GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

**BILLINGTON
MAYOR**

Contact Officer:

John Armstrong,
Democratic Services and Elections Manager
Tel: 01483 444102

9 December 2020

To the Councillors of Guildford Borough Council

You are hereby summoned to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Council for the Borough of Guildford to be held **Via Microsoft Teams** on **THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2020** commencing at 7.00 pm.

James Whiteman
Managing Director

Millmead House
Millmead
Guildford
Surrey   GU2 4BB

www.guildford.gov.uk

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting will be recorded for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website in accordance with the Council's capacity in performing a task in the public interest and in line with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for six months.

If you have any queries regarding webcasting of meetings, please contact Committee Services.

THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Vision – for the borough

For Guildford to be a town and rural borough that is the most desirable place to live, work and visit in South East England. A centre for education, healthcare, innovative cutting-edge businesses, high quality retail and wellbeing. A county town set in a vibrant rural environment, which balances the needs of urban and rural communities alike. Known for our outstanding urban planning and design, and with infrastructure that will properly cope with our needs.

Three fundamental themes and nine strategic priorities that support our vision:

Place-making   Delivering the Guildford Borough Local Plan and providing the range of housing that people need, particularly affordable homes

Making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier

Regenerating and improving Guildford town centre and other urban areas

Community   Supporting older, more vulnerable and less advantaged people in our community

Protecting our environment

Enhancing sporting, cultural, community, and recreational facilities

Innovation   Encouraging sustainable and proportionate economic growth to help provide the prosperity and employment that people need

Creating smart places infrastructure across Guildford

Using innovation, technology and new ways of working to improve value for money and efficiency in Council services

Values for our residents

- We will strive to be the best Council.
- We will deliver quality and value for money services.
- We will help the vulnerable members of our community.
- We will be open and accountable.
- We will deliver improvements and enable change across the borough.

Time limits on speeches at full Council meetings:	
Public speaker:	3 minutes
Response to public speaker:	3 minutes
Questions from councillors:	3 minutes
Response to questions from councillors:	3 minutes
Proposer of a motion:	10 minutes
Seconder of a motion:	5 minutes
Other councillors speaking during the debate on a motion:	5 minutes
Proposer of a motion's right of reply at the end of the debate on the motion:	10 minutes
Proposer of an amendment:	5 minutes
Seconder of an amendment:	5 minutes
Other councillors speaking during the debate on an amendment:	5 minutes
Proposer of a motion's right of reply at the end of the debate on an amendment:	5 minutes
Proposer of an amendment's right of reply at the end of the debate on an amendment:	5 minutes

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

To receive and note any disclosable pecuniary interests from councillors. In accordance with the local Code of Conduct, a councillor is required to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) that they may have in respect of any matter for consideration on this agenda. Any councillor with a DPI must not participate in any discussion or vote regarding that matter and they must also withdraw from the meeting immediately before consideration of the matter.

If that DPI has not been registered, the councillor must notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of the DPI within 28 days of the date of the meeting.

Councillors are further invited to disclose any non-pecuniary interest which may be relevant to any matter on this agenda, in the interests of transparency, and to confirm that it will not affect their objectivity in relation to that matter.

3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications or announcements from the Mayor.

4. LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications or announcements from the Leader of the Council.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive questions or statements from the public in relation only to the business for which this extraordinary meeting has been called.

6. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To hear questions (if any) from councillors of which due notice has been given in relation only to the business for which this extraordinary meeting has been called.

7.   **PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND** (Pages 5 - 46)

8.   **REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES: 2020-21** (Pages 47 - 58)

9.   **COMMON SEAL**

To order the Common Seal to be affixed to any document to give effect to any decision taken by the Council at this meeting.

Council Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Managing Director

Author: John Armstrong, Democratic Services and Elections Manager

Tel: 01483 444102

Email: john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: Joss Bigmore

Tel: 07974 979369

Email: joss.bigmore@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 17 December 2020

Periodic Electoral Review of
Guildford Borough Council: Council Size Submission

Executive Summary

At the Council meeting on 8 December 2020, the draft Council Size Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was considered and Council agreed to refer the matter for further consideration by the Corporate Governance Task Group at its meeting held on 14 December 2020 for the purpose of:

(a)   giving further consideration to the requirements of the review generally and in particular to that referred to on pages 4-5, 13, and 21 of the LGBCE's guidance to councillors;

(b)   reviewing the contents of the Council Size Submission; and

(c)   consideration of the forecast increase in electorate by 2026

and reference back to this extraordinary meeting of the Council for final approval of the Council Size Submission.

At its meeting on 14 December, the Task Group was provided with details of the Council's CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (see paragraph 4.13 below) and forecast increase in electorate by 2026, and has reviewed the contents of the draft Submission. The proposed revised draft Submission, as recommended by the Task Group including tracked changes, is set out in Appendix 1. This now states a preference for maintaining the current Council Size of 48 Councillors, based on the retention of all out elections every four years.

Recommendation to Council

(1)   That the Council Size Submission, attached at Appendix 1, and its stated preference for maintaining a Council size of 48 Councillors, be approved and presented to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

(2)   That the Democratic Services and Elections Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Governance Task Group, be authorised to make such

minor alterations to improve the clarity of the revised draft Submission document as the Council may determine.

Reason for Recommendation:
To respond to the LGBCE's invitation to make a Council size submission as part of the periodic electoral review of Guildford Borough Council, taking into account the following factors:

- the Strong Leader and Executive arrangements introduced since the last review including the scrutiny and advisory committees and boards;
- the necessary involvement of councillors in the regulatory functions of planning and licensing;
- the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Officers extended since the last review;
- changes in the Council's functions, and the manner by which it delivers its services since the last review;
- the technological advancements in communications and the changing way in which residents access information and services;
- increasing population of the borough and concomitant increase in electorate;
- the community role and the casework load of every councillor;
- the financial position of the Council, and the country as a whole, particularly in the context of the coronavirus pandemic

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide a further opportunity for the Council to suggest to the LGBCE a Council size proposal for consideration in its forthcoming consultation on warding patterns.

2. Strategic Priorities

2.1 The review will ensure that the Council size is appropriate for ensuring that the Council is able to deliver on its corporate priorities and in a manner consistent with the Council's desire to be open and accountable to its residents.

3. Background

3.1 A copy of the report to last week' Council meeting containing all the relevant background information in respect of this matter and the accompanying documentation can be found on the Council's website:
Agenda for Council on Tuesday, 8th December, 2020, 7.00 pm (guildford.gov.uk)

4. Council Size Submission

4.1 The first part of the electoral review process is the invitation from LGBCE for the Council to make a submission on Council size, that is the total number of councillors to be elected to the Council. As stated in the guide for councillors[1], the LGBCE will make its judgment on council size by considering three broad areas:

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[1] Appendix 1 to the 8 December report to Council

- The **governance arrangements** of the Council and how it takes decisions across the broad range of its responsibilities.
- The Council's **scrutiny functions** relating to its own decision making and the council's responsibilities to outside bodies.
- The **representational role of councillors in the local community** and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the council on local partner organisations.

4.2   The LGBCE emphasise that any submission to them on council size (whether it is for an increase, reduction or maintaining current arrangements), should ensure that it addresses these areas and that the view on council size is backed up by evidence.

4.3   At the Council meeting on 8 December 2020, the draft Council Size Submission to the LGBCE was considered and Council agreed to refer the matter for further consideration by the Corporate Governance Task Group at its meeting held on 14 December 2020 for the purpose of:

(a)   giving further consideration to the requirements of the review generally and in particular to that referred to on pages 4-5, 13, and 21 of the LGBCE's guidance to councillors;
(b)   reviewing the contents of the Council Size Submission; and
(c)   consideration of the forecast increase in electorate by 2026

and reference back to this extraordinary meeting of the Council for final approval of the Council Size Submission.

Consideration by the Corporate Governance Task Group – 14 December 2020

4.4   In order to inform the task group's consideration of this matter, all councillors were asked individually to consider in advance of the task group meeting, and inform their political group representative on the task group, the estimated number of councillors overall they feel would be appropriate to include in our Council Size Submission and, importantly, to provide a brief summary (3 or 4 bullet points) of the main reasons for the number they suggest.

4.5   At the task group meeting, task group members each reported the feedback they had received from councillors from their respective political groups. It was very clear that the general consensus was for maintaining the current Council size of 48 councillors.

4.6   The task group noted that during the debate at the last Council meeting, some councillors had queried the reference in the LGBCE's guidance to the Council's 15 CIPFA Nearest Neighbours and the bar chart set out in Appendix 4 to their guidance. Officers have sought further advice from the LGBCE, which is set out below.

4.7   The LGBCE have confirmed that they make their decisions on council size based on evidence related to three aspects:

- strategic leadership,
- accountability, and
- community leadership.

4.8   The LGBCE recognise that there is considerable variation in council size across England, not only between different types of local authority, but also between authorities of the same type. In the LGBCE's opinion, local government is as diverse as the communities it serves – providing leadership, services and representation suited to the characteristics and needs of individual areas. The LGBCE therefore aims to recommend electoral arrangements, including council size, which are appropriate for the particular local authority.

4.9   In simpler terms, they are looking to agree a council size that is right for Guildford. They treat every council size submission on its merits against the three aspects set out above and confirm that they do not apply any mathematical formula to ensure all authorities in a similar grouping should have the same or a similar number of councillors.

4.10   The LGBCE have confirmed that they refer to the CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Model only to understand the contextual position of the authority being reviewed. This helps them to understand how the authority compares in its council size with its nearest neighbours and helps them to ask questions (always related to the three aspects set out above) about any proposals that appear to be outside the range. Nevertheless, they stress that Guildford's submission will **only** be assessed on the merits of its evidence and arguments related to strategic leadership, accountability and community leadership, and not on the basis of how its number compares with its nearest neighbours. There are any number of well-evidenced arguments an authority could make in favour of a proposed council size that falls outside the expected range. Authorities have different governance arrangements, different scrutiny functions, alternative models for community leadership, and this can drive significant variations in the number of councillors 'similar' authorities require to govern in a way most appropriate for their local area.

4.11   As to making the CIPFA data available, unfortunately under terms of the data licence the LGBCE is unable to share the CIPFA Nearest Neighbour Model externally although they say that some authorities will have access to the groupings through their own licences. The 'expected ranges', however, are made available and this is all set out in their guidance document.

4.12   The CIFPA data is reviewed every few years, with an update due next year. This means, that it can contain some older data, such as local authorities that do not exist anymore and this may explain why in Guildford's case, they provided a comparison against 11 of the 15 nearest neighbours. The colour of the bar charts do not represent political parties; this is purely an aesthetic look based on the formatting of the spreadsheet.

4.13   Since the last Council meeting, we have managed to identify Guildford's 15 CIPFA Nearest Neighbours, which appear to be based on councils that have similar socio-economic characteristic to ours. We have provided some comparative information in the table below, which was obtained from a

spreadsheet of electoral information on all two-tier districts in England provided by the LGBCE:

Council	Electors	No. of wards	Council Size	Electors per councillor
Basingstoke & Deane	136,809	18	54	2,534
Brentwood	60,611	15	37	1,638
Cherwell	112,645	16	48	2,347
Epping Forest	103,154	32	58	1,779
Epsom & Ewell	61,223	13	38	1,611
Guildford	**101,811**	**22**	**48**	**2,121**
Reigate & Banstead	107,595	15	45	2,391
Runnymede	61,331	14	41	1,496
South Oxfordshire	109,133	21	36	3,031
Spelthorne	75,723	13	39	1,942
Surrey Heath	68,563	14	35	1,959
Tandridge	64,535	20	42	1,537
Vale of White Horse	101,632	24	38	2,675
Waverley	93,951	29	57	1,648
Winchester	90,243	16	45	2,005
Woking	74,736	10	30	2,491

4.14   The borough's electorate forecast increase to 2026 is 118,557, compared to 103,253 as at September 2020.   This is set out in Annex A to the revised draft Submission. The figures are broken down to polling district level and reflect a combination of the projected changes in population derived by the LGBCE from ONS statistics, extant planning permissions, and an extrapolation of housing delivery information from the latest published Land Availability Assessment.

4.15   Following a review of the contents of the draft Submission in the light of this information, the Task Group recommend that the revised draft Submission, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be adopted by the Council at this meeting. This now states a preference for maintaining the current Council Size of 48 Councillors, based on the retention of all out elections every four years.

5.   Financial Implications

5.1   There are no financial implications arising directly from the making of this submission. The costs associated with the review will be met from within existing budgets.

6.   Legal Implications

6.1   The LGBCE operates under the provisions of Part 3 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). This established the LGBCE in place of the former Boundary Committee of the Electoral Commission.

6.2.   Under S56(1) of the 2009 Act, the LGBCE must, from time to time, conduct a review of the area of each principal council, and recommend whether a change

should be made to the electoral arrangements. In this regard, "electoral arrangements" means:

- The total number of Councillors
- The number and boundaries of electoral areas[2] for the election of Councillors
- The number of Councillors to be returned by any electoral area
- The name of the electoral area

6.3 The legislation does not set out how many councillors each authority (or type of authority) will have. It is the LGBCE's responsibility to determine the appropriate number of councillors for each authority.

6.4 In making its recommendations, Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act requires the LGBCE to have regard to:

(a) The need to secure that the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors is, as nearly as possible, the same in every electoral area – over the five-year period following implementation of the recommendations.

(b) The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and, in particular the desirability of fixing boundaries:

- which are and will remain easily identifiable
- so as not to break any local ties

(c) The need to secure effective and convenient local government

6.5 Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act also states that the LGBCE should take into account any change to the number and distribution of electors that is likely to take place within the five years following the *end* of a review. This requirement means that, at the start of the review the LGBCE asks us to provide them with *six-year* forecasts of electorate changes in all polling districts, i.e. up 2026.

6.6 The LGBCE's decision on council size will mark the formal start to the review process. However, this decision will not be formalised until their Final Recommendations are agreed and published at the end of the process. This is because the number of councillors may change marginally (generally ±1) from the initial decision if it is felt that modifying the number of councillors may provide for a pattern of wards that better reflects the three statutory criteria referred to in paragraph 6.4 above.

6.7 The Final Recommendations describe the complete set of electoral arrangements, including ward names and locations as well as the number of elected members, alongside parish warding arrangements. These recommendations will be implemented at the next scheduled borough council elections in May 2023 by means of an Order laid before Parliament.

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[2] In this context an electoral area means a ward

7.   Human Resource Implications

7.1   There are no HR implications arising directly from the proposals contained in this report.

8.   Equality and Diversity Implications

8.1   Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2   In this regard, the Council must consider whether the decision will or could have a differential impact on: racial groups; gender; people with disabilities; people of a particular sexual orientation; people due to their age; people due to their religious belief; or people who are pregnant
.
8.3   It is not considered that an equality impact assessment is necessary for the purpose of responding to the LGBCE on the number of councillors or patterns of ward boundaries.

9.   Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

9.1   There are no relevant climate change/sustainability implications arising from this report.

10.   Background Papers

Agenda for Council on Tuesday, 8th December, 2020, 7.00 pm (guildford.gov.uk)

11.   Appendices

Appendix 1: Revised Draft Council Size Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England

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Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Council Size Submission
Guildford Borough Council

Contents

How to Make a Submission

1. It is recommended that submissions on council size follow the format provided below. Submissions should focus on the future needs of the council and not simply describe the current arrangements. Submissions should also demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been considered in drawing up the proposal and why you have discounted them.

2. The template allows respondents to enter comments directly under each heading. It is not recommended that responses be unduly long; as a guide, it is anticipated that a 15 to 20-page document using this template should suffice. Individual section length may vary depending on the issues to be explained. Where internal documents are referred to URLs should be provided, rather than the document itself. It is also recommended that a table is included that highlights the key paragraphs for the Commission's attention.

About You

3. The respondent should use this space to provide the Commission with a little detail about who is making the submission, whether it is the full Council, Officers on behalf of the Council, a political party or group, or an individual.

   The full Council approved this submission at its extraordinary meeting held on 817 December 2020.

Reason for Review (Request Reviews Only)

4. Please explain the authority's reasons for requesting this electoral review; it is useful for the Commission to have context. *NB/ If the Commission has identified the authority for review under one if its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

   N/A

Local Authority Profile

5. Please provide a short description of the authority and its setting. This should set the scene for the Commission and give it a greater understanding of any current issues. The description may cover all, or some of the following:
   • Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?
   • Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?
   • Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?
   • Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

The Borough of Guildford was formed in 1974 under the Local Government Act 1972 from the former Guildford Borough Council and the former Guildford Rural District Council. It has borders with five other Surrey Boroughs/Districts and one Hampshire Borough.

Guildford has its origins growing up where the River Wey flows through the North Downs ridge. This constrains development and creates a clear sense of separation between the town and outlying settlements, protecting the highly valued environment that is a distinctive part of the borough's character. The western border of the borough lies within the Blackwater Valley.

Situated in the south west of the county, Guildford is the county town of Surrey and the urban areas of Ash and Tongham in the west of the borough are home to many of our residents, with further communities in village settlements across the borough. The wards within the borough vary between the densely populated urban areas and more sparsely populated, and in many case geographically larger, rural wards. We are within commuting distance from London and about 70 kilometres from the south coast.

Guildford is Surrey's second largest borough in the county in terms of area, covering approximately 269 square kilometres.

We are also the second most populated borough, with 151,300 residents (with a population density of 5.6 people per hectare) and an electorate of 105,000, The population is steadily growing and is predicted to reach 161,000 by 2031, and 167,000 by 2034. Much of this increase is due to the Local Plan adopted in 2019, with further significant increases expected by the end of the Local Plan period in 2034 (over 16,000 new homes). The Plan includes four strategic sites (Weyside Urban Village, Blackwell Farm, Gosden Hill Farm and the former Wisley Airfield) which are expected to deliver over 6,000 new homes by 2034, together with many significant housing developments in the urban areas and villages, and in the countryside around Ash.

The population has increased by 25% since the last review in 1998. The borough's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population is currently 14% overall (9% in 2011) including a significant Gypsy and Traveller population.

The University of Surrey is a significant asset to Guildford Borough, contributing to both the local economy and to community life. There are currently about 17,000 students at the University, over 11% of the population headcount. The borough's electorate is forecast to increase to 118,557 in 2026[1], compared to 101,811 as at December 2019[2]. Based on the current number of councillors (48), this would mean an increase of electors per councillor from 2,121 to 2,470 in 2026. The forecast number of electors per ward is shown in Annex A to this Submission. A comparison of relevant electoral data showing Guildford against its CIPFA Nearest Neighbours, including those Surrey Districts not deemed to be "Nearest Neighbours", is attached as Annex B to this Submission.

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[1] The figures are broken down to polling district level and reflect a combination of the projected changes in population derived by the LGBCE from ONS statistics, extant planning permissions, and an extrapolation of housing delivery information from the latest published Land Availability Assessment

[2] The most current electorate figure is 103,253 as at September 2020, which equates to 2,151 electors per councillor

The borough has 24 parished areas, of which 23 have a parish council. The Guildford town area is unparished.

There are 56,064 households in the Borough. This is an increase in households of 3.9% since 2011. The average household size is 2.7 people (2.43 in 2011).

Guildford is a busy town with a wide influence on its surrounding area. The M25, A3, A31 and A331 are the principal routes that connect Guildford to the rest of the Strategic Road Network. The A3 trunk road cuts through the borough and provides a direct link to London and the south coast.

The borough benefits from twelve rail stations, including Guildford railway station, the busiest in the county, which provides access to, and interchange between, four lines. These rail lines fan out to serve our other stations and destinations beyond including London Waterloo, Woking, Reading, Redhill and Gatwick Airport.

The south of the borough lies within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and surrounding land is designated as Areas of Great Landscape Value. There are Special Protection Areas (SPA) (particularly surrounding Ash), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS), local Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and nature reserves across our borough. Approximately 89% of the borough is currently located within the Metropolitan Green Belt which, taking account of anticipated development envisaged in the Local Plan, is expected to reduce to 83.5%.

Our borough has a particularly rich and varied architectural heritage with 1,200 listed buildings and 38 conservation areas. It contains 151 designated Areas of High Archaeological Potential, 37 County Sites of Archaeological Importance, 35 scheduled monuments and 10 registered parks/gardens. The borough is also home to a series of great historic country houses set within designed landscape and parklands.

Guildford is known for its historic buildings and landscapes, cultural associations and the picturesque town centre. Guildford Cathedral, the University of Surrey, the Hog's Back and Surrey Hills are dominant landmarks of our borough. We are one of the safest parts of Surrey and part of one of the safest counties in England.

Guildford town centre is a principal regional shopping centre, with a vibrant night-time economy and is the only town in Surrey to be awarded Purple Flag status.

Our residents are largely healthy and enjoy well above average life expectancy. The electorate is generally well educated, articulate, highly skilled, and well paid although there are some school pupils who achieve lower than average results in education.

House prices are high, sustained by high demand, and are considerably above the national average (average house prices are currently £231,205 across England and Wales, £439,509 in Surrey and £445,524 in Guildford). This in turn has led to a vibrant private rented sector that provides housing for those who

cannot afford to access the private sale market. There is an ongoing shortage of affordable housing, particularly for first time buyers, which in turn contributes to skill shortages in the borough. The total Guildford Borough Council housing stock is 5,210 units, with 65 new units having been added since the Housing Strategy was adopted in 2015 and planning permission for a further 103 units.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 provides a measure of deprivation based on factors such as income, employment, health, education, housing and crime. The Index ranks our borough amongst the least deprived 10 per cent of boroughs in England. Despite the borough's relative affluence, pockets of significant deprivation exist particularly in the urban wards of Friary & St Nicolas, Stoke, Westborough, and Stoughton and also in Ash Wharf ward in the west of the borough.

The local economy is one of the most competitive in the UK with a total gross value added (GVA) of over £5 billion and the number of jobs continues to grow in line with our role as a regional administrative and commercial centre. The Research Park associated with the University of Surrey forms the core of a growing cluster of high-tech industries, at the cutting-edge of innovation, which continues to create new employment opportunities.

Our rural economy accounts for 25% of all jobs and, with the improved coverage of superfast broadband, this is likely to increase. However, we do have skills shortages in some sectors and many people are unable to afford homes close to their workplace.

The borough attracts around three million visitors each year, generating an estimated £330 million in tourism income for local businesses and directly supporting around 4,500 jobs. It has an active and diverse cultural scene with established venues and organisations sitting alongside a growing fringe and festival programme.

We are fortunate that the level of unemployment in Guildford is low. Approximately 3.4% of working age adults in the borough are unemployed compared to 4.8% of working age adults nationally. The unemployment rate may increase in line with the national picture, due to loss of retail and the impact of the coronavirus emergency on the hospitality sector. However, we do have a skills shortage in some sectors and many workers are unable to afford homes close to work. This creates additional pressure to make sure that adequate provision is made for housing.

The Context for your proposal

Your submission gives you the opportunity to examine how you wish to organise and run the council for the next 15 years. The Commission expects you to challenge your current arrangements and determine the most appropriate arrangements going forward. In providing context for your submission below, please demonstrate that you have considered the following issues.

- When did your Council last change/reorganise its internal governance arrangements and what impact on effectiveness did that activity have?

- To what extent has transference of strategic and/or service functions impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery and the ability of the Council to focus on its remaining functions?
- Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?
- What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?

This submission sets out the Council's proposal to maintain the number of Borough Councillors at the present number of 48~~seek a small reduction in the number of Borough Councillors from 48 to 44, representing a reduction of nearly 10%~~. In reaching this conclusion, the Council has taken into account a number of factors:

- the Strong Leader and Executive arrangements introduced since the last review including the scrutiny and advisory committees and boards
- the necessary involvement of councillors in the regulatory functions of planning and licensing
- the Scheme of Delegation of Functions to Officers extended since the last review;
- changes in the Council's functions, and the manner by which it delivers its services since the last review;
- the technological advancements in communications and the changing way in which residents access information and services;
- increasing population of the borough and concomitant increase in electorate;
- the community role and the casework load of every councillor; and
- the financial position of the Council, and the country as a whole, particularly in the context of the coronavirus pandemic

At member level, the Council has been operating executive arrangements (leader and cabinet model) since 2001 and, following the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, adopted the so-called 'strong' leader and cabinet (England) model. Although there has been no express desire to move away from these arrangements, the Council decided in 2014 *to review all available decision-making models and to make recommendations to scrutiny, Executive and full Council on improvements to the governance arrangements*.

This review took place in 2015, which resulted in the establishment of a hybrid model of executive arrangements comprising a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee, together with two new Executive Advisory Boards (EABs) to advise and make recommendations to the Leader and Executive. The EABs' respective remits were based on the fundamental themes of the then Corporate Plan, providing an opportunity for non-Executive councillors to have a greater input in decision making and shaping, at a very early stage, key projects and policies most closely aligned to the Council's strategic priorities. In many respects, the EABs effectively perform pre-decision challenge and scrutiny of the issues prior to consideration of those issues by the Executive.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible primarily for post decision review of Executive decisions and wider external scrutiny, including the commissioning of task and finish groups. The review envisaged the Committee seeking to increase public engagement on matters of public concern through its topic selection and mode of working.

The revised governance arrangements were introduced in January 2016.

The Corporate Governance and Standards Committee is responsible for considering and commenting on the Council's audit and accounts activity, and monitoring and reviewing the Council's corporate governance activity.

The Planning Committee was reduced in size in 2017, and now has 15 members, with a further 18 substitutes. All councillors are able to address the Planning Committee on particular applications, and all have the right to call-in applications to be decided by the committee rather than delegated to officers, if they have good planning reasons for doing so.

In May 2016, the Council received a valid petition for a referendum as to whether the Council should be run in a different way by a directly elected mayor. The referendum was held in October 2016. Voters rejected the proposal by 4:1 on a turnout of just under 25%.

The Council has very recently reviewed the operation of the EABs and has agreed to retain the two EABs whose remits have been realigned to the current directorate arrangements that have been put in place as a result of the Future Guildford transformation programme (see below). Executive portfolios have also been aligned so that there is a clearer link with the directorates.

In addition to the formal committees and advisory boards, many councillors are involved in a number of working groups and task groups, which may be set up by the full Council, the Executive, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the EABs and the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee. Boards addressing strategic matters such as Climate Change, Innovation and the Local Plan are set up by the Executive and have membership drawn from across the Council.

At officer level, the Managing Director instigated a fundamental transformation programme in 2018 ("Future Guildford"), which is the most far-reaching and comprehensive approach to reorganisation that this Council has seen, involving changes to systems, structures, services, culture, and head count.

The phased (two-year) programme seeks to:
- Improve our services and customer care
- Future proof our organisation
- Modernise our services and systems
- Make us more efficient
- Deliver savings and address our financial challenges
- Create an environment where there are better development opportunities for staff
- Develop our culture into one that collectively adapts and changes to address the various challenges and issues facing us

Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?
No

What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?
The Council, as an organisation, has recognised that it cannot be complacent and must constantly strive for improvement in how it operates at all levels, including at officer and member level. The Council acknowledges the importance of training and development for both officers and councillors. The Council is accredited under the South East Employers Charter for Member Development. A cross-party steering group of councillors oversees the training and development of councillors.

The Council recognises the continuing importance of the role of non-Executive councillors in scrutiny of Executive decisions, assisting in policy and governance development through working groups and task groups, and involvement in the regulatory functions of Planning and Licensing. It is the intention of the current administration to encourage and support all councillors, both Executive and non-Executive, and from all political groups, to participate and contribute to the work of the Council. Maintaining the Council at its current size will assist that goal and maintain the Council's effectiveness in the face of an increasing population and electorate.

There has been, and still is, a perception that the executive arrangements adopted, leave backbench councillors disaffected and disengaged with the decision-making process. That feeling led to the governance review described above. However, it is clear that the levels of disaffection and disengagement would not be so acute if there were fewer councillors overall.

Council Size

6. The Commission believes that councillors have three broad aspects to their role. These are categorised as: Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership. Submissions should address each of these in turn and provide supporting evidence. Prompts in the boxes below should help shape responses.

Strategic Leadership

7. Respondents should provide the Commission with details as to how elected members will provide strategic leadership for the authority. Responses should also indicate how many members will be required for this role and why this is justified.

Topic		
	Key lines of explanation	*What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?* *The Cabinet model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?* *If the authority runs a Committee system, we want to understand why the number and size of the committees you propose represents the most appropriate for the authority.* *By what process does the council aim to formulate strategic and operational policies? How will members in executive, executive support and/or scrutiny positions be involved? What particular demands will this make of them?* *Whichever governance model you currently operate, a simple assertion that you want to keep the current structure does not in itself, provide an explanation of why that structure best meets the needs of the council and your communities.*
Governance Model	Analysis	Guildford Borough Council operates under the 'Strong Leader' and Cabinet (England) model in line with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. In common with all councils operating executive arrangements, the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive members, are the busiest councillor roles within the Council's governance structure. The Leader is elected for up to a four-year term of office at the first Selection Council meeting following the four yearly borough elections. Under the strong leader arrangements, the Leader of the Council determines the membership and portfolios of the Executive, and normally holds their own portfolio of responsibilities. This model of governance is expected to continue. Following the Borough Council elections in 2019, the Council moved politically from Conservative control to no overall control. The political balance on the Council is currently: Guildford Liberal Democrat Group: 17 Residents for Guildford and Villages Group: 16 Conservative Group: 8 Guildford Greenbelt Group: 3 Labour Group: 2 Independent: 1 Vacancy: 1

Up until September 2020, the Leader was a Liberal Democrat member. On 6 October, the Council elected a new Leader (a member from the Residents for Guildford and Villages group). The Council is now run by a joint Liberal Democrat / Residents for Guildford and Villages administration, with Executive places shared equally between the two groups.

The Council's approach to formulating strategic and operational policies has traditionally been consultative and collaborative. In general terms, councillors determine strategic policy and officers develop the operational policies that will deliver those strategic outcomes.

Following the Borough Council elections in May 2019, the new Executive gave an indication of their future strategic priorities for the Council. From the ideas and proposals submitted and following further discussions with councillors, a list of draft priorities was developed across the four following strategic themes:

> Climate Change and Environment
> Housing and Community
> Economy and Regeneration
> Improved Council

The themes and draft priorities formed the basis of discussions at a workshop for all councillors held in November 2019. The workshop focussed on defining the outcomes and impacts that the Council would most wish to deliver.

In January 2020, the views of a joint meeting of the EABs were sought in respect of the proposed new draft corporate priorities and the outline timetable for developing a new corporate plan in order to support the Council with the development of new corporate priorities and a corporate plan to provide the strategic framework for managing its business and resources effectively. The Executive considered those views and made an appropriate change to one of the draft priorities as a result and agreed a process and timetable for the production of a new corporate plan involving a councillor working group to oversee the process, which included public consultation and stakeholder engagement. However, the Covid pandemic has prevented us from moving this process forward.

The governance review of 2015 referred to above explored *all available decision-making models.* The Council was not convinced by the case for formal governance change away from the leader and cabinet model. The Council supported a mixed-model or hybrid approach that essentially combined the leader and cabinet system with two EABs and a streamlined overview and scrutiny function. The advantages of a mixed-model approach included achieving

desired outcomes through a relatively quick route that also retained flexibility to introduce further change if and when needed (and left open the option of a formal change if desired).

Portfolios	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How many portfolios will there be?* ➢ *What will the role of a portfolio holder be?* ➢ *Will this be a full-time position?* ➢ *Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions?*
	Analysis	Since 2001, the size of the Executive at Guildford has fluctuated irregularly from between eight and ten members. The Executive currently comprises a total of eight lead councillors (including the Leader and Deputy Leader), four each from the two largest groups. Their portfolio titles and areas of responsibility are as follows:

Councillor	Areas of Responsibility
Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Service Delivery	Customer Service, Governance including corporate Health and Safety, Future Guildford, Human Resources, Partnerships, Web Services.
Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Housing and Development Control	Housing, Homelessness, housing standards (HMOs, private rented sector), Development Control and Enforcement, Public Relations and Communications
Lead Councillor for Resources	Finance, Commercial Asset Management, Procurement
Lead Councillor for Climate Change	Innovation, Strategic Planning, Sustainable Transport, Housing Delivery
Lead Councillor for Community	Health, Wellbeing, Access and Disability, Safety, grants and voluntary services, Careline, Handyperson, Care and Repair
Lead Councillor for Economy	Economic Development, Social Enterprise, Rural Economy, Heritage and Community Assets
Lead Councillor for Regeneration	Town Centre MasterPlan, Infrastructure, Major Projects, Strategic Asset Management
Lead Councillor for Environment	Waste, Licensing (including Health and Safety regulation), Parking, Parks and Leisure, Arts and Tourism, Bereavement, Environmental Health and Protection.

The Lead Councillor's role is not considered to be full time. However, it is necessary for all Lead Councillors to make a substantial time commitment to properly carry out their roles. Lead Councillors have established panels and working groups to progress key issues/projects, which include non-Executive councillors. There are currently 15

working groups. During the last review of councillors' allowances (2019), we surveyed all councillors on various matters including an approximate indication of the number of hours they spent each month on their various duties as a councillor. On average, Executive members spent 88 hours per month on their duties. <u>The workload of the Executive members means that those in full time employment are unlikely to be able to take on these roles; if there are fewer councillors it may be difficult to find suitable members to fill the Executive places.</u>

The Executive meets formally on a monthly basis, with each meeting preceded by an informal Liaison meeting with the Corporate Management Team for the purpose of briefing the Executive on forthcoming business and matters of a strategic nature. Lead Councillors also hold monthly meetings/briefings with relevant directors and service leaders

In addition to the formal Executive meetings, the Lead Councillors are expected to represent the Council on bodies outside of the Council. As senior representatives of the Council, Lead Councillors are called upon to participate in partnership and regional bodies, as well as certain voluntary organisations. The demands made by these bodies vary but are nevertheless a significant call upon the time of Lead Councillors.

Importantly, Lead Councillors are expected to attend meetings of EABs whenever matters coming within the areas of portfolio responsibility are being discussed and at most Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings a Lead Councillor attends to answer questions on any matters within their portfolio.

Most executive decisions taken by councillors are dealt with collectively by the Executive. However, there is a small number of powers delegated to individual Lead Councillors, as set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

The Executive has established the Executive Shareholder and Trustee Committee specifically to discharge the shareholder and trustee functions of the Council. The Committee generally meets on an ad hoc basis, but at least once annually to receive an annual report and annual accounts from the Council's Companies (Guildford Borough Council Holdings Ltd and North Downs Housing Ltd) and a number of Charities. The Committee comprises five Executive councillors including the Leader, who is the chairman.

In 2016, the Council established and wholly owns the holding company which, in turn, owns North Downs Housing Ltd (see page 24 below for details of NDH's objectives). The board of the housing company currently includes two councillors and the board of the holding company includes one councillor. Both boards meet approximately 5-6 times each year.

		What does this mean for future Council size?
		The Council will continue to operate a Leader and Cabinet model, with up to ten Councillors forming the Executive. The Leader and Executive Portfolio Holder roles are substantial and require the Councillors to contribute significant time and effort. These roles, including an Executive size of ten to accommodate anticipated further increases in workloads, need to be factored into the future size of the Council.
Delegated Responsibilities	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?* ➢ *How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions?*
	Analysis	The functions and responsibilities of the full Council, Executive, the Council's committees, and officers are set out in Part 3 of the *Council's Constitution*: The scheme of delegation to officers is a mix of both executive and non-executive powers. All matters outside of the remit of officer delegations are determined collectively by the Executive (or by lead councillors in a very small number of cases) in respect of all executive functions; and by full Council, or certain committees and sub-committees in respect of non-executive functions. In addition, a limited number of executive and non-executive functions are delegated to the Guildford Joint Committee, which comprises ten borough councillors, and the ten county councillors representing the ten county divisions in the borough. Up to 10 Executive councillors may be involved in taking major (key) decisions. Major decisions involving the budget and policy framework are reserved to full Council. The number of councillors on each of the committees and the number of meetings each year are currently as follows:

Committee	No. of Councillors	No. of Meetings p.a.
Service Delivery EAB:	12	6
Strategy and Resources EAB:	12	6
Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	12	7
Corporate Governance & Standards:	7	6
Licensing Committee:	15	6
Planning Committee:	15	13
Employment Committee:	3	Ad hoc (average: 4)

There are 86 committee seats in total (excluding the Executive but including the Joint Committee), which currently averages at 1.8 seats per councillor. However, at any given time, the range of committee memberships per

		councillor can range from 0 to 4 dependent on individual circumstances. Substitutes are permitted on all committees, except the Executive and the Licensing Committee. ~~We acknowledge that a small reduction in the number of councillors to 44 will mean that the average number of seats on committees per councillor will increase marginally, but manageably to just under two.~~ All meetings (with the exception of the Employment Committee and the Licensing sub-committees) meet during the evening. However, a significant number of task group/working group meetings and group leaders' meetings are held in the daytime, which means that certain councillor roles require greater flexibility in terms of time commitment.

Accountability

8. Give the Commission details as to how the authority and its decision makers and partners will be held to account. The Commission is interested in both the internal and external dimensions of this role.

Topic	
Internal Scrutiny	The scrutiny function of authorities has changed considerably. Some use theme or task-and-finish groups, for example, and others have a committee system. Scrutiny arrangements may also be affected by the officer support available.
Key lines of explanation	➢ *How will decision makers be held to account?* ➢ *How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?* ➢ *How many task and finish groups will there be? And what will their functions be? What time commitment will be involved for members? And how often will meetings take place?* ➢ *How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?* ➢ *Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.* ➢ *Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value.*
Analysis	The Leader/Executive is responsible for the discharge of the executive functions of the Council, with the remaining councillors responsible for setting the budget and policy framework within which the Leader/Executive must operate, supporting policy development, and scrutinising the performance of the Leader/Executive. All councillors may be involved in non-Executive functions.

As mentioned above, we currently have one Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee, comprising 12 non-Executive councillors, which is able to hold decision makers to account by performing its statutory scrutiny role of calling in decisions taken by the Executive for review. The functions of the Committee are set out in Article 8 of the Council's Constitution

The establishment of the two EABs following the governance review in 2015 referred to above, also provided a means by which backbench councillors can exert pre-decision scrutiny of matters prior to consideration by the Executive. The functions of the EABs are set out in part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

The O&S Committee and EABs ensure that their level of activity is manageable through their joint bi-monthly work programme meetings, following which the O&S Committee and EABs approve their respective updated work programmes. The O&S Committee and EABs are able to set up their own task and finish groups, although in the past three years only the O&S Committee has done this, examples of which are:

- Air Quality Monitoring
- Food Poverty
- Implications of Changes to Policing in Surrey
- Older people's services
- On-Street Parking

Any councillor may suggest topics for review by an O&S task and finish group. Dependent on the complexity of the topic selected for review by a task and finish group, each group may need to meet on up to five occasions in order to gather and assimilate sufficient evidence on which to base recommendations in a final report to the Executive/Council, or other decision-maker.

Membership of O&S task groups is determined by the O&S Committee after it has scoped a review. Such groups tend to comprise up to six councillors.

The O&S Committee is chaired by a councillor who is not from the majority political group, or a chairman of any other committee. The volume of work considered by the O&S Committee is expected to remain manageable for the foreseeable future.

The 2015 governance review also acknowledged that the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee undertook, as part of its terms of reference, significant monitoring and reviewing of the Council's corporate governance and audit and accounts activities. The review recognised the importance of this committee to the Council, particularly in the way in which it

supported the overview and scrutiny function through ongoing scrutiny of financial matters, including an expanded remit on the treasury management function and budget monitoring.

What does this mean for future Council size?

We anticipate that the Council will continue to operate with one O&S Committee and two EABs for the foreseeable future. ~~Although t~~There is currently a total of 36 seats on the O&S Committee and the two EABs, together with 7 seats on the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee. ~~on the basis that~~ Typically, non-Executive councillors can normally expect to be appointed to up to two ~~more than one~~ committees. There are also 30 seats on the regulatory committees (Planning and Licensing), most of which will be occupied by non-Executive councillors. ~~W~~we therefore believe that provision for ~~up to 20~~at least 38 non-Executive councillors performing these roles needs to be factored in to the future size of the Council to ensure thorough internal scrutiny and effective decision-making.

| **Statutory Function** | This includes planning, licensing and any other regulatory responsibilities. Consider under each of the headings the extent to which decisions will be delegated to officers. How many members will be required to fulfil the statutory requirements of the council? |

| | *Key lines of explanation* | ➢ *What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?*
➢ *Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?*
➢ *Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?*
➢ *Will executive members serve on the planning committees?*
➢ *What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members?* |

Planning

Analysis

The Council has a single, borough-wide Planning Committee comprising 15 councillors. Prior to May 2017, the membership of the Committee was 23. The functions of the Committee are set out in part 3 of the Council's Constitution. Details of the total number of planning applications received each year since 2016, the number determined in each of those years by the Planning Committee, the percentage of applications determined by the Committee and the average number of applications dealt with at a meeting are set out in the table below:

Year	Total No. of applications received	No. determined by Planning Committee	% of applications determined by Planning Committee	Average no. of applications considered at each meeting (no. of meetings in year)
2016	2,015	98	4.9	5.4 (18)
2017	1,983	77	3.9	5.1 (15)

2018	1,962	58	3	4.8 (12)
2019	1,710	73	4.3	5.6 (13)
2020 (to 30/09/20)	1,225	43	3.5	4.3 (10)

There are no plans to introduce area planning committees.

Executive councillors have served, currently serve, and we anticipate will continue to serve, as members of the Planning Committee. The number of Executive councillors serving on the Planning Committee has varied from between two and four on the Committee in the past.

Ward councillors, who are not members of the Planning Committee, can speak at meetings on planning applications and, in common with other committees, members of the public are also allowed to address the Committee. There have been no occasions when a meeting has not been quorate.

The Council currently operates a 4-weekly cycle for the Planning Committee in order to meet statutory timescales for determining planning applications. Major applications are required to be determined within 13 weeks and all other applications need to be determined within 8 weeks. The Government closely monitors the speed of decision-making for every Local Authority and is able to place Authorities which fail to make decisions within the statutory timescale into special measures.

The borough's residents who are generally well-educated and very articulate, have always taken a very keen interest in the work of the Planning Committee, which is by far the committee with the highest levels of public attendance at meetings and webcast views.

Planning is a matter of considerable importance for both councillors and residents. There is often a high degree of sensitivity attached to planning applications and many give rise to distinct and polarised opinion. Planning Committee Members are also aware that an erroneous decision can see substantial costs awarded against the Council and know that litigation is an option open to aggrieved parties. In these circumstances, the Council expects a high level of professionalism from all councillors serving on the Planning Committee, both full members and substitutes, and extensive and thorough training is provided for all members and refreshed regularly. No councillor can sit on the Planning Committee unless they have completed at least the basics training. Membership of the Committee brings with it significant responsibility.

		While the Council operates a comprehensive scheme of Officer Delegation in relation to development management, the applications referred to Committee are invariably controversial locally, which means that the work of councillors serving on the Committee is onerous. Planning matters and enquiries make up a significant proportion of work for Ward Members. For the future, the Development Management service and the Planning Committee are likely to face more pressure in particular when applications in respect of the strategic sites identified in the Local Plan come forward and, more generally, when the economic outlook improves. The Council has invited the Local Government Association to conduct a peer review of the operations and procedures of the Planning Committee (which took place in November 2020). The review explored a number of aspects of the Committee, for example, the size of the committee including ward representation and the voting rights of councillors for applications in their wards; and various probity, procedural, and conduct issues.
Licensing	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?* ➢ *And what will be the time commitment for members?* ➢ *Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?* ➢ *Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them?*
	Analysis	The Licensing Committee comprises 15 councillors and is scheduled to meet six times each year and is responsible for all functions of the licensing authority as prescribed by the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, together with other relevant licensing and registration functions (e.g. taxi and private hire licensing). The functions of the Committee are set out in part 3 of the Council's Constitution. There have been no occasions when a meeting has not been quorate. No councillor can sit on the Licensing Committee unless they have completed the appropriate training. The Committee has two Sub-Committees, which meet during the daytime on an ad hoc basis. **The Licensing Sub-Committee** considers contested applications for premises licences, club premises certificates, temporary events notices and personal licences in the Borough in respect of the sale and/or supply of alcohol and the provision of regulated entertainment and late-night refreshments, where relevant representations have been made. The **Licensing Regulatory Sub-Committee** determines contested licensing applications (other than those that are referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee) and disciplinary matters within the purview of the Licensing Committee in accordance with the Council's policies. The bulk of the work of this Sub-Committee deals with errant taxi and private hire drivers. Both Sub-Committees comprise three councillors, who are drawn on a panel basis from the membership of the parent Licensing Committee, as required. The Council appoints the membership of the Committee in May each year and also a

number of designated sub-committee chairmen, from the committee membership. Details of the number of occasions both Sub-Committees have been convened since 2016 are set out in the table below.

Year	Licensing Sub-Committee:	Licensing Regulatory Sub-Committee:
2016	6	5
2017	1	4
2018	4	7
2019	4	6
2020 (to date)	4	3

	Key lines of explanation	➢ *What will they be, and how many members will they require?* ➢ *Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers.*
Other Regulatory Bodies	Analysis	The Council has established the **Corporate Governance and Standards Committee**, which meets at least on six occasions annually and comprises seven councillors, and three co-opted independent members, and three co-opted parish council representatives. The Committee's main areas of responsibility are Audit and Accounts; Corporate Governance; and Ethical Standards activities. The Committee's role, functions, and terms of reference are set out in Article 10 and in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. Only one Lead Councillor may be appointed to the Committee (except the lead councillor with portfolio responsibility for finance/resources), and that Lead Councillor cannot be elected chairman or vice-chairman. The Committee has two sub-committees – **Assessment Sub-Committee** and **Hearings Sub-Committee** which meet on an ad hoc basis; the former to conduct an assessment as to whether a code of conduct complaint should proceed to formal investigation, informal resolution, or no further action taken, and the latter to conduct a hearing to determine complaints following completion of a formal investigation which has found that the subject member has breached the code of conduct. The Sub-Committees each comprise five councillors who are appointed on a politically balanced basis from the parent committee by the Monitoring Officer. The Sub-Committees have each met on three occasions. The Council has also established an **Employment Committee,** comprising three councillors, at least one of whom must be an Executive member. The Committee's terms of reference are also set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. The Committee meets on an ad hoc basis and has met on 22 occasions since 2015.

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What does this mean for future Council size?

The **Planning Committee** has a higher level of business than any other Regulatory Committee. This volume of business, combined with the requirement to attend site visits and deal with a significant number of enquiries and representations from residents, make this a high volume of work for councillors. It is therefore important to allocate Councillor capacity to complete this role within the proposal.

All councillors have some involvement in planning applications which affect their ward, with the responsibility of calling applications to committee when appropriate and dealing with residents' concerns and questions.

The level of activity within **Licensing Committee** (and its Sub-Committees) is not expected to change in the future. The majority of decisions will continue to be determined under delegated powers, with only a small number of Sub-Committee meetings required to deal with contested applications. As a result, it is proposed that these functions can be undertaken alongside other Member roles.

The ~~limited~~ number of councillors directly involved in the **Corporate Governance and Standards Committee** and **Employment Committee** must be taken into account, as the workload involved in considering financial and audit issues, and undertaking governance scrutiny and advice where necessary, is considerable. ~~means that these functions can be undertaken alongside other councillor roles.~~

As mentioned above, typically, non-Executive councillors can normally expect to be appointed to up to two committees across the whole Council. There are 30 seats on the regulatory committees (Planning and Licensing), 7 seats on the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee, most of which will be occupied by non-Executive councillors, and 36 seats on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the two EABs. Given the desire to ensure that our councillors reflect, as far as possible, the demographics of the borough and that not all councillors have the time available in their busy lives to commit to being appointed to two committees, we therefore believe that provision for up to 38 non-Executive councillors performing a combination of regulatory/scrutiny/EAB roles needs to be factored into the future size of the Council to ensure that these important functions are carried out effectively.

~~Although, the total number of seats on the Regulatory Committees is 40, on the basis that councillors normally expect to be appointed to more than one committee, we believe that provision for up to 24 councillors performing these roles, needs to be factored in to the future size of the Council.~~

External Partnerships	Service delivery has changed for councils over time, and many authorities now have a range of delivery partners to work with and hold to account.
Key lines of explanation	➢ *Will council members serve on decision-making partnerships, sub-regional, regional or national bodies? In doing so, are they able to take decisions/make commitments on behalf of the council?* ➢ *How many councillors will be involved in this activity? And what is their expected workload? What proportion of this work is undertaken by portfolio holders?* ➢ *What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload?*
Analysis	The Council, along with Surrey County Council, established the Guildford Joint Committee in 2018 (see above) involving ten borough councillors, at least one of whom must be an Executive member (currently three). The decisions taken by the Joint Committee in respect of borough council functions delegated to it are binding on the Council. The Joint Committee has met formally on a quarterly basis, and meets informally in between formal meetings. It is not expected that the workload of the Joint Committee will change in the foreseeable future. The Leader represents the Council on the Surrey Leaders' Group, which provides a political forum where leaders can come together to discuss strategic issues and act as a strong representative body for local government in Surrey. The Leader also represents the Council on the following bodies: • Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership Board and Programme Management Group • Local Government Association • South East England Councils • Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board One councillor represents the Council on the Surrey Police and Crime Panel, which meets on six occasions per annum. Outside Bodies: Following a review in 2017, the Council agreed to appoint councillors for a four-year term to 34 external organisations ranging from local charitable, educational, cultural, environmental, sports/recreational, and statutory organisations to a hospital trust and local authority partnerships. Councillors are appointed In 1998 when the Council was last reviewed, we appointed councillors annually to a total of 74 external organisations, ranging from local charitable, educational, cultural, environmental, sports/recreational, and statutory organisations. In many cases, up to three councillors would be appointed a single organisation. Following a review in 2017, we now appoint councillors to a much lower number of local external organisations, but for a four-year term, with a single councillor being appointed to each of them. In 2019, following the borough council elections, there were 34 such appointments in various capacities, for example as director/board members,

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governors, trustees, or in an advisory capacity. ~~These organisations range from charitable organisations, hospital trust, local authority partnerships, sporting and cultural organisations.~~

The workload associated with the<u>se</u> appointments varies considerably, though would normally involve the attendance of the Councillor at between 4 and 6 meetings a year at different venues in the Borough/County. As part of the 2017 review, the Council agreed to appoint one councillor <u>(and a substitute)</u> to such external organisations that:

- Support the Council's Corporate priorities, and/or
- Assist in delivery of Council services, and/or
- Are using Council facilities

Each external organisation is asked to complete a 'person profile' to ensure that the appointment is a suitable match to the requirements of the organisation and the capacity of the individual councillor in terms of skills, experience and time commitment.

In addition, at the invitation of the Surrey Leaders' Group, the Council submits annual nominations for appointment of district/borough council representatives on various external Surrey wide organisations. Such appointments are normally for a period of three years.

There are also organisations to which Portfolio Holders are appointed such as the Surrey Waste Partnership.

Community Involvement

9. The Commission understands that there is no single approach to community leadership and that members represent, and provide leadership to, their communities in different ways. The Commission wants to know how members are required to provide effective community leadership and what support the council offers them in this role. For example, does the authority have a defined role and performance system for its elected members? And what support networks are available within the council to help members in their duties?

Topic		Description
Community Leadership	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?* ➢ *Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?* ➢ *How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?*

		➢ Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies? *➢ Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident's association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?* *➢ Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils? Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making?*
	Analysis	The Council operates in a three-tier local government structure, with Surrey County Council as the upper tier authority, and 23 Parish Councils representing our local communities except in the Guildford town urban area. Of our 48 councillors, 4 are also county councillors and 7 are parish councillors, and one is "triple hatted". We do not have any area committees. One of the key reasons individuals become a Councillor is the role they can play in the community, seeking improvements for local residents. It is therefore understandable that a significant proportion of their time is spent on engaging with their residents and issues within their ward. The actual time commitment will vary significantly between Councillors, dependent on their other responsibilities, the nature of the area they represent and the number of Councillors for that ward. Most Councillors are proactively involved within their wards as opposed to simply responding to case work and consider that they play an active part within their communities. The approach they take varies from member to member, but most Councillors are involved in some or all of the following: • Holding surgeries – dealing with queries, providing advice and engaging with residents; • Receiving and responding to communications from residents by phone, email, ward websites and social media; • Consulting and keeping residents informed on council matters via email, newsletters, ward Facebook pages and social media; • Attending Parish Council meetings and working with them on community issues; • Attending meetings of residents' associations/local community groups within their wards, and working with them on community issues; • Working with, and/or offering support, to community groups and local organisations; • Engaging on social media (22 councillors have social media accounts).

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The level and methods of community engagement and leadership undertaken is at the discretion of each Councillor. ~~The main purpose of the Ward Councillor in these settings is to listen to the views of the parish council, residents' group, or individual residents and, where appropriate, represent those views within the Council.~~

Through all these mechanisms, councillors are able to explain the Council's policies and actions and to represent the views of the residents of their ward in their work on the Council. This is the basic democratic accountability role of ward councillors. At present, each of the 48 councillors represents on average 2151 electors; this number is set to increase to 2470 electors by 2026.

In addition, the Council appoints three 'Champions' to act as a positive focus for the local community at elected Member level in respect of the following:

- Armed Forces
- Historic Environment and Design
- Older Persons

This requires an additional time commitment by these Members in addition to their community representative role and as members of committees, panels and working groups.

The Council provides a range of support to Councillors to assist them with their role. Following the Borough Council elections in 2019, all new and returning councillors were provided with:
- A portable lap top device to allow them to access Council systems and applications
- Mobile telephones for The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Executive members, chairmen, and group leaders
- a handbook Guide to Being a Councillor; and
- a full induction programme, followed by ongoing training and development opportunities, including briefings on various matters, through their four-year term.

Casework	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?* ➢ *What support do members receive?* ➢ *How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?* ➢ *In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?*

	Analysis	During the last review of councillors' allowances in 2019, councillors were canvassed on their workload. Thirty councillors responded (63%). The responses showed that most backbench councillors reported working an average of 50 hours per month on their range of duties, with Executive councillors spending an average of 88 hours per month on their range of activities and responsibilities. For ward/casework, all councillors averaged at around 22 hours per month. The casework load is not spread evenly across all wards and the load on some councillors is greater than others. However, most councillors have a significant casework load, albeit of different types, for example casework can include housing issues, council tax problems, council services such as waste collection and recycling, and planning problems as applicant or affected neighbour. Some problems are specific to particular wards, for example flooding issues, supporting university students (many of whom are not actually on the electoral register), and supporting the borough's Gypsy and Traveller community. Many borough councillors have full-time jobs and they have to fit in this casework with those jobs, the meetings they prepare for and attend and their family lives. The Council wants to attract younger councillors, including those with young families, so we need to make sure that the workload is not excessive. It is clear that councillors deal with their caseloads in a variety of ways. ~~Overall,~~ In some cases, councillors ~~seek~~will be able to assist their residents directly or simply point them to the appropriate help, ~~though will seek~~ but often they will need to seek the assistance of officers sometimes acting as mediators to help resident and officer appreciate each other's point of view ~~where necessary~~. In the majority of cases, the councillors will remain engaged until the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the resident. Councillors feel the public are more aware of them and their role along with a greater expectation of assistance and more opportunities for people to contact them. Email and social media provide the public with much greater access to them and there is a consequent expectation of immediate response to complaints/enquiries. Advancements in technology since the last electoral review can lead to efficiencies, but also raise residents' expectations of immediate action, seven days a week. ~~have brought about significant efficiencies for dealing with casework~~. It is also important to reflect that councillors are seen more and more as advocates for their community and can get involved in issues that are not directly related to council services but serve and are of benefit to a wider public interest. The widespread use of ICT and other channels of communication have reduced the need for residents to rely on Councillors for information about council services – for example, residents no longer need to contact their Councillor to find out about meetings as minutes and agendas are published online. Information about council services is available 24/7

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		through the Council's website and the public can carry out a wide variety of transactions with the Council online. However, not everyone is able to access online services, particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable people, and some elderly residents are not at home with the internet and need assistance.

Other Issues

10. Respondent may use this space to bring any other issues of relevance to the attention of the Commission.

When the Council was last reviewed in 1998, we operated the committee system of decision making, which involved three programme committees[3] together with an overarching Policy and Resources Committee[4]. Each of the committees, which comprised of 20 councillors each on the Arts & Recreation and Housing & Health Committees, 17 on the Building & Works Committee, and 16 on the Policy and Resources Committee, had their own delegated powers and budgets. However, in certain cases, decisions required multiple reports to various committees in order to consider all aspects of service and resource implications. In most cases, the types of decision those committees took then were decisions that, today, would be taken by an Executive comprising of a maximum of ten councillors.
.
The Local Government Act 2000 was introduced in order to address the silo approach to decision making under the committee system, to make the decision makers more accountable for their decisions, and to streamline and speed up decision-making generally by involving fewer councillors in the process.

The Leader and Cabinet system of local government only works well if there is strong backbench scrutiny and challenge. The Council believes that scrutiny and challenge is becoming an increasingly important role and bringing a significant additional workload for councillors. The adoption of the Local Plan in 2019, which makes provision for up to 16,000 new homes in the borough over the plan period, has increased significantly the workload of all councillors with a greater number of major planning applications coming forward, the production and scrutiny of the second part of the Local Plan - Development Management Policies, more Supplementary Planning Documents required to provide clarity and amplification of local plan policy, all of which provide a constant stream of correspondence from residents.

If councillors are to perform their roles of scrutiny and challenge effectively, they need time to carry out research and prepare for meetings as well as reading through the papers and sitting in the meetings themselves. Maintaining councillor numbers to enable that is important to achieving effective scrutiny and challenge.
It is clear then, with a maximum of ten councillors involved in making key decisions under executive arrangements, we do not need as many councillors as we did under the former committee system.

---

[3] Arts & Recreation, Building & Works, and Housing & Health
[4] together with the usual regulatory committees

Alongside the Leader and Cabinet model, the Council adopted a new Constitution to support efficient and effective decision making. The Council's Constitution was based upon the model Constitution produced by the Secretary of State at the time the Local Government Act 2000 was enacted. This included an expanded scheme of delegation to support streamlined decision making. As well as a different governance structure, the size and shape of the Council's services have changed since the last review:

- We have outsourced a number of services – for example, leisure management, and G Live (our entertainment venue)
- Although we have retained our housing stock, we have sought alternative means by which we can deliver affordable housing. For example, in 2016, we established North Downs Housing Limited to be the housing trading arm of Guildford Borough Council, whose objectives are to identify housing need in the borough; increase provision for lower income households; generate a financial return, accelerate development of brownfield land in the borough and deliver homes for rent and sale. As at 31 March 2020, NDH owned 40 residential properties.
- We are currently undertaking a fundamental transformation programme (Future Guildford) to redesign the manner in which we deliver services to our residents
- New legislation introduced since the last review has also changed how we deliver services and the councillors' role in that regard, for example the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005

However, restructuring, outsourcing and new ways of working does not reduce the responsibility on all councillors for thorough, well-informed decision-making and effective scrutiny. Providing assistance to residents is still necessary as before – it makes little difference to a resident with problems with a council service if that service is provided in-house or out-sourced, and in fact problems with out-sourced services can be more difficult to resolve.

In proposing a reduction from 48 to 44 councillors, the Council has recognised the need to make its contribution towards the challenging savings required over the next three to four years and beyond. This is important not only in itself, but as a positive signal to staff and to the public. Identifiable savings that could be achieved through a reduction in Council size to 44, would be in the order of £30,000 p.a. whilst the level of engagement and representation is maintained.

Although minor financial savings could be made by reducing the number of councillors, it is the Council's view that it is more important to ensure good decision-making through effective scrutiny, together with strong community engagement and representation, through maintaining the number of councillors at the present level.

Finally, it is important to recognise the changes in wider society. Service and communication technology has changed dramatically. The internet and social media have created new opportunities for residents to self-serve, access information and request services. Electronic communications have replaced letters as the main communication channel for residents contacting their councillors.

The Council recognises that adjustment of ward boundaries will be necessary whilst maintaining the number of councillors at 48, since the uneven increase in the electorate by 2026 will result in even more wards with an electoral variance of 10% or more, as can be seen in Annex A. Given the expected significant increase in the size of Guildford's electorate to 2026 and beyond, if adjustments in councillor numbers are necessary to achieve appropriate ward boundaries,

this should be by increasing rather than decreasing the number of councillors. To illustrate this, we would refer to the last review in 1998, in which the Commission recognised that the level of housing development in the Merrow and Burpham area and associated increase in electorate had led to significant under-representation, which the Commission addressed by creating two separate wards for Merrow and Burpham, which resulted in a net increase of two councillors in that area.

Summary

11. In following this template respondents should have been able to provide the Commission with a robust and well-evidenced case for their proposed council size; one which gives a clear explanation as to the number of councillors required to represent the authority in the future. Use this space to summarise the proposals and indicate any other options considered. Explain why these alternatives were not appropriate in terms of their ability to deliver effective Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership.

Alternatives:

In considering the appropriate ~~a~~ Council size ~~smaller than the 44 that we are suggesting, we have looked at the implications of reducing the number of councillors further to 42~~ we have looked at the implications of reducing the number of councillors to fewer than 48 but~~, on balance,~~ feel that this would not provide sufficient Councillor capacity to undertake the range of roles set out in this proposal or offer sufficient community leadership. It is also recognised that the Borough will continue to see significant population growth and, therefore, ~~an increase~~a reduction ~~in electorate~~ in number of councillors would result in an increase in electorate represented by each councillor and an increase in councillor workload in terms of casework and community leadership.~~.~~

In considering a Council size larger than the current 48, we have looked at the implications of ~~both the status quo and~~ increasing the number of councillors to 50 but feel that the existing Council size ~~had been established for a very different governance structure. There is a significantly more streamlined decision-making process in place now and the Council's structure and services have also undergone, and are currently undergoing, significant change.~~has worked reasonably well under the revised governance structure. The financial implications of increasing councillor numbers would not be justified in the current difficult financial climate. ~~Whilst there has been an increase in population and electorate since the 1998 review, it is not felt that these governance and structure changes justify the status quo or an increase in Council size.~~

Conclusion

~~Given that~~ Tthe aims of the review are to enable the Commission to recommend electoral arrangements, including council size, which are appropriate for Guildford, and ensure that the Council has the right number of councillors to take decisions, ~~and~~to manage the business of the council in an effective way now and in the future, and to enable councillors to fully represent their residents and provide community leadership. Given the expected increase in the size of the electorate up until 2026 and beyond, the Council has concluded that maintenance of the size of the Council at the current 48 councillors is the prudent course, to ensure: ~~the small reduction in the Council size to 44 would achieve these aims but without:~~

- ~~adversely affecting~~ the needs of constituents will continue to be met and ~~or~~ councillors will be able ~~' ability~~ to fulfil their roles as strategic or community leaders, and~~or~~

- ~~impacting on~~ the Council's ability to deliver its services ~~or~~and to deliver effective scrutiny, regulation and partnership working will not be diminished.

We have made the case in this Submission for 38 non-Executive councillors plus a maximum of 10 Executive councillors, to justify maintaining the Council size at 48. As stated above, even though there are currently eight Executive councillors, we anticipate that their increasing workloads to deal with the significant challenges facing the borough and major developments in the pipeline will mean that we are likely to need to revert to ten in the not too distant future.

The Council also wishes to continue with all-out elections every four years.

Ward	Polling District	Electorate 2020	2026 Electorate Forecast	Difference
Burpham	A1	2,222	2,314	92
Burpham	A2	2,101	2,217	116
Christchurch	B1	1,583	2,017	434
Christchurch	B2	2,835	2,915	80
Friary & St Nicolas	C1	1,689	1,755	66
Friary & St Nicolas	C2	1,459	1,792	333
Friary & St Nicolas	C3	971	2,853	1882
Friary & St Nicolas	C4	1,776	1,919	143
Friary & St Nicolas	C5	1,053	1,081	28
Holy Trinity	D1	1,877	2,089	212
Holy Trinity	D2	3,084	3,180	96
Holy Trinity	D3	1,259	1,278	19
Merrow	E1	1,751	1,813	62
Merrow	E2	2,319	2,421	102
Merrow	E3	2,112	2,195	83
Onslow	F1	2,284	2,504	220
Onslow	F2	1,346	1,398	52
Onslow	F3	418	587	169
Onslow	F4	476	1,599	1123
Onslow	F5	1,099	1,339	240
Pilgrims	G1	401	400	-1
Pilgrims	G2	343	359	16
Pilgrims	G3	459	471	12
Pilgrims	G4	556	547	-9
Pilgrims	G5	272	288	16
Shalford	H1	766	912	146
Shalford	H2	229	397	168
Shalford	H3	309	333	24
Shalford	H4	2,024	2,096	72
Shalford	H5	930	989	59
Stoke	I1	1,144	1,175	31
Stoke	I2	2,006	2,087	81
Stoke	I3	1,376	1,729	353
Stoughton	J1	2,577	2,739	162
Stoughton	J2	1,174	1,254	80
Stoughton	J2A	434	458	24
Stoughton	J3	2,596	2,781	185
Westborough	K1	2,762	2,907	145
Westborough	K2	2,721	2,951	230
Westborough	K3	824	853	29
Worplesdon	L1	1,267	1,312	45

Appendix 1

Ward	Polling District	Electorate 2020	2026 Electorate Forecast	Difference
Worplesdon	L2	1,309	1,518	209
Worplesdon	L3	1,853	2,571	718
Worplesdon	L4	1,007	1,067	60
Worplesdon	L5	915	973	58
Clandon & Horsley	M1	209	218	9
Clandon & Horsley	M2	1,094	1,181	87
Clandon & Horsley	M3	1,044	1,104	60
Clandon & Horsley	M4	1,407	1,507	100
Clandon & Horsley	M5	1,002	1,056	54
Clandon & Horsley	M6	1,224	1,627	403
Clandon & Horsley	M7	1,055	1,095	40
Effingham	N1	1,033	1,892	859
Effingham	N2	1,065	1,093	28
Lovelace	O1	332	346	14
Lovelace	O2	1,493	2,552	1059
Lovelace	O3	119	504	385
Send	P1	3,444	3,873	429
Tillingbourne	Q1	560	596	36
Tillingbourne	Q2	904	954	50
Tillingbourne	Q3	1,516	1,560	44
Tillingbourne	Q4	861	887	26
Tillingbourne	Q5	644	675	31
Ash South & Tongham	R1	1,595	1,793	198
Ash South & Tongham	R2	2,161	3,309	1148
Ash South & Tongham	R3	1,933	2,749	816
Ash South & Tongham	R4	881	1,039	158
Ash Vale	S1	2,256	2,393	137
Ash Vale	S2	2,138	2,240	102
Ash Wharf	T1	2,034	2,120	86
Ash Wharf	T2	2,665	3,074	409
Normandy	U1	2,537	2,606	69
Pirbright	V1	2,079	2,081	2
TOTAL		103,253	118,557	15,304

Source: GBC

Annex B: Comparative electoral information (CIPFA Nearest Neighbours and Surrey districts not deemed to be "nearest neighbours"

Council	Electors	No. of wards	Council Size	Electors per councillor
Basingstoke & Deane	136,809	18	54	2,534
Brentwood	60,611	15	37	1,638
Cherwell	112,645	16	48	2,347
Elmbridge	99,781	16	48	2,079
Epping Forest	103,154	32	58	1,779
Epsom & Ewell	61,223	13	38	1,611
Guildford	**101,811**	**22**	**48**	**2,121**
Mole Valley	69,198	21	41	1,688
Reigate & Banstead	107,595	15	45	2,391
Runnymede	61,331	14	41	1,496
South Oxfordshire	109,133	21	36	3,031
Spelthorne	75,723	13	39	1,942
Surrey Heath	68,563	14	35	1,959
Tandridge	64,535	20	42	1,537
Vale of White Horse	101,632	24	38	2,675
Waverley	93,951	29	57	1,648
Winchester	90,243	16	45	2,005
Woking	74,736	10	30	2,491

Source: LGBCE (December 2019)

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Council Report

Ward(s) affected: n/a

Report of Director of Resources

Author: John Armstrong (Democratic Services and Elections Manager)

Tel: 01483 444102

Email: john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: Joss Bigmore

Tel: 07974 979369

Email: joss.bigmore@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 17 December 2020

Review of Allocation of Seats on Committees: 2020-21

Executive Summary

At its meeting on 28 July following the last review of the numerical allocation of seats on committees to the political groups, the Council agreed the allocation as set out in **Appendix 1**.

On 11 December 2020, the proper officer[1] received notice in writing from the leader of the Conservative group, Councillor Nigel Manning, that he would be happy to treat Councillors David Bilbe, Richard Billington, Graham Eyre, and Paul Spooner as members of the Conservative group, following receipt of notice in writing from each of the four councillors that they wished to be treated as members of that group. Councillor Manning also confirmed that Councillor Jo Randall was the deputy leader of the Conservative group.

These notices also had the effect of simultaneously ceasing the membership of Councillors Bilbe, Billington, Eyre, and Spooner of the Conservative Independent Group on the Council.

The political balance on the Council is now:

Guildford Liberal Democrats: 17
Residents for Guildford and Villages: 16
Conservative Group: 8
Guildford Greenbelt Group: 3
Labour: 2
Independent: 1
Vacancy: 1

Under Council Procedure Rule 23, whenever there is a change in the political constitution of the Council, the Council must, as soon as reasonably practicable, review the numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups.

This report sets out, in **Appendix 2**, the notional calculation of the numerical allocation of seats on committees based on the percentage of seats to which each political group and the independent member would be entitled when applying the normal rounding up/down rules.

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[1] the Democratic Services and Elections Manager

The notional calculation invariably requires refinement in terms of adjustments to meet the required number of members on committees etc.

Appendix 3 sets out a suggested numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups that would best meet, as far as reasonably practicable, the requirements for political balance for the remainder of the 2020-21 Municipal Year.

Recommendation to Council:

The Council is invited to consider in the light of the change in the political constitution of the Council, the proposed revision to the calculation of the numerical allocation of seats on committees for the remainder of the 2020-21 Municipal Year, which is set out in **Appendix 3** to this report.

Reason for Recommendation:
To enable the Council to comply with Council Procedure Rule 23 in respect of the appointment of committees and with its obligations under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in respect of the political proportionality on its committees.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1. **Purpose of report**

1.1 The Council is asked to review the numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups following the recent change in the political constitution of the Council.

2. **Background**

2.1 Under Council Procedure Rule 23, the Council is required to review the allocation of seats on committees to political groups at its annual Selection meeting and as soon as reasonably practicable following any change in the political constitution of the Council or as otherwise required by statute. Wherever such a review is required, the Democratic Services and Elections Manager will submit a report to the Council showing what allocation of seats would best meet, as far as reasonably practicable, the requirements for political balance.

3. **Main Considerations**

3.1 Details of the current numerical allocation of seats on the committees to the political groups, which were approved by the Council at its meeting on 28 July 2020, are shown in **Appendix 1** to this report.

3.2 On 11 December 2020, the proper officer received notice in writing from the leader of the Conservative group, Councillor Nigel Manning, that he would be happy to treat Councillors David Bilbe, Richard Billington, Graham Eyre, and Paul Spooner as members of the Conservative group, following receipt of notice in writing from each of the four councillors that they wished to be treated as members of that group. Councillor Manning also confirmed that Councillor Jo Randall was the deputy leader of the Conservative group.

3.3 These notices also had the effect of simultaneously ceasing the membership of Councillors Bilbe, Billington, Eyre, and Spooner of the Conservative Independent Group on the Council.

3.4 The political balance on the Council is now:

> Guildford Liberal Democrats: 17
> Residents for Guildford and Villages: 16
> Conservative Group: 8
> Guildford Greenbelt Group: 3
> Labour: 2
> Independent: 1
> Vacancy: 1

Reviewing the numerical allocation of seats on Committees

3.5 The first stage of the review is to make a *notional* calculation of the numerical allocation of seats based on the percentage of seats to which each political group and the independent member would be entitled when applying the normal rounding up/down rules. This notional calculation is set out in **Appendix 2**.

3.6 The **notional calculation** shows that the following adjustments are necessary:

- To increase the allocation of seats on the Corporate Governance & Standards Committee by one
- To increase the allocation of seats to the Guildford Liberal Democrat Group by one as that group is entitled to thirty-one seats overall
- To increase the allocation of seats to the Residents for Guildford and Villages Group by one as that group is entitled to twenty-nine seats overall
- To reduce the allocation of seats to the Conservative Group by one seat as that group is only entitled to fifteen seats overall
- To reduce the allocation of seats to the Guildford Greenbelt Group (GGG) by one seat as that group is only entitled to five seats overall
- To reduce the allocation of seats to the Labour Group by one as that group is only entitled to four seats overall
- To make provision for an allocation of two seats to the independent member

3.7 Taking all this into account, the second stage of the review is to agree a numerical allocation of seats to political groups on committees that addresses the need for the adjustments and meets, as far as reasonably practicable, the requirements for political balance for the remainder of the 2020-21 municipal year.

3.8 Councillors may wish to bear in mind that when the Council last reviewed the allocation of seats on committees in July 2020, following the death of Councillor Patrick Sheard and the establishment of the Conservative Independent Group, it was agreed (with no councillor voting against) to make no change to the number of seats allocated to the GGG approved by the Council at the Selection Meeting on 19 May 2020 (i.e. seven in total).

3.9 The proposed numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups referred to in **Appendix 3** makes changes only to the allocation of seats to the Conservative group, with no other group's allocation of seats affected. The Conservative group's allocation of seats would return to the allocation it had prior to the Council meeting on 28 July 2020.

4.   Legal implications

<u>Requirement for political balance and numerical allocation of seats on committees</u>

4.1   Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out how committees must be constituted when the Council is divided into one or more political groups. The Council must *give effect so far as reasonably practicable*, to the following four principles in constituting its committees:

   (a) that not all of the seats on any committee are allocated to the same political group;
   (b) that if a political group has a majority on the Council, it must have a majority of seats on all committees;
   (c) that, subject to (a) and (b) above, the number of seats allocated to a political group across all the committees must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership; and
   (d) that, subject to (a) to (c) above, the number of seats allocated to a political group on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.

4.2   Once it has determined the allocation of seats to different political groups, section 16 of the 1989 Act places a duty on the Council to allocate those seats in accordance with the wishes of the political groups.

5.   Financial Implications

5.1   There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6.   Human resource Implications

6.1   There are no human resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

7.   Equality and Diversity Implications

7.1   There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

8.   Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

8.1   There are no climate change/sustainability implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

9.   Background Papers

   None

10.   Appendices

   Appendix 1: Current numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups for 2020-21 as agreed by Council on 28 July 2020
   Appendix 2: Notional Calculation of the Numerical Allocation of Seats on Committees to political groups for the remainder of 2020-21
   Appendix 3: Draft Calculation of the Numerical Allocation of Seats on Committees to political groups for the remainder of 2020-21

Note: By reason of the special circumstances described below, the Deputy Mayor considered that this item should be dealt with at this meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Special Circumstances: Council Procedure Rule 23 requires that whenever there is a change in the political constitution of the Council, the Council must, as soon as reasonably practicable, review the numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups.

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CURRENT Numerical Allocation of Seats on Committees to political groups for the 2020-21 Municipal Year
As agreed by Council on 28 July 2020

Committee	Lib Dem	R4GV	Con	Con Ind	GGG	Lab	Ind
Total no. of seats on the Council	17	16	4	4	3	2	1
% of no. of seats on the Council	36.17%	34.04%	8.51%	8.51%	6.38%	4.26%	2.13%
Corp Gov & Standards Cttee (7 seats)	2	2	1	0	1	1	0
Employment Cttee (3 seats)	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Service Delivery EAB (12 seats)	4	5	2	0	1	0	0
Strategy and Resources EAB (12 seats)	4	4	0	1	1	1	1
Guildford Joint Cttee (10 seats)	4	3	1	1	1	0	0
Licensing Cttee (15 seats)	6	5	1	1	1	0	1
Overview & Scrutiny Cttee (12 seats)	4	4	1	1	1	1	0
Planning Cttee (15 seats)	5	5	1	2	1	1	0
Total no. of seats on committees (Total: 86)	30	29	7	7	7	4	2

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NOTIONAL Calculation of the Numerical Allocation of Seats on Committees to political groups for the remainder of the 2020-21 Municipal Year

Committee	Guildford Liberal Democrats	Residents for Guildford & Villages	Conservatives	Guildford Greenbelt Group	Labour	Independent	
Total no. of seats on the Council (1 vacancy)	17	16	8	3	2	1	Adjustment needed
% of no. of seats on the Council	36.17%	34.04%	17.02%	6.38%	4.26%	2.13%	
Notional total number of seats on committees (Total: 86)	31.11 Rounded down to 31	29.27 Rounded down to 29	14.64 Rounded up to 15	5.49 Rounded down to 5	3.66 Rounded up to 4	1.83 Rounded up to 2	
Corporate Governance & Standards Committee (7 seats)	2.53 seats rounded up to 3	2.38 seats rounded down to 2	1.19 seat rounded down to 1	0.45 seat rounded down to 0	0.3 seat rounded down to 0	0.15 seat rounded down to 0	+1
Employment Committee (3 seats)	1.09 seats rounded down to 1	1.02 seats rounded down to 1	0.51 seat rounded up to 1	0.19 seat rounded down to 0	0.13 seat rounded down to 0	0.06 seat rounded down to 0	
Service Delivery EAB (12 seats)	4.34 seats rounded down to 4	4.08 seats rounded down to 4	2.04 seats rounded down to 2	0.77 seat rounded up to 1	0.51 seat rounded up to 1	0.26 seat rounded down to 0	
Strategy & Resources EAB (12 seats)	4.34 seats rounded down to 4	4.08 seats rounded down to 4	2.04 seats rounded down to 2	0.77 seat rounded up to 1	0.51 seat rounded up to 1	0.26 seat rounded down to 0	
Guildford Joint Committee (10 seats)	3.62 seats rounded up to 4	3.4 seats rounded down to 3	1.7 seat rounded up to 2	0.64 seat rounded up to 1	0.43 seat rounded down to 0	0.21 seat rounded down to 0	
Licensing Committee (15 seats)	5.43 seats rounded down to 5	5.11 seats rounded down to 5	2.55 seats rounded up to 3	0.96 seat rounded up to 1	0.64 seat rounded up to 1	0.32 seat rounded down to 0	
Overview & Scrutiny Committee (12 seats)	4.34 seats rounded down to 4	4.08 seats rounded down to 4	2.04 seats rounded down to 2	0.77 seat rounded up to 1	0.51 seat rounded up to 1	0.26 seat rounded down to 0	
Planning Committee (15 seats)	5.43 seats rounded down to 5	5.11 seats rounded down to 5	2.55 seats rounded up to 3	0.96 seat rounded up to 1	0.64 seat rounded up to 1	0.32 seat rounded down to 0	
Total	30	28	16	6	5	0	Total: 85
Entitlement adjustment	+1	+1	-1	-1	-1	+2	

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PROPOSED Numerical Allocation of Seats on Committees to political groups for the remainder of the 2020-21 Municipal Year

Committee	Lib Dem	R4GV	Con	GGG	Lab	Ind
Total no. of seats on the Council	17	16	8	3	2	1
% of no. of seats on the Council	36.17%	34.04%	17.02%	6.38%	4.26%	2.13%
Corp Gov & Standards Cttee (7 seats)	2	2	1	1	1	0
Employment Cttee (3 seats)	1	1	1	0	0	0
Service Delivery EAB (12 seats)	4	5	2	1	0	0
Strategy and Resources EAB (12 seats)	4	4	1	1	1	1
Guildford Joint Cttee (10 seats)	4	3	2	1	0	0
Licensing Cttee (15 seats)	6	5	2	1	0	1
Overview & Scrutiny Cttee (12 seats)	4	4	2	1	1	0
Planning Cttee (15 seats)	5	5	3	1	1	0
Total no. of seats on committees (Total: 86)	30	29	14	7	4	2

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