

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2020 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.20 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser, UllaKarin Clark, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Pauline Jorgensen, Charles Margetts and Wayne Smith

Other Councillors Present

Rachel Bishop-Firth
Prue Bray
Gary Cowan
Lindsay Ferris
Michael Firmager
Clive Jones
Malcolm Richards
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
Caroline Smith

71. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Parry Bath, Stuart Munro and Gregor Murray.

Councillor Michael Firmager, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Leisure, attended the meeting on behalf of Councillor Bath. In accordance with legislation Councillor Firmager could take part in any discussions but was not entitled to vote.

72. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 28 November 2019 and the Extraordinary Executive Meetings held on 23 December 2019 and 15 January 2020 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Leader of Council.

In relation to the previous minutes the Leader of Council reiterated that the decision that was made at the 15 January meeting was to approve the consultation of the Local Plan Update and he wanted to encourage as many people as possible to respond to that consultation.

73. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor UllaKarin Clark declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 76, Shareholders' Report, by virtue of the fact she was an unpaid Non-Executive Director of Loddon Homes Ltd. Councillor Clark remained in the meeting during discussions and voted on the matter.

Councillors John Halsall and Wayne Smith declared personal interests in Agenda Item 76, Shareholders' Report, by virtue of the fact that they were unpaid Non-Executive Directors of WBC (Holdings) Ltd. Councillors Halsall and Smith remained in the meeting during discussions and voted on the matter.

Councillor John Halsall declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 80, Temporary Closure Remenham Footpath 4 Henley Festival, by virtue of the fact that he lived in the

area affected by the closure. Councillor Halsall remained in the meeting during discussions and voted on the matter.

Councillor John Kaiser declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 76, Shareholders' Report, by virtue of the fact the he was an unpaid Non-Executive Director of Wokingham Housing Ltd and Berry Brook Homes Ltd. Councillor Kaiser remained in the meeting during discussions and voted on the matter.

Councillor Charles Margetts declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 76, Shareholders' Report, by virtue of the fact the he was an unpaid Non-Executive Director of Optalis (Holdings) Ltd. Councillor Margetts remained in the meeting during discussions and voted on the matter.

74. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

74.1 Michael Smith asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Traffic congestion in and around the eastern end of Lower Earley and Winnersh generally is getting worse, with hundreds of cars, buses and lorries stalled in long traffic queues on all main routes for many hours during extended morning and evening peak periods each weekday. The improvements to the Showcase end of Lower Earley Way have had a small effect currently, but the increases in traffic from the Strategic Development Locations is quickly adding to the existing congestion as more homes are occupied. Aside from the completion of the Winnersh Bypass Phase 2, what other plans does the Council have to alleviate these problems for vehicle movements specifically in this area?

Answer provided by the Leader of Council

This is actually quite close to my heart. One of the three major topics that we are dealing with at the moment is congestion.

If I was Pauline I would say that I drive on these roads every day and recognise your comments: but I do not as I live in the northern parishes. There has been some improvement since the Lower Earley Way work has been completed but there are times in the day when the area still experiences significant queues.

To manage this the Council, in its role as highway authority, has embarked on a series of actions to ensure that key routes and intersections operate as efficiently as they can. Not all of these actions will help Lower Earley Way but some will. These actions include improvements to lines and signs at signal and roundabout junctions and the use of technology to make traffic signal control as reactive as possible to demands throughout the day and the management of obstructions caused by parking and loading activities.

A programme of interventions at sensitive locations has been prepared and work is underway to design and implement improvements, prioritised towards those locations where congestion is worse. All this work is being combined within our emerging Intelligent Transport Systems (the ITS Strategy) which will support the Council in tackling congestion and delay and for which significant capital funding is being invested over the next four years.

This Strategy is setting a framework and justification for future investment focused on: improved congestion detection and sharing of information with the travelling public; improved control room facilities in order that quick decisions can be made around network management; the use of technology to manage our road network more efficiently; and how we can improve the use of alternatives such as cycling.

We are also, through our transport and journey planning activities by the Council's MyJourney team, continuing to promote travel modes other than private cars and are engaging proactively with public transport operators to ensure that residents have access to a choice of alternative ways in which to make shorter journeys, such as travel to school and work, especially at peak periods. To further encourage more people to switch from using their cars to more sustainable modes we have, through our capital programme, been continuing with the delivery of new Greenways, an ambitious programme of traffic free cycling and walking routes across the Borough.

The combination of these activities is the only way to ensure that our road network operates as efficiently and equitably as possible for residents as well as businesses and visitors, whilst acknowledging the Council's role in managing air quality, the environment and road safety.

We have, I believe, the highest concentration of vehicles per household in the Country so I am told. I am told that by Tony Johnson so it must be true. We also have a finite series of roads so it is difficult to change the network but we have been doing so by building roads. So the strategy which we are embarked on is trying to make the network work better and that is through the technology which is available which is making the traffic signalling work interactively and having a series of signage which works with the traffic signalling combined with a control system which then permits it to be planned with obstructions. So we have something like £187m in the Capital Budget, over three years, in order to tackle congestion which we think is probably the biggest frustration which our residents have. So I agree with you.

Supplementary Question

I have lived in Lower Earley for over 35 years and commuted by car to Bracknell and Crowthorne for most of that time there being no useful public transport for either departure or destination locations. My personal observations of the Winnersh Crossroads and using all form of approaches to it over recent months is that the traffic flows are about twice those stated in the models used for the Winnersh Relief Road planning application; if I have understood the addendum to the traffic assessment correctly. Queues of over 200 cars in both directions on the Reading Road are not uncommon.

Please can the Member for Highways explain how by adding two roundabouts either side of the M4 overbridge that connects a new road designed to bring in additional traffic from the various strategic developments from both north and south of the area is going to improve the traffic flow and reduce congestion in the Winnersh area? I would also be interested to understand how pedestrian and cyclists can be integrated safely into that?

Supplementary Answer provided by the Executive Member for Highways and Transport

The first thing to say is that because the Winnersh by-pass has the problem of trying to get either under or over the M4 you have got no option with the Winnersh by-pass and the by-pass road that goes up along the left of the main road. You have got no opportunity to

have those two roads without two roundabouts because we cannot put a bridge over the M4 or indeed another tunnel under it.

So we cannot have one roundabout as there is not enough space for it. I have lived in Lower Earley for 35 years as well funnily enough and I commute along that road every day. My experience so far is that the Winnersh by-pass has improved the traffic along the peripheral road and the road towards the Showcase Cinema. That hopefully will relieve more of the traffic that is currently trying to go through the Winnersh crossroads. The Winnersh crossroads is meant to be relieved by that road but we are also looking to whether we can do anything to improve the Winnersh crossroads and we had a conversation with various people about a week and half ago to try and look at what the options are for doing something to Winnersh crossroads as well as the Winnersh by-pass to try and relieve it.

So I know there is a problem with the Winnersh crossroads it has definitely been made worse in my opinion by the turn-off to go to Sainsbury's which means that there is only one lane up the way which also goes left which means it queues back further. I understand your problem and we are looking into it at the moment.

I would have liked them to have done something better with the A329M as well because that now queues up towards Bracknell and I am talking to them actively about that because they have actually caused a problem on the A329M Bracknell-bound that was not there before they put the smart motorway extra capacity off the M4. I have had one meeting with Highways England about that and we are still progressing that with them. At the moment we have not accepted that bit of the junction back because of the issue that they have left us with i.e. what they have done with that junction.

75. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Chairman invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Members

75.1 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

With reference to the recent TfSE Transport Strategy Consultation. What implications does the Council see this might have for the Council and its evolving consultation starting next month on housing delivery to 2036?

Answer

The consultation undertaken by Transport for the South East (TfSE) was on a draft transport strategy for the South East region. When it is finalised, the strategy will help guide future policy development and investment decisions by the Department for Transport. However we do remain the Highways Authority and also the Planning Authority.

At a local level, the transport strategy will influence our local transport planning and decisions by impacting our access to Government funding and therefore how deliverable certain transport interventions might be. Notwithstanding, the principles set out in the draft transport strategy are broadly consistent with current best practice that we work to.

The Draft Local Plan Update sets out how we propose to manage development in the period to 2036. Consultation on the Draft Local Plan Update starts shortly and I would like everyone to feed their comments in. There are no proposals in the draft transport strategy that impact on the level of development we are expected to plan for, so there are no implications for housing delivery.

There is active engagement between the planning and transport functions of the Council to ensure the impacts of development are fully considered in our decisions. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is being reviewed alongside the Local Plan Update and will itself become the subject of consultation later this year which again I would like to encourage you to feed back to.

Supplementary Question

I assume that we all accept that the NPPF is the key Government planning document and that the NPPF policy will trump any policy that we adopt in our Local Plan. The transport strategy is really the same in the sense that the authority dealing with the transport strategy is of a higher level than us as a local body. For that reason although it has ended my reading of the document and the South East Transport consultation is that it favours transport improvements and it goes on to say linked to employment and both are linked to more houses with five year annual reviews. So to actually say that there is no impact I would actually challenge that.

I mean there is a plan to link the M3 and the M4 probably through Wokingham and my reading of this consultation is just like the NPPF; it is a higher body than our local authority. The 'duty to co-operate' is a similar concern. My question will be will the implication of a transport strategy and the 'duty to co-operate' be actually factored into the Council's thinking in the new Local Plan as your Local Plan evolves?

Supplementary Answer

The 'duty to co-operate' always has to be factored into any thinking. I have taken some advice on the status of the TfSE plan from Officers already and they have told me that actually their position as Highways Authority and Planning Authority takes precedent over the TfSE plan at the moment. So I can check that for you but that is what I have been told.

75.2 Prue Bray asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

I am asking this for an older resident who for health and age reasons, does not feel able to come to the committee in person, so has asked me to ask this question on his behalf.

Unfortunately in November he was left battered and bruised by a fall in the bottom part of Denmark Street near Stitchery Do in Wokingham Town Centre after tripping on the pavement. He contacted the Council to ask when the pavement in that part of Denmark Street would be brought up to the same standard as the Market Place, and was told that the area of pavement in question would be inspected for faults. He asked to be told what the inspection found.

That was on 3rd December. He asked again on 10th January. As of the date of writing this question, 21st January, he still has not had a response. He hopes that an answer will be forthcoming tonight. So please, when the area of pavement outside Stitchery Do was inspected after his fall, what did the inspection show?

Answer

If I can take the Winnersh lights one first we have been talking to Paul Fishwick and of course we will talk to local Members before we even consider doing anything that is obvious.

I am very sorry to hear about the gentleman's fall and hope he has made a full recovery.

It is not acceptable not to get a response I completely agree and I would like to apologise for that as it is not what we hope to do. After receiving the report from the gentleman on 3rd December 2019, we requested a Highways Inspector to check the area around Stitchery Do in Wokingham, in case there were any defects. No defects were found.

Denmark Street footway is actually inspected every month. The latest inspection was carried out on the 2nd January. Again no safety defects were found in the vicinity of Stitchery Do.

We get a very large number of enquires every week and unfortunately I think this one was missed but that is not an excuse.

As part of the wider project for Wokingham Town, Peach Street, Denmark Street and Broad Street will be progressed as Public Realm improvement schemes. We have got budget to cover the design phase, and we have programmed in to start the design work during the coming financial year. Once the design is complete we can start to establish construction costs and a timetable for future delivery.

Supplementary Question

Pauline you have partly answered this in your first answer, but the Market Place has been repaved, although there are issues with the colour, and you have just mentioned that some planning for improving the rest of the pavement is now being done. Can you tell me when you will actually start improving the rest of the pavement in Denmark Street?

Supplementary Answer

I have not got a date yet. It is a balancing act. I think we would like to not cause too much destruction of the town centre to ensure that the businesses are not constantly being upset by road works or improvements so we will do something but at the moment we have not got a date yet as we are very conscious of not damaging the businesses in that area as well.

75.3 Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing a question relating to the exempt information contained in Agenda Item 84.

This question was asked and answered during the Part 2 section of the meeting.

75.4 Imogen Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing the following question:

Question

Where are the details of how the £50m budget was calculated for the Climate Emergency?

Answer

These details were presented to Overview and Scrutiny on 13 January 2020, a meeting where a member of your group was present, and will be presented again at the Executive and Council next month.

Each budget bid is calculated by the appropriate service manager responsible for each initiative and you will find it clearly explained in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Supplementary Question

Will it explain how much carbon is offset by the amount of money we are spending on a per project basis?

Supplementary Answer

It is not my area of expertise so I cannot tell you that. All I can tell you is that I have put a budget together for the Service Managers and you will have to ask Gregor I guess about that one. I will get him to give you a written answer.

75.5 Clive Jones asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing the following question:**Question**

WBC Holdings at the end of December 2019 has a loss of £223,000. Do you expect there to be a profit or loss at the end of the current financial year and can these figures be presented as both a cash figure and a percentage of turnover?

Answer

The Shareholder's Report at Item 76 to this agenda actually gives you the position as it is at 31 December 2019 of a loss of £115,000 and a forecast year-end position loss of £223,000. Both these figures are in line with what the agreed budget for the Holding Company was for the financial year 19/20.

The Holding Company is the parent of the operational housing companies and as such its financial position reflects the positions of the companies. Its sources of income are from loans, of which it is merely an 'on' lender from WBC at cost, and the dividend income from the companies. Therefore it makes no profit of its own. It does however incur administrative costs and these contribute to the deficit. It will remain loss making until such time as the subsidiary companies start to pay the dividends.

Supplementary Question

Do you think that the Council's experiment over the last 8-9 years with companies for housing, Optalis, etc have been a success?

Supplementary Answer

I expect the 96 people living in the houses in Phoenix would probably say it has been. But no it has been a financial success. Obviously as a company we want to pay dividends to the Holding Company which can go back in and can be used for revenue. We have quite an ambitious plan which I will talk to tonight about how we are going to take these companies forward.

75.6 Lindsay Ferris asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

Question

After months of concern about the possibility of gravel extraction at Bridge Farm Shinfield, the residents of Spencers Wood and Shinfield have another potential site to be concerned about. There is to be a consultation on the possibility of land west of Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood being used for the extraction of sand and gravel. What conversations have Officers had to date with the landowners/developers in question?

Answer

Land west of Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, was promoted by the landowner for future sand and gravel extraction through a 'call for sites' exercise undertaken across central and eastern Berkshire in November last year. This is one of two new sites that were promoted; the other being in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Following the promotion of the site, Council Officers have engaged with the landowner through our consultants, that is Hampshire Services, to request factual information on the quality and quantity of sand and gravel present. This information is necessary to help our consideration of the site in due course, as required by national planning.

The consultation, if approved, provides an opportunity for residents, landowners, businesses and other interested parties to comment on the suitability of this site, amongst other matters. These responses will help inform our future work. I would encourage anyone with a view on the suitability of the site to respond to the consultation.

Supplementary Question

My understanding of where we were with this was that with the site, particularly the one in Bray, we had enough gravel and sand to meet the needs. Is that still the case?

Supplementary Answer

I am not aware that to be the case. You know our plan as it stands at the moment the last two sites we took out, Bridge Farm and the one at Knowl Hill, which was a weigh site. I appreciate that and there is not sufficient hence the reason why it was decided back last year that we would need to go out for a 'call for sites'. So that is not my understanding but you know I will double check that for you.

It was not my understanding when I was looking after it under Stuart. If we took Bridge Farm out we would not have enough and we would have to go for extra sites hence the reason we went out.

75.7 Rachel Bishop-Firth asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing the following question:

Question

Agenda item 76, page 41 talks about a target of 1,200 new affordable homes – can you confirm this is a net figure, that the plan will be for an **additional** 1,200 affordable new homes to be **added** to the current Council housing stock.

Answer

First of all I will talk about Council housing. As the Shareholders' Report states we have an ambitious target for the Council to deliver 1,000 homes over 4 years producing a 5%

return and this is known as the Housing 1-4-5 project. Now 5% is significantly less than you would expect if you were a builder or a developer so it reflects the fact there is a large number of affordable homes.

I would expect a very large proportion of these homes will be delivered through the housing companies but some of the houses will also be delivered through the Housing Revenue Account. If you look at the Housing Revenue Account in the paper that is being presented today you will see that we are £1.4m to the good. We also have a situation where about 18 months ago the Government removed the cap on HRA because before we could not borrow any money as borrowings were low and what we are doing at the moment is we are going through a programme to look at just how much money we can borrow in the HRA. Now those houses if they are bought through the HRA will all go into the housing stock.

We are developing on Council land and we are also in discussions with a number of developers to explore the opportunity of taking affordable housing where they want to sell that affordable housing and that is being done through Loddon Homes in much the same way as any registered provided.

I will also highlight in the Shareholders' report that we have a more efficient and effective 'One Team' approach between the key Council departments and the housing companies. I am pleased to report that this approach is already producing results with a combined pipeline of over 1,200 potential new homes now identified and being investigated or actively progressed but obviously the only houses which will go onto the Council's housing stock will be those houses bought in the HRA because they are social housing.

Supplementary Question

Do you have a target at this point in time for the number of true Council houses to be added on to Wokingham Borough Council's housing stock?

Supplementary Answer

Because there has been a cap on the HRA which the Government had put on we are just now in the position that we can actually start to look at the borrowings and see where our appetite is. There is quite some room there and the way the borrowings are worked out is quite simple. You look at the rents you collect so you can service the debt. It would be my ambition to increase the HRA by 300-400 houses over the next four years. Again that is all dependent on how much borrowing we have got in there as we cannot borrow money that we cannot pay back obviously. It also depends on whether the Government changes the rules and regulations again.

We are aware that our social housing has stood still for quite some time because we have not been able to buy those houses because all the houses that were affordable homes in the past, over the last couple of years, have gone to registered housing companies not ourselves. But we are now looking to borrow money to actually buy houses to put into our own HRA which will be pure Council houses.

I would like to think that we would probably build 300 houses over the next four years maybe a bit more depends, as I say, we are looking at our borrowings and how much we can borrow and we are looking at how much of that we can pay back. We do not want to borrow money if we cannot pay it back. Remember that we have just come through a period as well where the rents have gone down for the last three years I think. We have had to reduce Council house rents and that has had quite a marked impact on the amount

of money we get in. Now it is going back to the normal rate which is an increase which is based around the CPI and we now will be in a better position to target borrowings that we can use to build or buy social housing.

76. SHAREHOLDERS' REPORT

(Councillors UllaKarin Clark, John Halsall, John Kaiser, Charles Margetts and Wayne Smith declared personal interests in this item)

The Executive considered a report setting out the budget monitoring position and providing an operational update of the Council owned companies.

Councillor Clark provided an update on the work of Loddon Homes and Berry Brook Homes which were now working alongside the Regeneration Team. In addition integration of Loddon Homes' accountancy within the Council's Finance Department was almost completed. Both of these changes would provide cost savings for the companies and it was noted that both companies were expected to achieve their budget targets for the current financial year.

Councillor Clark also highlighted that the building of key worker flats in Wokingham Town Centre had been completed and of the 22 flats 17 were already occupied; the majority of which to NHS employees.

In addition the 46 affordable houses at Gorse Ride were due to be delivered at an earlier date than previously announced, however this was still dependent on finding suitable alternative accommodation for the existing tenants and finding a solution to ease the pressure on local schools due to the unexpected influx of children in temporary accommodation at Gorse Ride. A further 249 dwellings would be built as part of phase 2 of the Gorse Ride regeneration project.

Members were informed by Councillor Clark that the housing companies had identified, actively progressed or investigated delivery of over 1,200 homes. In addition 1,000 homes, which included a mixture of affordable housing as well as housing for both social and market rents, were to be delivered over four years.

Councillor Margetts provided an update on the work of Optalis and highlighted that work had been carried out to drive efficiency out of the back office while maintaining quality of service which had led to savings of £720k this year and expected savings of £400k next financial year. David Birch, the new CEO, was due to start on 1 March.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the budget monitoring position for the month ending 31 December 2019 be noted;
- 2) the operational update for the period to 31 December 2019 be noted;
- 3) the Optalis budget and operational position update for November 2019 be noted.

77. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FY2019/20 - QUARTER 3

The Executive considered a report setting out the current position of the revenue budget.

The Executive Member for Finance and Housing introduced the report and highlighted the working budgets of each Directorate, their spend to date and forecast outturns. In addition

Councillor Kaiser drew Members' attention to the fact that even though Children's Services were showing an overspend of £2.93m the total overspend was expected to be in the region of £973k.

With regard to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) this was currently forecasting a nil variance and the HRA reserve was showing an expected balance of £1.82m as at 31 March.

In addition Councillor Kaiser highlighted the shortfall in the Dedicated Schools' Grant which was due to carry forward a deficit of £3.33m.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the current position of the revenue budget to date be noted;
- 2) the forecast outturn and the projected level of balances in respect of the General Fund be noted.

78. CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20 - END OF DECEMBER 2019

The Executive considered a report relating to the quarter three position of the capital budget.

The Executive Member for Finance and Housing drew Members' attention to the proposed transfer of £275k budget from the Carters Hill project to the Groveland's Park project as set out in recommendation 2 of the report.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the quarter three position for the capital budgets, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- 2) the transfer of £275k budget from environmental work at Carters Hill (static caravan site, non-HRA) to environment and accommodation works at Groveland's Park (static caravan site, non-HRA) project in the capital programme for 2019/20 be noted. Diverting budget between similar projects, to where on further investigation works required.

79. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Executive considered a report setting out the major financial issues facing the Council which were required to be taken into account when setting the level of Council Tax.

During the introduction of the report the Executive Member for Finance and Housing highlighted that the Local Government Act 2003 required the Chief Finance Officer to report to Members, when setting the level of Council Tax, on the robustness of the budget presented and adequacy of reserves. Councillor Kaiser highlighted the letter that the Council had written to the Local Government Finance Settlement Team as its response to the Local Government Finance Settlement, as set out in Appendix 2.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the Chief Finance Officer's (CFO) report and the issues contained within, including the local government finance settlement and the sections on key risks be noted

and that these be considered when setting the Council Tax for 2020/21 and agreeing the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP);

- 2) the Council's response to the draft local government finance settlement, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be supported;
- 3) the Council's ongoing representations for fairer funding for the residents of Wokingham Borough Council be supported.

80. TEMPORARY CLOSURE REMENHAM FOOTPATH 4 HENLEY FESTIVAL
(Councillor John Halsall declared a personal interest in this item)

The Executive considered a report relating to an application for the temporary closure of Remenham Footpath 4 for the setting up and de-rigging of the Henley Festival in July 2020.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the making of an order for the closure of Footpath Remenham No 4, for a closure of an 80m section of the footpath for the set up and de-rig of the Festival stage from Monday 6th to Wednesday 8th July 2020 inclusive and from Monday 13th July to Tuesday 14th July 2020 inclusive be approved;
- 2) included within the closure a 620m section for evening performances from Wednesday 8th July to Sunday 12th July 2020 inclusive and day time performances on Saturday 11th July and Sunday 12th July 2020, under Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to the receipt of the requisite consent of the Secretary of State for Transport.

81. CENTRAL AND EASTERN BERKSHIRE JOINT MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN: SAND AND GRAVEL PROVISION AND OPERATOR PERFORMANCE REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION

The Executive considered a report relating to a proposed Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan: Sand and Gravel Provision and Operator Performance Regulation 18 Consultation.

During the introduction of the report the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement advised that although other sites had been identified they were subsequently found to be unsuitable. As a result of a 'call for sites' two new sites for the extraction of sand and gravel had come forward; one in the Spencers Wood/Swallowfield area and the other located in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. As these had come forward the Council had a duty to go out to consultation on the sites to ascertain their suitability. The consultation was intended to be carried out during 10 February-20 March.

Councillor Smith confirmed that if the Council could not find any suitable sites and the amount of available minerals decreased then the price of raw materials would increase. He advised that an event was due to be held in Swallowfield to gain residents' feedback on the proposals and he hoped that many people would attend.

The Leader of Council reiterated the importance of people responding to the consultation and asked the press and local Members to encourage people to do so.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan: Sand and Gravel Provision and Operator Performance regulation 18 Consultation be agreed for public consultation;
- 2) the proposed consultation framework be agreed;
- 3) any minor amendments to the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan: Sand and Gravel Provision and Operator Performance Regulation 18 Consultation and material to support this consultation be delegated to the Director of Localities and Customer Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning and Enforcement.

82. OPTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE NEW ARBORFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION

The Executive considered a report setting out the options for the management of the New Arborfield Primary School.

The Executive Member for Children's Services outlined the issues with Farley Hill School, which whilst being judged a 'good' school and oversubscribed, its building was old and the School could only be reached by car. Councillor Clark went through the options considered and advised that the preferred option was the relocation and expansion of Farley Hill Primary School to the new Arborfield Primary School premises. This would make it easier for children to walk to school, thereby minimising traffic congestion.

Councillor Clark advised that the proposal would have capacity for 420 pupils (plus a nursery) with planning permission to enable growth to 630 places if required.

The Ward Member for Barkham advised that he supported the relocation of Farley Hill into the new building as he had concerns that if a new school was opened this would have a detrimental effect on the number on role at the Coombes School.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the preferred approach of relocating and expanding Farley Hill Primary School to a potential capacity of 630 places from September 2021 by taking on the management of the new Arborfield Primary School premises be endorsed;
- 2) a formal consultation on the preferred approach be undertaken; and
- 3) authority to make a final decision be delegated to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services.

83. SOUTH WOKINGHAM COMMUNITY FACILITY OPERATOR

The Executive considered a report relating to the preferred operator for the new community facility being provided as part of the necessary infrastructure for the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location.

The Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement advised that Wokingham Without Parish Council was the preferred operator for the new community facility. He clarified that

the formal terms of agreement were not being agreed as part of this report but would come back to a future meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Wokingham Without Parish Council be approved as the preferred operator for the new community facility within the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location, subject to agreement of the terms of leases;
- 2) the Executive receives a report at a later date recommending the specific terms of formal agreement with Wokingham Without Parish Council to operate the community facility within the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location.

84. ACQUISITION OF A PROPERTY WITHIN THE BOROUGH

The Executive considered a report relating to the acquisition of a property within the Borough.

The Executive Member for Finance and Housing introduced the report and informed the meeting that the property had been identified through the Investment Strategy process but the terms of the proposed acquisition did not align with the strict criteria for returns on investments. As this was deemed a key property holding it was therefore proposed to 'top-up' the acquisition budget from outside of the Investment Strategy budget.

85. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.

86. ACQUISITION OF A PROPERTY WITHIN THE BOROUGH

The Executive considered the exempt information related to this item as set out in the agenda and Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey's exempt question was responded to.

87. ACQUISITION OF A PROPERTY WITHIN THE BOROUGH

The press and the public were invited back into the meeting and the recommendations of the report were considered.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the target property be acquired in line with the details contained within Part 2 of the report;
- 2) the additional costs be funded, as detailed in Part 2 of the report, from other sources and not from the Investment Portfolio;
- 3) all income from this property be reported through the Investment Portfolio.