

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24th November 2015 at Pippbrook, Dorking from 7.00pm to 9.30pm

Present: Councillors Margaret Cooksey (Chairman), David Mir (Vice Chairman), Emile Aboud, Tim Ashton, Lucy Botting, Lynne Brooks, Stella Brooks, John Chandler, Stephen Cooksey, Mary Cooper, Clare Curran, Rosemary Dickson, David Draper, Paul Elderton, James Friend, Paula Hancock, Raj Haque, Mary Huggins, Chris Hunt, Duncan Irvine, Howard Jones, Malcolm Ladell, Claire Malcomson, Simon Ling, Tim Loretto, Vivienne Michael, Wayne Monkman, John Muggeridge, Paul Newman, Corinna Osborne-Patterson, Jatin Patel, Paul Potter, Sarah Seed, Philippa Shimmin, Peter Stanyard, Chris Townsend, Michelle Watson, Clayton Wellman and Charles Yarwood.

Members of the Council observed a minute's silence in respect of the victims of the Paris attacks on 13th November.

23. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Santi Mondejar and John Northcott.

25. Disclosure of Interests

Councillors David Draper and Margaret Cooksey declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12 Motion 3/2015 as members of the National Trust. Councillor Draper also declared a non-pecuniary interest in that item as a volunteer at Polesden Lacey.

26. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised Members that the list of activities and engagements that she had attended on behalf of the Council since the last Council meeting was available in the Members' Room. She reported that she represented the Council at, and had been privileged to attend, a wide range of events as varied as the Annual Parade and Inspection of 1408 (Dorking) Squadron Air Cadets to the Indoor Bowling Annual Disability Day at Leatherhead Leisure Centre and the Service of Remembrance and wreath laying at the War Memorial in Dorking.

The Chairman reported on three major fund raising events for her charities which had taken place in the last two months. Firstly a curry night at Fetcham Tandoori in October which had raised over £600, secondly, also in October, the 'Grand Walk for the Chairman's Charities' which had raised £1,500 and finally a quiz night at rialto in November which had raised £1,200. The Chairman thanked all involved for their support and generosity.

Finally, the Chairman highlighted the forthcoming Chairman's Carol Concert to be held at 2.00pm on Saturday 5th December at Dorking Halls. The event promised an exciting and varied programme for all ages and Members were encouraged to attend.

27. Recommendations of Committees

- i) Audit Committee – 17th September 2015 – Treasury Management - Annual Report and Prudential Indicators 2014/2015

Councillor Stella Brooks, Chairman of the Audit Committee, introduced the item and proposed the recommendations of the Committee as set out on page 2 of the agenda.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Treasury Management Annual Outturn report for 2014/2015 be noted.
 - (2) That the actual Prudential Indicators reported for 2014/2015, as detailed in Appendix A to the report submitted be approved.
- ii) Licensing Committee – 14th October 2014 – Treasury Management – Gambling Act 2005 - Statement of Principles

Councillor John Chandler, Chairman of the Licensing Committee, introduced the item and proposed the recommendations of the Committee as set out on page 2 of the agenda.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Gambling Act 2005 - Statement of Principles be adopted for the next three years, subject to any further additions that may need to be included during that period.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Head of Service with responsibility for Environmental Health and Licensing to approve any further amendments to the Statement of Principles arising from the final week of the consultation period, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

28. Community Governance Review - Dorking

The Council considered the report set out at pages 55 to 68 of the agenda in respect of the proposed terms of reference and method of consultation for the Community Governance Review of Dorking. The Executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services introduced the report and proposed the recommendations which were seconded by Councillor Stephen Cooksey.

Members welcomed the proposed terms of reference and consultation methods. It was suggested that officers also investigate ways in which the views of 16 and 17 year old residents could be sought. The Executive Member advised that, in addition to seeking views through the advisory poll, the Council would consult with Surrey County Council and others who might have an interest in the review, which would include schools, and youth and community groups in the Dorking area.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the terms of reference of the Community Governance Review for Dorking as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted be approved.
- (2) That the question to be asked in a local advisory poll on 5th May 2016, together with the franchise and other procedural rules for the local poll, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report submitted, be approved.

29. Housing Allocations Scheme 12 Month Review

The Council considered the 12 month review of the Housing Allocations Scheme. The Executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services introduced the report and advised that the report was before Council for debate prior to consideration by the Executive in January 2016. The scheme had been reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee on 6th October and had been revised to take account, where possible, of the Committee's comments. The proposed revisions were shown in track changes on Appendix 1 to the report submitted. In respect of table 1.11 in the report, the Executive Member confirmed that 'Other' related to sheltered housing.

Members welcomed the proposed amendments and recommended the amended scheme to the Executive for approval.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to approve the amended Housing Allocations Scheme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted.

30. Information Reports

i) Local Cycling Plan – Progress Update

The Executive Member for Rural Economies and Cycling introduced the report which updated Members on the progress made in respect of the Local Cycling Plan approved in November 2014.

In response to a question regarding whether the impact of off-road cycle paths in the Surrey Hills AONB had been evaluated, it was confirmed that land owners in the Surrey Hills had been working closely with users particularly in respect of mountain biking. More information on how off-road cycling was providing safer cycling routes within the Surrey Hills would be provided to Members during the following year.

Members queried whether the action in respect of initiative E3-3 should show as red rather than amber, in line with the measure used by Surrey County Council, to indicate that changes to the regulations had not yet been achieved. The Council was advised that this was shown as amber because action was being taken by Mole Valley District Council to do as much as it could, as an authority, to lobby for changes to the regulations.

The Council was advised that the number of casualties amongst cyclists in Surrey had been increasing. To address this, the Action Plan included a number of measures aimed to reduce such casualties including education and safety campaigns as well as improvements to infrastructure.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ii) Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy - Action Plan Update

The Executive Member for Environment introduced the report which detailed the progress made to achieve the actions in the Action Plan drawn from the Surrey Waste Partnership's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Members noted that the Surrey County Council Cabinet had, that afternoon, approved a range of measures which would reduce the service at Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and concern was expressed that this could lead to an increase in incidences of fly-tipping. The Leader advised that the changes to CRCs would have a differential impact on service users across the county. Council officers were, with Surrey County Council's agreement, currently developing a business case for Mole Valley to take responsibility for running the Ranmore Road, Dorking CRC. If this were implemented, it would help to enable the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in this area.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

iii) Car Parking Review

The Executive Member for Property and Parking introduced the report which advised Members of the progress made in delivering the Car Parking Strategy. The Executive Member also highlighted the free parking in the District's town centres which would be available at certain times in the pre-Christmas period.

Some Members expressed concern that the Action Plan did not address the issue of affordable parking in town centres and that the motion to introduce 30 minutes free parking which had been supported by residents and local businesses had been defeated at the last Council meeting. The Executive Member reported that town centre parking was closely monitored and that, in response to concerns about the impact of resident parking zones on the local economy, a low paid worker permit had been introduced aimed at people working in Dorking town centre. The introduction of new resident parking zones in early 2016 could increase the take up of these permits. In response to a suggestion that payment by monthly instalments, rather than quarterly as at present, could increase the take up of low paid worker permits, the Executive Member undertook to investigate the possibility of payment by monthly instalments.

With regard to the proposal for 30 minutes free parking, the Executive Member confirmed that he was aware of an on-line petition in respect of this matter and that, should the petition be submitted to the Council, the matter and the views of residents and businesses would be considered.

The Council welcomed the report and noted that the low number of penalty notices issued could also be due to the tact and diplomacy of the Civil Enforcement Officers. The Executive Member acknowledged that the Council promoted ethical enforcement using a 'soft touch' where appropriate. He confirmed that Sunday enforcement continued although not every Sunday. The new parking restrictions in Dorking High Street were working well with few contraventions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

31. Leader's Statement

The Leader started by thanking all the council officers, members from all sides of the chamber and local residents and businesses that had helped in the challenge to deliver the Council's priorities of protecting our local environment, building prosperity and developing community well being.

The Leader updated Members on his activities in recent weeks. He had been continuing to meet with and, occasionally attending matches of, many of the local junior and adult football clubs. He noted that, as had been seen internationally, football could be a source of compassion and community resilience in the most testing of times, as well as raising the future well being of those who took part.

The Leader reported that he had, with the Chairman, the privilege of attending the annual general meeting of Citizens Advice Mole Valley. The Fairfield Centre had been packed with their volunteers and stakeholders and he had set out the strengths of our partnership and some examples of how the two organisations worked together to help individuals and families in need. The Leader reported that he had made sure that all the volunteers in the room knew how much their work was valued by Members, not just as a council but as local residents too.

Along with other local authority leaders in Surrey and Sussex, the Leader advised that he had recently been involved in taking forward the opportunity presented by central government for local councils to collectively assume more devolved responsibilities for the things that really make a difference to future prosperity within local communities. Through their track record of success local councils had shown that, given additional responsibility for infrastructure and skills development they would be able to deliver additional economic growth.

The Leader reported that he and the Vice-Chairman of the Council had been to the headquarters of Surrey Police recently to learn more of the current efforts of Surrey Crimestoppers. He advised that Crimestoppers was an independent organisation which took anonymous information and provided it to the police to follow up. Their track record spoke for itself and the Leader encouraged anyone interested in becoming a community ambassador for them to let him know.

Finally, the Leader drew attention to the recent County Council roadworks in Dorking and the surrounding villages which had caused a significant degree of disruption even above and beyond that imposed upon us locally by the current traffic flow design. He reported that he had been campaigning for a number of years for the lights at Pump Corner to be removed to ease the flow of traffic and to support local businesses and leisure visitors. He was delighted to report that with the support of Councillor David Mir and Councillor Stephen Cooksey, some progress had been made with the Surrey County Council Highways team, who were now preparing to contact Surrey Police to understand whether they had any objection to such a change, even if only on a trial basis. Earlier in the week the Leader had taken the County team to observe the traffic flows at Pump Corner and he was pleased to report Mole Valley District Council and Surrey County Council would jointly undertake a review which would consider whether changes of priority, traffic flows or removal of signals would aid flow and in turn support trade to local businesses. The removal of one phase of lights was already being trialled. The Leader referred to recent problems caused not only by the usual queues in the area, but by the roadworks taking out the traffic light sensors and defaulting the signals to cycle through each access road for an equal amount of time which had severely impacted on traffic, and thanked the Dorking Police team and the other agencies involved for the partnership working which had resulted in as fast a resolution as possible.

32. Reports of Executive Members

Councillor Vivienne Michael – Executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services

The Executive Member reported that the Customer Services and Benefits teams, both of whom were key to serving residents effectively and efficiently, were continuing to deliver excellent standards of service exceeding the targets set for them. She particularly commended the Benefits team which served some of the most vulnerable in the community and was working in the rapidly changing context of welfare reform.

The Executive Member referred to the Council's Above and Beyond Awards Scheme which recognised members of staff who had outstanding customer service. She congratulated the two members of staff who had received the award since the last Council meeting – Tristan Mitchell and Malcolm Langford – and reminded Members that that nominations could be made at any time by councillors, officers and members of the public, and that forms were available on the website or from Customer Services. The current round of nominations was due to close on 28th November 2015.

The Executive Member advised that, further to her last update, a peer review of the Council's Homelessness service had taken place at the end of July. The review had commended the Council for its corporate commitment to homelessness, its work with partners in addressing issues for homeless people and for its work with private landlords in finding accommodation for those facing homelessness. The Executive Member commended the service which had achieved a score of 72% in the review, significantly above average for similar districts and a fantastic result for Mole Valley. Aligned to this, another successful Landlord Forum had recently been run where advice and information was shared with landlords regarding Universal Credit and proposed reforms to the private rented sector in the Housing and Planning Bill.

With regard to the work of the Communications team, the Executive Member reported that they had been busy running a number of successful high profile campaigns and consultations in recent months. The Clean Mole Valley campaign focussed on issues that were priorities for residents. The campaign's message was that Mole Valley was a beautiful place and the Council wanted to keep it that way. Littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling were not tolerated. Those caught would be fined or prosecuted and residents and businesses should be mindful to comply with waste legislation when disposing of waste.

The Communications team had also taken the lead in several Surrey-wide campaigns including Surrey Winter Wellness and the Surrey Counter-Fraud campaign. With regard to fraud, the Executive Member highlighted a number of recent successes by Mole Valley's investigators in

identifying and pursuing people committing tenancy fraud and returning a number of social housing properties to legitimate tenants.

Finally, the Executive Member reported on the 'There's More to Mole Valley' campaign which promoted several aspects of the Council's work that many people would not identify with the Council, including sports programmes, Walks for Health, Dorking Halls and other cultural events. The campaign was now being extended into the winter promoting Christmas activities and important messages about keeping warm, keeping well and getting prepared for winter weather. With regard to work being undertaken by the Council on preparations for winter weather, Members were advised that arrangements had been put in place with Leatherhead Start to provide accommodation for rough sleepers when the temperature fell below 0°C, and were encouraged to report rough sleepers using the Street Link notification on the Council's website. This would ensure that incidences of rough sleeping were recorded nationally and East Surrey Outreach Service notified quickly.

The Executive Member referred Members and residents to the comprehensive update on progress under her portfolio area which was accessible on the Mole Valley District Council website and in addition to the highlights outlined above, included more about the Hope Springs Eternal project which had launched successfully in September, the new Dorking Halls website which should make it easier to explore all that was on offer and to book online, and the Council's ongoing work on preventing and dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Paul Newman – Executive Member for Environment

With regard to waste and recycling, the Executive Member reported that Mole Valley District Council continued to work with the Surrey Waste Partnership to promote recycling. The latest county wide initiative aimed to encourage more food waste recycling. In Mole Valley, the campaign began in October and was scheduled to be completed in early January. All refuse bins in the district would be stickered with a 'No Food Waste Please' message, followed by each household being delivered a free roll of compostable caddy liners and a promotional leaflet explaining how and why to use the service. Similar campaigns elsewhere in the country had seen a steady increase in the amount of food recycling and it was hoped that a similar increase would be seen locally.

Members were advised that work was continuing on the procurement of the Joint Waste Contract with Elmbridge, Surrey Heath and Woking Borough Councils. Initial tender submissions would be received by the end of November, and evaluated in December and January to identify the companies that would be invited to submit final tenders for the contract. The aim of the Joint Waste Contract was to ensure residents were getting the best deal for their waste collection and recycling rates continued to be among the highest in the country.

The Executive Member reported that the refuse and recycling collection schedule would change over the Christmas and New Year period. Residents would be given a bin tag in mid-December which listed the changes and gave additional information on where and how to recycle Christmas trees. Information had already been published on the Council's website and would be promoted through the press and social media.

Councillor Howard Jones – Executive Member for Town Centres

The Executive Member updated the Council on progress in respect of Transform Leatherhead, and addressed some of the issues raised in one of the questions to him under agenda 11. He reported that he had attended a Leatherhead Chamber of Commerce with the Federation of Small Businesses business breakfast that morning to discuss Transform Leatherhead and ten days previously he had been at St John's School for another business breakfast with some of the bigger employers in Leatherhead. He advised that, whilst he understood that one of the prime focusses of Transform Leatherhead was to bring in a few key comparison retailers to improve the retail offer in the town, it was not the project's only focus. The project team was also focussing on the non-retail businesses in Leatherhead because they were important to the overall demographic of

Leatherhead and the needs that Transform Leatherhead was aiming to meet. The Executive Member contested the notion that the Transform Leatherhead project was just about getting in two or three big national comparison retail outlets and nothing else. He stressed that the consultants and the officer team had been dealing with all aspects of Leatherhead, not just commercial and retail, and had been talking to charities, schools and a wide range of other bodies. He advised that if the criteria to obtain Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funding were met, it would be possible to apply for subsidiary funds within the LEP for projects such as disability access and sustainable transport. In addition, developer contributions would be forthcoming from any significant developments of new homes as part of the process. Affordable housing would also be required to be provided in the appropriate percentage for every new home created. He confirmed that Transform Leatherhead was a holistic project covering all aspects, although it had been founded on the fact that Leatherhead had been under-performing and the project sought to address that, and advised that the second stage of consultation on the project was about to commence.

Members noted that work was currently continuing on the restructuring of the Economic Development team. The Executive Member also advised that the Council had been encouraging the notion of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). There were a number of interested parties within the business community in Dorking who were considering a BID. The Executive Member also referred to the potential for the possible creation other BIDs within the District.

The Executive Member reported that the Council continued to actively support and coordinate a programme of events in Dorking and Leatherhead. The French Market had returned to Leatherhead on 20th November and Halloween celebrations had also been held in Leatherhead. The Executive Member advised that Sainsbury's and the staff of the local Halifax branch had supported the Halloween event and thanked them for their contributions. Looking forward, the Gala Night would be held in Dorking on 3rd December and the Leatherhead Christmas Festival on 5th December.

Finally, the Executive Member reported that the Meadowbank project was ongoing and proceeding in accordance with the expected timetable.

Councillor Corinna Osborne-Patterson – Executive Member for Rural Economies and Cycling

The Executive Member referred to the RideLondon-Surrey event, a significant part of which Mole Valley had hosted. 27,000 people had taken part in the mass participation event and it was anticipated that they had raised in the region of £12m for charity. Planning for the 2016 event was underway and, as in previous years, officers continued to work with RideLondon to ensure that the views of Mole Valley were heard. The Executive Member advised that, following this year's event, RideLondon was aware that there were still some areas in which they could improve for 2016, including the removal of signage post-event, increasing the number of local volunteers, and pedestrian crossing points in rural areas. Members noted that the 2016 event would take place on Sunday 31st July.

The Executive Member updated the Council on the Tourism Co-operation bid, the first phase of which had been recently submitted to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership. If successful, the Council would have funding to develop a Destination management Plan for rural tourism in Mole Valley. The plan would look at how the economic benefits from visitors to the area could be maximised, with a particular focus on visitors enjoying Mole Valley the heart of the Surrey Hills, for example walkers, horse riders and cyclists. The outcome of the first stage bid was expected early in the New Year.

Members were advised that a project was underway to review the objectives of the Council's community transport policy and the cost effectiveness of the current in-house arrangements. Initially this was being done as a solely Mole Valley project, but dialogue with other East Surrey authorities had identified similar issues, so the possibility of a joint review was currently being explored.

Councillor Sarah Seed – Executive Member for Planning

The Executive Member reported that the Infrastructure Needs Assessment (INA) consultation had now started with publicity events using the INA 'Wishing Well' taking place around the District. The letterbox drop of INA postcards to all addresses in Dorking and the south of the District had been completed. And video content was also being finalised to be used on the Mole Valley YouTube channel and other social media such as Facebook and Streetlife. Responses were being directed to the online questionnaire which was live and advertised on the website banner. Hard copies were being distributed at public events and the team was engaging with a range of interested parties. Questionnaires would also be available at Transform Leatherhead events going forward. To date there had been a good response.

Members were advised that consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement would commence before the end of November and run until early January. This included an extra two weeks to allow for the Christmas period. The Executive Member reported that the Statement of Community Involvement told the public how they were able to get involved in the preparation of the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents and how they would be notified about planning applications and how to make their views known. All Statutory Consultees would be notified of the consultation as well as over 5000 organisations and individuals registered on the Local Plan database. The document would be available to view on the Mole Valley website and a hard copy available at the Council Offices and HelpShop. Members noted that the consultation would include a specific question about whether or not site notices should be used as a method of publicising planning applications in addition to neighbour notification letters, as well as inviting general comments on the whole document.

The Executive Member reported that the Housing and Planning Bill had been published in October 2015 and was currently making its way through the approvals process. The Bill included a significant number of amendments to planning legislation and gave effect to many of the Government's aspirations set out in the 'Fixing the Foundations' productivity plan which trailed initiatives for increasing the delivery of new homes and boosting home ownership. There would be a new duty on Councils to keep a register of particular kinds of land. This could include a register of previously developed land, commonly known as brownfield land, which was suitable for housing development. The Bill also amended and supplemented the duties placed on local authorities under the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 which required them to keep and have regard to registers of people seeking land for self-build and custom house building. This was to help achieve the Government's aim to double the number of self build houses by 2020. Residents would be able to add their details to the 'self build register' to register their interest.

The Executive Member advised that the County Council had announced a capital fund of £1m per annum for four years from 2016 to 2020 to deliver improvements to Surrey's secondary town centres and local town centres. Details of how the scheme would be operated were being worked out by the County Council. In anticipation of the scheme's launch in April 2016, work was underway to identify those centres in Mole Valley which would benefit from investment through this fund and how this might be achieved through working with local communities.

Finally, Council was advised that Transport for London/Network Rail had launched their latest consultation on the Crossrail 2 project which was designed to create a new cross London rail line providing services between Surrey and Hertfordshire. It was not planned to provide Crossrail 2 services beyond Epsom or Chessington South. The scheme was at an early stage of design and was evolving. It was not expected to open before 2030.

33. Questions to Members of the Executive

(1) The following question was submitted by Councillor Shimmin:

"If the forthcoming restructuring of the Economic Development Team results in the establishment of a new post of Business Development Officer this will hopefully be successful in attracting new businesses to Mole Valley. In this event, what measures will be put in place to support existing

small businesses to ensure that new businesses don't impact on them negatively? This is important in Leatherhead where the 'Transform' project presents significant risks to existing small businesses in Leatherhead North?"

Councillor Jones responded as follows:

"I have largely answered that in my earlier update. One thing I would say is that the post on one level is supposed to be a strategic operator who is dealing with the bigger companies, looking to attract bigger companies to come in. One of the other things we are looking for the team to do is to try and move forward Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) so the local businesses are running services for themselves. The model we are moving towards, because of the way BIDs work where the 'big boys' can't out vote the 'small boys', you have to have by rateable value but also by number of businesses, it is weighted in such a way so that people who organise a BID have to bring the 'big boys' and the small independent traders with them to get their majority. So in fact the Business Improvement model is actually well designed not only to look for the interests of small businesses, it's actually going to be representing them in its very structure."

(2) The following question was submitted by Councillor Draper:

"On 16th June 2015 the Executive approved Agenda item 8, Executive Report Annex B, relating to the redevelopment of Meadowbank Football Ground, with a listed scope of works as set out in the report.

The item also included a timescale, with work commencing in September 2015 and completion expected in July 2016. Given that virtually no work has yet been undertaken on the site, can the Executive Member inform us as to why the work has been delayed by some three months, when it will begin and what is now the expected completion date for the entire project?"

Councillor Jones responded as follows:

"As set out in my earlier Executive Member update, the project is proceeding in accordance with the expected timetable."

Councillor Draper asked the following supplementary question:

"That isn't an answer to the fact that virtually no work has yet been undertaken on the site apart from a little bit of ground clearance so therefore the reply doesn't cover it nor is there an answer to whether the completion date for the entire project will be as agreed by the executive, July 2016."

Councillor Jones advised that any further information in respect of this question would contain exempt information and it would therefore be necessary to exclude the press and public before responding to the supplementary question.

(3) The following question was submitted by Councillor Townsend:

"Could the Leader give councillors the latest position on the Meadowbank project with particular regard to the 2 Dorking football clubs involved and the current position of the Surrey FA? We were informed many months ago that the Leader was speaking with the 2 clubs with a view to a resolution of their issues - we have had little or no information since."

Councillor Friend responded as follows:

"Although the officer team are obviously leading any negotiations, I remain in contact with many adult and junior football clubs in and around Dorking, helping them to consider their longer term infrastructure needs. Officers tell me that Surrey FA understand the progress of the overall project."

Councillor Townsend asked the following supplementary question:

“Can the Leader give me a view as to what the current cost situation is on the actual development of Meadowbank?”

Councillor Friend advised that as in the previous question, any further response would contain exempt information, and it was proposed and seconded that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the responses to the supplementary questions asked by Councillors Draper and Townsend.

RESOLVED: That members of the Press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that consideration of the item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Part II

In responding to the supplementary questions asked by Councillors Draper and Townsend, the Executive Member for Town Centres outlined the current position with regard to the Meadowbank project as he understood it and advised Members of ongoing developments.

The meeting resumed in public session.

(4) The following question was submitted by Councillor Malcomson:

"With the news that The Leatherhead Theatre management is about to renew its ten year lease, what does the Council intend to do to help revive and support this important community resource, which should be a hub of excellence?"

Councillor Jones responded as follows:

“Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) money of £400,000 was available for Church Street. Part of that process was certainly intending to try and make the front of the Theatre more attractive, whether that be with lighting or a porch, etc. That is part of the process of the Church Street improvement.”

In accordance with Standing Order 7, the three questions submitted by the deadline but not asked and answered within the 15 minutes question period are recorded in Appendix 1 to these minutes with the responses of the Executive Members.

34. Motions

Motion 2/2015

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Paul Elderton and seconded by Councillor David Draper:

"This Council notes:

- (1) That the cost of the parking permits offered by the District Council to residents of Church Street and North Street in Dorking at £350 per year is far in excess of the cost of residents' parking permits offered by the County Council where residents' parking schemes exist in the town;
- (2) That the number of permits currently issued on a quarterly and annual basis to residents of these roads is 17 and thus a reduction in cost would not significantly affect the parking

budget and would be offset by a greater take up of such permits and the use of currently spare capacity in the St Martin's Walk car park; and

Resolves to review the residents' parking scheme in Church Street and North Street, Dorking and to bring forward proposals in the next budget that will align more closely the cost of residents' parking permits for this scheme with the cost of residents' parking permits in Surrey County Council schemes."

The Council resolved to take the motion on the night.

Members debated the motion in full. A number of Members spoke in support of the motion, stating that aligning the cost of the residents' parking scheme in Church Street and North Street with the cost of other residents' permits would ensure fairness and also encourage more residents to use the scheme thus increasing car park usage and income. Other Members opposed the motion on the grounds that the permits referred to were for car parks, not on-street parking, and were already considerably discounted. Members also queried how reducing the price of the permits would overcome issues regarding the availability of parking spaces in the Church Street car park, and expressed concerns about any impact on other users of the District's car parks and the cost implications.

RESOLVED: That Motion 2/2015 be rejected.

(N.B. Counted vote on the motion - 10 for, 26 against)

Motion 3/2015

The following motion was proposed by Councillor David Draper and seconded by Councillor Paul Elderton.

"This Council notes:

- (1) That since tourist information centres and associated facilities were abandoned by Mole Valley District Council some years ago it has been much more difficult for tourists, visitors and residents to obtain information on the various events, activities and facilities available in the District;
- (2) That the re-provision of Tourist Information Centres would help to boost the local economy and improve footfall in our town centres;
- (3) That many market towns throughout the country successfully support Tourist Information Centres in the town centres; and

Resolves to examine, in consultation, with the County Council, the Surrey, Leatherhead and Dorking Chambers of Commerce and other appropriate local organisations, the possibility of re-establishing Tourist Information Centres in Dorking and Leatherhead."

The Council resolved to take the motion on the night.

Members debated the motion in full. A number of Members spoke in support of the motion, stating that the on-line tourist information was inadequate and that visitors often wanted personal advice. It was considered that the Council had a role in encouraging and attracting visitors to the district and that the provision of Tourist Information Centres would help to achieve this, rather than relying on private organisations and attractions to provide tourist information facilities. Other Members opposed the motion on the grounds that visitor information was already available in Dorking Halls and at the HelpShop in Leatherhead, and a large amount of information available 24/7 on the internet and social media, which was usually most people's preferred information source. It was considered that working with businesses to help stimulate tourism in the district would be more

beneficial than providing Tourist Information Centres, as there was no evidence that such provision would increase tourism in the towns.

Following the vote on the motion, the Executive Member for Community Engagement and Resident Services requested that a report in respect of the proposal to work with other organisations to examine tourist information provision be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED: That Motion 3/2015 be rejected.

(N.B. Counted vote on the motion - 14 for, 19 against)

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Chairman

.....Date

Agenda Item 11 – Questions remaining to be asked

(5) The following question was submitted by Councillor Simon Ling

“Will the Executive Member for the Environment please bring us up to date on the effect of the recent door to door campaign in selected Wards to encourage greater use of food waste and recycling collection facilities, and tell us what if any action has been taken by the Council as a result?”

Councillor Newman responded as follows:

“The door to door canvassing took place over two periods in October, so it is a little too soon to assess what effect it has had on recycling performance.

Collected waste from the selected round will be monitored over the next few weeks and this should tell us a bit more about how successful the visits were.

In the meantime, Envirocomms, who carried out the canvassing on our behalf, have provided detailed feedback from their visits. Firstly, they have reported a 65% ‘contact rate’, meaning they managed to talk to 65% of the households they visited. This amounts to roughly 650 properties. A 65% contact rate is very high for this kind of activity, so that is promising.

Envirocomms reported that households did not suggest any particular barriers to recycling, but there were a few residents who were not aware they could place out extra recycling for collection, or that they were entitled to extra recycling bins, for free. These residents were corrected by Envirocomms and many then went on to order extra recycling bins which have now all been delivered. This in itself should see performance improvements on the round, but it also tells us that we need to work on making sure residents across the District know what they are entitled to.

The Recycling & Sustainability Manager, Josh Lambe, will be happy to share the full results of the canvassing with any interested Members.”

(6) The following question was submitted by Councillor Stephen Cooksey

“A number of the issues highlighted by residents in the Transform Leatherhead consultation including improving the town centre retail offering, parking and congestion would be highlighted by residents in Dorking if a similar consultation were to be undertaken. The Transform Leatherhead project is intended to address these issues in Leatherhead. Would the Executive member for Town Centres please tell the Council what plans the Administration has to address them in Dorking?”

Councillor Jones responded as follows:

“Although our current focus is on transforming Leatherhead as it was identified as a strategic priority area by the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, it is worth recalling that a few years ago the Council prepared and adopted an Area Action Plan for Dorking following extensive consultation and engagement with local residents and businesses. The Action Plan contains proposals for improving the retail offer in the heart of the town and introduces policies to safeguard shops in the town. It also includes measures to help sustain the town’s economic vitality and viability and safeguard its social and environmental infrastructure.

We are aware of Dorking’s emerging aspirations around the development and creation of a trader led Business Improvement District or BID as they are known. Officers are meeting with trader representatives to identify how we can best support them to deliver their aspirations.

Dorking has been identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership for investment around sustainable transport initiatives and future transport resilience funding. A scheme to improve connectivity

between Dorking and Dorking Deepdene Stations has already attracted funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership and further phases are planned.

The specific issue of traffic congestion in Dorking was considered at a recent meeting of the Local Committee. As a result, discussions have taken place with the County Council to look at what measures might be taken to mitigate reduce the traffic congestion that occurs in parts of the town. An update on the meeting and subsequent discussions will be considered by the Local Committee at its December meeting.

The Infrastructure Needs Assessment is currently the subject of consultation and is providing local residents and businesses with the opportunity to identify the infrastructure that they believe needs improving. This could include the town's road network and parking provision. We will be collating all the responses we receive and use them to identify the infrastructure needs that are important to local communities and to help prioritise Community Infrastructure Levy funding."

(7) The following question was submitted by Councillor Peter Stanyard

"Will the Executive Member for Housing please bring us up to date on the effect of the Right to Buy provisions in the Housing and Planning Bill currently before Parliament on MVDC:

- a. In our ability to provide new build affordable housing either directly or through Circle Housing Mole Valley or others, and
- b. Our ability to continue to provide housing to existing tenants
- c. On our development plans and capital budget should we be required to sell council land following the sale of homes under the provisions?"

Councillor Vivienne Michael responded as follows:

"The Housing and Planning Bill introduces the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants and the Bill has received its first and second readings in the House of Commons. It is now at the Commons committee stage. The contents of the Bill are therefore potentially subject to change and the impact for Mole Valley cannot be fully assessed until there is more certainty.

The Bill reflects the agreement between the government and the National Housing Federation, whereby housing associations will extend the Right to Buy to their tenants on a voluntary basis and the government will make payments to Associations to compensate them for the cost of the discounts on offer.

Critically for Mole Valley homes lost through the extended Right to Buy will need to be replaced within the District. However, there is nothing in the Bill that will require Associations to do this and those that choose to may not replace like for like in the authorities where they work.

Although the Bill will require authorities that have retained ownership of their housing stock to sell high value properties it does not include any requirements on non-stock holding local authorities to sell land or any other assets towards funding the extended Right to Buy.

Despite this potential loss of stock the Council will be able to continue with its development programmes with the local housing Association partners and to nominate people from the housing register to new and existing stock.

What we do know, is that over the last three years 20 Circle Housing Mole Valley Homes (CHMV) have been sold through the **Preserved Right to Buy** (given to those who were tenants at the time of stock transfer) and the **Right to Acquire** (the existing right to buy type scheme for housing association tenants, which is not as generous as the Preserved Right to Buy or extended Right to Buy).

A briefing paper on the Bill has been prepared for members that also covers the introduction of the Starter Home Initiative, which is discounted home ownership for the under 40's. The Bill will allow

regulations requiring starter homes to be included on residential sites as a condition of securing planning permission. These regulations will be issued at a later date.

It is also understood that the government intends to amend the definition of affordable housing in the National Planning Policy Framework to include the Starter Home Initiative. This could reduce the number of new affordable rented homes provided on private sector development sites.

The progress of the Bill and potential impacts for Mole Valley will be closely monitored and reported by officers.”