ELMBRIDGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Report of a meeting held on 9 July 2014

* J. O'Reilly - Leader
* T.G. Oliver - Deputy Leader

* J. Browne
* G.P. Dearlove
* A. Kelly
* Mrs. R. Mitchell
* Mrs. C.J. Cross
* Mrs. C. Elmer
* Mrs. D.M. Mitchell
* Mrs. M.C. Sheldon

(* Denotes attendance)

(D.J. Archer, B.J.F. Cheyne, Mrs. S.R. Kapadia, Mrs. R.J.M. Lyon, Mrs. K. Randolph,
J.G. Sheldon, Mrs. J.R. Turner, J.A. Vickers were also present.)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. LEADER’S OPENING REMARKS

The Leader advised that in June the Council completed an assessment against the Customer Service Excellence standard. This year, Environmental Health & Licensing, Customer Services and Planning Services were assessed. The assessor had confirmed the outcome and the Leader was pleased to report that once again the Council was fully compliant. In recognition of exceptional performance, the standard also recognised areas of compliance plus. Last year, the assessor awarded 3 compliance pluses which had been reconfirmed again this year. In addition to these, 4 more areas were likely to be recognised as compliance plus this year for elements that included the Council’s new reception area which the assessor commented went beyond even compliance plus with its ‘one stop shop’ approach. Thanks were extended to all staff for their continued commitment and service to the Council’s customers.

He also reported that HRH the Countess of Wessex had visited the Riverhill Community Project today to meet those involved in the project and members of the Cobham Conservation and Heritage Trust. During her visit, she unveiled an information board that explained the project. Whilst acknowledging the Council’s financial support to the project, the Cabinet thanked Mr. Ian Gayton, Parks, Recreation & Cemeteries Manager and Miss. Laura Richardson, Parks Development Officer for all their hard work in developing the project.

The Cabinet congratulated Places for People Leisure (formerly DC Leisure) who had won the ‘Leisure Centre Operator of the Year’ award at the 2014 Flame Awards. These were the most highly coveted awards of the health & fitness sector and this was the second year in a row where Places for People Leisure had won this accolade.
3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

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**RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL ON 23 JULY 2014**

4. 2015/16 BUDGET STRATEGY

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Leader introduced the report that presented the first stage in the Council’s annual budget planning process.

The report also updated on the Budget position for 2015/16, as was included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), together with details of the forecast savings required to balance the budget over the medium term in the context of declining Government grant and the economy.

The Cabinet noted that whilst the Council had set a balanced budget for 2014/15 and was working from a sound financial base, it remained a very challenging period. The core principles underlying the medium term strategy were as follows:

- maintaining a sustainable financial position over the planning period;
- Council Tax being kept at affordable levels with increases limited to a maximum of 2% or below inflation;
- the deployment of the Council’s limited resources to those activities which contributed most to improving outcomes for local people; and
- continuing to identify and deliver significant savings each year.

The Cabinet noted that the Government had not yet provided any detailed announcements on financial settlements for 2015/16, given that a review of local government funding was due to take place in 2014 with recommendations on improving the current system being issued in January 2015. The Leader stated that the Administration was committed to another year of Council Tax freeze for 2015/16. In this regard, the Council was continuing to consider alternative ways to generate income as well as deliver savings, so that front line services were not adversely affected.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT**

(A) THE UPDATED REPORT AND OVERALL APPROACH TO THE PREPARATION OF THE 2015/16 BUDGET, BE AGREED;

(B) AN ESTIMATED BUDGET SHORTFALL OF OVER £5 MILLION FOR THE PERIOD OF THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY WHICH COVERED THE FIVE YEAR PERIOD 2015/16 THROUGH TO 2019/20, WITH A MORE IMEDIATE TARGET OF £1.5 MILLION FOR 2015/16, BE NOTED;
These Minutes should be referred to in conjunction with the Minutes of the subsequent meeting of the Council, where they are presented; and for completeness to the next relevant meeting when the Minutes are adopted.

(C) A BUDGET REDUCTION TARGET OF £1.5 MILLION FOR 2015/16, TO ENSURE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SAVINGS REQUIREMENT, BE AGREED;

(D) OFFICERS WORK UP DETAILED SERVICE PLANS AND BUDGET PROPOSALS IN LIAISON WITH RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDERS AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PRIORITIES;

(E) THE USE OF REVENUE RESERVES OVER THE MEDIUM TERM BE CONSIDERED, WHilst MAINTAINING THE REQUIRED GENERAL FUND BALANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY; AND

(F) THE OUTLINE HIGH LEVEL BUDGET TIMETABLE, AS SET OUT IN SECTION 6 OF THE REPORT, BE NOTED.

5. ELECTRONIC TRANSFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder for Resources introduced the report and advised that as part of the desire to modernise the Council’s business processes and improve support to Members, it was proposed that the Council provides all Councillors with mobile electronic devices (tablets) through which they would be able to transact most of their Council business. These devices would be provided and managed by the Council and would be restricted for EBC business only. The intention was that they would be fully secure to comply with data security requirements but would give Members access to all agendas, the Council website and intranet (Bridge-it) and emails without the need to access via the VPN. The devices would be able to connect to wi-fi networks to access the information.

The intention was to carry out a pilot with Members on the Cabinet and Licensing Committee in the Autumn and, subject to this being successful, together with the need to comply with legislative requirements, the aim was to migrate all Members in time for the 2015/16 Municipal Year at which point hard copy publications for officers and Members would cease for all formal meetings.

An opportunity had now arisen for a joint procurement of a new Committee Management software system (Modern.gov) with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council which would provide a cost benefit as well as enabling the more convenient app facility for Members to utilise through mobile devices to support their work on the move.

Members noted that a CLAS Security consultant had been engaged to provide the Council with advice on the options available to ensure that Mobile Devices could be introduced into the Council’s network without either a security / information risk to the Council or jeopardising the Code of Connection and Public Sector Network (PSN) data. Furthermore, in order to maintain the integrity and security of Council data on equipment connected to the Council’s network, these devices would have a standard set of software loaded on them and be “locked down” to prevent additional software / applications being added.
Whilst fully supporting the Council providing all Councillors with mobile electronic devices through which they would be able to transact most of their Council business, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development requested that extensive Member training be provided particularly in the implementation phase of the project. She further proposed that given that this initiative had been developed in the context of the work carried out by the Member ICT Reference Group, this Group be included in the pilot which the Cabinet supported.

The Cabinet acknowledged that whilst this would be a fundamental change for Members to access all Council business electronically, a sensitive approach was required in recognition of the varying levels of IT skills.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT**

(A) **THE COUNCIL PROVIDES ALL MEMBERS WITH ELECTRONIC TABLET DEVICES IN ORDER TO SUPPORT THEIR NEED FOR CONVENIENT ACCESS TO AGENDA, COUNCIL EMAILS AND THE COUNCIL WEBSITE & INTRANET;**

(B) **A PILOT BE CONDUCTED FOR THE CABINET, LICENSING COMMITTEE AND THE MEMBER ICT REFERENCE GROUP IN THE AUTUMN, WITH A VIEW TO FULL MIGRATION FOR ALL MEMBERS BY MAY 2015;**

(C) **THE PROCUREMENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SYSTEM, MODERN.GOV, BE PROGRESSSED AND AN EXCEPTION TO CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES [CPR 26.8(D) AND (K)] BE AGREED TO PERMIT ADHERENCE TO JOINT PROCUREMENT TIMESCALES AND FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE SPECIALIST SUPPLY AS SET OUT IN THE REPORT;**

(D) **ALL COMMITTEE REPORTS BE PRODUCED ON THE NEW SYSTEM;**

(E) **THE CITRIX SOLUTION BE PROGRESSED FOR MOBILE EMAIL AND MOBILE DEVICE MANAGEMENT FOR MEMBERS;**

(F) **THE MODERN.GOV ‘RESTRICTED APP’ BE INCLUDED IN THE PROCUREMENT, TO ENABLE MOBILE DEVICES TO VIEW PART II INFORMATION, SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE SECURITY MEASURES BEING IN PLACE; AND**

(G) **SUBJECT TO THE SUCCESSFUL PILOT AND LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS TO PROVIDE SUMMONSES, NO ‘PAPER COPY’ AGENDAS BE PRINTED FOR MEMBERS WITH EFFECT FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/16.**

6. **MAYOR’S SECRETARY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION (IER)**

(Links to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development introduced the report that sought approval for the recruitment of a Mayor’s Secretary on a 28 hours per week
permanent basis together with the refocusing of resources within the core Executive and Member Services Team to meet the increased statutory responsibilities for Individual Electoral Registration (IER).

In 2010/11 as part of the budget setting process, Council approved the recruitment of a Mayor’s Secretary on an 18 hours per week basis, on the understanding that activities would focus on those of a civic nature rather than charity fundraising. However, it quickly became apparent that even with a reduced role in charity fundraising, the new arrangement of 18 hours a week was insufficient to cover the activities of a civic nature, as well as the day to day support to Mayoral engagements. Accordingly, the hours were increased from 18 to 22 hours per week.

Over the intervening period, there had been three different competent individuals appointed to this role, all of whom gave excellent support to the Mayors but all having viewed the 22 hours per week as challenging to undertake required duties. During the last Mayoral Year, and in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Mayor’s Secretary had worked increased hours. In considering a sustainable future approach and to enable continuity of service provision when the last post holder left the Council, an interim agency appointment was agreed on the basis of 28 hours per week.

The Cabinet noted that due to adjustments in controlled monthly hours of the Mayor’s Chauffeur and Mace Bearer, there was sufficient current budget provision in respect of the Mayor’s Secretary post for 28 hours per week and authority to recruit in this regard on a permanent basis was sought.

The Portfolio Holder further advised that whilst the requirements for the Electoral service had seen recent significant changes, there was now a fundamental change to the voter registration process, with the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER). At present, one person in every household was responsible for registering everyone else who lived at that address. IER would require each person to register to vote individually, rather than by household. The Cabinet noted that a transition period was underway with increased procedures and updating of systems to ensure security of personal data, and once implemented, there would be significant increased processes and volume of workflow compared to the existing position.

Therefore, in order to meet the increased demands of the service; build in resilience and to make the Team fit for purpose, it was proposed that some changes to the administrative arrangements within the Team be undertaken with some refocusing of resources.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT**

(A) **AUTHORITY TO RECRUIT TO THE POST OF MAYOR’S SECRETARY ON A 28 HOURS PER WEEK PERMANENT BASIS (AN INCREASE OF 6 HOURS PER WEEK), BE AGREED; AND**

(B) **THE INCREASED STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION (IER) AND THE CONSEQUENT REFOCUSING OF RESOURCES WITHIN THE CORE EXECUTIVE AND MEMBER SERVICES TEAM, AS SET OUT IN THE REPORT, BE AGREED.**
7. DISCRETIONARY FEES & CHARGES REVIEW – ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES 2014/15

(Link to Council Priorities: Commitment to the Environment)

The Cabinet noted that a review of the current discretionary fees and charges had taken place within the Environmental Services Team, which if supported, would generate additional income of £35,740 in 2015/16.

With regard to the Waste Collection Service, whilst no increases were proposed for the charges for the Special Collection Service and Wheeled Bin Charges, it was noted that the reduced subscription charge of £31 for the Garden Waste Collection Service customers who paid either online or by direct debit, would be removed. Accordingly, a £33 subscription charge would be applied for all subscriptions from 1 October 2014.

With regard to the Pest Control Service, Members noted that the various charges had not been increased for a number of years and in order to maintain a competitive service, as well as reducing the net cost of the service, it was proposed that, with effect from 1 October 2014, the charges be increased, details of which were outlined in Appendix A of the report.

Whilst it had been suggested to discontinue the 50% concessionary rate for those residents in financial hardship for the treatment of wasps, the Portfolio Holder considered that this concession should continue and therefore he proposed that recommendation (C) be deleted. The Cabinet considered that as this service was frequently used the 50% concessionary rate should remain and accordingly supported the deletion of recommendation (C).

The Cabinet supported the proposed increases to the Pest Control Service, as set out in Appendix A of the report and agreed that the 50% concessionary rate for the treatment of wasps should be discontinued. Members also acknowledged that, under the Council’s existing Scheme of Delegation, these fees and charges would be reviewed annually by the Strategic Director in line with inflationary pressures.

With regard to Parking Charges, the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport reminded Members that in 2010, the Council had introduced a range of ‘Recession Buster’ initiatives to help mitigate the impact of the difficult economic climate. In this regard, a scheme was introduced to offer heavily discounted season tickets to businesses that purchased 10 or more season tickets. Whilst the scheme had proved popular with over 200 discounted season tickets being sold in bulk to local businesses in the last year, the Cabinet noted that this equated to an annual cost of approximately £58,000 to support the scheme. Mindful that there had been an improvement in the economy, it was proposed to gradually reduce this initiative whilst endeavouring to minimise the impact on local businesses.

Furthermore, as the Council receives several requests throughout the year from local groups to temporarily suspend parking charges for all or part of a day in a particular car park to support a community event such as a local fete or fair, it was proposed that delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Transport to deal with these matters in the future.
RECOMMENDED: THAT

(A) THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION CHARGE FROM 1 OCTOBER 2014 FOR THE GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE FOR ALL PAYMENT METHODS BE SET AT £33;

(B) THE PEST CONTROL CHARGES BE REVISED FROM 1 OCTOBER 2014, AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX A OF THE REPORT, WITH FUTURE INFLATIONARY INCREASES APPLIED AS NECESSARY BY THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL’S SCHEME OF DELEGATION;

(C) THE ‘RECESSION BUSTER’ DISCOUNT RATE FOR THE BULK PURCHASE OF PARKING SEASON TICKETS BE REDUCED, ON THE BASIS SET OUT IN SECTION 17 OF THE REPORT;

(D) THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT BE GIVEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO APPROVE SUSPENSIONS OF PARKING CHARGES, OR VARIATIONS TO PERIODS OF MAXIMUM STAY IN COUNCIL CAR PARKS IN THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:

(I) IN RESPONSE TO AD HOC REQUESTS FROM LOCAL GROUPS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY EVENTS;

(II) TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT BUSINESS TRADING DURING THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD UP TO A MAXIMUM OF THREE CONCESSIONARY DAYS; AND

(III) IN RESPONSE TO CHANGES IN LOCAL PARKING NEEDS.

8. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REVIEW

(Link to Council Priorities: Vibrant and Thriving Elmbridge, P3 and P4)

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Affairs introduced the report and advised that the Development Manager, with support from the Head of Planning Services, had been reviewing the way that Planning Services were delivered; what improvements could be made; and whether there were adequate resources to respond to current and future workloads.

On completion of the review, it had been concluded that a number of measures would have a marked improvement on the service and enable the team to continue striving for excellence.

In this regard, there were a number of measures that had been identified that would enhance the service offered to the Council’s customers and would ensure that the decision making was sound, robust and consistent.

The first measure identified was Duty Planning Advice. The proposal was to retain the duty system for general planning enquiries, policy guidance, advice on planning constraints and information on what documentation needed to be submitted with an application. Members of the public requesting detailed advice on schemes for specific
sites would be directed to make a formal pre-application enquiry. This change would result in better quality decisions when an application was made as the Officer would be able to check what advice had been given previously and in most cases the same Officer who responded to the pre-application enquiry would be assigned to the planning application.

With regard to the existing charging regime, the Portfolio Holder advised that a full review of planning charges had been undertaken. Currently the Council did not charge for the advice offered on householder and minor pre-application enquiries and it was therefore proposed that a fee be levied for this service which would bring the Council into line with other Surrey authorities and would place greater value on the advice given.

It was also proposed to increase the existing charges for pre-application advice by 20%, details of which were outlined in the report, which would also bring the Council more into line with charges from across other authorities. At present, there were three tiers of charging and it was proposed to retain these but enhance the service further by offering a meeting on site or a site visit and a meeting. There would also be an additional tier that would offer a site visit and/or meeting on site, a follow-up response and further meetings, combined with a ‘Development Team Service’ (DTS) that would involve offering pre-application advice to the applicant through a panel of senior managers within the team. It was noted that no other Surrey authority offered this enhanced service however it was expected that it would be popular with applicants keen for greater certainty and less delay when submitting planning applications. It was also proposed to offer the ‘gold’ service to those seeking advice on householder schemes, which included the opportunity for a site visit or a meeting on site. This was also anticipated to be popular as the Council received frequent requests for officers to meet on site which was not currently available.

In order to respond to the current and rising levels of applications, approval for the creation of three additional posts was also sought, namely, a Trainee Planning Officer; a Principal Planning Officer; and a Registration Officer. It was noted that whilst this increase in the establishment would result in an additional cost to the Council, there was an opportunity to recoup a sizeable portion of that cost through the revised charging system for pre-application advice.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT TWO ADDITIONAL PLANNING OFFICER POSTS AND ONE ADDITIONAL REGISTRATION OFFICER POST BE CREATED AS PERMANENT POSTS ON THE COUNCIL’S ESTABLISHMENT.**

RESOLVED that the package of measures, to include increasing the fees for pre-application enquiries and charging fees for householder advice, be agreed.

9. **BUILDING CONTROL MUTUAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The demands of the commercial market and the constraints that being part of the Council had on the Building Control Service had meant that the current way the service was provided could soon become extremely challenging. Accordingly, the Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Affairs introduced the report that advised that alternative delivery options had been considered and after extensive work including
the drafting of an options appraisal and an outline business plan, it was proposed that work commence to form an Elmbridge Building Control Mutual.

The Cabinet noted that the proposal was supported by the Government’s Cabinet Office, the Building Control Manager and the Team. Furthermore, the Cabinet Office had now offered full financial support to help move the service to a Mutual model with a provisional start date of April 2015.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT**

(A) THE BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE CABINET OFFICE TO PROGRESS TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF A BUILDING CONTROL MUTUAL WITH A PROVISIONAL SPIN OUT WITH A TARGET CREATION DATE IN 2015; AND

(B) THE FULL BUSINESS CASE AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS BE REPORTED TO CABINET AND COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL IN DUE COURSE.

10. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder for Resources introduced the report and advised Members that the Asset Management Plan was a strategic document forming part of the Council’s Policy Framework, which provided Member and Officer guidance on the management of the Council’s land and property portfolio. The Plan aimed to optimise the contribution that property makes to the Council’s provision of quality services and to support the Council’s objectives through effective asset management and to ensure all assets comply with statutory obligations in respect of health and safety issues.

The Cabinet noted that the previous Asset Management Plan had been approved in 2011 and the Plan had now been refreshed and detailed the Council’s plan in relation to the corporate property portfolio of operational and non-operational holdings for the next three years.

The Cabinet welcomed the comprehensive report and noted that the Asset Management Plan and associated strategies was a good framework for the management of the Council’s assets.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the Walton Public Conveniences had been declared surplus to operational requirements and that disposal for affordable housing was being considered, one Member asked what the current position was in this regard. The Head of Asset Management and Property Services confirmed, given the layout of the site and the complexities of rights of light issues, it was proving challenging to progress with the project at this time. However discussions were ongoing with the Council’s partners in this regard.

With regard to the refurbished reception area at the Civic Centre, one Member asked whether we had received any feedback from the Council’s customers in this regard. The Chief Executive commented that whilst initially mixed feedback had been received, the Receptionists had reported that the reception area was now considered...
to be more popular and well received. Furthermore, he reiterated the Customer Service Excellence assessor’s comments regarding the new reception area which the assessor considered went beyond even compliance plus with its ‘one stop shop’ approach.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT THE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES BE ADOPTED.**

11. **WATERSIDE DRIVE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS HUB**

   (Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder for Resources provided Members with the current position in respect of the proposed development of a Sports Hub at Waterside Drive.

The Cabinet was reminded that in February 2014 a report was considered regarding the proposed Sports Hub at Waterside Drive and it was agreed that the SCAPE framework, of which Willmott Dixon were the main contractor, be used. Pick Everard, who were also on the SCAPE framework, had been appointed as the Council’s quantity surveyor and project manager assisting through the feasibility stage of the project namely, Phase I. In addition, in order to discharge Condition 23 of the outline planning permission, approval was given to spend £50,000 on survey works, SCAPE Fees and the fee for Pick Everard.

Members noted that as there was considerable risk inherent in the ground conditions on this proposed project especially as it was a former landfill site, it was essential that a cautious approach to the Sports Hub project be taken. The Portfolio Holder advised that under the SCAPE framework, the Council remained solely at the feasibility stage and would not progress from this position until it was confident that a scheme could be delivered which was cost effective, would satisfy the potential users and other essential stakeholders and ensure complete public safety.

It was noted that the intrusive ground investigation surveys had proved more challenging and were therefore more extensive than originally envisaged. The costs of the surveys to date were £125,300 and the project manager and quantity surveyor fees were £17,900. This essential work was necessary to minimise the risk of additional building work and costs at implementation stage. By reducing the unknown factors now, the full costs and timescales could be determined with a high degree of accuracy.

During the period of June to September 2014 and following the results of the ground investigation works, it was envisaged that the next stage of phase 1, in terms of developing the civil engineering aspects and associated issues, would be commissioned. Members noted that the amount required would be an additional £55,000 bringing the total costs of the feasibility stage to the sum of £200,000.

The Portfolio Holder advised that as the results of the ground investigation works were expected to be received in mid-August, a further report would be submitted to Cabinet in the Autumn. At this point, a clear indication of the design for the scheme would be known. It was envisaged that work would commence on site in Spring 2015 and with a 50 week build, this would mean a contract completion date in early Spring 2016.
An update was also provided regarding the proposed management model for the Sports Hub together with the outcome of the extension stakeholder consultation that had recently been undertaken.

The Cabinet noted the progress being made with the project and acknowledged the positive work that had been undertaken by the Waterside Drive Member Reference Group.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT AN ADDITIONAL SUM OF £150,000, FOR FURTHER WORKS TO COMPLETE PHASE I OF THE FEASIBILITY STAGE, BE AGREED AND FUNDED AS OUTLINED IN THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS, TO ENABLE SCAPE AND THEIR CONTRACTOR WILLMOTT DIXON TO COMPLETE THE COST PLAN AND PRODUCE A DETAILED PROGRAMME FOR THE WORKS AND THAT A FURTHER REPORT IN THIS REGARD BE SUBMITTED TO CABINET IN AUTUMN 2014.**

RESOLVED that the progress on the proposed management model for the Sports Hub, should the scheme proceed, and the progress made with the various stakeholders interested in the outcome of the Sports Hub, be noted.

12. **PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT NIELSON’S FIELD OPEN SPACE, EAST MOLESEY [PART II REPORT IN PART – EXEMPT UNDER PARAGRAPH 3 OF PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED)]**

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report that detailed a proposal to replace an existing dilapidated single span steel bridge, owned by the Council, that provided a means of cycle and pedestrian access for local residents to Nielson’s Field Open Space, East Molesey.

The Cabinet noted that an independent expert structural engineer report had identified extensive defects to the bridge and together with its poor structural condition, had resulted in its closure due to health and safety concerns. Advice had been subsequently sought from an independent engineer in respect of options available to the Council should it wish to replace the existing bridge. Having particular regard to appearance, cost, design, life span and location, Members noted that the report favoured Option 2 as the most appropriate replacement bridge which consisted of the installation of a new tubular hollow section welded truss girder steel bridge replacement. The deck would be of steel with a non-slip surface and would support cycle and pedestrian use.

The new bridge would require all appropriate consents statutory and otherwise which would include planning permission and environment agency consent.

Due to the necessary consents and the complexity of the build and location, it was anticipated that the earliest start date on site would be January 2015, with the earliest completion date likely to be late March/April 2015.

To enable a full discussion, the Cabinet moved in camera, and considered the options proposed for the form of construction together with estimated costs in respect of each option. Members were of the view that the case for selecting Option 2 as recommended was not sufficiently robust and more information would be needed, and
considered it appropriate that, in the event of Council agreeing to replace the existing pedestrian bridge, the Strategic Director & Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Resources, evaluate and determine the most appropriate option to construct.

Whilst noting that the costs of the construction / fees would be funded from the New Homes Bonus Reserve allocated for capital expenditure, the Portfolio Holder for Resources indicated that a proportion of the costs could be met from the Strategic Infrastructure Spending Board monies available. Arising from further discussion, Members supported an application for a proportion of the funding being submitted to the Local Spending Board for East and West Molesey, as that local community would benefit most from the replacement of the pedestrian bridge.

**RECOMMENDED: THAT**

**(A)** THE COUNCIL AGREES TO REPLACE THE EXISTING DILAPIDATED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE TO NIELSON’S FIELD OPEN SPACE WITH RECOMMENDED CONSTRUCTION TO BE AGREED;

**(B)** SUBJECT TO (A) ABOVE, THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR & DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR RESOURCES, EVALUATE AND DETERMINE THE MOST APPROPRIATE OPTION TO SELECT FOR CONSTRUCTION; AND

**(C)** COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CONSTRUCTION AND ANY PROFESSIONAL FEES, AS REPORTED IN APPENDIX C OF THE REPORT, BE FUNDED FROM THE NEW HOMES BONUS RESERVE ALLOCATED FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE / A GRANT (CIRCA. 20%) FROM THE LOCAL SPENDING BOARD FOR EAST AND WEST MOLESEY, AS APPROPRIATE.

13. **PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS AND DISPOSALS**

**(Below is a brief summary of the matters discussed under this item. In view of the nature of the discussion which contained exempt information as defined under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, a copy of the full Minute is appended [at the back of these Minutes] as Minute No. 18 for Members of the Council only.**)

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder for Resources introduced the report that provided details of proposals for the acquisition of a property in Cobham for investment purposes and a part disposal of a Council asset in Thames Ditton.

**MATTERS OF REPORT**

14. **A MUSEUM SERVICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY – UPDATE**

(Link to Council Priorities: L3)

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture introduced the report that updated Members on the latest position in respect of the Council’s 2014/15 Flagship project ‘Launch a new museum service to the wider community by September 2014’ together with details of the next phase of the project and associated costs.
With regard to the current storage position, at the Cabinet meeting in September 2013, it had been reported that the search for a new build museum store had not been successful. Whilst part of the museum collection was already stored at Luxfords Depot in Brooklands, it was further proposed that more of the Council’s museum artefacts be accommodated at Luxfords and a lease at their building in Weybridge be secured. It was noted that the lease would be for 5 years with a mutual 12 month rolling break clause included.

It was noted that independent surveying consultants had been commissioned by Luxfords for advice in respect of the highly specialised construction works required by the Council to make the space fit for the collection’s purposes. In this regard, the Portfolio Holder advised that a one off capital installation cost of £72,050 for the provision of storage facilities at Luxfords in Brooklands would be met from the museum redevelopment capital budget. The associated removal costs of £33,500 would be met from within existing leisure revenue budgets.

The Portfolio Holder also provided an update in respect of the Museum Outreach Service, the recently launched Museum website together with details of the photography project.

The Cabinet discussed the update and concern was expressed regarding the proposed dilapidation costs associated with both the Weybridge Library site and the leased floor space at Luxfords. With regard to the possible dilapidation costs due to Surrey County Council as a result of vacating Weybridge Library, the Portfolio Holder advised that discussions were on-going between the Council and the County Council. It was suggested that prior to any monies being paid in respect of dilapidations, an update report in this regard be submitted to Cabinet.

As part of the discussion, it was agreed that in addition to schools and community groups, the ‘Discovery Boxes’ be made available to the Centres for the Community.

RESOLVED that

(a) the proposal to relocate the Museum Collections, as detailed in the report, to new storage facilities at Luxfords in Brooklands, be supported;

(b) the capital building costs of £72,050 for the new storage be met from the Museum Redevelopment capital budget and associated moving costs of £33,500 be met from existing leisure revenue budgets; and

(c) the Civic Centre display cost of £16,000 be funded from the Museum Redevelopment capital budget and a bid be made to the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund of £42,000 for the outreach display cases.

15. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS (RECOMMENDATION FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2014)

(Link to Council Priorities: P1, P4)

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Affairs reminded Members that at the last meeting of the Cabinet held in June 2014, recommendations from the Planning Committee meeting held on 25 March 2014, in respect of Article 4 Directions, were considered.
In June, the Cabinet agreed to defer making a decision on the item so that it could be considered in conjunction with the item being presented to the Planning Committee on 8 July 2014 in respect of Article 4 Directions: Thames Ditton and Hinchley Wood (Minute No. 16 below refers).

On consideration of the recommendations from the Planning Committee meeting held on 25 March 2014, the Portfolio Holder proposed that, whilst supporting the making of non-immediate Article 4 Directions for the Industrial and Trading Estates, the Town Centres of Weybridge and Walton-on-Thames be not progressed. The Cabinet fully supported this approach and accordingly

RESOLVED that a consultation be undertaken and the appropriate notifications made for the making of non-immediate Article 4 Directions under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) to remove the permitted development right to change the use from Offices (B1A) to a dwelling house (Class C3) in respect of the Molesey Industrial Estate, Hersham Trading Estate (including North Weylands and Riverdene Estate) and Brooklands Industrial Estate (as defined in Appendices C, D and E of the Planning Committee report).

16. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS – THAMES DITTON AND HINCHLEY WOOD

(Link to Council Priorities: P1, P4)

The Portfolio Holder for Regulatory Affairs introduced the report and advised that at the Planning Committee in March 2014, Members of the Committee asked that further consideration be given to the use of Article 4 Directions in Thames Ditton and Hinchley Wood. Accordingly, Officers examined these areas again and a report in this regard was considered at the Planning Committee in June 2014.

At the Planning Committee in June 2014, the report was discussed and as a result of further information being cited by the Thames Ditton Ward Councillors, it was agreed that this information would be further considered with a report being presented to the Planning Committee’s next meeting on 8 July 2014.

Mindful that the Planning Committee meeting was held the previous evening, a verbal update was provided to the Cabinet on the outcome of discussion on this matter. The Cabinet noted that after careful consideration of the additional information and following a full discussion at the Planning Committee, it had been recommended that no further Article 4 Directions be made.

The Cabinet concurred with the Planning Committee recommendation and accordingly

RESOLVED that no further Article 4 Directions be made.

17. 2013/14 REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN AND 2014/15 BUDGET UPDATE

(Link to Council Priorities: All)

The Portfolio Holder for Resources updated Members on the Revenue and Capital Outturn for 2013/14 and the 2014/15 in year budget.
Members noted that in February 2013 the Council approved the 2013/14 budget for council tax setting purposes at £17.6 million. As a result of variations and other changes in the anticipated spend, a revised forecast figure of approximately £14.6 million was reported in February 2014 which would have resulted in a predicted underspend of £2.9 million. The actual outturn for the year resulted in an underspend of £3.1 million, a variance of £0.2 million from the revised forecast.

The overall position for the General Fund balance showed it remaining at £4.0 million, the required level set by the Council in accordance with the Medium and Long Term Financial Strategy.

Cabinet noted the continued excellent performance in respect of the collection of Council Tax, which was at 98.8% for 2013/14.

With regard to capital outturn, the position was £7,074,811, an underspend of £695,889 compared to the revised programme of £7,770,700 approved in February 2014.

RESOLVED that the outturn for 2013/14 and the early budget update for 2014/15, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m. and concluded at 9.19 p.m.

J. O’REILLY
Leader of the Council