

Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 17 September 2024

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Alex Coley (Acting Vice-Chair); Councillors Tony Froud (as nominated substitute for Councillor Hannah Dalton), Kate Chinn, Graham Jones (as nominated substitute for Councillor Robert Leach), Alison Kelly, Lucie McIntyre and Phil Neale

In Attendance: Councillor Bernie Muir and Councillor James Lawrence

Absent: Councillor Hannah Dalton and Councillor Robert Leach

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Andrew Bircher (Interim Director of Corporate Services), Brendan Bradley (Chief Finance Officer), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Arjan de Jong (Strategic Housing Manager), Richard Chevalier (Parking Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

18 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

One written question from a Member of the Public was received by the Committee to which a written response had been published in advance of the meeting.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors made the following declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda:

Legal Proceedings

Councillor Lucie McIntyre: Councillor Lucie McIntyre declared that her family had membership of the premises but did not consider that this had any affect on the discussions which may or may not happen.

20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 July 2024 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

21 CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS - PROCUREMENT ACT UPDATE

The Chair informed the Committee that the Government had changed the implementation date for the matters contained within this report to 24 February 2025. In light of the additional time permitted, the Chair proposed that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee (12 November 2024) and referred to the following meeting of Full Council for ratification.

The Committee unanimously resolved to defer the consideration of this item to its meeting on 12 November 2024.

22 PAYMENTS FROM CHUTER EDE FUND

The Committee received a report requesting it to allow payments to be made to residents who have applied for support funding, in accordance with the legacy from Chute Ede trusts.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Update to report.** The Interim Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that there had now been 5 applications to the Fund in the current year.
- b) **Criteria for allocation of funds – terms.** In response to a question from a member, the Interim Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that the criteria for allocation of funding were set by the terms of the Trust Fund. These were to benefit people who are leaving the Borough to attend University. The Director informed the Committee that he had written to the 4 state senior schools in the Borough to request that they share the details of the Fund with their pupils going on to University.
- c) **Allocation of funds – university year.** In response to a question from a member the Interim Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that the nature of the Trust had been interpreted as being to help people during the transition to University and was therefore only available to first year students.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Nominate and Authorise the (Acting) Director Corporate Services, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to decide upon and make payments to applicants in this and subsequent years.**

23 HOOK ROAD CAR PARK EQUIPMENT FUNDING

The Committee received a report seeking funding of up to £25,000 to install pay and display equipment at Hook Road Car Park as an interim measure between the end of life of the current equipment and the start of any proposed developmental works at Hook Road.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Nature of request.** The Chair informed the Committee of the nature of the request from the Environment Committee and expressed his support for option 2 set out in the report (that the report be remitted to the Environment Committee for consideration).
- b) **Funding and potential for relocation of equipment.** In response to questions from members, the Parking Manager informed the Committee that the income generated by Hook Road car park would be sufficient to fund the purchase and installation of the pay and display equipment, but that it needed to be considered whether the Committee wished to use that income to do so. The Parking manager also informed the Committee that the equipment could potentially be relocated to a different car park from the Hook Road car park site.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved:

With 1 vote for recommendation 1, 4 votes against recommendation 1 and 2 abstentions:

- (1) **not to support recommendation 1 of the report.**

With 4 votes for recommendation 2, 2 votes against recommendation 2 and 1 abstention to:

- (2) **Remit the report for consideration at the next scheduled meeting of Environment Committee.**

24 URGENT DECISIONS

The Committee received a report informing it of decisions taken by the Chief Executive and Directors on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Urgent Decision 133.** In response to a question from the Acting Vice-Chair, the Head of Housing and Community informed the Committee that a report providing a review of the Private Sector Leasing Scheme would be presented to the next meeting of the Community & Wellbeing Committee.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the urgent decision taken and the reasons for that decision, since the last meeting of the committee.**

25 APPOINTMENT OF ACTING VICE-CHAIR

The Committee agreed to appoint Councillor Alex Coley as Acting Vice Chair for the meeting.

26 TOWN & COUNTRY HOUSING TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENT

The Committee received a report requesting it to agree to the update and amendment of the temporary accommodation agreement with Town & Country Housing.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Use of funds.** In response to a question from a member, the Chair informed the Committee that transfer of council housing to Rosebery Housing Association (now Town & Country Housing) had taken place in 1993 and that the funds received from this had been used for numerous purposes over the intervening years.
- b) **Additional recommendation.** The Acting Vice-Chair proposed the following additional recommendation to the report:
 - (4) That this same report be brought to Community and Wellbeing Committee at its next meeting to note.

The Committee unanimously agreed to the addition of this recommendation.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Agree that the Council updates and amends the terms of the management of temporary accommodation agreement, with Town & Country Housing (TCH) as outlined in the report.**
- (2) **Agree that the Council release the restrictive covenant on 58 Upper High Street in return for a payment from TCH, to be set by the district valuer.**
- (3) **Nominate and authorise the Director of Environment, Housing & Regeneration in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to take all necessary actions to implement this Committee's decision as necessary and appropriate.**
- (4) **That this same report be brought to Community and Wellbeing Committee at its next meeting to note.**

27 HORTON CEMETERY

The Committee received a report presenting a Motion referred from the meeting of Full Council on 30 July 2024.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 5 votes for, 2 abstentions and the Chair not voting to:

- (1) Note the Motion and that no action is to be taken, having noted the advice as set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.5, 4.23 to 4.29 and 5.24 of the report.**

28 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee resolved with 5 votes for, 2 votes against and the Chair not voting to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

In response to a question from a member, the Committee noted that the Constitution Working Group would be consider matters relating to the exclusion of committee items from publication.

29 33-39 HIGH STREET LEASE FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Committee received a report proposing that the Council enters into an agreement with Town & Country Housing (TCH) to extend the current lease for a period of up to 10 years.

The Committee's consideration of this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) To agree to enter into a lease for a period of up to 10 years with Town & Country Housing (TCH) on the terms set out in the report.**
- (2) That this same report be brought to Community and Wellbeing Committee at its next meeting to note.**

30 LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Committee received a report regarding legal proceedings that the Council is party to.

The Committee's consideration of this item is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted Minute.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the position taken, and**
- (2) Agree to the release of the sum of £55,000 from Corporate Project Reserves to fund the Council's position.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.16 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)