

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 28 JULY 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.10 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Clive Jones (Chairman), Stephen Conway (Vice-Chairman), Rachel Bishop-Firth, Lindsay Ferris, Paul Fishwick, David Hare, Ian Shenton and Imogen Shepherd-DuBey

Committee Members Present Online

Prue Bray

Other Councillors Present

Norman Jorgensen

Pauline Jorgensen

Caroline Smith

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sarah Kerr.

Councillor Prue Bray was unable to be present in person at the meeting but attended remotely. In accordance with the legislation Councillor Bray took part in discussions but did not take part in voting during the meeting.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors Prue Bray, Stephen Conway, David Hare and Clive Jones declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 19 Council Owned Companies Update by virtue of the fact that they were non-Executive Directors of Council owned companies. These Councillors remained in the room and voted on the item.

Councillor Stephen Conway declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 22 Relocation of Twyford Library To The Old Polehampton Boys School Site by virtue of the fact that he was the Council's representative on the Polehampton Charity. Councillor Conway left the room and did not take part in any discussion or vote on this item.

Councillor David Hare declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 23 New Dementia Care Home In The Toutley East Development Construction Consultation And Contract by virtue of the fact that he was a non-Executive Director of Optalis Limited. Councillor Hare left the room and did not take part in any discussions or vote on this item.

15. STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER

Good evening everyone and welcome to the Executive meeting of 28 July 2022. I am very pleased that the new administration has decided that we will be supporting families in receipt of free school meals during the school holidays up to and including May of 2023. There are a few teething problems, we are moving with a provider called Charris and I contacted them last week and they have reacted very quickly to sort out the issues.

The theme as most people will know by now of this administration is to promote partnership working wherever possible across the Council and with outside bodies. I've asked the Deputy Leader of the Council to look into developing partnerships across the Borough and he will give us a short update of his plans at either the next Executive meeting or the next full Council.

16. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

16.1 Colin Watts asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

At the end of April visit to the University of Reading campus to present the SOLVE group alternatives to housing at Hall Farm, you were clear in your objections to the building of 4,500 houses at Hall Farm. Can you confirm that this remains your position and that the next version of the Local Plan Update will not include any significant development at Hall Farm?

Answer

My colleague Cllr Lindsay Ferris responded to a similar question at the 30 June meeting of Executive.

The last administration approved the strategy put forward in the Local Plan Update Revised Growth Strategy Consultation 2021 which proposed 4,500 houses at Hall Farm.

My administration will be working with Officers to look carefully at options for how we can best plan for our housing and development needs going forward in ways that ensure that our Local Plan will pass as 'sound' at public examination.

Clearly, I cannot pre-determine this process, however I can assure you that we are going into this process open minded, as we must, and that we will carefully consider all the views that have been expressed by residents alongside those of stakeholders and importantly, the technical evidence that must guide us to the best and most sustainable locations for new development to be located.

Since the election we have written to the Secretary of State highlighting our concerns about how the high housing numbers currently expected of Wokingham Borough are calculated and enforced. We have engaged our local MPs and have received their strong support to our efforts.

Experience both here and elsewhere across the country shows that we must put a new local plan in place which delivers on our development needs. No doubt what it eventually includes will not suit everybody, but not having an effective plan would mean less control over where development happens. Hall Farm cannot be dismissed as a possibility without good reason and at this stage our officers are still gathering evidence upon the best options and solutions available.

Supplementary question

I think it is clear to the residents around the whole farm site that huge, and I mean huge amounts of work are going on by the university and the planning department, and our great concern is this becomes a fait accompli. Even this week we got a drone flying over

for a week and a half over the site, constantly having people come from the university and the conversation that we had with the university just the other week, it is totally clear that whatever the university says about engaging with the local community, they are lying about the 4,500, it is there and it will stay there from the university's mind. So my question is that the concern about it being a fait accompli because of all the work that both the Council's planning department and the university are engaged in.

Supplementary answer

All I can say is that I cannot pre-determine the process. So, thank you very much.

16.2 Paul Stevens asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

Question

The Local Plan Update has to set out housing plans for Wokingham up to 2038. The Hall Farm proposed plan goes way beyond that date, with only half of the 4,500 homes being completed by 2038. Can you confirm that the next version of the LPU will only cover the period up to 2038 and will not try to create a plan beyond that date?

Answer

My colleague Cllr Jones has already outlined in his answer to an earlier question that the new administration will be working closely with officers to look at all options for how we best plan for and manage the development we need going forward in ways that ensure our Local Plan is found to be 'sound' at public examination.

As Cllr Jones explained, we cannot pre-determine this process.

The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) requires local planning authorities to put plans in place which provide for new housing supply for at least 15 years from its date of intended adoption, so this we must do.

In addition, where a strategic allocation of scale is proposed, Government expects the Council to look at that allocation on a comprehensive basis and make clear within the Local Plan what is proposed in the longer term, to ensure the most sustainable development solution is planned for that site over time, rather than in a piecemeal fashion.

The approach would be the same for Hall Farm or any other major allocation of similar scale proposed by the Plan.

Cllr Jones has also outlined our lobbying of government and our concerns regarding how housing needs are calculated. We will be continuing to lobby Government to change the methodology in parallel to our work on the Local Plan, whilst being clear in our aim to work towards having a new Local Plan which can be found to be 'sound' at examination.

Supplementary question

The number of houses proposed are at least in part predicated upon the developers need to build 4,500 houses to pay for the level of infrastructure required to make the site viable. Can you clarify precisely how many new houses are required for Wokingham to have a viable plan that would meet the requirements set by the current national government housing targets?

Supplementary answer

We have at the moment a figure of 781 houses per annum, and as a Local Plan we have to have 15 years of housing supply from the start of the Local Plan.

16.3 Tony Johnson asked the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

Please could the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and Adult Services comment on the Equalities Impact Assessment for WBC's proposed 70 bed dementia care home which was approved by WBC's Planning Committee under Application [211777](#) on 13th July?

Answer

Adult Services has worked in partnership with Optalis Ltd technical advisors and the council's property team in the development of our outline planning application. The application ensures that the building design meets the appropriate standards and utilise best practice from across the sector.

As is required, a Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment was completed by Wokingham Borough Council in the early stage of the project and the assessment did not identify an adverse impact on the protected characteristic under the Equalities Act.

However, the Council's Adult Services has always been committed to making certain that this site is appropriate and has planned due diligence ahead of a reserved matters planning application. This will include commissioning an independent external care provider to complete an assessment of the site to ensure its ability to deliver high quality care to vulnerable people.

It is worth noting that the proposed dementia care home at Toutley East will provide us with the capacity it needs to meet the demand and complexity of an ageing population. We estimate that the number of older people expected to require residential and nursing care provision, funded by the council, will rise by at least 17% by 2025.

Forthcoming reforms to Adult Social Care will place increasing pressure on the care sector from October 2023. Central government's ambition to reform the sector has not, unfortunately, been matched by the funding required to meet this enormous challenge. These reforms only increase the need to deliver the right care, at the right time and at the right price.

Supplementary question

Thank you for providing an answer on behalf of the Council, especially for talking about the due diligence at the reserved matters stage where you plan to have somebody else to come in and do a report. Although, there are many other impact assessments made as part of the planning application, the equalities impact assessment doesn't appear to have been included within the document pack, which given Justice Lewis' 2018 ruling to Bath and North East Somerset Council that the Public Sector Equality Duty applies at the Outline Planning stage and not just at the Reserved Matters is somewhat odd. If it had been published then Members of the Planning Committee might have been able to take a properly informed judgement. However, as Lord Chief Justice Hewart pointed out in 1924, justice must not only be done, it must be seen to be done. So please can you explain why Wokingham Borough Council has not shown itself to be compliant with the case law and thus may have opened itself up for judicial review?

Supplementary answer

I am not sure and will send you a written report. I am quite honest, I am not a planner.

17. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

17.1 Charles Margetts asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

A key issue for residents in my ward is provision of a sixth form in the south of the Borough. In early 2022, WBC announced the provision of a 6th form, additional Year 7 places, and additional SEND places at Bohunt School. Can the Executive Member update me on progress including when this provision will open?

Answer

Charles is not here and this is essentially the same question that he asked me at the Council meeting last week. But I know that maybe people watching would like to know what the answer is. So I can confirm that the plan is still that the sixth form at Bohunt will open in September 2023, and Charles and his fellow ward Councillors have already been sent that information in the update that I promised them at last week's Council meeting.

17.2 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question which was answered by the Executive Member for Planning and the Local Plan:

Question

At the Planning Committee I voted against Toutley East as putting people who have no say in their placement next to noisy polluting motorways is quite wrong. Dementia patients or their relatives have no say where they live if they are occupants of a Council run care home.

The business case makes no reference to other Council owned land away from motorways such as Farley Hill's closed Primary School.

The business case recommends the delivery model should be a Joint Venture with a development partner but fails to consider the Councils own Housing Companies.

Would a better business case be the location of the care home at the closed Farley Hill School site and use the Councils own Housing Companies to build even more desperately needed affordable houses at Toutley East.

Answer

We were pleased that the Planning Committee accepted that this is a suitable location for a care home. Mitigation against road noise will of course need to be taken into account in the design of the building and I am confident that the Council can deliver a high-quality care home on this site to the standards that our residents both expect and deserve.

With regards to the decision-making process for dementia patients, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision-making. Adult Social Care will support residents to make their own decisions if they can; we want to uphold their rights while living in care homes.

If a person is assessed to lack capacity to consent to living in a care home, the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards mandate a set of assessments that are undertaken by two assessors independent of those commissioning the placement, to consider what is in the persons Best Interest and the less restrictive option.

In making this Best Interests decision the assessor is required to consult with a variety of people including the adult concerned (who will still have views, wishes and feelings even if lacking capacity) and 'relevant others' (including friends/family/advocates).

With respect to your subsequent points, it is true that the Council owns other land and that other such sites might also be suitable for new care home provision. However, having established that the Toutley East site is acceptable under planning, this site is the quickest route to deliver the facility and thus start addressing the increasing revenue spend pressures that the Council is facing from having to fund placements in private care homes. Failure to proceed on this site will lead to a delay in the delivery programme of approximately 18-24 months; whilst an alternative site is identified, survey work undertaken, designs worked up and planning secured. A two-year delay in delivery will only act to exacerbate financial pressures on Adult Social Care, especially in light of the impending Social Care reforms.

In terms of the residential delivery, please note that the business case for the residential delivery is not being presented in the Executive report. Rather the Executive is being asked to note the delivery options. As is set out in the report, the full business case will be prepared and reported back to Executive and potentially full Council in due course.

Supplementary question

Thank you for that answer. In yesterday's Daily Mail headline is new evidence that in a landmark report by a committee of government advisors stating that air pollution, not just noise, contributes to the decline in mental ability and vascular dementia, and I believe the Council should not disregard the committee of government advisors who will be much more informed than our Borough Council Council Officers. With the availability now of a government landmark report on air pollution as a cause of dementia, it is now for the Executive to decide if Toutley is still a good option or should they look elsewhere for a more suitable site.

I raised the suitability of Toutley and other sites with planning Officers but they simply stated that they were not material considerations. That view was supported by the Council's Legal department. I would point out that planning regulations clause nine of schedule 12a of the Town Country Planning Act of 1992 on exempt information states, and I quote: "Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission. To withhold information from a Member is in breach of the Act and it is as reprehensible as withholding information from the public about the expenditure of the public monies on projects." Where the Borough Council is effectively the judge and jury as is the case with Toutley East. An independent enquiry into the role of the planning department would not go amiss here either, as I am sure our residents would appreciate it and it would give greater public confidence in that department.

So, really if you see the Daily Mail headline yesterday which is that it would suggest that air pollution is a very serious issue and to take a decision based on the limited information you've got now, I think it would be inappropriate.

Supplementary answer

Thank you Gary, yes I did see reference to that issue and report of the committee that was in the papers yesterday, and I think we will need to take due reference to that from that. On the other point that you raised, can I suggest that obviously you were, felt uncomfortable as to what happened on this issue, that you feel so much, there is a complaints process through Andrew Moulton, to do that. And I would also recommend that you write to me with some of your concerns so that I can look at them as well.

17.3 Jim Frewin asked the Executive Member for Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

This question relates to item 21 Toutley master plan.

In answer to the full Council 21 July question (34.2) it was clear that vulnerable residents will be moved from Suffolk Lodge to Toutley as part of this project. Please provide risk assessment and mitigation details on how this move would impact vulnerable residents especially how the changes in noise levels and air quality (A329M proximity) impacts.

Answer

Suffolk Lodge currently provides less than 30% of the residential care the Council commissions. Although, it has a Care Quality Commission rating of "Good", it cannot meet the needs of all the older individuals the Council has to provide residential and nursing care for.

The proposed Dementia Care Home at Toutley would provide local residents with the care and support needed to meet an aging population. It will promote a better quality of life and improved welfare for residents through more personalised care and support.

We are committed to ensuring the scheme reflects best practice in dementia design and the design of the new home is inspired by recent research and learning from the pandemic to create a safe, welcoming place, that promotes the wellbeing and good health of people with dementia.

We intend to work closely with Optalis Ltd to ensure a safe and smooth transition for residents to the new care home and indeed we have made provision of £500K in the Medium Term Financial Plan for this. Individuals have different needs and this funding will ensure any transition works for all.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision-making. Adult Social Care will support residents at Suffolk Lodge to make their own decisions if they can, in order to uphold their rights while living in care homes.

If a person is assessed to lack capacity to consent to living in a care home, the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards mandate a set of assessments that are undertaken by two assessors independent of those commissioning the placement, to consider what is in the persons Best Interest and the less restrictive option.

In making this Best Interests decision the assessor is required to consult with a variety of people including the adult concerned (who will still have views, wishes and feelings even if lacking capacity) and 'relevant others' (including friends/family/advocates). The

assessment will consider the benefits and burdens of a particular placement against other available options to determine what is in the individuals' best interests.

Supplementary question

Thank you David, you didn't actually answer the question about air quality and noise but I joined the partnership because I believed we would build on the good things started by the previous administration and that we would challenge the things we believed to be not so good. In my opinion this Toutley plan is not such a good idea, it appears to be done for speed to provide a number of places and it is not taking into account the health and wellbeing of the residents being placed there. Given the fact that the public question tonight and now two of the Members questions highlighted a number of concerns with this Toutley plan, my supplementary question is this: Will this Executive defer the decision on Toutley until clarification is made on the points raised tonight and points raised outside?

Supplementary answer

I don't think we can defer a decision, but certainly as the process goes along we will make sure that the air pollution and noise are kept to an absolutely minimum and within all legal standards of this country and we would do that anyway, and that is the most important thing. I do not want the people who I am serving as Executive Member to be any worse off at this new chapter development at Suffock Lodge and I am sure that is why you said this as well. And we will endeavour to make sure that this is as fair as possible and yes, the noise is kept down low below standards and also air pollution.

18. CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW

The Executive considered a report relating to the Capital Programme review. The review had identified savings which would help the budget gap identified in the MTFP. Further work would be ongoing as part of the capital monitoring throughout the year and the budget setting process for 2023/24 to look at options to close the budget gap.

The Executive Member for Finance Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that it had become apparent that the Council had been increasing its level of borrowing under the previous administration. This level of borrowing was putting pressure on the revenue budgets and interest repayments on these loans.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey informed that the report highlighted areas of improvement and efficiencies to help to bridge the gap identified in the MTFP. Some items had been moved to later years and some had been removed altogether.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that the report also sought approval to fund the 'Active Travel and Bus Priority' from savings identified from the 'Managing Congestion and Pollution' project.

The Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways Councillor Paul Fishwick emphasized that the £4m saving identified would be re-invested in Active Travel and Bus Priority, this was aligned with the Local Cycling and Walking Strategy and would support the revision of the Bus Service Improvement Plan for 2022, following discussions and feedback from the Department for Transport.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The capital programme review carried out by directors and lead members be noted and approved, which includes;

- Confirmation for £136m of capital projects to continue as planned.
 - Savings of £12.5m achieved through the removal of projects or reductions in budget. Taking into account lost capital receipts, the net saving is £9.3m. Details set out in Appendix A.
 - Re-profiling capital budgets of £15.7m from 2022/23 into future years. Details set out in Appendix B.
- 2) The £4m saving identified from 'Managing Congestion & Pollution', to be reinvested in 'Active Travel and Bus Priority' over two years (£2m in 2023/24 and £2m in 2024/25) and considered as part of the medium term financial plan for 2023/24 be approved;
- 3) The figures in recommendation one are in addition to the financial information presented in the Capital Monitoring 2022/23 - Quarter 1 Executive report be noted.

19. REVENUE MONITORING 2022-23 Q1

The Executive considered a report relating to the revenue monitoring 2022-23 Q1 which outlined the current forecast outturn positions for 2022/23 for the Council's net revenue expenditure, its General Fund Balance (GFB), the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey informed that the report showed a predicted shortfall of £2.2m in the Revenue Budget for this year. She recognised that when this Budget was set, no one could have predicted the war on Ukraine, the fuel crisis and the inflation raises. However, there had been an over ambitious target, which had been set in order to deliver a balanced Budget.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that some of the challenges identified included a £558k overspend in the Home to School Transport Budget. This was due to a large number of SEND children needing transport, and a large number of children arriving from Hong Kong and Ukraine for whom transport was necessary as they were being sent to various locations in the Borough where the available school places were.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey informed that a £780k shortfall in car parking income was expected. This was because an over ambitious target had been set. Also, since the covid pandemic, people's driving habits had changed and people were using their cars less.

It was explained by the Executive Member for Finance that another challenge was the increase in inflation which meant that goods were costing more to buy. For example, there was a shortfall of £250k in the Budget to buy the blue bags for waste collection due to an increase in the price of plastic.

Councillor Shepherd Du-Bey stated that it was necessary to either increase the income or find savings in order to bridge the shortfall identified in the Budget. Officers were undertaking a lot of work to find more efficiencies.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing Councillor Stephen Conway wished to emphasise that a lot of work was being undertaken to address the projected challenges identified.

RESOLVED that the overall forecast of the current position of the General Fund revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) illustrated in the Executive Summary and appendices attached to the report be noted.

20. CAPITAL MONITORING 2022/23 - QUARTER 1

The Executive considered the capital monitoring 2022/23 – Quarter 1 report which outlined the progress of the Council in delivering its capital programme for the financial year 2022/23.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey informed that the report highlighted a challenge at the Winnersh Triangle Parkway, where an unexpected water mains was found during the building process. This project now had a £1.3m of unallocated cost attached to it.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey pointed out that the report sought approval of a capital budget supplementary estimate of £5.5, for the building of a SEND school in the Borough. Funding for the SEND school was coming from central government, and the building of this school would help the Council to significantly reduce the amount of money spent on sending children to specialist places outside of the Borough.

Councillor Paul Fishwick informed that the issue with the Thames Water Main had been identified in 2021. However, no supplementary estimate had been established at the time to remedy the shortfall.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The position of the capital programme at the end of Quarter 1 (to 30 June 2022) as summarised in the report and set out in detail in Appendix A to the report be noted;
- 2) The proposed carry forwards in the capital programme as set out in Appendix B be approved and noted; and
- 3) A capital budget supplementary estimate of £5,576,900 for SEND sufficiency plan to help meet the actions identified under the High Needs Block management plan. This budget will be funded through a budget virement from reallocating existing SEND project budgets (£425,000) and allocation of the Higher Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) Grant (£5,151,900) be approved. Further information is set out in the report.

21. COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES UPDATE

(Councillors Prue Bray, Stephen Conway, David Hare and Clive Jones declared a personal interest in this item.)

The Executive considered the Council owned companies update. The report outlined changes to the boards of the Council owned companies.

The Leader of the Council Councillor Clive Jones, Leader of the Council thanked the Councillors who were retiring from their positions in Council owned companies for their contributions during their tenure.

Councillor Clive Jones stated that the new non-Executive Directors were looking forward to working with the Council Owned Companies to deliver the necessary infrastructure in the Borough.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and Adult Services Councillor Dave Hare reported that he had had the first meeting with Optalis, this had been positive and new HR person had been introduced to the Board. He was hopeful that things would move forward in a positive way.

The Executive Member for Children's Services Councillor Prue Bray informed that she had attended the first meeting with Berry Brook Homes and she too felt that this had been a positive meeting.

RESOLVED That the following changes to the non-executive directors of the Council owned companies as follows be noted:

- 1) WBC (Holdings) Limited – Retirement of Cllrs John Kaiser, Stuart Munro and Wayne Smith and appointment of Cllrs Clive Jones (Chairman), Stephen Conway, Prue Bray. Re-appointment of Graham Ebers;
- 2) Wokingham Housing Limited and Berry Brook Homes Limited – Retirement of Cllr John Kaiser and appointment of Cllr Prue Bray;
- 3) Loddon Homes Limited – Retirement of Cllrs Shahid Younis and Norman Jorgensen and appointment of Cllrs Clive Jones (Chairman) and Stephen Conway; and
- 4) Optalis Limited – Retirement of Cllr Charles Margetts and appointment of Cllr David Hare

22. IMPLEMENTING THE LEISURE STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report which gave details of a proposal to enhance sports and football facilities, addressing the shortfall in 3G pitches within the community.

The Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure Councillor Ian Shenton stated that the report sought approval to progress a 3G pitch proposal in Lower Earley and to approve the release of S106 funds to finance improvements to physical activity facilities at the Forest School.

Councillor Ian Shenton explained that problems had been identified with proposals for a 3G pitch at Laurel Park, however there remained a need for additional football facilities in the Borough, both for training and for weekend fixtures. An analysis had been carried out which had identified the Maiden Erlegh site as the most suitable site.

Councillor Ian Shenton informed that extensive public consultation would be carried out prior to the planning application submission. Following the planning application, a bid for funding from the Football Foundation would be submitted. Installation was expected to happen during the 2023 summer holiday, with the facility opening in September 2023, whereafter income would exceed ongoing costs.

Councillor Ian Shenton explained that approval was also being sought for improvements to the swimming pool and sports facilities at the Forest School, including refurbishment of the gym and swimming pool floor. Once the improvements were completed, the facilities would be available for the community to use. The swimming pool would provide for 'modest swimming requirements', which would be a unique feature within the Borough's swimming pool facilities.

Councillor Dave Hare wished to emphasise that the consultation should be thorough and that football clubs should be consulted too, he believed that the facility should be built to meet the needs of the community.

Councillor Ian Shenton confirmed that the consultation would be thorough, the final details were being finalised with comms.

Councillor Clive Jones agreed with the previous comments about the consultation and added that a workshop with Earley Town Council would also take place.

In response to a question Councillor Ian Shenton confirmed that the 3G project was dependent on the funding from the Football Foundation being obtained, which put some pressure on the timescales.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) Subject to planning, Football Foundation funding and endorsement by formal public consultation prior to planning application, the outcome of the option appraisal analysis, Maiden Erlegh School, is progressed as the proposed 3G pitch site; and
- 2) Funds for use of S106 finance for physical activity enhancements at Forest School be approved and released.

23. TOUTLEY EAST DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The Executive considered a report which contained an update on the Toutley East Development.

The Executive Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty Councillor Rachel Bishop-Firth spoke on behalf of the Emmbrook Ward Members and stated that there was consensus that more affordable housing and care home beds were needed in the Borough. However, there were concerns about this particular site, and objections had already been raised on this issue, and work would be undertaken to address these concerns at the reserved matters stage.

Councillor Stephen Conway acknowledged the concerns raised by local ward Members. He added that this plan had been approved by the Planning Committee, however this was an outline planning permission and as such there was scope to address some of the concerns previously raised.

Councillor Stephen Conway emphasized the fact that the realisation of the plan was dependent upon the building of housing to pay for the project. It was pleasing to note that the plan included 35% of affordable housing.

Councillor David Hare stated that a new care home was desperately needed in the Borough. He drew attention to the fact that the facility would be of high quality and be one of the best in the southeast, if not in the country. He added that although Suffolk Lodge was a much loved facility, but it did not serve the purposes of the residents.

The Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan Councillor Lindsay Ferris supported the plan. He proposed to add a recommendation to take on board the points raised by

Councillors Gary Cowan and Jim Frewin with regard to noise and pollution. This additional recommendation was agreed by the Executive.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) This update on the delivery of the Toutley East development be noted;
- 2) The proposed strategic masterplan and land uses for the site, including a new 68-bed dementia care home and up to 130 residential units (on 13th July 2022 Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning consent for the strategic masterplan) be noted;
- 3) The financial business case (Return on Investment) for the Toutley East development, including how the proposed land uses financially support each other and the net revenue benefit of £337,000 per annum rising to £700,000 per annum over an approximate 4 year time period be noted;
- 4) The delivery options for the residential development identified at this stage, which will be subject to a future business case being approved by Executive and Council be noted;
- 5) Authority to the Director of Assets and Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services, be delegated to deliver the strategic masterplan in line with the approved financial business case; and
- 6) Officers provide a report on the impact of poor air quality and noise on dementia as reported in the national press.

24. RELOCATION OF TWYFORD LIBRARY TO THE OLD POLEHAMPTON BOYS SCHOOL SITE

(Councillor Stephen Conway declared a personal and prejudicial interest on this item, he left the room and did not take part in the discussions or vote.)

The Executive considered a report containing an update on the proposal to relocate Twyford library.

Councillor Clive Jones explained that there had been a campaign for a permanent library in Twyford for around 20 years, with a huge amount of public support. He thanked the Polehampton Charity for engaging with Council for so long. He also wished to pay tribute to the late Dave Turner, who was a trustee of the Polehampton Charity and worked very hard to transfer the library to the old Polehampton Boys School historical site.

Councillor Clive Jones explained that historical buildings played a vital role in the community and helped to connect people with their heritage. The old Polehampton Boys School site would provide a permanent home for the library and was a good example to partnership working between the Council and Polehampton Charity.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris pointed out that this was a facility within the northern area of the Borough, which another positive aspect of the project. This facility would be used by residents of not only Twyford, but also Hurst, Charvil and other villages around. He

extended his gratitude to the Polehampton Charity and the late Dave Turner in helping to achieve this project.

Councillor Prue Bray confirmed that the campaign to move the Twyford library had been ongoing for over 20 years. She too wished to thank the Polehampton Charity for their patience for the time it had taken to agree to the relocation of the library. She informed that there was also a vision for a Twyford Hub in the site, this was the stage 1 of the project.

Councillor Prue Bray extended her gratitude to Councillors Stephen Conway and Lindsay Ferris, and Dee Tomlin who had been a councillor for many years for Twyford and had also campaigned for the relocation of the library.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris explained that there would be an opportunity to raise revenue from the current library site, which could then be used to fund the new library.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The relocation of Twyford library be proceeded;
- 2) The allocation of £330,000 of S106 funds to the project be agreed; and
- 3) The lease agreements for the new library site (as summarised in the report), and delegates authority to the Director of Place and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change & Resident Services and the Executive Member for Business & Economic Development, to complete the lease be approved.

25. NEW DEMENTIA CARE HOME IN THE TOUTLEY EAST DEVELOPMENT CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANT AND CONTRACT

(Councillor David Hare declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, he left the room and did not take part in the discussions or vote.)

The Executive considered a report which outlined details of proposal for a new dementia care home and residential development of up to 130 residential units and supporting infrastructure.

Councillor Clive Jones explained that the report sought the approval of the procurement process for the new dementia care home in Toutley. Optalis would continue to be the provider, however a new contract with Optalis was required as the new home would be larger than Suffolk Lodge. The current financial modelling predicted that the new care home would deliver around £377k per annum worth of financial efficiencies by 2025. The reforms within Adult Social Care however, were likely to increase the potential saving from this scheme. It was therefore envisaged that that care home would support the delivery of additional cost avoidance in the region of £700k per year.

Councillor Clive Jones informed that the Council was starting to look at potential sites for a second care home.

Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey stated that most of the people living care homes in Wokingham were in private care homes. She informed that under the new Adult Social Care reforms, the Council would be required to start assessing those people for their care needs and subsequently be expected to start covering the care costs when they reached the threshold of £86k. So, in order to manage these costs, care places would have to be

offered in Council run care homes. Having Council run care homes would be the only way to manage the cost of care going forward, therefore she supported this proposal.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The proposal to transfer service provision from existing care services at Suffolk Lodge to the new dementia care home at Toutley East, and delegates authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and the Director of Resources and Assets, jointly, in consultation with the Executive Members for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services and the Executive Member for Finance, to make any changes necessary to the contract between Wokingham Borough Council and Optalis Ltd to give effect to this change in service, up to a value of £2m per annum be noted;
- 2) Authority jointly to the Director of Adult Services and the Director of Resources and Assets to increase the value of the care contract in place with Wokingham Borough Council's Local Authority Traded Company (Optalis Limited), by way of contract variation, up to the value of circa £4m, subject to inflationary increases, to deliver the staffing requirements for the care home, be delegated, that in each case:
 - a) the budget for the costs of the services has already been approved as part of the agreed Council Budget;
 - b) the business case has been approved by both Directors;
 - c) the Executive Member with responsibility for Adult Services and the Executive Member with responsibility for Finance have been consulted.
- 3) The procurement strategy set out in the Procurement Business case for the construction consultants and contractor required for the development of the new dementia care home and associated works; and delegates authority to the Director of Resources and Assets, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, to implement and/or adapt this strategy within the approved budget be approved.

26. EDUCATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

The Executive considered Education Management System Procurement report. The report sought approval to extend the contract for the Capita One Education Management System until March 2026 and complete a procurement process to enable any new system to be implemented by April 2026.

Councillor Prue Bray explained that Children's Services the management system which was used by Children's Services was coming to the end of its contract. The report sought approval to extend this contract in order to enable the service to have more time to explore the best options going forward.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The extension of the contract for Capita One for another two years from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2026 be approved; and
- 2) The procurement business case for the Education Management System be approved.

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