

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL



Contact Officer:

John Armstrong,
Democratic Services and Elections Manager

2 May 2024

To the Councillors of Guildford Borough Council

You are hereby summoned to attend Part Two of the Annual Meeting of the Council ('Selection Meeting') to be held in the **Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB** on **MONDAY 13 MAY 2024** commencing at 7.00 pm.

Pedro Wrobel
Chief Executive

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 Democratic Services.

THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (2021- 2025)

Our Vision:

A green, thriving town and villages where people have the homes they need, access to quality employment, with strong and safe communities that come together to support those needing help.

Our Mission:

A trusted, efficient, innovative, and transparent Council that listens and responds quickly to the needs of our community.

Our Values:

- We will put the interests of our community first.
- We will listen to the views of residents and be open and accountable in our decision-making.
- We will deliver excellent customer service.
- We will spend money carefully and deliver good value for money services.
- We will put the environment at the heart of our actions and decisions to deliver on our commitment to the climate change emergency.
- We will support the most vulnerable members of our community as we believe that every person matters.
- We will support our local economy.
- We will work constructively with other councils, partners, businesses, and communities to achieve the best outcomes for all.
- We will ensure that our councillors and staff uphold the highest standards of conduct.

Our strategic priorities:

Homes and Jobs

- Revive Guildford town centre to unlock its full potential
- Provide and facilitate housing that people can afford
- Create employment opportunities through regeneration
- Support high quality development of strategic sites
- Support our business community and attract new inward investment
- Maximise opportunities for digital infrastructure improvements and smart places technology

Environment

- Provide leadership in our own operations by reducing carbon emissions, energy consumption and waste
- Engage with residents and businesses to encourage them to act in more environmentally sustainable ways through their waste, travel, and energy choices
- Work with partners to make travel more sustainable and reduce congestion
- Make every effort to protect and enhance our biodiversity and natural environment.

Community

- Tackling inequality in our communities
- Work with communities to support those in need
- Support the unemployed back into the workplace and facilitate opportunities for residents to enhance their skills
- Prevent homelessness and rough-sleeping in the borough

Time limits on speeches at full Council meetings:	
Public speaker:	3 minutes
Response to public speaker:	3 minutes
Questions from councillors (including supplementaries):	3 minutes
Response to supplementary questions from councillors:	3 minutes
Proposer of a motion:	6 minutes
Seconder of a motion:	4 minutes
Other councillors speaking during the debate on a motion:	4 minutes
Proposer of a motion's right of reply at the end of the debate on the motion:	4 minutes
Proposer of an amendment:	4 minutes
Seconder of an amendment:	4 minutes
Other councillors speaking during the debate on an amendment:	4 minutes
Proposer of a motion's right of reply at the end of the debate on an amendment:	4 minutes
Proposer of an amendment's right of reply at the end of the debate on an amendment:	4 minutes

AGENDA

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. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 52)

To confirm the minutes of the Budget meeting of the Council held on 7 February, and the extraordinary meetings held on 21 February and 16 April 2024.

4. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications or announcements from the Mayor.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

To receive any announcements from the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and/or Monitoring Officer.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Prior to the adoption by the Council of its new Council Procedure Rules on 16 April 2024, a number of enquiries regarding public speaking were made and the members of the public concerned were informed that this meeting of the Council would be the next opportunity for them to address the Council on general matters either related to the powers, duties or functions of the Council or matters which affect the borough.

The new Procedure Rules do not provide for public participation at the Annual Meeting (of which this meeting is the second part, following the 'Mayor Making' meeting on 8 May 2024).

It will therefore be necessary for the Council to agree to suspend Council Procedure Rule 2.2 (Business at the Annual Meeting) in order to receive questions or statements from the public on this occasion.

7. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES 2024-25 (Pages 53 - 84)

8. ANNUAL WEYSIDE URBAN VILLAGE REPORT (Pages 85 - 118)

9. MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE (Pages 119 - 140)

To receive and note the attached minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 25 January, 22 February, and 18 April 2024.

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GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Guildford Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey, on Wednesday 7 February 2024

* The Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah

* The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sallie Barker MBE

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| * Councillor Bilal Akhtar | Councillor Steven Lee |
| * Councillor Phil Bellamy | * Councillor Sandy Lowry |
| * Councillor Dawn Bennett | * Councillor Richard Lucas |
| * Councillor Joss Bigmore | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| * Councillor David Bilbe | * Councillor Richard Mills OBE |
| * Councillor Honor Brooker | * Councillor Carla Morson |
| * Councillor James Brooker | * Councillor Danielle Newson |
| * Councillor Philip Brooker | * Councillor Patrick Oven |
| Councillor Ruth Brothwell | * Councillor George Potter |
| * Councillor Yves de Contades | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Amanda Creese | * Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith |
| * Councillor Geoff Davis | * Councillor David Shaw |
| Councillor Jason Fenwick | * Councillor Joanne Shaw |
| * Councillor Matt Furniss | Councillor Katie Steel |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | * Councillor Howard Smith |
| * Councillor Lizzie Griffiths | * Councillor Cait Taylor |
| * Councillor Gillian Harwood | * Councillor Jane Tyson |
| * Councillor Stephen Hives | * Councillor James Walsh |
| * Councillor Catherine Houston | * Councillor Fiona White |
| * Councillor Tom Hunt | * Councillor Dominique Williams |
| * Councillor Bob Hughes | * Councillor Keith Witham |
| * Councillor James Jones | * Councillor Sue Wyeth-Price |
| * Councillor Vanessa King | * Councillor Catherine Young |

*Present

Honorary Freeman Keith Churchouse was also in attendance.

CO101 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ruth Brothwell, Jason Fenwick, Steven Lee, and Katie Steel; and from Honorary Aldermen Catherine

Cobley, Sarah Creedy, Jayne Marks, Terence Patrick, Tony Phillips, Lynda Strudwick, and Jenny Wicks.

CO102 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

CO103 MINUTES

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 23 January 2024 were approved as a correct record. The Mayor signed the minutes.

CO104 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that he planned to hold a multicultural Charity Gala at Holy Trinity Church, on 14 April 2024, the aim of which was to bring together, celebrate and showcase the diverse talent that existed within the borough.

Artistic Director, Nishi Joshi-Bhatt was excited to be involved with the project, and she and her group Nishi Dance Shakti would also be performing. It was hoped that the gala would attract solo artists, and groups to showcase dance, music, vocal performances, and other original acts.

Proceeds from the event would go to the Mayor's chosen charity, The Fountain Centre, and The Mayor of Guildford's Local Support Fund.

CO105 LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

Crowdfund Guildford

The Leader reported on the success of the Crowdfund Guildford scheme, which was supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and the new round of funding that was now available. The Artventure Trust had been fundraising with Crowdfund Guildford and they had met their fundraising goal to create a sensory garden for art activities, gardening and a swing chair for clients with learning disabilities. The Council had pledged £3,000 pounds towards their £10,691 goal alongside 41 other supporters in the community.

A new round of funding through crowdfund Guildford had been launched and councillors were informed that anyone with an idea that could help the community they could join the free workshop on Friday 8 March 2024, which would inform participants about the funding available including advice on how to run a crowdfund campaign.

Garden waste subscription refunds

The Leader reported that there had been significant disruption to the Council's garden waste bin service due to supply chain issues. The delay meant that we had been unable to deliver garden waste bins to some residents within the expected timeframe. Some residents that applied for a new subscription part way through the year did not receive a garden waste bin in time to make full use of the service. Consequently, it had been decided to cancel and refund in full their 2023-24 subscription.

If residents rejoined the garden waste collection service for the 2024-25 period, before 28 February, they would receive priority delivery of a new garden waste bin during March, in time for the new service year which would begin on 25 March.

Tom Horwood – Joint Chief Executive

The Leader reminded councillors that this meeting would be Tom Horwood's last Council meeting before leaving Guildford and Waverley as Joint Chief Executive. The Leader noted that Mr Horwood's calm, professional approach in leadership of the organisation would be greatly missed and expressed gratitude for his commitment and dedicated public service.

In response to a question, the Leader confirmed that the garden waste subscription refunds would be made to those persons who did not receive a bin.

CO106 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions or statements from the public.

CO107 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillor Richard Mills OBE asked the Lead Councillor for Environment and Climate Change, Councillor George Potter, the following question:

"The Risk Register at the meeting of the Guildford and Waverley Joint Governance Committee on 24th January 2024, Risk 7, page 30, accepted at that meeting, indicates that encouraging 'working from home as much as possible' is a current mitigation measure against the perceived risk that the objective of delivering net zero carbon by 2030, might not be achieved.

Will the Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change advise:

- (a) how far this policy is currently being pursued?*

- (b) *how the level of home working by Council staff has changed over the period since the end of lockdown?*
- (c) *what contribution the policy has made, or is expected to make, to the reduction of carbon emissions in the Borough?, and*
- (d) *what assessment has been made of the costs and benefits of this policy including staff productivity and service delivery?"*

The Lead Councillor's response was as follows:

"At the present time, GBC staff are allocated as either fixed or agile workers. Staff who have been identified as agile workers are expected to spend at least 50% of their time in the office.

However, that policy is currently being reviewed and the Council is looking at a number of data sources including: the approach being taken by other authorities in the region; the self-reported impact of agile working on staff health and wellbeing; and the feedback from team managers on the impact of agile working on their service delivery.

In terms of the latter, the initial review of data suggests that the Council's agile working approach has had a positive impact on recruitment, retention and, in some if not all cases, team performance. However, it is clear that it can also have a less positive impact on team cohesion if not managed carefully.

The future policy will need to respond to these concerns about team cohesion through planned, managed and structured team contact whilst also maximising the positive benefits of agile working in terms of recruitment, retention and minimising carbon emissions. The Council will consult and engage with the staff and union representatives before making any changes to the current approach. It will also consider the implications of any new policy before adopting it, including the implications on climate change.

Bearing all of this in mind, the current description of staff being encouraged to 'work at home as much as possible' is not correct in terms of the current policy and is unlikely to be correct in terms of any future policy and so I have asked officers to recommend changes to that wording that can be considered by the Joint Governance Committee in due course".

As a supplementary question, Councillor Mills asked the Lead Councillor whether he would agree that there was widespread recognition that the continuing scale

of emissions from Spectrum which meant that the chances of achieving the net zero objective were now very slight and, if that was the case, the Council would need to consider three options:

- To close Spectrum.
- To continue to pursue the net zero objective, recognising that the prospect of successfully achieving that objective with the main mitigation measure was very slight.
- To accept that the objective was now unrealistic and should not be pursued further.

In response, the Lead Councillor indicated that as this raised issues that involved other portfolios (including Leisure), he was therefore unable to provide a detailed answer, not least because work was still continuing to address and develop a plan for how the Council was going to deal with the Spectrum and its carbon emissions over the period leading up to 2030. The Lead Councillor agreed, however, that if the risk register stated that working from home was one of the mitigation measures against the impact of carbon emissions caused by Spectrum, it would seem to be unrealistic and suggested that this matter should be raised again when the risk register was updated.

CO108 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024-25

Under Sections 38 to 42 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council was required to produce an annual policy statement that covered a number of matters concerning the pay of the authority's staff, in particular the Council's approach to the pay of senior management and the lowest paid employees, and the relationship between the two. The aim behind the Pay Policy Statement was to ensure that the Council's approach to pay was transparent. The Council considered the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2024-25, which met the requirements of the Localism Act in that regard and also met the requirements of guidance issued by the Secretary of State to which the authority was required to have regard under Section 40 of the Act.

Following approval by full Council, the Pay Policy Statement would be published on the Council's website. Any subsequent amendment to this statement made during the financial year would be similarly published.

Data on pay and rewards for staff was published on the website in line with the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Community and Organisational Development, Councillor Carla Morson, seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane, the Council

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for the 2024-25 financial year, attached at Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, be approved.

Reason:

To comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 (Section 39) and associated guidance.

CO109 CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2024-25 TO 2028-29

Prior to consideration of the budget related reports, of which the Capital and Investment Strategy was the first, the interim Chief Finance Officer made a presentation to the Council, which provided information about the strategic context within which the budget had been prepared, the medium-term financial plan, the robustness of the estimates, adequacy of reserves and budget risks.

The Council considered a report on the Council's capital and investment strategy, which gave a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk was managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

Decisions made now, and during the period of the strategy on capital and treasury management would have financial consequences for the Council for many years into the future. The report therefore included details of the capital programme, any new bids/mandates submitted for approval plus the requirements of the Prudential Code and the investment strategy covering treasury management investments, service investments, and commercial investments. The report had also covered the requirements of the Treasury Management Code and the prevailing DLUHC Statutory Guidance.

Councillors noted that in order to achieve the ambitious targets within the Corporate Plan, the Council needed to invest in its assets, via capital expenditure, which was split into the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

All projects, regardless of the fund, would be funded by capital receipts, grants and contributions, reserves, and finally borrowing. When preparing the budget reports, it was not known how each scheme would be funded and, in the case of regeneration projects, what the delivery model would be. The report showed a

high-level position. The business case for each individual project would set out the detailed funding arrangements for the project.

The Council noted that some capital receipts or revenue income streams might arise as a result of regeneration schemes, but in most cases the position was currently uncertain, and it was too early at this stage to make assumptions. It was likely that there would be cash-flow implications of the development schemes, where income would come in after the five-year time horizon of the report and the expenditure incurred earlier in the programme.

The Council had an underlying need to borrow for the General Fund capital programme of £202 million between 2023-24 and 2028-29. Officers had put forward bids, with a net cost over the same period of £9.8 million, increasing this underlying need to borrow to £211.8 million should these proposals be approved for inclusion in the programme.

The capital programme included several significant regeneration schemes, which it was assumed would be financed from GF resources. Detailed funding proposals for each scheme would be considered when their Outline Business Case was presented to the Executive for approval.

The main areas of expenditure (shown gross), as set out in the report, were:

- £258 million Weyside Urban Village (WUV)
- £35 million Ash road bridge and footbridge (total gross cost £44 million, external funding, £36 million, net cost to GBC £8 million)

The report contained a summary of the new bids submitted and the position and profiling of the current programme (2023-24 to 2028-29).

The HRA capital programme was split between expenditure on existing stock and either development of or purchase of dwellings to add to the stock. A lot of work had been done on stock condition surveys and the results were being analysed with a view to having a robust stock condition assessment which provided 100% stock data over a rolling 5-year programme and allowed for effective assessment against Regulatory and legislative standards. This would allow compliance with the new building safety legislation and standards.

Improved building safety standards across social housing had resulted in a national drive to improve standards and safety. Guildford had started to respond to this and had spent a significant sum on its properties. The budget for 2024-25 and ongoing would see budgets return to more modest levels seen in the past.

The capital programme would be funded from HRA capital receipts and reserves. There was also £121 million between 2023-24 and 2028-29 included for development projects to build or acquire new housing (including WUV).

Officers had recommended the removal of the Bright Hill scheme from the HRA programme, as previously reported to Councillors, due to the change in the scope of the scheme being delivered.

The main areas of major repairs and improvement expenditure were:

- refurbishment, replacement & renewal programme of existing stock, £1.3 million, which included kitchen & bathroom upgrades, void property refurbishment and roof works,
- works to existing stock to comply with changes to standards and legislation, £3.4 million, including replacement fire doors, electrical testing and fire protection works,
- mechanical and electrical works £400,000, including central heating systems, and
- other works of £1.2 million including disabled adaptations.

The main HRA development projects included:

- Guildford Park Car Park: £39 million,
- WUV: £49 million, and
- Foxburrows: £11 million.

The Council noted that officers carried out the treasury management function within the parameters set by the Council each year and in accordance with the approved treasury management practices.

The budget for investment income for 2024-25 was £3 million, based on an average investment portfolio of £86 million, at a weighted average rate of 5%. The budget for debt interest paid was £14.8 million, of which £5.4 million related to the HRA and £7.9 million was being capitalised and added to the cost of schemes in the capital programme, which was a net cost to the General Fund of £1.5 million for the year.

The Council noted that councils could invest to support public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (service investments) or to earn investment income (commercial investments, where earning a return was the primary purpose).

Investment property (the primary purpose of which was to earn a yield) had been valued at £178 million, as per the 2022-23 unaudited Statement of Accounts, with rent receipts of £9.2 million and a yield of 5.7%. The Council was not making any future purchases solely for yield, which was in line with government guidelines. The Council had also invested £25.3 million in its housing company North Downs Housing Ltd (NDH), via 40% equity to Guildford Borough Council Holdings Ltd (£10.1 million) who, in turn, passed the equity to NDH, and 60% repayment loan direct to NDH (£15.3 million) at an interest rate of 5%. The loan was a repayment loan in line with the NDH business plan. There was no further investment planned within this capital and investment strategy.

The report had also included the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy and the Prudential Indicators and had set out the updated flexible use of capital receipts policy. This policy, if approved by the Council, would permit the use of any capital receipts received in year to be used to fund any service transformation costs incurred in the same year.

The Capital and Investment Strategy 2024-25 to 2028-29 had also been considered by the Joint Executive Advisory Board at its meeting on 11 January 2024, and by the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee at its meeting on 18 January 2024.

At its meeting on 25 January 2024, the Executive also considered this matter and endorsed the recommendation contained in the report submitted to the Council. The Executive had also resolved:

- (1) That, subject to Council approval, the new bids set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved for inclusion in the capital programme as indicated.
- (2) That the Bright Hill scheme be removed from the HRA approved and provisional programmes as previously reported to Councillors.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Finance & Property, Councillor Richard Lucas, seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane, the Council:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the General Fund and HRA capital estimates, as shown in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report submitted to the Council, as amended to include the bids approved by the Executive at its meeting on 25 January 2024, be approved.

- (2) That the Minimum Revenue Provision policy, referred to in section 9 of the report, be approved.
- (3) That the capital and investment strategy be approved, specifically the investment strategy and Prudential Indicators contained within the report and in Appendix 1 thereto.
- (4) That the updated flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 9, be approved.

Reasons:

To enable Council to approve the capital and investment strategy for 2024-25 to 2028-29, and the funding required for the new capital schemes proposed.

CO110 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2024-25

Councillors noted that the Council owned and managed over 5,200 Council Houses which it rented to tenants who qualified for social housing or for which it held the freehold. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was the ring-fenced account within which the Council recorded the income and expenditure for its operations as landlord to its residents and for the day-to-day management, repairs and maintenance of the council housing stock.

The Council considered a report on the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2024-25, which had been built on the estimates and assumptions in the updated 2023 HRA Business Plan. The business plan had been reviewed to reflect changes in relevant legislation and guidance, along with consideration of the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency and the ongoing challenges of the pandemic as it affected the Council's operating environment.

The Direction on the Rent Standard 2019 had required the Regulator of Social Housing to set a rent standard for social housing which came into effect from 2020. This would have been CPI +1% from the preceding September rate equating to 7.7%, which was the recommended rent increase for the year. This rate would also apply to those in Shared ownership.

A 5% increase in garage rents was proposed for 2024-25, which was in line with the wider Council policy on fees and charges.

The report included overall details of the proposed investment programme for the properties that were managed within the HRA, additional details of this work had also been set out within the item on the Capital and Investment Strategy.

The HRA annual budget and HRA business plan had assumed that any surpluses on the HRA were used to invest in redevelopment and upgrading of the existing stock, invest in new build affordable housing to be retained and rented by the Council within the HRA and then if there were sufficient monies available, the repayment of debt taken on under HRA self-financing.

The 30-year business plan had shown that there were sufficient resources within the HRA to carry out the Council's investment plans as well as repay the debt over the 30-year business plan period and still leave a healthy reserve balance at the end of the 30 years for further investment not yet identified.

There were further expected investment needs that would be fully developed in order to meet carbon targets and expected regulatory changes, and work on these continued. They were not, however, fully reflected within the current plan, but they would be considered in future reviews.

This report had also been considered by the Joint Executive Advisory Board at its meeting on 11 January 2024 and their comments had been included therein. At its meeting on 25 January 2024, the Executive also considered this report and had endorsed the recommendations to Council.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane, proposed and the Lead Councillor for Finance and Property, Councillor Richard Lucas seconded the following motion:

- (1) That the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, be approved.
- (2) That a rent increase of 7.7%, be implemented.
- (3) That the fees and charges for HRA services for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
- (4) That a 5% increase be applied to garage rents, which is in line with the wider Council policy on fees and charges.

Following the debate on the motion, Councillor Joss Bigmore proposed, and Councillor Maddy Redpath seconded the following amendment:

“In paragraph (2) of the motion, substitute “5%” in place of 7.7%.”

The Council noted that if this amendment was adopted, the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2024-25 referred to in paragraph (1) of the motion would also

require amendment. Accordingly, the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2024-25 taking account of a 5% increase in council house rents was set out as Appendix 1 to the Order Paper.

If amended, the substantive motion would read as follows:

- “(1) That the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the ~~Order Paper report submitted to the Council~~, be approved.
- (2) That a rent increase of ~~5%~~ 7.7%, be implemented.
- (3) That the fees and charges for HRA services for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
- (4) That a 5% increase be applied to garage rents, which is in line with the wider Council policy on fees and charges.”

Following the debate on the amendment it was put to the vote and was lost on the Mayor’s casting vote.

A recorded vote was requested in respect of the original motion, which was supported by four other councillors in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19 (d).

The Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, be approved.
- (2) That a rent increase of 7.7%, be implemented.
- (3) That the fees and charges for HRA services for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
- (4) That a 5% increase be applied to garage rents, which is in line with the wider Council policy on fees and charges.

Reasons:

To enable the Council to set the rent charges for HRA property and associated fees and charges, along with authorising the necessary expenditure to implement a budget, which is consistent with the objectives outlined in the HRA Business Plan.

Result of the Recorded Vote:

The motion was approved, with nineteen councillors voting in favour, eighteen against, and seven abstentions, as follows:

FOR:

Councillor Phil Bellamy
 Councillor Angela Goodwin
 Councillor Gillian Harwood
 Councillor Stephen Hives
 Councillor Catherine Houston
 Councillor Tom Hunt
 Councillor Vanessa King
 Councillor Sandy Lowry
 Councillor Richard Lucas
 Councillor Julia McShane
 Councillor Masuk Miah
 Councillor Carla Morson
 Councillor George Potter
 Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith
 Councillor Joanne Shaw
 Councillor Cait Taylor
 Councillor Jane Tyson
 Councillor Fiona White
 Councillor Dominique Williams

AGAINST:

Councillor Bilal Akhtar
 Councillor Sallie Barker MBE
 Councillor Dawn Bennett
 Councillor Joss Bigmore
 Councillor David Bilbé
 Councillor Honor Brooker
 Councillor James Brooker
 Councillor Philip Brooker
 Councillor Geoff Davis
 Councillor Matt Furniss
 Councillor Bob Hughes
 Councillor Richard Mills OBE
 Councillor Patrick Oven
 Councillor Maddy Redpath
 Councillor David Shaw
 Councillor Keith Witham
 Councillor Sue Wyeth-Price
 Councillor Catherine Young

ABSTAIN:

Councillor Amanda Creese
 Councillor Yves de Contades
 Councillor Lizzie Griffiths
 Councillor James Jones
 Councillor Danielle Newson
 Councillor Howard Smith
 Councillor James Walsh

CO111 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2024-25 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024-25 TO 2026-27

The Council considered a report which outlined the draft General Fund Budget for 2024-25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) ending 2026-27. The work on the 2024-25 budget and the £18.3m MTFP gap had been undertaken as part of the Financial Recovery Plan agreed by the Council in August 2023. The outputs from the various workstreams of the Financial Recovery Plan were set out within the report which had reduced the budget gap by £15.9m.

The MTFP had set out the key work streams for the Council to focus on over this period which, collectively, aimed to address the remaining £2.4m budget gap across the MTFP period, and prepare for future capital financing costs and funding risks.

Significant progress had been made since the report to Council in July 2023, but the agreed savings plans needed to be delivered and the remaining budget gap needed to be addressed.

It was also noted that strengthened financial reporting and processes needed to be embedded in the Council in order to lay the foundations of a financially resilient council.

The proposed budget for 2024-25, which included a Council Tax requirement for Guildford Borough Council of £11,868,084, excluding parish precepts and an increase of £5.75 in Council Tax (2.99%), resulting in a Band D charge of £198.16. As set out in the report, the Council was required to set a balanced budget for 2024-25.

Parish Councils had requested precepts totalling £2,330,834 meaning the overall council tax requirement for the borough, including parish precepts would be £14,198,918.

The Joint Executive Advisory Board (JEAB) had considered this report at its meeting held on 11 January 2024. At its meeting held on 25 January 2024, the Executive had also considered this report, including the comments of the JEAB, and had endorsed the recommendation therein.

Under The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and Council Procedure Rule 19 (d), the Council was reminded that a recorded vote would be conducted on the proposed budget and Council tax resolution as set out in the report, and the Order Paper circulated at the meeting which contained details of the respective precepts set by Surrey County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, neither of which were deemed to be excessive.

Under Council Procedure Rule 15 (o), Councillor Lucas as the mover of the original motion, indicated that, with the consent of his seconder and of the meeting, he wished to alter his motion by substituting, in paragraph 13, “£100,000” in place of “£40,000”. Paragraph 13, as altered, would therefore read as follows:

“(13) That the Council’s existing Local Council Tax Support Scheme, with uprating as set out in Appendix 6 and the ~~£40,000~~ £100,000 discretionary hardship fund that runs alongside it, be continued.”

The Council agreed to accept the alteration to the original motion, as indicated above. The motion, as altered, therefore became the substantive motion for debate.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Finance and Property, Councillor Richard Lucas, seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane, the Council:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the budget be approved, and specifically that the Council Tax requirement for 2024-25 be set at £11,868,084 excluding parish precepts and £14,198,918 to include parish precepts.
- (2) That the Band D Council Tax for 2024-25 (excluding parish precepts) be set at £198.16, an increase of £5.75 (2.99%).
- (3) That the Band D Council Tax for 2024-25 (including parish precepts) be set at £237.08.
- (4) That the Council approves the following, as considered by the Executive on 25 January 2024:
 - (i) the General Fund revenue estimates for 2024-25 including proposed fees and charges relating to General Fund services, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report submitted to the Council,
 - (ii) the Housing Revenue Account estimates for 2024-25, including housing rents and other fees and charges,
 - (iii) the Capital and Investment Strategy for 2024-25, and
 - (iv) the Housing Revenue Account capital programme for 2024-25.
- (5) That the Council notes that the Chief Finance Officer, in accordance with the terms of his delegated authority, has calculated the following amounts for the year 2024-25 in accordance with regulations made under Sections 31B (3) and 34(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) ('the Act'):
 - (i) 59,890.5 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its council tax base for 2024-25 for the whole Council area.

(ii) For those parts of the borough to which a parish precept relates:

Parish of:	
Albury	619.07
Artington	140.92
Ash	7,452.34
East Clandon	150.82
West Clandon	712.26
Compton	486.67
Effingham	1,327.31
East Horsley	2,630.32
West Horsley	1,590.83
Normandy	1,372.10
Ockham	269.60
Pirbright	1,255.31
Puttenham	315.07
Ripley	923.26
St. Martha	403.27
Seale & Sands	518.71
Send	2,187.26
Shackleford	371.62
Shalford	1,886.89
Shere	1,991.85
Tongham	1,161.30
Wanborough	180.22
Wisley	-
Worplesdon	3,704.40
Total	31,651.40

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the 1992 Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(6) That the Council calculates the following amounts for the financial year 2024-25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

(i) £138,901,117 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the

Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.

- (ii) £136,570,283 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act
- (iii) £14,198,918 being the amount by which the aggregate at sub-paragraph (i) above exceeds the aggregate at sub-paragraph (ii) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirements for the year.
- (iv) £237.08 being the amount at sub-paragraph (iii) above divided by the amount at sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph (5) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including parish precepts).
- (v) £2,330,834 being the aggregate amount of all special items (parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as follows:

Parish of:	£
Albury	44,840
Artington	5,161
Ash	571,427
East Clandon	10,394
West Clandon	27,895
Compton	26,981
Effingham	137,221
East Horsley	154,951
West Horsley	105,452
Normandy	154,481
Ockham	16,891
Pirbright	84,835
Puttenham	17,000
Ripley	99,398
St. Martha	13,850
Seale & Sands	23,000
Send	94,984
Shackleford	16,909
Shalford	120,968

Shere	209,397
Tongham	49,399
Wanborough	5,500
Wisley	-
Worplesdon	339,900
TOTAL	2,330,834

(vi) £198.16 being the amount at sub-paragraph (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at sub-paragraph (v) above by the amount at sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph (5) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item (parish precept) relates.

(vii) Part of the Council's area

Albury	270.59
Artington	234.78
Ash	274.84
East Clandon	267.08
West Clandon	237.32
Compton	253.60
Effingham	301.54
East Horsley	257.07
West Horsley	264.45
Normandy	310.75
Ockham	260.81
Pirbright	265.74
Puttenham	252.12
Ripley	305.82
St. Martha	232.50
Seale & Sands	242.50
Send	241.59
Shackleford	243.66
Shalford	262.27
Shere	303.29
Tongham	240.70
Wanborough	228.68

Wisley	198.16
Worplesdon	289.92

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at sub-paragraph (vi) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council’s area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph (5) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(viii) Part of the Council’s area

VALUATION BANDS								
	Band	Band	Band	Band	Band	Band	Band	Band
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
PARISH	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Albury	180.39	210.46	240.52	270.59	330.72	390.85	450.98	541.18
Artington	156.52	182.61	208.69	234.78	286.95	339.13	391.30	469.56
Ash	183.23	213.76	244.30	274.84	335.92	396.99	458.07	549.68
East Clandon	178.05	207.73	237.40	267.08	326.43	385.78	445.13	534.16
West Clandon	158.21	184.58	210.95	237.32	290.06	342.80	395.53	474.64
Compton	169.07	197.24	225.42	253.60	309.96	366.31	422.67	507.20
Effingham	201.03	234.53	268.04	301.54	368.55	435.56	502.57	603.08
East Horsley	171.38	199.94	228.51	257.07	314.20	371.32	428.45	514.14
West Horsley	176.30	205.68	235.07	264.45	323.22	381.98	440.75	528.90
Normandy	207.17	241.69	276.22	310.75	379.81	448.86	517.92	621.50
Ockham	173.87	202.85	231.83	260.81	318.77	376.73	434.68	521.62
Pirbright	177.16	206.69	236.21	265.74	324.79	383.85	442.90	531.48
Puttenham	168.08	196.09	224.11	252.12	308.15	364.17	420.20	504.24
Ripley	203.88	237.86	271.84	305.82	373.78	441.74	509.70	611.64
St. Martha	155.00	180.83	206.67	232.50	284.17	335.83	387.50	465.00
Seale & Sands	161.67	188.61	215.56	242.50	296.39	350.28	404.17	485.00
Send	161.06	187.90	214.75	241.59	295.28	348.96	402.65	483.18
Shackleford	162.44	189.51	216.59	243.66	297.81	351.95	406.10	487.32
Shalford	174.85	203.99	233.13	262.27	320.55	378.83	437.12	524.54
Shere	202.19	235.89	269.59	303.29	370.69	438.09	505.48	606.58
Tongham	160.47	187.21	213.96	240.70	294.19	347.68	401.17	481.40
Wanborough	152.45	177.86	203.27	228.68	279.50	330.32	381.13	457.36
Wisley (Meeting)	132.11	154.12	176.14	198.16	242.20	286.23	330.27	396.32
Worplesdon	193.28	225.49	257.71	289.92	354.35	418.77	483.20	579.84
TOWN AREA								
Guildford	132.11	154.12	176.14	198.16	242.20	286.23	330.27	396.32

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at sub-paragraphs (vi) and (vii) above by the number which in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (7) That the Council notes that for the year 2024-25, (i) Surrey County Council (SCC) and (ii) the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey (PCCS) have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwelling in the Council’s area as shown below:

		VALUATION BANDS							
		Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
		£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
(i) SCC		1,172.40	1367.80	1563.20	1758.60	2149.40	2540.20	2931.00	3517.20
(ii) PCCS		215.71	251.67	287.62	323.57	395.47	467.38	539.28	647.14

- (8) That the Council agrees, having calculated the aggregate in each of the amounts at sub-paragraph (viii) of paragraph (6) and paragraph (7) above, to set the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2024-25 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act.

Part of the Council's Area:

VALUATION BANDS								
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
PARISH	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Albury	1,568.50	1,829.93	2,091.34	2,352.76	2,875.59	3,398.43	3,921.26	4,705.52
Artington	1,544.63	1,802.08	2,059.51	2,316.95	2,831.82	3,346.71	3,861.58	4,633.90
Ash	1,571.34	1,833.23	2,095.12	2,357.01	2,880.79	3,404.57	3,928.35	4,714.02
East Clandon	1,566.16	1,827.20	2,088.22	2,349.25	2,871.30	3,393.36	3,915.41	4,698.50
West Clandon	1,546.32	1,804.05	2,061.77	2,319.49	2,834.93	3,350.38	3,865.81	4,638.98
Compton	1,557.18	1,816.71	2,076.24	2,335.77	2,854.83	3,373.89	3,892.95	4,671.54
Effingham	1,589.14	1,854.00	2,118.86	2,383.71	2,913.42	3,443.14	3,972.85	4,767.42
East Horsley	1,559.49	1,819.41	2,079.33	2,339.24	2,859.07	3,378.90	3,898.73	4,678.48
West Horsley	1,564.41	1,825.15	2,085.89	2,346.62	2,868.09	3,389.56	3,911.03	4,693.24
Normandy	1,595.28	1,861.16	2,127.04	2,392.92	2,924.68	3,456.44	3,988.20	4,785.84
Ockham	1,561.98	1,822.32	2,082.65	2,342.98	2,863.64	3,384.31	3,904.96	4,685.96
Pirbright	1,565.27	1,826.16	2,087.03	2,347.91	2,869.66	3,391.43	3,913.18	4,695.82
Puttenham	1,556.19	1,815.56	2,074.93	2,334.29	2,853.02	3,371.75	3,890.48	4,668.58
Ripley	1,591.99	1,857.33	2,122.66	2,387.99	2,918.65	3,449.32	3,979.98	4,775.98
St. Martha	1,543.11	1,800.30	2,057.49	2,314.67	2,829.04	3,343.41	3,857.78	4,629.34
Seale & Sands	1,549.78	1,808.08	2,066.38	2,324.67	2,841.26	3,357.86	3,874.45	4,649.34
Send	1,549.17	1,807.37	2,065.57	2,323.76	2,840.15	3,356.54	3,872.93	4,647.52
Shackelford	1,550.55	1,808.98	2,067.41	2,325.83	2,842.68	3,359.53	3,876.38	4,651.66
Shalford	1,562.96	1,823.46	2,083.95	2,344.44	2,865.42	3,386.41	3,907.40	4,688.88
Shere	1,590.30	1,855.36	2,120.41	2,385.46	2,915.56	3,445.67	3,975.76	4,770.92
Tongham	1,548.58	1,806.68	2,064.78	2,322.87	2,839.06	3,355.26	3,871.45	4,645.74
Wanborough	1,540.56	1,797.33	2,054.09	2,310.85	2,824.37	3,337.90	3,851.41	4,621.70
Wisley (Meeting)	1,520.22	1,773.59	2,026.96	2,280.33	2,787.07	3,293.81	3,800.55	4,560.66
Worplesdon	1,581.39	1,844.96	2,108.53	2,372.09	2,899.22	3,426.35	3,953.48	4,744.18
TOWN AREA								
Guildford	1,520.22	1,773.59	2,026.96	2,280.33	2,787.07	3,293.81	3,800.55	4,560.66

*Note: Wisley Parish Meeting

In accordance with the Executive's decision at its meeting on 8 August 2002 (see Minute No. 270 – 2002-03), the Chief Finance Officer has anticipated the precept for 2024-25 for the Wisley Parish Meeting to be £nil and this is reflected in all the relevant Council Tax figures above.

- (9) That the Council determines that the Borough Council's basic amount of council tax for 2024-25 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under section 52ZB of the Act.
- (10) That, as the billing authority, the Council notes that it has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax

for 2024-25 was excessive under the regulations and that the billing authority was not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Act.

- (11) That the Council agrees, in respect of council tax payments:
- (i) that the payment dates for the statutory ten monthly instalment scheme be set to run from 2 April to 2 January each year; and
 - (ii) that the payment dates be set as the second day of each month for a customer who has requested to opt out of the statutory scheme under the provisions of The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) (Amendment) (No 2) (England) Regulations 2012.
- (12) That the Council agrees, in respect of non-domestic rate payments:
- (i) that the payment dates for the statutory ten monthly instalment scheme be set to run from 2 April to 2 January each year; and
 - (ii) that the payment dates be set as the second day of each month for a customer who has requested to opt out of the statutory scheme under the provisions of the Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2014.
- (13) That the Council's existing Local Council Tax Support Scheme, with uprating as set out in Appendix 6 and the £100,000 discretionary hardship fund that runs alongside it, be continued.
- (14) That, from 1 April 2025, the Council varies its determination of 26 February 2019 under Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, so that the long-term empty dwelling levy starts after a property has been empty and unfurnished for one year.
- (15) That, from 1 April 2025, the Council will charge a premium (levy) of 100% on periodically used dwellings as defined by section 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (16) That the use of the 2023-24 underspend as set out in paragraph 8.5 of the report, be approved.

- (17) That the Council approves the annual statement of accounts for Wisley Parish Meeting, which is currently dormant, for the year ended 31 March 2024, as set out below:

	Year ending	
	31 March 2023	31 March 2024
	£	£
1. Balances brought forward	3,605	3,608
2. (+) Annual precept	Nil	Nil
3. (+) Total other receipts	3	0
4. (-) Staff costs	Nil	Nil
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	Nil	Nil
6. (-) Total other payments	Nil	Nil
7. (=) Balances carried forward	3,608	3608

8. Total cash and investments	3,608	3,608
9. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	Nil	Nil
10. Total borrowings	Nil	Nil

Reasons:

- The General Fund Budget is a major decision for the Council and setting a balanced budget is a statutory requirement.
- Scrutiny of these MTFP and Budget proposals demonstrate transparency and good governance.
- The Council has been well positioned to respond to these challenges and whilst the latest MTFP for the subsequent years ending 2026-27 continues to project future financial pressures, and opportunities, the Council is able to take action to ensure sufficient funding is in place to deliver and maintain services.

Result of the Recorded Vote:

The motion to adopt the Budget and Council Tax resolution above was approved, with thirty councillors voting in favour, twelve voting against, and two abstentions, as follows:

FOR:

Councillor Phil Bellamy
Councillor Amanda Creese
Councillor Yves de Contades
Councillor Angela Goodwin
Councillor Lizzie Griffiths
Councillor Gillian Harwood
Councillor Stephen Hives
Councillor Catherine Houston
Councillor Tom Hunt
Councillor James Jones
Councillor Vanessa King
Councillor Richard Lucas
Councillor Sandy Lowry
Councillor Julia McShane
Councillor Masuk Miah
Councillor Carla Morson
Councillor Danielle Newson
Councillor Patrick Oven
Councillor George Potter
Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith
Councillor David Shaw
Councillor Joanne Shaw
Councillor Howard Smith
Councillor Cait Taylor
Councillor Jane Tyson
Councillor James Walsh
Councillor Fiona White
Councillor Dominique Williams
Councillor Sue Wyeth-Price
Councillor Catherine Young

AGAINST:

Councillor Bilal Akhtar
Councillor Sallie Barker MBE
Councillor Joss Bigmore
Councillor David Bilbé
Councillor Honor Brooker
Councillor James Brooker
Councillor Philip Brooker
Councillor Geoff Davis
Councillor Matt Furniss
Councillor Bob Hughes
Councillor Richard Mills OBE
Councillor Keith Witham

ABSTAIN:

Councillor Dawn Bennett
Councillor Maddy Redpath

CO112 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Council received and noted the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 23 November 2023 and 4 January 2024.

The meeting finished at 9.55 pm

Signed

Mayor

Date

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Guildford Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB on Wednesday 21 February 2024

The Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah

* The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sallie Barker MBE – in the chair

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| * Councillor Bilal Akhtar | * Councillor Steven Lee |
| * Councillor Phil Bellamy | Councillor Sandy Lowry |
| * Councillor Dawn Bennett | * Councillor Richard Lucas |
| * Councillor Joss Bigmore | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| * Councillor David Bilbe | * Councillor Richard Mills OBE |
| Councillor Honor Brooker | * Councillor Carla Morson |
| * Councillor James Brooker | * Councillor Danielle Newson |
| * Councillor Philip Brooker | * Councillor Patrick Oven |
| Councillor Ruth Brothwell | * Councillor George Potter |
| * Councillor Yves de Contades | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Amanda Creese | Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith |
| * Councillor Geoff Davis | * Councillor David Shaw |
| * Councillor Jason Fenwick | * Councillor Joanne Shaw |
| Councillor Matt Furniss | Councillor Katie Steel |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | * Councillor Howard Smith |
| * Councillor Lizzie Griffiths | * Councillor Cait Taylor |
| * Councillor Gillian Harwood | * Councillor Jane Tyson |
| * Councillor Stephen Hives | * Councillor James Walsh |
| * Councillor Catherine Houston | * Councillor Fiona White |
| * Councillor Tom Hunt | * Councillor Dominique Williams |
| * Councillor Bob Hughes | * Councillor Keith Witham |
| * Councillor James Jones | * Councillor Sue Wyeth-Price |
| * Councillor Vanessa King | * Councillor Catherine Young |

*Present

CO113 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah, and Councillors Honor Brooker, Ruth Brothwell, Matt Furniss, Sandy Lowry, Merel Rehorst-Smith, and Katie Steel; and from Honorary Aldermen Catherine Cobley, Sarah Creedy, Jayne Marks, Tony Phillips, Lynda Strudwick, and Jenny Wicks.

CO114 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

CO115 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Deputy Mayor reported that, before leaving for his well-deserved break, the Mayor had joined Guildford Hongkongers for their New Lunar Year Market at Guildford Cathedral on Saturday 10 February 2024, and very much enjoyed meeting over 60 stall holders – who served over 5,000 people during this popular event.

On a rainy Shrove Tuesday afternoon, The Mayor opened the popular Pancake Races, and the Charlotteville Jubilee Trust, who organised the event were delighted that £1,000 was raised for the Guildford Street Angels.

One of the Mayor's last engagements before his break was to join representatives from Rotary in Guildford and the Vivace Chorus, as they presented funds raised by the Mayor's Christmas Concert. Ticket sales raised £3,000 for the Mayor's Local Support Fund and the retiring collection raised just over £1,300 for the Fountain Centre.

CO116 LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

Crowdfund Guildford

The Leader reported that there would be a free virtual workshop on Friday 8 March, in which participants would gain valuable insights into how residents can access support and funding for their ideas and projects, learn first-hand about the resources available, the application process and how the Council can help in bringing forward community initiatives. Councillors were asked to encourage residents and local groups with an idea, to attend. They could sign up by visiting www.spacehive.dot.com/movement/Guildford.

Pride in Surrey

The Leader announced that Guildford would be hosting the fifth anniversary celebration of Pride in Surrey, at Stoke Park on Saturday 21 September 2024. The Leader expressed immense pride in our diverse community, which included a high representation of LGBTQ+ residents, recognising the significance this

event had to our residents. Tickets were now available via the Pride in Surrey website and were being offered on a 'pay what you can' basis keeping pride accessible for as many people as possible.

Arts Council Accreditation – Guildford Museum

The Leader reported that the Museum had retained full accreditation with Arts Council England, which recognised the hard work that the heritage team had put into every aspect of the Museum from looking after the collection of objects to meeting relevant standards for policies and procedures.

Public inquiry for planning appeal at land at Guildford Cathedral

The Leader reported that this appeal would be determined by public inquiry, which would open on 5 March 2024, and was due to last 10 days. Times and dates were subject to change, as advised by the Planning Inspector. More information could be found on the Council's website, where the appeal documents could be viewed.

CO117 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following persons addressed the Council meeting in respect of Minute No. CO119 below – Review of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2015-2034), and made the key points indicated below:

- (1) Julia Osborn, Chair of Send Parish Council, stated that the Local Plan had adopted a spatial strategy of housing and industrial development that was characterised by a heavy concentration of development in the north-east corner of the borough, particularly the ward of Send and Lovelace.

Since the removal of the villages from the Green Belt, Send had also witnessed a huge spike in windfall applications. According to the sustainability appraisal, villages sat at tier 10 of the sequential hierarchy, which meant that they were the least sustainable position for development to take place. All villages should only account for 5% of total supply. However, since the adoption of the plan, 843 dwellings had been approved in Send alone, which was 8% of total supply of the plan in just one village. Furthermore, strategic sites had not been delivered in the timeframe expected and key road improvement infrastructure fundamental to the spatial approach of the plan had not been delivered.

The spatial strategy of the Local Plan was now not fit for purpose, and it never was. The continued reliance on windfall applications, without infrastructure in villages was a completely unsustainable approach. This update needed vision and leadership, to produce a new spatial strategy, with a town centre master plan at its core and allocated sites in villages that

had not yet received approval must be removed from the plan, with immediate effect, to alleviate any further pressure on existing infrastructure. A new Green Belt and Countryside Study was also needed to reapply constraint to villages.

In response, the Lead Councillor for Planning, Councillor Fiona White stated that the Council was only being asked at this meeting to agree that the plan should be updated following the officer review. The matters to which the speaker had referred would be dealt with during the work to update the plan and the evidence that would be required as part of the update process. It was therefore not possible to respond to these matters at this stage. The Lead Councillor assured the speaker that the Council would liaise with parish councils, residents' associations and residents throughout the borough as part of this process.

- (2) John Rigg, on behalf of the Guildford Vision Group stated that many people in Guildford believed that the 2019 Local Plan was not fit for purpose, had huge gaps, with missing or bad policies. The glaring omission from the 2003 plan, the 2019 plan, and the officer's report on the agenda was a lack of planning vision, with no reference to the town or the emerging town master plan. The report remained silent on the essential evidence assembled in Shaping Guildford's Future (SGF). Seventy percent of the borough's population lived in the town, yet the Local Plan had no ambitions for flood remediation for height restrictions, density, delivering riverside homes and parks or to assist green belt protection. Its land allocations were incoherent and, as with North Street, often wrong. Thirty brownfield sites in the centre and 90 across the borough excluded due to flood risk. The Council appears to have abandoned and disregarded the emerging SGF.

In response, the Lead Councillor for Regeneration reiterated to the speaker that the Council at this meeting was only being asked to agree that the Local Plan should be updated, not to discuss the details of any future Plan. The Lead Councillor agreed that the evidence base needed to be reviewed, and reassured the speaker that the Council had no intention of discarding the work already completed through SGF. The regeneration team was already working with the planning policy team sharing the data that had been gathered during the SGF programme. The Lead Councillor emphasised that the flood alleviation scheme was essential to unlocking a wealth of opportunity within the town centre and that work was progressing.

- (3) Alastair Smith, Chair of the Guildford Society, supported the Council initiating an update of the Local Plan. National planning policy was in turmoil with

three significant updates to the NPPF over 18 months. The Guildford Local Plan needed to be robustly developed to cope with this turmoil. It was noted that a detailed plan and budget for the update was due to be prepared for approval. It was suggested that the following should be included in the plans:

- The evidence base needed to be fully updated, but must also include initiatives such as the economic strategy and the outputs from the Shaping Guildford Future programme.
- The revised local plan must lock in required infrastructure improvements particularly if the housing numbers increase.
- The Local Plan update was likely to take more than three years. The Lead Councillor had expressed caution on achieving a 30 month timescale proposed by central government. We cannot wait for three years. Alongside the Local Plan update, the Council must be prepared to draft and add extra policies on matters such as heights, which was a major concern to the Guildford Society and potentially, for selected site areas to guide development or policy in draft carried weight in the planning process. It was stated at the Executive meeting that the update should be viewed as an opportunity to address issues including town centre, riverside, brownfield sites, affordability, etc. The Society agreed, but also felt that design, quality and standards should be included.

In response, the Lead Councillor for Planning reiterated that the Council at this meeting was only being asked to agree to update the Local Plan and the speaker's comments would be looked at as part of that update. The Lead Councillor thanked the speaker for sending the paper that he had submitted in respect of the heights policy, which had already been passed on to the Planning Policy Team. The Lead Councillor assured the speaker that the Council would not ignore any of those things as part of the update process.

- (4) Malcolm Aish, Chair of Ockham Parish Council stated that the failure to deliver the infrastructure which underpinned the current Local Plan, should lead the Council to decide to proceed with an update of the Local Plan. The problems included the lack of delivery of the A3 improvements with the Burnt Common slip roads and other works around Guildford not proceeding. The works at junction 10 on the M25 were allegedly running two years late and the increase in residents had led to traffic queues and delays on the local road network. Optimistic plans for more cycling were not the answer.

The failure to upgrade the Ripley wastewater works meant that it could not cope with the numerous new homes already being built in Horsley and Send. The flood risk programme required much more work across the borough. Displacement is a problem across the Borough. The lack of evidence of a new Howard of Effingham School was putting a strain on school places, doctors' surgeries were refusing to take on new patients in this area, which would result in displaced residents looking further south for education and health needs. Guildford Borough Council's efforts to tackle climate change had not progressed, the take-up of electric vehicles had been slow and there were not enough charging points. The housing number forecast using the SHMA had been based on inflated ONS figures, which had grossly overstated the student population. This was expected to be demonstrated by the 2021 census data due to be published in 2025. These inflated figures were unlikely to lead to students wanting to live in the remote locations of the strategic sites. Students had been helped by the significant levels of purpose-built student accommodation and the possible reduced demand from the closure of the law school this year. The difficulties with the former Wisley Airfield as a strategic site may result in that not being available in an update of the plan. The brownfield sites in the centre of Guildford had reduced demand for retail and were available for residential development. The housing number had benefited from the large number of windfall units outside the plan and the huge demand for delivery materials had led to severe damage to local roads.

In response, the Lead Councillor for Planning, stated that the Council would take into account all the issues that had been raised on the assumption that the Council agreed to update the plan, but, unfortunately, she could not respond to any of the detail at this stage.

- (5) Karen Stevens, on behalf of Compton Parish Council commented on the current uncertainty around whether the proposed widening of the A3, part of the critical infrastructure on which three of the current strategic sites depended. Studies had shown that it would do little, if anything, to alleviate local traffic; it would simply unlock thousands of out-of-town houses, all reliant on cars. The strategic sites could not all be delivered, and keeping them in the Local Plan served no other purpose than to keep the housing figures artificially high. This would inevitably risk aggressive development when the five-year supply was not met. In the case of Blackwell Farm, it was also preventing the land from being designated a National Landscape. Natural England had assessed Blackwell Farm as meriting AONB status and had said that it could be included within the extended Surrey Hills National Landscape,

but only if the Council acknowledged that the site was undeliverable and removed it from the Local Plan. Compton Parish Council, whilst agreeing that an update was needed, felt that the Local Plan required a wholesale revision so that it delivered for Guildford. The current Plan was undemocratic, developer-led and bad for the environment. It ignored the views of thousands of residents, did not invest in the town centre or brownfield areas, but instead lazily built on countryside sites that relied on non-existent infrastructure and were anything but 'strategic'.

In response, the Lead Councillor for Planning reiterated her earlier comments, but also pointed out that the current Local Plan would remain in force while the update of the plan was being carried out, and that any planning decisions would be made by reference to that current local plan during the update period.

- (6) Amanda Mullarkey, on behalf of Guildford Residents Association, stated that a five-year housing supply based on the new formula would be required, but the Council was asked to plan the timetable wisely and to get some crucial things in place upfront. Firstly, a height supplementary planning document to sit alongside the heights policy for the plan. The SPD would inform site allocations for brownfield sites in the new plan, allow a plan-led approach and avoid excessive allocations for brownfield sites driving up heights. Secondly, development briefs for major brownfield sites linked to flood risk management and sustainable transport plans. Site briefs would make brownfield proposals credible and avoid housing figures for sites that bear no relationship to how a site could be developed. Thirdly, there was not a Community Infrastructure Levy plan to channel developer contributions from the current plan. We cannot afford to miss out that important part of the plan cycle. Effective means were required to secure developer contributions to infrastructure. Not only were there no A3 improvements, there was no sustainable movement corridor. Putting these three things in place would help to mitigate some of the big challenges that an update would trigger, for example, gaming of the system by developers who would have an incentive to talk down delivery of existing allocated sites in order to negotiate new supposedly deliverable sites, as happened in the run-up to the last plan. Another challenge would be Woking's unmet need, last time Guildford had to provide homes for Woking's unmet need under the duty to co-operate. This time, Woking's housing shortfall could be eye-watering, the Council would need excellent data in respect of constraints and on deliverable strategies for sustainable development of brownfield sites otherwise Guildford would again be asked to look for many more unsustainable greenfield sites.

In response, the Lead Councillor for Planning stated that none of the detail referred to by the speaker could be looked at until the Council had agreed to update the Local Plan and had commenced the update process, which had to be evidence led.

CO118 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- (a) Councillor Joss Bigmore asked the Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Regeneration, Councillor Tom Hunt, the following question:

“The Local Plan contains a number of large strategic sites which are yet to deliver homes. The allocation at Blackwell Farm can’t be delivered without the addition of a piece of land owned by GBC. Can the lead councillor please give an update as to the negotiations between the University of Surrey and GBC as regards this ransom strip.”

The Lead Councillor’s response was as follows:

“Blackwell Park Limited (BPL), the wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Surrey charged with the development of Blackwell Park, has entered into Heads of Terms for an Option Agreement with the Council to purchase from the Council a small parcel of land necessary for the development. We are confident that the transaction meets our best value requirement and as the Local Planning Authority have reserved all rights and powers to determine or refuse any future planning application.

The Council has commissioned a S123 valuation to confirm that the best value requirement is being met and Legal are finalising documentation for completion.

The Council in its role as Local Planning Authority (LPA) is now working with BPL to establish a Planning Performance Agreement and BPL is committed to lodging a planning application that meets the high expectations that the Guildford community is calling for and deserves.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Bigmore asked the Lead Councillor to review whether it was appropriate for the matter in question, given the public interest in the site and the potential value to the Council, to be dealt with as an officer delegated decision thus avoiding formal scrutiny by a Committee of the Council. In response, the Lead Councillor stated that the key challenge with this site was that its value was not yet known and that there was an option agreement using the Stokes and Cambridge method which would depend on the value of the sale of the Blackwall Farm site. It would therefore be difficult to

determine how it would navigate any governance procedure other than delegated authority. The Lead Councillor indicated that he would discuss this with officers but did undertake to give councillors a briefing on the option agreement once the matter was a little closer to being finalised.

- (b) Councillor Catherine Young asked the Lead Councillor for Planning, Councillor Fiona White the following question:

“The NPPF at paragraph 61 states the following:

*‘To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. The outcome of **the standard method is an advisory starting-point** for establishing a housing requirement for the area (see paragraph 67 below). There may be **exceptional circumstances**, including relating to the particular demographic characteristics of an area which justify an alternative approach to assessing housing need; in which case the alternative approach should also reflect **current and future demographic trends and market signals**’.*

Correct me if I am wrong, but the officer’s report implies that we are likely to be working towards an increased housing figure based on the standard method of 771 houses per annum, versus our current figure of 562.

*To me, the NPPF clearly states the standard method is **advisory**.*

Will the Lead Councillor ensure that the significant constraints that did not appear to be given due weight during the previous Local Plan examination be fought for with more vigour? This would include greater protection for our Green Belt, the Surrey Hills National Landscape, our countryside and all our open green spaces.

Additionally, can she also confirm her intention to fully investigate and evidence the challenges that have been made over recent years to the ONS figures, which indicate a significant inflation of migratory student numbers, which clearly indicate our housing need is lower?

Once this evidence is considered, if it points to a significantly lower housing number for Guildford, can she commit to the reinstatement of Green Belt to

those villages that were removed from the Green Belt by the Local Plan in 2019?”

The Lead Councillor’s response was as follows:

“These questions all relate to work and evidence collecting that will need to take place as part of the update process, should this be agreed by the Council tonight. As part of understanding the timetable and budgetary requirements associated with the update (see Recommendation 2), the Planning Policy team will be considering the breadth of evidence that will be necessary to support a new plan. The updated plan and associated evidence base will be prepared in accordance with the national policy and guidance that is in place at that time.”

- (c) Councillor Catherine Young asked the Lead Councillor for Planning, Councillor Fiona White the following question:

“There is already established a Planning Policy Board made up of cross-party membership. Would the Lead Councillor for Planning please provide details as to how this group will be involved in the update of the Local Plan, should the recommendation to Full Council be agreed tonight?”

Whilst there is understandable reliance on the Planning Policy Board members to keep their respective groups informed, if approved, this is a critical process affecting every aspect of our Borough, our residents, our places, and our environment. Can the Lead Councillor agree to ensure that there are at least formal quarterly updates provided to all Councillors?”

The Lead Councillor’s response was as follows:

“I am sure that Councillor Young will remember that there was previously a Local Plan Panel to provide a sounding board in relation to the putting together of the current local plan. Once part 2 of the local plan was complete, that changed to become the Planning Policy Board. In anticipation of the council’s agreement to update the local plan, I am proposing to disband the Planning Policy Board and to revive the Local Plan Panel. Each of the opposition groups on the council will be invited to nominate a member to serve on the panel. It is important that those members discuss the issues raised with their own groups as I want to

encourage as much involvement from all parties on this council. If a nominated member can't attend, I hope that they will send a substitute so that nothing gets missed. I will be chairing the Panel and I have asked Councillors Vanessa King and Dominique Williams to join as well. The Panel will meet as and when necessary. I think that the workload will be fairly light at the beginning but will increase as the update evolves.

I will also try to ensure that all councillors are kept informed on our progress, but I am not willing to commit to providing updates on a specific basis. The process of updating the local plan is not linear and, in fact, can be quite "lumpy". There will be times when so much detailed work is being done behind the scenes that there is little to report, and I don't believe that I can commit to the regular updates you have asked for. However, I will commit to share as and when we have something to share, which is the purpose of the Local Plan Panel."

CO119 REVIEW OF THE GUILDFORD BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN: STRATEGY AND SITES (2015-2034)

The Council was required to review the Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (LPSS) within five years of adoption to decide if an update to the Plan was required. Having considered changes in national planning policy, associated guidance and relevant legislation, as well as changes in circumstances affecting Guildford borough since the LPSS was adopted, officers had recommended that the Local Plan should be updated.

Changes identified and which supported a decision to update the LPSS included the level of local housing need based on Government's standard method calculation, which differed significantly from the LPSS housing requirement; changes in the economy; slower progress toward delivery of several strategic sites than had been anticipated; and changes in planned delivery of supporting infrastructure such as the Guildford A3 scheme.

Furthermore, whilst many of the LPSS policies remained consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), there were changes in planning related legislation and guidance identified which supported a decision to update the LPSS. More fundamentally, however, the Government had proposed to introduce significant planning reform flowing, at least in part, from the recent publication of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA). These changes, which included a new NPPF and National Development Management Policies and other regulations, would impact on plan-making to the extent that 'new style' Local Plans were proposed.

Should the decision to update the Local Plan be supported, a further report would be prepared to propose appropriate timing for and budgetary requirements of the Local Plan update. Importantly, this would consider planning reform proposals including the Government's timescales for initiating 'new style' Local Plans alongside the impacts of changes on the nature and form of plans and supporting evidence.

It was important to stress that the findings of this review did not change any elements of the LPSS. The LPSS remained part of the Council's Development Plan, which was the primary consideration in terms of determining planning applications. Due weight would be given to policies according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF, which for the most part they were.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Planning, Councillor Fiona White, seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, and Lead Councillor for Regeneration, Councillor Tom Hunt, the Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2015-2034) be updated following the findings of the review undertaken in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- (2) That a further report be submitted to the Executive at a later date to clarify the appropriate timing for and budgetary requirements of the Local Plan update, such report to follow the enactment of the national planning reform legislation and to consider its implications for the update process.

Reasons:

- There was a statutory requirement to review the LPSS within 5 years of its adoption. This was to assess whether it needed updating. The review findings set out in the report had indicated that an update of the LPSS would be an appropriate course of action to ensure that the Council's Local Plan remained effective into the future.
- There were a range of uncertainties which impacted on the context for the preparation of a new / updated Local Plan, some of which related to the lack of clarity regarding the detail of proposed Government reforms to the planning system which guided plan-making. It was necessary that these were fully considered in order to set out recommendations regarding the scope and timing of a new plan-making process.

The meeting finished at 8.21 pm

Signed

Date

Mayor

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of Guildford Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB on Tuesday 16 April 2024

* The Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah

* The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Sallie Barker MBE

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| * Councillor Bilal Akhtar | * Councillor Steven Lee |
| * Councillor Phil Bellamy | * Councillor Sandy Lowry |
| * Councillor Dawn Bennett | * Councillor Richard Lucas |
| * Councillor Joss Bigmore | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| * Councillor David Bilbé | * Councillor Richard Mills OBE |
| Councillor Honor Brooker | Councillor Carla Morson |
| * Councillor James Brooker | Councillor Danielle Newson |
| Councillor Philip Brooker | * Councillor Patrick Oven |
| * Councillor Ruth Brothwell | * Councillor George Potter |
| * Councillor Yves de Contades | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| Councillor Amanda Creese | * Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith |
| Councillor Geoff Davis | * Councillor David Shaw |
| Councillor Jason Fenwick | * Councillor Joanne Shaw |
| Councillor Matt Furniss | Councillor Katie Steel |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | * Councillor Howard Smith |
| * Councillor Lizzie Griffiths | * Councillor Cait Taylor |
| * Councillor Gillian Harwood | * Councillor Jane Tyson |
| * Councillor Stephen Hives | * Councillor James Walsh |
| * Councillor Catherine Houston | * Councillor Fiona White |
| * Councillor Tom Hunt | * Councillor Dominique Williams |
| * Councillor Bob Hughes | Councillor Keith Witham |
| * Councillor James Jones | * Councillor Sue Wyeth-Price |
| * Councillor Vanessa King | Councillor Catherine Young |

*Present

CO120 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Honor Brooker, Philip Brooker, Geoff Davis, Jason Fenwick, Matt Furniss, Carla Morson, Danielle Newson, Katie Steel, Keith Witham, and Catherine Young; and from Honorary Freeman Keith Churchouse and Honorary Aldermen Catherine Cobley, Sarah Creedy, Jayne Marks, Tony Phillips, and Lynda Strudwick.

CO121 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

CO122 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported that the previous week had marked the end of the holy month of Ramadan, which meant the end of a month of fasting from sunrise to sunset. During this time, the Mayor did not drink or eat anything during the day, which was often difficult to deal with, especially when attending Mayoral events although, thankfully, people had been very understanding.

The Mayor reported that he was honoured to be invited to speak about his experience of Ramadan at the staff briefing held the previous Thursday. Colleagues at Waverley had been very welcoming and the Mayor was happy to answer some of the questions people had about Ramadan.

The Mayor acknowledged that his Mayoral year would be ending very soon, but that he was still very busy and looking forward to presenting this year's Mayor's Awards for Service to the Community on 27 April at the County Club. The Mayor thanked the club for once again sponsoring this important event.

The Mayor also reported that arrangements were being finalised for his main fund-raising event of the year, in aid of his chosen charity The Fountain Centre. This would be the Mayor's charity adult football tournament, being held on Sunday 2 June, which was being hosted by Guildford City Boys and Girls Football Club at Stoughton Recreation Ground. The date had to be rescheduled beyond the mayoral year to fit in with the football league timing. The Mayor expressed his thanks to the Mayor elect for her understanding and for agreeing to join him at the event and present the Mayor's shield for fair play for the first time. The Mayor also thanked:

- everyone at Guildford City Boys and Girls FC,
- Corporate sponsor Martin Grant Homes,
- Chelsea FC Foundation,

- AFC Wimbledon Academy, and
- Guildford Lions.

Finally, the Mayor drew the Council's attention to the Big Charity Fund Raising Walk taking place on Sunday 19 May, which would start and finish at Shalford Park. The Mayor elect, would be walking the 10 mile route and councillors were invited to sponsor her.

As this was his last full Council meeting as Mayor before the Annual Meeting, the Mayor thanked councillors for their support throughout his Mayoral year, and particularly thanked the Deputy Mayor and wished her the very best of luck for her mayoral year.

CO123 LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Leader reported on the following matters:

Making Guildford town centre safer for all

Over the past few months, the Council had been working with Surrey Police and Experience Guildford to introduce changes to help make Guildford town centre safer for all:

- There were now additional police officers patrolling in Guildford town centre at the weekends.
- The Council had introduced street marshals to the town centre on Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00pm to 8:00pm, who were on hand to:
 - help reassure visitors and residents in Guildford town centre,
 - work with Police to enforce Public Space Protection Orders that were in place, and
 - deal with other environmental and public realm issues, such as littering.
- Over the next few weeks, Surrey County Council's Targeted Youth Support would begin a youth outreach project.

The street marshals and youth outreach project were initiatives funded through the Safer Streets Fund. In Guildford, this funding was being used to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour within Guildford town centre. These changes would continue throughout 2024 and into 2025.

Guildford Flood Alleviation Scheme

The Environment Agency, this Council and the County Council were working together to develop a scheme to reduce flood risk to homes, businesses, and infrastructure in Guildford town centre. The scheme would also improve the

natural environment and build better connections between Guildford town centre and the River Wey.

The Environment Agency would be holding a drop-in public engagement event on Thursday 18 April from 2pm to 7pm, in The Circle Bar at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre.

Active April

This month residents were being encouraged to try something new to keep fit. There was a variety of sports places to visit around the borough like Guildford Spectrum, the Lido, and outdoor gyms to help keep people active during this month.

CO124 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions or statements from the public.

CO125 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

There were no questions from councillors.

CO126 REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION: COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

The Council considered a report on the recent review of Council Procedure Rules which had been undertaken as part of the current work programme to update the constitutions of both Guildford Borough Council (GBC) and Waverley Borough Council (WBC). The Joint Strategic Director of Legal and Democratic Services had prioritised the Council Procedure Rules as a high priority, requiring urgent attention.

After reviewing both councils' Council Procedure Rules, it was apparent that there would be little benefit in amending both sets of the current rules. Officers had therefore recommended the introduction of a set of new Council Procedure Rules for both councils, using examples of good practice, based on the statutory framework.

The work to review the Council Procedure Rules for both GBC and WBC was extensive, and had been presented initially to, and supported by, the Guildford and Waverley Joint Constitutions Review Group. Subsequently, WBC's Standards & General Purposes Committee (on 8 April 2024) and GBC's Corporate Governance & Standards Committee (on 11 April 2024) had considered the proposed new Council Procedure Rules. Details of the outcome of each committee's consideration of the proposed new Council Procedure Rules were

reported to the Council, and would be reported to WBC's full Council meeting on 23 April 2024.

A key theme in the proposed new Council Procedure Rules was to clearly identify who had the authority and responsibility to discharge functions at council meetings, including proper officers, and the correct procedures to be followed, including appropriate communication channels.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Regulatory & Democratic Services, Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith, seconded by Councillor James Jones, the Council RESOLVED: That the proposed new Council Procedure Rules, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report submitted to the Council, be adopted into the Constitution, subject to the following minor amendments, as suggested by Waverley's Standards & General Purposes Committee:

- (a) CPR 2.3 - Election of the Mayor and Appointment of the Deputy Mayor (page 32 of the Council agenda): Amend the second paragraph so that it reads as follows:

“The current Mayor will preside over the election of their successor, unless they are unable to do so, in which case the current Deputy Mayor will do so. If the Deputy Mayor is ineligible to do so, due to the principle that a Councillor should not preside over their own election, the Monitoring Officer will **call for a motion that a non-executive Member of the Council take the chair to** preside for the first agenda item of business to Elect the Mayor. In the case of an equality of votes, the person presiding at the meeting, ~~provided they are a councillor,~~ shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes”.

- (b) CPR 4.2 – Business at Extraordinary Meetings (page 37 of the Council agenda): Amend paragraph (vi) so that it reads as follows:

“(vi) consider the items of business for which the extraordinary meeting has been called, **and deal with any business remaining from the last Council meeting.**”

- (c) CPR 15.12 - Motions which may be moved during debate (page 52 of the Council agenda): Amend first paragraph so that it reads as follows:

“When a motion is under debate, no other motion may be moved except the following procedural **or closure** motions, which may be moved by a member, without comment, at the end of a speech by another member.”

- (d) CPR 25.4 – Leader of the Council (page 62 of the Council agenda):
Amend the first paragraph so that it reads:

“The Leader of the Council, or Deputy Leader in their absence, may attend any meeting of a Committee and speak **once** on any item under consideration as of right, unless they have a relevant interest in the matter that would preclude them from being present.”

Reasons:

- Adoption of the new Council Procedure Rules will ensure that both Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils have adequate arrangements in place to deal with the conduct of business at council meetings in an effective and efficient manner that meets statutory requirements.
- Adoption of the new Council Procedure Rules will be a significant milestone in the process of aligning the constitutions of GBC and WBC where it is appropriate to do so.

CO127 REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARDS AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

The Council noted that the Executive Advisory Boards (EABs) and the single Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) Committee had been established in 2016, following a review of the Council’s internal governance arrangements in 2015. The EABs had been based on a model adopted at that time by two district councils in Kent. In essence, their purpose was to increase backbench member involvement in significant Executive decisions, by advising the Executive at an early stage on the formulation and development of policies and major projects that will help to deliver the Council’s strategic priorities within its Corporate Plan.

When the new arrangements were introduced, much of the work of the then existing two O&S Committees (including policy development) transferred to the EABs and the new O&S Committee was responsible primarily for post-decision review of Executive decisions and wider external scrutiny, including task and finish group investigations.

The remits of the EABs were originally aligned to the themes of the Corporate Plan in place at the time of their establishment. Latterly, they had been linked to the

corporate management structure of the Council (Resources EAB and Community EAB).

The EABs also met jointly to consider matters of significant mutual interest, including consideration of draft budget papers each year. They had no substantive decision-making powers. The EABs and O&S Committee met in public, and all meetings were webcasted, and their proceedings were subject to Part C of the Council Procedure Rules (relating to committees), Public Speaking Procedure Rules, Access to Information Procedure Rules, and (for O&S) the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of Guildford's Constitution.

The Council acknowledged that, since May 2023, the EABs had met on just three occasions (two of which were joint meetings of the two EABs) with most scheduled meetings having been cancelled due to lack of business, or due to the business that had been scheduled on their work programme being postponed for a number of reasons.

At its informal briefing on 14 February 2024, the Executive considered a briefing note on the future of the EABs and their role within the Council's democratic governance processes, particularly in the context of the O&S function. The chairs and vice-chairs of the EABs and the O&S Committee had been invited to the briefing meeting to participate in the discussion and to offer their views. The chair and vice-chair of the O&S Committee and one of the EAB vice-chairs attended and were generally supportive of the proposals to disband the EABs and the existing O&S Committee and replace them with two new O&S Committees.

This matter had also been discussed at the meeting of the Joint Constitutions Review Group (JCRG) held on 28 March 2024. The JCRG supported the proposals and commended them for consideration by the Corporate Governance & Standards Committee at its special meeting held on 11 April 2024. The Committee had also endorsed the proposals and recommended their adoption by the Council.

Upon the motion of the Lead Councillor for Regulatory & Democratic Services, Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith, seconded by Councillor James Walsh, the Council:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the proposal to disband the two EABs and the single O&S Committee and to replace them with two new Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Option 3 referred to in the report submitted to the Council), be adopted and implemented with effect from the 2024-25 municipal year.

- (2) That the draft Terms of Reference of the two proposed new Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report submitted to the Council, be adopted, subject to the addition of the following after paragraph 1.4:

'1.5 General terms of reference

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee may:

- (a) appoint such formal sub-committees and informal task and finish groups as they consider appropriate to fulfil the Council's overview and scrutiny functions,*
- (b) approve an overview and scrutiny work programme so as to ensure that each Committee's time is effectively and efficiently utilised,*
- (c) undertake investigations into such matters relating to the Council's functions and powers as:
 - (i) may be referred by the Leader/Executive, or*
 - (ii) the Committee may consider appropriate.**
- (d) consider petitions received under the adopted Petition Scheme that fall into the following categories:
 - petitions requiring a senior officer to give evidence to the Committee, and*
 - a request from a petition organiser, who is not satisfied with the Council's response to a petition, for a review of the adequacy of the steps taken or proposed to be taken in response to the petition.'**

- (3) That the operation of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committees be reviewed after 12 months.

Reason:

To ensure that the Council is able to demonstrate that it discharges its overview and scrutiny function more effectively.

CO128 APPOINTMENT OF JOINT STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

The Council noted that Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 required local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial

affairs and appoint a Section 151 Officer, also known as a Chief Finance Officer, to have responsibility for those arrangements.

Due to the changes to the Corporate Management Board structure and the advertising of the permanent role of Joint Strategic Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer a permanent appointment was required to ensure that both Councils met their statutory requirements.

Following the advertising of the permanent role, one application had been received, from the current interim S151 Officer, Richard Bates. Mr Bates had been in the role of interim Executive Head of Finance/ S151 Officer since 17 July 2023, and, latterly, the role of Interim Joint Strategic Director of Finance. At its meeting on 12 April 2024, the Joint Senior Staff Committee (JSSC) conducted an interview of Mr Bates for the permanent role of Joint Strategic Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer and had recommended unanimously to confirm his formal appointment to that role at the full meetings of both Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils to be held respectively on 16 and 23 April 2024.

It was noted that any formal offer of appointment was subject to no material or well-founded objection being made by either of the two Council Leaders on behalf of their respective Executives in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001. The Council was informed that no such objection had been received in respect of this appointment.

Upon the motion of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane seconded by the Lead Councillor for Finance and Property, Councillor Richard Lucas, the Council

RESOLVED: That, subject to the agreement of Waverley Borough Council at its full Council meeting on 23 April 2024, confirmation of a formal offer of appointment to the role of Joint Strategic Director of Finance, and designation as Section 151 Officer, for both Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils be made to Richard Bates, subject to a salary of £127,850 per annum.

Reasons:

- Section 151 of the Local Government Act, 1972 required that local authorities had in place arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.
- Richard Bates was a qualified Accountant and experienced local authority Chief Financial Officer. He had held the S151 Officer role at Dorset County Council and interim S151 Officer at Mendip District Council

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- Richard Bates had been carrying out the responsibilities of the role of interim Executive Head of Finance/S151 Officer at both authorities since 17 July 2023 and, latterly, the role of Interim Joint Strategic Director of Finance.

The meeting finished at 7.50 pm.

Guildford Borough Council

Report to: Council

Date: 13 May 2024

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Strategic Director of Legal & Democratic Services

Author: John Armstrong, Democratic Services & Elections Manager

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Report Status: Open

Appointment of Committees and Other Appointments: 2024-25

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council is required annually to establish its committees, their size and terms of reference, and to appoint councillors to them in accordance with the rules on political balance.
- 1.2 The Council also elects the chairmen and vice-chairmen of those committees.
- 1.3 Group Leaders have been asked to submit nominations from their respective groups by no later than 12 noon on Thursday 9 May 2024, so that they may be included on the Supplementary Agenda Pack (formerly known as the 'Order Paper') and circulated to all councillors.

2. Recommendations

- (1) That, for the 2024-25 municipal year, the Council agrees to appoint the committees referred to in the table set out in paragraph 6.2 of this report, and agrees their respective size referred to therein and the proposed terms of reference, as indicated in **Appendix 1** to this report.

- (2) That the proposed numerical allocation of seats on committees to each political group on the Council, as shown in **Appendix 2** to this report, be approved for the 2024-25 municipal year.
 - (3) That the nominations for membership of the committees and the joint committees, for the 2024-25 municipal year, as shown on the Supplementary Agenda Pack to be submitted to the Council, be approved in accordance with the wishes of the political groups.
 - (4) That the designated chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Regulatory Sub-Committee continue to be elected annually by the Council, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.4.6.
 - (5) That the nominations for election of chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees and relevant sub-committees for the 2024-25 municipal year, as shown on the Supplementary Agenda Pack to be submitted to the Council, be approved.
 - (6) That the nominations for appointment of the Councillor Champions (and deputies) for the 2024-25 municipal year, as shown on the Supplementary Agenda Pack to be submitted to the Council, be approved.
- 3. Reasons for Recommendation:**
- 3.1 To comply with Council Procedure Rule 2 of the Constitution in respect of the appointment of committees and election of chairmen and vice-chairmen.
 - 3.2 To enable the Council to comply with its obligations under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in respect of the political proportionality on its committees.
- 4. Exemption from publication**
- 4.1 No part of this report is exempt from publication.
- 5. Purpose of Report**
- 5.1 This report asks the Council in respect of the 2024-25 Municipal Year:

- (a) to appoint a number of committees to discharge various non-executive functions and to agree their respective size, terms of reference, and numerical allocation of seats to political groups,
- (b) to appoint councillors to those committees in accordance with the statutory requirements for political balance,
- (c) to elect committee and sub-committee chairmen and vice-chairmen, as appropriate,
- (d) to determine that full Council will continue to elect the designated chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Regulatory Sub-Committee, and elect those chairmen for the forthcoming municipal year, and
- (e) to agree the appointment of a number of Councillor Champions.

6. Background

Appointment of Committees

- 6.1 Council Procedure Rule 2 requires the Council, at its Annual Meeting, to appoint such committees as it shall determine and to agree their respective size and terms of reference.
- 6.2 The Council is invited to appoint the following committees in the manner specified in the table below:

Committee	No. of voting members of Committee	No. of co-opted (non-voting) members
Corporate Governance and Standards Committee	7 councillors ¹	Up to 3 independent & 3 parish members ²
Joint Senior Staff Committee (with Waverley)	3 councillors (Leader + 2)	None
Joint Governance Committee (with Waverley)	6 councillors (Leader + 5)	None
Licensing Committee	15 councillors	None
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Resources)	12 councillors (non-Executive)	None

¹ who may include one member of the Executive, except the lead councillor whose portfolio includes finance and resources. Neither the Leader nor Deputy Leader may be a member or substitute member of this Committee

² These co-optees have been appointed to the Committee for a four-year term ending May 2027

Committee	No. of voting members of Committee	No. of co-opted (non-voting) members
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Services)	12 councillors (non-Executive)	None
Planning Committee	15 councillors	None

6.3 The Council is also invited to consider and approve the terms of reference of these committees for 2024-25, details of which are set out in **Appendix 1** to this report. The only change being proposed relates to the terms of reference of the Corporate Governance & Standards Committee. Following approval by the Council on 16 April 2024 to establish two new Overview & Scrutiny Committees, one of which will be primarily responsible for scrutiny of finance, both in terms of budget preparation and budget monitoring, it is proposed that the following activities be removed from the terms of reference of the Corporate Governance & Standards Committee and added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees' terms of reference:

- To consider reports on the Capital and Investment Strategy prior to their referral to the Executive and Council
- To consider budget monitoring reports at least on a quarterly basis.

Political Composition of the Council

6.4 The political composition of the Council is:

Liberal Democrats:	25
Conservatives:	10
Residents for Guildford and Villages:	7
Guildford Greenbelt Group:	3
Labour:	3

Requirement for political balance and numerical allocation of seats on committees

6.5 Except in relation to the Licensing Committee and its sub-committees where the Council has absolute discretion as to whether they are politically balanced, the membership of each of the Council's committees and sub-committees shall be in accordance with statutory requirements for political balance. As far as possible, the number of seats allocated to a political group on committees and sub-committees will reflect the size of that group in proportion to the total Council membership.

- 6.6 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, *as far as reasonably practicable*, to the following four principles in constituting its committees or sub-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.
- 6.7 The draft calculation of the numerical allocation of seats to political groups on committees for the 2024-25 municipal year is set out in **Appendix 2** to this report. This now includes the two new Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which the Council agreed to establish at its last meeting.
- 6.8 Once the allocation of seats to the political groups has been determined, 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. Details of the numerical allocation of seats on the committees to the political groups together with each political group's nominations to fill those seats will be included on the Supplementary Agenda Pack to be circulated to all councillors prior to the Council meeting.

Substitute members on Committees

- 6.9 Council Procedure Rule 2.4.7 now provides that for each political group represented on a committee, all members of that group not appointed to that committee, shall be designated as substitute members for the member or members of that group who have been appointed to that committee. It is, therefore, no longer necessary for political groups to nominate substitute members to committees.

7. Election of chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees and sub-committees

- 7.1 Following the appointment of committees, new Council Procedure Rule 2.4.6 requires the Council to elect the chairmen and vice-chairmen of all committees for the ensuing municipal year. It also provides that unless directed otherwise by Council, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Sub-Committees shall be appointed by those Sub-Committees. In order to ensure that licensing hearings may take place as expeditiously as possible, without having to wait for the first meeting of the Licensing Committee of the new municipal year, it is proposed that the current arrangements whereby Council elects the seven designated chairmen in respect of the Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Regulatory Sub-Committee should continue.
- 7.2 Details of nominations received in respect of the election of committee and sub-committee chairmen and vice-chairmen will also be set out in the Supplementary Agenda Pack to be circulated to all councillors prior to the Council meeting.
- 7.3 Councillors will note the new requirements in respect of nominations for election of chairman and vice-chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees, which are set out in the O&S terms of reference in Appendix 1 (para 2.5):

“Subject to the total number of Opposition members on the Council exceeding 10% of the overall membership, the Chair of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be nominated by the Principal Opposition Group. The Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will not usually be from the same political group as the Chair. Without consent of the Council, no councillor can be Chair or Vice-Chair of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee”.

8. Councillor Champions

Armed Forces Champion

- 8.1 Borough and district councils across Surrey have been invited to appoint a member of the Executive, or Chairman of an appropriate Scrutiny Committee, or a Member with an interest in the Armed Forces community, as the Council’s Armed Forces Champion. The role involves raising the profile and needs of the Armed Forces community (serving personnel, both regular and reserve, their families, and veterans), within the Council and the Borough. Close liaison with the Council’s Armed Forces Covenant Officer, with particular reference to the Council’s obligations undertaken

through the Armed Forces Covenant and the Community Covenant, will be essential.

The Armed Forces Champion for 2023-24 was Councillor Stephen Hives (Deputy: Councillor Sallie Barker MBE).

Historic Environment and Design Champion

- 8.2 Since 2004, the Council has appointed an Historic Environment and Design Champion whose role has been to promote and support best practice in the built and historic environment by ensuring that the Council provides a vision for how the quality of the built environment will improve. This will require an overview of the host of responsibilities the Council has, for example via planning, conservation, procurement of new buildings and the management of streets and green spaces.

The Historic Environment and Design Champion for 2023-24 was Councillor Howard Smith (Deputy: Councillor Richard Mills OBE)

Older Persons' Champion

- 8.3 The role of the Older Persons' Champion is to promote services for older people within the Borough. The role requires a willingness to challenge existing structures and cultures; and an ability to work across organisational boundaries and motivate key partners.

The Older Persons' Champion for 2023-24 was Councillor Honor Brooker.

- 8.4 The Council is invited to appoint Councillor Champions for 2024-25, nominations for which will be set out on the Supplementary Agenda Pack to be circulated prior to this Council meeting. By way of information the current Councillor Champions have been invited to provide a summary of their activities over the past municipal year, details of which will be included in the Order Paper.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1 As the Council's membership is divided into political groups, it is required by sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and related regulations, to ensure that appointments to fill seats on committees are allocated in the same proportion as that in which the Council as a whole is divided. There is also a duty to review annually the allocation of seats on committees to political groups or, as soon as reasonably practicable, following any change in the political constitution of the Council.

- 9.2 The Council has wide powers in the Local Government Act 1972 to appoint committees and delegate (non-executive) functions to them. As the Council operates executive arrangements, it is required under the Local Government Act 2000, to establish at least one overview and scrutiny committee.
- 9.3 The Council should ensure the separation of roles between the Council as developer and the Council as Local Planning Authority so as to ensure there is no conflict of interests or perception of pre-determination or bias.
- 9.4 It is recognised good practice to ensure that the Leader and Lead Councillors on the Executive do not sit as members of the Planning Committee given the potential conflict of interest that is likely to exist in respect of planning applications in respect of the Council's own developments or developments which directly affect the Council's land or property holding.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 Councillors who are elected as chairmen of committees are entitled to receive a special responsibility allowance (SRA) in accordance with the Council's adopted scheme of allowances for councillors. The current SRAs vary according to the committee, ranging from £4,174 p.a. to £6,677 p.a. In addition, the scheme of allowances provides that co-opted members of committees are entitled to a small co-optees' allowance (currently £419 p.a.) and claim travel and subsistence allowance at the same rate as councillors to cover the cost of attending meetings. All of this can be contained within existing budgets.
- 10.2 There are no other financial implications arising from consideration of this matter.

11. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 11.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

12. Human resource Implications

- 12.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report.

13. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 13.1 There are no specific climate change/sustainability implications as a result of this report.

14. Background Papers

None

15. Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposed terms of reference of Committees for 2024-25

Appendix 2: Numerical allocation of seats on committees to political groups

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GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE OF COMMITTEES 2024-25

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Statement of purpose

The Committee has a dual purpose both as an audit committee and a standards committee.

The Committee is a key component of the authority's corporate governance. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide independent assurance to councillors of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of the authority's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

With regard to standards, the Committee promotes high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members and oversees the arrangements for dealing with allegations of misconduct.

Audit and Accounts Activity

1. To consider reports on the summary of internal audit activity (actual and proposed) and the level of assurance that it can give over the Council's corporate governance arrangements and monitor the progress of high priority actions arising from audit recommendations
2. To consider reports dealing with the management and performance of the providers of the internal and external audit functions.
3. To approve the Internal and External Audit Plans, and significant interim changes.

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4. To consider the external auditor's annual letter (including their audit fee), relevant reports (both financial and strategic) and the report to those charged with governance.
5. To consider specific reports submitted by the internal or external auditors
6. To comment on the scope and depth of internal and external audit work and ensure that it gives value for money.
7. To review and approve the annual statement of accounts and Audit Findings Report with specific emphasis on whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.
- ~~8. To consider reports on the Capital and Investment Strategy prior to their referral to the Executive and Council~~
- ~~9. To consider budget monitoring reports at least on a quarterly basis.~~

Corporate Governance Activity

10. To monitor and review the operation of the Council's Constitution, particularly in respect of financial procedures and protocols, procurement procedures and guidelines and make recommendations, as appropriate, in respect of any proposed amendments to the Executive and Council.
11. To consider the Council's arrangements for corporate governance and to recommend such actions necessary to ensure compliance with best practice, together with any relevant corporate governance related issues referred to the Committee by the Joint Chief Executive, a Director, the Leader/Executive or any other committee of the Council.
12. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management undertaken throughout the Council including the review of the Corporate Risk Register.
13. To consider and approve the Council's Annual Governance Statement in advance of the formal approval of the Council's Statement of Accounts.
14. To consider an annual report of the operation of the whistle-blowing policy, including incidents reported
15. To monitor and audit the Council's equality and diversity policies and approve the Equality Scheme and associated action plan.
16. To monitor bi-annually the Council's performance in dealing with Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests.
17. To monitor the Council's progress on various data protection and information security initiatives.
18. To consider annual reports on the work of task groups appointed by the Committee, together with other matters submitted to the Committee periodically by those task groups

19. To consider bi-annually Planning Appeals Monitoring Reports and S106 Monitoring Reports
20. To consider an annual report on the exercise of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Ethical Standards Activity

21. To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members¹
22. To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Councillors' code of conduct.
23. To advise, train or arrange to train councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the code of conduct.
24. To agree arrangements for the selection and interviewing of candidates for appointment as Independent Persons (including such joint arrangements with other councils as may be deemed by the Monitoring Officer to be appropriate) and to make recommendations to full Council on these appointments.
25. To agree allowances and expenses for the Independent Person and any Reserve Independent Persons
26. To grant dispensations, after consultation with the independent person, to councillors and co-opted members with disclosable pecuniary interests.
27. To monitor and review the operation of the Code of Conduct for Staff and the Protocol on Councillor/ Officer Relations and to make recommendations as appropriate to Council in respect of any necessary amendments.
28. To consider the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report on misconduct complaints against councillors, and any other matter referred by the Monitoring Officer.

Accountability arrangements

To report to those charged with governance on the Committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning the adequacy and effectiveness of their governance, risk management and internal control frameworks, financial reporting arrangements, and internal and external audit functions.

¹ A "co-opted member" for this purpose is, defined in the Localism Act section 27 (4) as "a person who is not a member of the authority but who

(a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or

(b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority; and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee".

Reference to councillors or co-opted members in paragraphs 30 and 31 includes councillors or co-opted members of parish councils in the Council's area.

To report annually to full Council on the Committee's performance in relation to the terms of reference and the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose.

**GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
JOINT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. This Joint Committee is to be established by Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council ("the councils") in accordance with Section 101 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (Appointment of committees)
2. MEMBERS: 12
 - (a) The Joint Governance Committee shall comprise the respective Leader of each council, plus five members appointed by Guildford Borough Council and five members appointed by Waverley Borough Council
 - (b) Appointments shall be made in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 in respect of each council.
3. QUORUM: 4 members in total, subject to each council being represented at a meeting by at least two of their members.
4. CHAIR: The Joint Governance Committee shall be chaired alternately between the councils by the Leader of the Council, hosting the meeting, or in their absence, the Leader of the Council not hosting the meeting, or in both Leaders absence, the Chair shall be appointed by a majority vote of those members present and voting.
5. PLACE OF MEETINGS: The venue for meetings of the Joint Governance Committee shall normally alternate between the two councils with the host Leader chairing the meeting, but the venue may be varied by the Joint Monitoring Officer following consultation with the Leader of each Council.
6. GENERAL ROLE: Adopting and exercising such of the functions of the councils as may be delegated by those councils in respect of the governance arrangements for inter-authority working between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council.

7. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS: As and when required, but at least bi-annually.
8. SUBSTITUTES: Substitutes may be appointed. The respective Group Leaders shall nominate an ongoing main substitute. Any appointed member of the Joint Governance Committee may be substituted by any other member of their political group on the council they represent.
9. ROLE AND FUNCTION:
 - (i) To undertake periodically a formal review (at least once every 12 months) of all inter-authority agreements, between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council, ensuring they continue to be fit for purpose and recommending to both Full Councils any changes required.
 - (ii) To undertake periodically a formal review (at least once every 6 months) of the collaboration risk assessment, reviewing current and target impact and likelihood scores and making any changes to the list of risks and mitigating actions.
 - (iii) Notwithstanding (i) and (ii) above, to undertake a formal review of the inter-authority agreements or the collaboration risk assessment at such other time as may be determined by the Joint Committee.
 - (iv) To discharge any other functions that relate to the governance of the inter-authority working arrangements that may from time to time be delegated to the Joint Committee.
 - (v) The Joint Governance Committee may arrange for the discharge of its functions by an Officer, of either Waverley Borough Council or Guildford Borough Council, and in doing so will set out clearly any limits upon such delegation.
 - (vi) The Joint Governance Committee may establish working groups to assist them in their work and in doing so will set clear terms of reference for them. Such working groups shall not be decision-making bodies.
 - (vii) The Joint Governance Committee may establish a Sub-Committee consisting solely of Members of one Council to consider matters solely relating to that Council.

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10. SERVICING THE JOINT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE: The servicing of the Joint Governance Committee shall be agreed between the councils' Democratic Services Managers.
11. MEETINGS OF THE JOINT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE SHALL BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE:
 - (a) A meeting of the Joint Governance Committee shall be summoned by the relevant Proper Officer of the Council who shall give a minimum of five clear working days' notice (or less in the case of urgency)
 - (b) Meetings of the Joint Governance Committee shall be held in public except in so far as the matters for decision relate to issues which can be dealt with in private in accordance with Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)
 - (c) The order of business at meetings of the Joint Governance Committee shall include the following:
 - (a) Apologies for Absence and notification of substitutes
 - (b) Disclosures of Interest
 - (c) Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting
 - (d) Matters set out in the agenda for the meeting
 - (e) Matters not set out in the agenda for the meeting but which the chairman agrees pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency
 - (d) Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members of the Joint Governance Committee present and voting at the time the question was put. A vote shall be taken either by show of hands or, if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting. The chairman or person presiding shall have the casting vote.

**GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
JOINT SENIOR STAFF COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Joint Senior Staff Committee is to be established in accordance with Section 102 (1) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (Appointment of committees).

1.0 MEMBERSHIP

The Joint Senior Staff Committee shall comprise 6 Councillors, being the respective Leader of each Council plus two Councillors appointed by Guildford Borough Council (one of whom shall be the Leader of the principal Opposition Group) and two Councillors appointed by Waverley Borough Council (one of whom shall be the Leader of the principal Opposition Group). The Committee shall be politically balanced for each Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

2.0 APPOINTMENT

Appointments shall be made in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

3.0 QUORUM

The quorum for a meeting of the Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be 3 members (subject to each Council being represented at any meeting by at least 1 member).

4.0 TIME & LOCATION OF MEETINGS

The venue and commencement time for meetings of the Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be determined by the Joint Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of each Council, and shall normally alternate between the Civic Office of each Council.

5.0 CHAIRMAN

The Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be chaired by the Leader of the Council at whose civic office the meeting is held. In their absence the meeting will be chaired by the Leader of the Council not hosting the meeting. In the absence of both Leaders, the chair will be elected by the meeting on the basis of a majority vote.

6.0 VOTING

Decisions of the Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be made by a majority vote of those members present and voting. A vote will be taken either by way of a show of hands or by electronic means. The Chairman shall have no second or casting vote. In circumstances where a majority decision cannot be made by the Joint Senior Staff Committee, the delegation of powers and function to the Committee, relating to that decision, will immediately cease. Any such decision will be referred to each Council for determination.

7.0 ROLE

Adopting and exercising such of the functions of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council (“the Councils”) as can be delegated by those Councils in respect of the appointment and disciplinary action relating to the Councils’ Joint Chief Executive, Joint Chief Officers and Joint Deputy Chief Officers as provided for by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 (as amended) or any successor regulations.

8.0 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

Meetings will be arranged by the Joint Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of each Council, on such occasions as is necessary to determine any business within its terms of reference.

9.0 SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

In the event of an appointed Councillor being unable to attend any meeting of the Joint Senior Staff Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader may appoint a Substitute Member, from the same Council, provided that prior written notice of such substitution is given to the Monitoring Officer by 5pm the working day prior to the meeting.

10.0 DELEGATION

The Joint Senior Staff Committee may arrange for the discharge of their functions by an Officer and in doing so will set out clearly any limits upon such delegation.

11.0 WORKING GROUPS

The Joint Senior Staff Committee may establish working groups to assist them in their work and in doing so will set clear terms of reference for them. Such working groups shall not be decision-making bodies.

12.0 SUB-COMMITTEES

The Joint Senior Staff Committee may establish sub-committees consisting solely of the Members of one Council, to consider matters relating only to that Council.

13.0 OFFICER EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURE RULES

The Joint Senior Staff Committee shall operate in compliance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules adopted by each Council into their Constitution.

14.0 FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

14.1 Joint Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service

- (i) Subject to (ii) below, to undertake and determine on behalf of the Councils all aspects of the process for the recruitment and selection of the Joint Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, including final approval of the terms and conditions of employment (based on current provisions) for that post.
- (ii) The final decision as to the appointment of the joint Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service shall be reserved to each Council, and subject to no material or well-founded objection to the making of an offer of appointment being received by the Leader of either Council on behalf of their respective Executives.
- (iii) To determine pension discretions relating to the Joint Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service.
- (iv) To consider any financial settlement of an affected employee who is unsuccessful in respect of the selection of the Joint Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service, and to make recommendations as appropriate for formal approval by each Council.
- (v) To confirm into post, or otherwise, the successful candidate following any probationary or trial period.
- (vi) To be responsible for ad-hoc employment matters affecting the Joint Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service post, including consideration and determination of any 'cost of living' pay award.

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- (vii) To be responsible, subject to (viii) below for any disciplinary action regarding the Joint Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service.

- (viii) The final decision to dismiss the Joint Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service shall be reserved to each Council and shall be subject to no material or well-founded objection to the proposed dismissal being received by the Leader of either Council on behalf of their respective Executives.

14.2 Joint Statutory Officer² posts

- (i) Subject to (ii) below, to undertake and determine on behalf of the Councils all aspects of the process of recruitment and selection of any Joint Statutory Officer post.

- (ii) The final decision as to the appointment of any Joint Statutory Officer posts shall be reserved to each Council and, subject to no material or well-founded objection to the making of an offer of appointment being received by the Leader of either Council on behalf of their respective Executives.

- (iii) To determine pension discretions relating to any Joint Statutory Officer posts.

- (iv) To consider any financial settlement of an affected employee who is unsuccessful in respect of the selection of any Joint Statutory Officer posts, and where necessary to make recommendations as appropriate for formal approval by each Council.

- (v) To be responsible for ad-hoc employment matters affecting any Joint Statutory Officer posts.

- (vi) To be responsible, subject to (vii) below, for any disciplinary action regarding any Joint Statutory Officer.

- (vii) The final decision to dismiss any Joint Statutory Officer shall be reserved to each Council and shall be subject to no material or well-founded objection to the proposed dismissal being received by the Leader of either Council on behalf of their respective Executives.

² Section 151/Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer

14.3 Joint Strategic Directors

- (i) Subject to (ii) below, to undertake and determine on behalf of the Councils all aspects of the process for the appointment of any Joint Strategic Director.
- (ii) The appointment of any Joint Strategic Director shall be subject to no material or well-founded objection to the making of an offer of appointment being received by the Leader of either Council on behalf of their respective Executives.
- (iii) To determine pension discretions relating to any Joint Strategic Director.
- (iv) To consider any financial settlement of an affected employee who is unsuccessful in respect of the selection and appointment of any Joint Strategic Director, and where necessary to make recommendations as appropriate for formal approval by each Council.
- (v) To be responsible for ad-hoc employment matters affecting any Joint Strategic Director post.
- (vi) To be responsible, subject to (vii) below, for any disciplinary action regarding any Joint Strategic Director.
- (vii) The dismissal of any Joint Strategic Director shall be subject to no material or well-founded objection to the proposed dismissal being received by the Leader of either Council on behalf of their respective Executives.

15.0 SERVICING THE JOINT SENIOR STAFF COMMITTEE

The Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be serviced by staff as agreed between the Democratic Services Managers of each Council.

The Joint Senior Staff Committee will be supported by professional advisors including legal advisors or human resources advisors as appropriate. The views of such advisors must be taken into account.

16.0 MEETINGS OF THE JOINT SENIOR STAFF COMMITTEE SHALL BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE:

1. A meeting of the Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be summoned by the Joint Monitoring Officer who shall give a minimum of five clear working days' notice (or less in the case of urgency).
2. Meetings of the Joint Senior Staff Committee shall be held in public except in so far as the matters for decision relate to issues which can be dealt with in private in accordance with Section 100A (4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and the Committee resolve to exclude the public.
3. The order of business at meetings of the Joint Senior Staff Committee shall include the following:
 - (a) Apologies for Absence and Substitute Members;
 - (b) Declarations of Interests;
 - (c) Agreement and adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting;
 - (d) Matters set out in the agenda for the meeting;
 - (e) Matters not set out in the agenda for the meeting but which the chairman agrees pursuant to Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

LICENSING COMMITTEE

1. Except as otherwise provided in the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, all functions of the licensing authority prescribed by those Acts.
2. All other functions relating to licensing and registration in so far as they are the responsibility of the Borough Council as specified in Section B of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).
3. All functions relating to health and safety at work in so far as they are the responsibility of the Borough Council as specified in Section C of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).
4. To determine any changes to taxi and private hire licence fees and charges on an annual basis, and to authorise statutory publication of the fees and charges.

5. To consider objections following the statutory publication of the fees and charges referred to in 4. above and to approve the final fees and charges.

LICENSING REGULATORY SUB-COMMITTEE

Other than those matters prescribed by the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005, to determine contested licensing applications and disciplinary matters within the purview of the Licensing Committee in accordance with the Council’s policies.

LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

All relevant functions relating to licensable activities, as described in the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

1. Statement of Purpose

- 1.1 The Council has established two Overview and Scrutiny Committees to discharge the functions under Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 with remits covering the following service areas:

Committee	Remit
Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Resources	Communications & Customer Services Housing Services Assets & Property Finance Legal & Democratic Services Organisational Development
Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services This Committee is the Council’s designated crime and disorder committee under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.	Community Services Environmental Services Regulatory Services Commercial Services Regeneration and Planning Policy Planning Development

- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Resources may, with the agreement of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Services, assume responsibility for an item which would

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normally fall within the remit of the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee if it has substantial revenue or capital implications.

1.3 The Council supports the role of its Overview and Scrutiny Committees in holding public-service decision-makers and providers to account and facilitating the improvement of public services in Guildford borough. Effective scrutiny enhances accountability, ensures transparency of decision-making, contributes to service improvement and acts as a 'check and balance' on decision-makers.

1.4 To this end the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will:

- a) provide a constructive "critical friend" challenge
- b) amplify the voices and concerns of the public
- c) be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- d) drive improvement in public services

1.5 **General terms of reference**

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee may:

- (a) appoint such formal sub-committees and informal task and finish groups as they consider appropriate to fulfil the Council's overview and scrutiny functions,
- (b) approve an overview and scrutiny work programme so as to ensure that each Committee's time is effectively and efficiently utilised,
- (c) undertake investigations into such matters relating to the Council's functions and powers as:
 - (i) may be referred by the Leader/Executive, or
 - (ii) the Committee may consider appropriate.
- (d) consider petitions received under the adopted Petition Scheme that fall into the following categories:
 - petitions requiring a senior officer to give evidence to the Committee, and
 - a request from a petition organiser, who is not satisfied with the Council's response to a petition, for a review of the adequacy of the steps taken or proposed to be taken in response to the petition.

2. Committee Form and Structure

Composition

- 2.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will comprise 12 members and shall be politically balanced.
- 2.2 Any non-Executive member who has not been appointed to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee may substitute for any member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provided that they are from the same political group as the member for whom they are substituting.
- 2.3 Executive members must not be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 2.4 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be appointed by Full Council at the Selection Council meeting each year.
- 2.5 Subject to the total number of Opposition members on the Council exceeding 10% of the overall membership, the Chair of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be nominated by the Principal Opposition Group. The Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will not usually be from the same political group as the Chair. Without consent of the Council, no councillor can be Chair or Vice-Chair of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.6 In the event of a vacancy in the position of Chair or Vice-Chair occurring during the year, the Committee may elect a replacement from nominations put forward by the Group Leaders.
- 2.7 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or any of their sub-committees or Task and Finish Groups, shall be entitled to appoint up to two non-voting co-optees. Co-optees will normally be drawn from groups, organisations, or service users with an interest in services within the Committee's remit. Co-optees may be appointed as standing co-optees or special interest co-optees appointed to assist with scrutiny of a particular matter.

Meetings

- 2.8 There will normally be at least seven ordinary meetings of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee each municipal year. In addition, special meetings may be called if appropriate including meetings to consider matters called-in to committee.

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- 2.9 A meeting of either Overview and Scrutiny Committee may be called by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the relevant committee if they consider it necessary or appropriate.
- 2.10 The quorum for an Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be 4 voting members.

Competency

- 2.11 All members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees must undertake a programme of training as considered appropriate by the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible upon appointment to the Committee, and as directed thereafter.

3. Functions and responsibilities

With regard to the service areas within their remit, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will have the following functions and responsibilities:

3.1 Policy development and overview:

- 3.1.1 Assist the Council and the Executive in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues.
- 3.1.2 Conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options.
- 3.1.3 Consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options.
- 3.1.4 Question members of the Executive and officers from the Joint Management Team about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area.
- 3.1.5 Liaise with other organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.
- 3.1.6 Hold enquiries and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development.
- 3.1.7 Go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that are reasonably considered necessary to perform the deliberations.

- 3.1.8 Invite witnesses to attend to address it on any matter under consideration and pay any advisor, assessors and witnesses a reasonable fee and expenses for so doing.

3.2 Scrutiny:

- 3.2.1 Review and/or scrutinise decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions, ensuring they are made in accordance with the Constitution and policies laid down by the Council and within the Corporate Plan.
- 3.2.2 Review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Executive and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time.
- 3.2.3 Review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas.
- 3.2.4 Require Executive members and officers to attend and answer questions about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects.
- 3.2.5 Exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made by the Executive or key decisions taken by an officer but not yet implemented.
- 3.2.6 Make reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Executive and/or joint committees in connection with the discharge of any functions.
- 3.2.7 Review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area by inviting reports and requesting them to address the committee and local people about their activities and performance.
- 3.2.8 Question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).
- 3.2.9 Consider requests from any elected or co-opted member for an item relevant to the functions of the committee to be considered at the next available meeting.
- 3.2.10 Consider any Councillor Call for Action on matters relevant to the Committee.
- 3.2.11 Perform scrutiny functions relating to crime and disorder and to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership.

3.2.12 To consider reports on the Capital and Investment Strategy prior to their referral to the Executive and Council.

3.2.13 To consider budget monitoring reports at least on a quarterly basis.

3.3 Annual report:

3.3.1 Each Overview & Scrutiny Committee will report annually to the Council on its workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

4. Proceedings

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will conduct their proceedings in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules at Part 4 of the Constitution.

4.2 No councillor may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they have been directly involved.

4.3 The Chair and Vice-Chair will undertake the following roles in relation to their committee:

(a) chair meetings of the Committee and promote the development and exercise of the overview and scrutiny function according to the Council's Constitution;

(b) ensure that the work of the Committee contributes to the Council's corporate objectives;

(c) liaise with Executive members as appropriate; and

(d) contribute to the training and development of members engaged in the overview and scrutiny role.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

1. All functions relating to town and country planning and development control in so far as they are the responsibility of the Borough Council as specified in Section A of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

2. All functions relating to:

- (a) the stopping up or diversion of footpaths, bridleways or restricted byways affected by development;
- (b) the extinguishment of public rights of way over land held for planning purposes; and
- (c) trees and hedgerows

as specified in Section I of Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

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PROPOSED Numerical Allocation of Seats to Political Groups on Committees 2024-25

Committee	Liberal Democrats	Conservatives	Residents for Guildford & Villages	Guildford Greenbelt Group	Labour
Total no. of seats on the Council (48)	25	10	7	3	3
% of no. of seats on the Council	52.08%	20.83%	14.58%	6.25%	6.25%
Notional number of seats on committees (Total: 70)	36	15	10	4	4
Corporate Governance & Standards Cttee (7 seats)	4	1	1	0	1
Joint Senior Staff Committee (3 seats)	2	1	0	0	0
Joint Governance Committee (6 seats)	3	1	1	1	0
Licensing Committee (15 seats)	8	3	2	1	1
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Resources (12 seats)	6	3	2	0	1
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Services (12 seats)	6	3	2	1	0
Planning Committee (15 seats)	8	3	2	1	1
Total no. of seats on committees	37	15	10	4	4

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Guildford Borough Council

Report to: Council

Date: 13 May 2024

Ward(s) affected: Bellfields and Slyfield

Report of Director: Place

Author: Abi Lewis, Assistant Director Regeneration & Planning Policy

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Lead Councillor responsible: Tom Hunt

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Report Status: Part Exempt

Weyside Urban Village Development

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Weyside Urban Village ("WUV") is a major 41-hectare brownfield regeneration scheme that Guildford Borough Council (the "Council") anticipates could deliver approximately 1,500 homes across a range of tenures, as well as 2,000 square metres of community space and 6,500 square metres of employment space.
- 1.2 In February 2020 the Council committed £334.9 million to de-risk the infrastructure and site assembly process needed across the Weyside Urban Village site. Over 44 percent of the site is currently in Council ownership, and 100 per cent will be achieved on completion of land transfers with Thames Water Utilities Ltd ("TWUL"). The conditional contract with TWUL was signed on 25 April 2019 (the "TW Agreement").

- 1.3 The Council signed a Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) with Homes England in July 2020 for Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) for £52.3m, to draw down the grant expenditure associated with the implementation of the infrastructure works. In October 2021, the Planning Committee issued a Resolution to Grant for the hybrid planning application for Weyside, with the decision notice to approve the application issued in March 2022.
- 1.4 The broader economic landscape and its impact on the construction industry over the last 12–18 months has been profound. At the end of 2021, the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) - which provides cost and price data for the UK construction industry - reported that the annual growth in its material cost index reached a forty-year high. Since then, pressures on supply chains have persisted and labour shortages have become more acute. Although the lifting of Covid restrictions led to a return of high activity levels, the war in Ukraine and high rates of inflation have put the construction industry in further turmoil. The impact of these issues is being felt at a local level, with forecast construction and financing costs also increasing significantly.
- 1.5 It was agreed with Executive in January 2020 that the project team would report the financial position to the Executive on an annual basis. This report sets out the current financial forecast to the end of the programme ahead of a further paper being presented to Executive and Council outlining the proposed mitigation plan to address the potential financial deficit that has arisen as a result of macro-level factors.
- 1.6 This report will be considered by the Executive at its special meeting on 9 May at which it will be asked:
 - (1) to note the current financial position of WUV at the Spring 2024 Financial Review, as set out in this report, and
 - (2) to note the current forecasted eventual deficit - outlined in Exempt Appendix 1 - in 2033 (year 10 of the project delivery programme).

(3) Delegate to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Regeneration and Lead Councillor for Finance and Property, authority to enter into such other contracts and legal agreements connected with the Weyside Urban Village programme as may be necessary in compliance with Procurement Procedure Rules and within the approved budget.

1.7 The Executive will also be asked to endorse the recommendation to Council in paragraph 2 below.

1.8 Details of the outcome of the Executive's consideration of this matter will be reported to the Council on the Supplementary Agenda Pack (formerly known as the Order Paper).

2. Recommendation to Council

2.1 That the Council approves the transfer of £69.548 million from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme for payments which the Council is obliged to make to TWUL under the TW Agreement for 2024-25, for costs necessary to meet the milestones set within the Homes England HIF agreement and construction costs of phase 2 Infrastructure, Offsite Highways and the New Council Depot.

3. Reasons for Recommendation:

3.1. To ensure that there is sufficient understanding of the projected financial forecast of the programme and outline the work underway to develop mitigation strategies to alleviate the forecast deficit.

3.2. To ensure that there is sufficient funding in the approved programme to cover construction of phase 2 Infrastructure, Offsite Highways and the new Council Depot and the payments which the Council is obliged to make to Thames Water Utilities Limited under the Thames Water Agreement for 2024-25.

3.3. To ensure that statutory service agreements and construction agreements can be entered into for the delivery of services and

infrastructure for the development and to ensure that Homes England Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) milestones are achieved.

- 3.4. To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan (2021-2025) priorities, by supporting the high-quality development of a strategic site, creating employment opportunities through regeneration and facilitating affordable housing.

4. Exemption from publication

- 4.1. Yes, part of the report. Exempt appendices 1-4.

(a) The content is to be treated as exempt from the Access to Information publication rules because it contains commercially sensitive and legally privileged information and is therefore exempt by virtue of paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as follows:

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
- Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

(b) The content is restricted to all councillors.

(c) The exempt information is not expected to be made public because it is deemed commercially sensitive and legally privileged.

5. Purpose of Report

- 5.1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update of the legal and financial work carried out so far, together with a review of the financial position of the programme at the Spring 2024 Financial Review.

- 5.2. It seeks approval to transfer £69.548 million from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme for payments which the Council is obliged to make to TWUL under the TW Agreement for 2024-25, for costs necessary to meet the milestones

set within the Homes England HIF agreement and payments necessary to construct phase 1 & 2 Infrastructure, Offsite Highways and the New GBC Depot.

- 5.3. The report also provides an update on the current “forecasted” eventual deficit (outlined in Exempt Appendix 1) in 2033.

6. Strategic Priorities

- 6.1. The recommendations in this report relate to the following priorities in the Council’s Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025:

- Provide and facilitate housing that people can afford.
- Create employment opportunities through regeneration.
- Support high quality development of strategic sites.
- Work with partners to make travel more sustainable and reduce congestion.
- Make every effort to protect and enhance our biodiversity and natural environment.

- 6.2. WUV is also identified as a key programme within the Corporate Plan, providing a new riverside community of 1,500 homes on brownfield land at Slyfield.

7. Background

- 7.1. WUV is a major 41 ha. brownfield regeneration scheme that the Council anticipates could deliver approximately 1,500 homes across a range of tenures as well as an additional 2,000 square metres of community space.

- 7.2. The Council has been working for over 15 years to de-risk the infrastructure and site assembly process. Significant progress has been made in de-risking the scheme through the completion of the TW Agreement and the GDA.

- 7.3. Housing is of great significance to the Borough and forms a major theme to the Adopted Local Plan Part 1. There is an ongoing shortage of affordable housing, particularly for first time buyers which in turn contributes to a skills shortage in the Borough.
- 7.4. The Council was awarded a £52.3 million grant from the Homes England Housing Infrastructure Fund. The GDA was completed on 29 July 2020. The Council was also awarded a £7.5 million grant from EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership and the contract was completed on 2 December 2019. An additional grant from EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership of £550,000 was awarded to the Council to enable the relocation of community facilities.
- 7.5. The Council entered into the TWUL Agreement to fund and enable the relocation of the existing sewage treatment works and the delivery of a new facility on the Council's former landfill site. TWUL have achieved planning consent and the transfer of the New Sewage Treatment Works site took place in February 2023 to enable construction to commence.
- 7.6. On 15 December 2020, the WUV Project Team submitted a Hybrid Planning Application to Guildford Borough Council acting as Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the redevelopment of part of the allocated site for WUV comprising: outline planning approval for the demolition of existing buildings and infrastructure and outline planning permission for up to 1,550 dwellings; local centre, up to 500 sqm of flexible community space, up to 6,600 sqm of flexible employment space, new Council Depot Site, six Gypsy and Traveller pitches and associated road infrastructure. Full planning permission for the development of primary and secondary site accesses, engineering operations associated with remediation and infrastructure, utilities, and drainage.
- 7.7. In August 2020 the Council received a notice of refusal from the Secretary of State for the relocation of the Bellfields Allotments. A revised application for the part relocation of the Bellfields Allotments was submitted to the Secretary of State (MHCLG) on 23 June 2021. An approval was granted to the disposal/relocation of 1.91ha on 10 February 2022. The Guildford Allotment Cooperative Society sought

to challenge the net land area of disposal granted by the Secretary of State and a clarification was received on 8 November 2022 giving consent to the relocation of 2.58Ha of statutory allotment land.

- 7.8. At its meeting on 6 July 2021, the Executive authorised the then Managing Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to sign and complete the deed of variation to the development agreement with TWUL. It was noted and recorded that the land to be acquired by the Council from TWUL, pursuant to the development agreement and any further land to be acquired by the Council in connection with the WUV is to be acquired pursuant to section 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 7.9. At its meeting on 21 September 2021 the Executive authorised the transfer of £67.1 million from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme for payments which the Council was obliged to make to TWUL under the TWUL Agreement for 2021-22 and 2022-23, for costs necessary to meet the milestone set within the Homes England HIF agreement and design costs necessary to prepare the planning application for the SCC Waste Transfer Centre.
- 7.10. At its meeting on 16 January 2023 a potential financial deficit in the scheme was reported and Officers tasked with progressing work on developing a mitigation strategy to alleviate this. The Executive also authorised the transfer of £72.06m from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme for payments which the Council is obliged to make to TWUL under the TWUL Agreement for 2022-23 & 2023-24 and to cover payments due for other infrastructure costs.

Progress to date

- 7.11. The procurement and delivery of the infrastructure works has commenced in order to meet the Homes England HIF milestones and to enable draw down of the grant expenditure. This includes:
 - Thames Water progression of the new sewage treatment works.

- Completion of UKPN Infrastructure Works on Phase 2 (former Sludge Lagoon site).
- Procurement of contractor and commencement of the offsite infrastructure works and onsite infrastructure works (Phase 2).
- Grant of Reserved Matters for Phase 1 housing.
- Grant of planning permission for the new GBC depot.
- Commencement of procurement for contractor to deliver SANG at Burpham Court Farm and design on SANG Management Plan.
- Delivery of a net increase in allotments across North Moors and Aldershot Road sites.
- Delivery of a new temporary AGGIE club for the Stoke and District Horticultural Society.

7.12. In parallel, following the aforementioned Council paper in January 2023 that identified the potential financial deficit in the scheme, Officers have been progressing work considering how this might be mitigated. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) has been appointed to review and validate this work, producing a short-list of options for the Council to decide upon. The mitigation options include:

- Accelerating land receipts on housing development plots, including utilising an alternative institutional funding mechanism.
- Reducing the level of affordable units.
- Options around Treasury management strategy linked to the scheme.
- A review of the phasing and programming of infrastructure delivery.

7.13. The mitigation strategy will also be helpful in considering how the Council might look to protect itself from potential future economic shocks which would add further pressure to the financial position of

the scheme. The outputs of the PwC commission will be presented to Executive and Council for consideration in June.

- 7.14. The Business Case for the scheme is also being updated to ensure that it reflects any changes in the business environment, the scope, assumptions, and outcomes of the Weyside programme.

8. Consultations

- 8.1. Updates on the progress of the WUV Programme have been provided to Councillors at the quarterly Weyside Governance Board and the Strategic Programmes and Projects Board.
- 8.2. The Executive received a full briefing on the financial position of the WUV programme on 24 April 2024 and a briefing for all Councillors was scheduled for 1 May 2024.
- 8.3. It is intended that the regularity of reporting to the Executive on the progress of the programme and financial position is reviewed and increased to a frequency to be agreed with the Executive.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1. An extract from the current WUV risk register is attached at Exempt Appendix 3 and outlines the ten main risks associated with the programme.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. Set out in Exempt Appendix 1.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1. The Council's internal Legal and Procurement officers are providing support to the Weyside project team in relation to procurement of consultancy services and construction contracts to ensure compliance with the Council's legal duties including the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules, and to enter into associated contracts.

11.2. In relation to the contracts and legal agreements which are required for the WUV going forward the Council has various statutory powers to enter into contracts, including:

- Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 for the provision of assets (including land & buildings) and/or services in connection with the discharge of the Council's statutory functions,
- Section 111 Local Government Act 1972 incidental to the discharge of a statutory function, and
- Section 1 Localism Act 2011 the general power of competence (subject to certain limitations).

11.3. DWF has been appointed as external legal adviser to the Council, providing specific advice on property, planning and contractual matters to be addressed, including s106 and planning permission, deregistration of common land and appropriation of land.

11.4. In addition, various agreements under statutory provisions with other bodies and authorities will be required, for example Surrey County Council in relation to the construction and adoption of highways.

11.5. Officers acting under delegated authority to enter into the contracts and agreements referred to in this report will ensure that the costs are reasonable and within the approved budget, that the overall terms of the transactions adequately protect the interests of the Council and its local taxpayers and are within the Council's statutory powers.

11.6. The Council entered into a conditional contract with Thames Water Utilities Limited on 25 April 2019. This contract became unconditional on 30 March 2022 and as outlined in Exempt Appendix 4, there are no exit provisions within the contract for either organisation.

12. Human Resource Implications

- 12.1. The WUV programme is sponsored by the Strategic Director for Place and led by the Assistant Director Regeneration and Planning Policy. The workstreams within the programme are being managed by the WUV project team, headed up by the Regeneration Lead. The WUV project team comprises a Development Manager (interim), Senior Development Surveyor, Development Surveyor, Project Manager (interim), Finance Analyst and a Project Support Officer.
- 12.2. The Weyside Programme is also supported by the Council's procurement, legal and finance teams, which are currently under significant pressure. Where possible, the Weyside team will look to secure additional grant funding to support additional resourcing specifically for the programme.
- 12.3. The cost of resourcing Weyside is included within the financial forecast.

13. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 13.1. The Council has a statutory duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides that a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 13.2. This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report and recommendations. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the programme and will be reviewed as the programme progresses and individual projects are brought forward for delivery.

14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 14.1. The Council formally declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and set a goal for the borough to reach net zero emissions by 2030. The Council is committed to reducing emissions, particularly from vehicles, energy use and construction processes. These objectives have been and will continue to be considered at all stages of the design and implementation of WUV.

15. Summary of Options

OPTION 1: The Council could decide not to approve the recommendation outlined in this report. However, the Council has ongoing financial and contractual commitments which would not be met as the team would not have the relevant financial approvals or delegations.

OPTION 2 (Recommended): To note the current financial position of the Weyside Urban Village programme and forecast potential deficit arising in 2033, and to approve the transfer of £69.548 million from the provisional capital programme to the approved capital programme for payments which the Council is obliged to make to TWUL under the TW Agreement for 2024-25, for costs necessary to meet the milestones set within the Homes England HIF agreement and construction costs of phase 2 Infrastructure, Offsite Highways and the New Council Depot.

16. Conclusion

- 16.1 The WUV programme has major benefits for Guildford by delivering c. 1,500 homes (with 40% affordable), new employment space, community facilities, a new sewage treatment works, relocation/new provision of the SCC Waste Transfer Centre all within a brownfield site.
- 16.2 The Council has a number of existing legal and financial obligations relating to the scheme which need to be met. Approval of the recommendation outlined in this report is proposed to enable the continuation the WUV programme.

16.3 This report precedes a second paper that will be presented to Executive and Council in June outlining the options available in mitigating the potential future deficit. This will summarise the work that Officers have been progressing over the past 15 months since the original deficit was reported to Council in January 2023 and will be accompanied by an independent external review by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC).

17. Background Papers

- [Extraordinary Full Council Meeting 10 Feb 2020](#)
- [Executive report 6 July 2021](#)
- [Executive report 21 September 2021](#)
- [Hybrid Planning Consent issued 30 March 2022](#)
- EQIA May 2021
- Executive report 5 January 2023
- Executive report 30 August 2023

18. Appendices

Exempt Appendix 1: Financial Implications

Exempt Appendix 2: Reappraised financial position of WUV

Exempt Appendix 3: Table of 10 Main Risks from current WUV Risk-Register

Exempt Appendix 4: Legal advice on Thames Water agreement

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda item number: 8
Appendix 1

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda item number: 8
Appendix 2

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda item number: 8
Appendix 3

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda item number: 8
Appendix 4

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Executive

25 January 2024

* Councillor Julia McShane (Chairperson)

* Councillor Tom Hunt (Vice-Chair)

* Councillor Angela Goodwin

* Councillor George Potter

* Councillor Catherine Houston

* Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith

* Councillor Richard Lucas

* Councillor Fiona White

Councillor Carla Morson

*Present

Councillors Philip Brooker, Vanessa King, Joanne Shaw, Howard Smith, Dominique Williams and Catherine Young were also in remote attendance.

EX46 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carla Morson.

EX47 Local Code of Conduct - Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

EX48 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2024 were confirmed as a correct record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

EX49 Leader's Announcements

The Leader made no announcements.

EX50 Review of the Guildford borough Local Plan: strategy and sites (2015-2034)

The Council was required to review the Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (LPSS) within five years of adoption to decide if an update to the Plan was required. Having considered changes in national planning policy, associated guidance and relevant legislation, as well as changes in circumstances affecting Guildford

borough since the LPSS was adopted, it was officers' view that the Local Plan should be updated.

The report was introduced by the Lead Councillor for Planning who explained that the Local Plan was not only concerned with housing need and housing numbers, but also addressed the business and employment needs of the borough as well. Workplace arrangements and shopping habits had changed greatly since the adoption of the Local Plan in April 2019, and it was anticipated the evidence base would now look quite different. There would also be a review of open spaces and recreational places. If approved, an update of the Local Plan would completely reappraise the evidence base in these key areas. The update would be a large piece of work for the Council to undertake and would take some time to complete. Should the Executive agree the recommendations in the report and forward to Full Council for approval, then a second report would be submitted to the Executive settings out in detail the timetable, process and financing for the update of the Local Plan.

It was noted that during the course of the update it was expected that the Government would announce some substantial changes to planning policy. In addition, a General Election would be held and it was anticipated that significant changes to national planning policy could be introduced by a new government. Officers would be closely monitoring the situation and the Council would need to be prepared to adapt as and when new policy was announced.

It was possible that some of the policies in the Local Plan could become outdated during the course of the update if legislation and/or the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) were to change. The adopted Local Plan would remain the primary consideration until such a time as a new plan was adopted by Full Council, but any such policy affected in this way would carry less weight.

It was explained that because the existing Local plan was adopted on 25 April 2019 and not prior to 01 April 2019, there could be an argument made at any appeal that the existing plan should remain in place with 2019 Land Availability Assessment (LAA) numbers for an additional year. However, it was to be expected that this argument might not be supported by the development industry. The matter was beyond the scope of the submitted report but would be kept under observation.

It was observed that slow progress nationally to update population statistics, NPPF and the Standard Method of the local housing need calculation meant it had not been possible to review the Local Plan at any earlier point in time. It was further suggested that the Council might need to apply the existing Standard

Method to its new evidence base if national planning policy were not updated during the period of the review.

The borough presented substantial constraints as to where new building might be located due to flood risk and designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) alongside a challenging infrastructure picture. It was emphasised that a revised plan would be built upon the evidence base alone and that the Council should endeavour to always be clear with local people in this regard.

There was currently no time limit by which any Council should adopt a new local plan. The existing Guildford Borough Local Plan took seven years to adoption in which time the Council undertook three rounds of public consultation, including a Regulation 19 consultation, and processed around 90,000 consultation replies. The Executive heard that the Government was indicating a 30-month period to adoption in future. It was unclear if, under such circumstances, there would be a requirement for less evidence and/or public consultation process and what, if any, penalty there might be for failing to adopt within a set period.

It was commented that although plan-making was challenging here was an opportunity to collaborate with local people to make improvements in a number of areas.

The Executive, in noting all comments and questions thanked the Planning Policy team for its report and,

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Full Council, meeting on 21 February 2024:

1. That the Guildford Local Plan: strategy and sites (2015-2034) be updated following the findings of the review undertaken in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
2. That a further report be submitted to the Executive at a later date to clarify the appropriate timing for and budgetary requirements of the Local Plan update, and that such report should follow the national planning reform legislation and consider its implications for the update process.

Reason(s):

1. There is a statutory requirement to review the LPSS within 5 years of its adoption. This is to assess whether it needs updating. The review findings set out in this report indicate that an update of the LPSS would be an appropriate

course of action to ensure that the Council's Local Plan remains effective into the future.

2. There are a range of uncertainties which impact on the context for the preparation of a new / updated Local Plan, some of which relate to the lack of clarity regarding the detail of proposed Government reforms to the planning system which guide plan-making. It is necessary that these are fully considered in order to set out recommendations regarding the scope and timing of a new plan-making process.

EX51 Capital and Investment Strategy 2024/25 - 2028/29

The capital and investment strategy gave an overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of local public services. The strategy also detailed how associated risks were managed and any implications for future sustainability.

The Executive considered the report that included details of the capital programme. It was noted that £96.9 million had been removed from the capital programme by Full Council in December 2023 which left around £212 million of capital investment remaining. There was just under £10 million worth of new bids/mandates submitted for approval. The report set out the requirements of the Prudential Code and the investment strategy covering treasury management investments, service investments and commercial investments.

In terms of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), £121 million of capital investment was proposed for the next five years to support development projects to build or acquire new housing (including Weyside Urban Village).

The report also covered the requirements of the Treasury Management Code and the prevailing DLUHC Statutory Guidance. Treasury Management income for the coming year was £3 million which was slightly down on what had been expected as interest rates had fallen.

The flexible use of capital receipts had been extended for the coming year should the council wish to do so.

The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) remained unchanged from last year's budget.

The report had been considered by the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee on 18 January 2023 and the comments arising from that meeting were set out in the Supplementary Information Sheet. A typo (missing words 'budget process') was noted on page 9 of this supplementary paper which would

be corrected before the report was submitted to Full Council. The sentence referred to an individual councillor's observational comment of the existing scrutiny process in regard to the budget. The Executive was informed that the scrutiny process for the present budget was in line with that conducted over the previous 4-5 years. There could be future recommended changes to this process as a result of the Council's ongoing close monitoring of all expenditure.

It was observed that close monitoring of expenditure and the actions undertaken by the Council to manage its budget had resulted in a significant reduction in projected expenditure of £200 million. However, the portfolio holder for Finance and Property acknowledged that there was still much work to be done to further reduce the Council's outgoings.

The Executive,

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the new bids set out in Appendix 2 to the report submitted to the Executive for inclusion in the capital programme as indicated, subject to Council approval.
2. To approve the removal of the Bright Hill scheme on the HRA approved and provisional programmes as previously reported to Councillors.
3. To recommend (to Full Council meeting on 7 February 2024):
 - (a) That the General Fund and HRA capital estimates, as shown in appendices 3 to 12, as amended to include the new bids referred to in 1. above, be approved.
 - (b) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, referred to in section 9 of the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.
 - (c) That the capital and investment strategy, specifically the investment strategy and Prudential Indicators contained within the report and Appendix 1, be approved.
 - (d) That the updated flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 8, be approved.

Reason(s):

To enable Council, at its budget meeting on 7 February 2024, to approve the capital and investment strategy for 2024/25 to 2028/29, and the funding required for the new capital schemes proposed.

EX52 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2024-25

The S.151 Officer introduced the report that outlined the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2024/25, which had been built on the estimates and assumptions in the updated 2023 HRA Business Plan.

It was noted that the HRA was a completely separate account to the General Fund. The surplus remained but was reducing year on year.

The Direction on the Rent Standard 2019 required the Regulator of Social Housing to set a rent standard for social housing which came into effect from 2020, which would have been CPI +1% from the preceding September rate, this equated to 7.7% and was the recommended rent increase for the year that would also apply to those in Shared ownership. The Leader reminded the meeting that around 92% of the Council's tenants were on social rent. Of those around 60% were in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

A 5% increase in garage rents was proposed which was in line with the wider Council policy on fees and charges.

The report included the overall details of the proposed investment programme for the properties that were managed within the HRA.

The comments arising from the meeting of the Joint Executive Advisory Board held on 9 January 2024 were set out in the Supplementary Information Sheet.

The Executive received those comments and,

RESOLVED:

To recommend to the Council meeting on 7 February 2024:

1. That the proposed HRA revenue budget for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Executive, be approved.
2. That a rent increase of 7.7%, be implemented.

3. That the fees and charges for HRA services for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
4. That a 5% increase be applied to garage rents which is in line with the wider Council policy on fees and charges.

Reason(s):

To enable the Council to set the rent charges for HRA property and associated fees and charges, along with authorising the necessary expenditure to implement a budget, this is consistent with the objectives outlined in the HRA Business Plan

EX53 General Fund Revenue Budget 2024-25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2024-25 to 2026-27

The S.151 officer introduced the report that set out the draft General Fund Budget for 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024-25 to 2026/27. The Executive was reminded that all of the proposed actions to achieve a balanced budget for next year were set out in the appendices to the report.

An underspend of just under £1.1 million was projected for the current year and this would be directed towards a number of actions to achieve a balanced budget for next year. It was confirmed that the Council was currently no longer at risk of declaring a S.114 notice.

The detail of the Local Government funding settlement was yet to be announced, but it was estimated that Guildford would receive an additional £165,000. Nationally, it was thought that higher awards would be directed towards upper tier authorities with responsibilities for schools and social care.

The Executive was referred to the S.25 report and heard that workstreams had been continuing on the 2024-25 budget and the £18.3m MTFP gap as part of the Financial Recovery Plan agreed in August 2023, including the capital expenditure review and the proposed asset disposal programme. The outputs from the various workstreams had reduced the budget gap by £15.9m. The MTFP set out the key work streams for the Council to focus on over this period which, aimed to address the remaining £2.4m budget gap across the MTFP period and to prepare for future capital financing costs and funding risks.

The Executive was advised that strengthened financial reporting and processes needed to be embedded to form the foundations of a financially resilient council.

The Executive noted that considerable progress had been made since reporting to Council in July 2023, but the agreed savings plans needed to be delivered and the remaining budget gap still needed to be addressed.

The Executive thanked the Financial Services team and officers across the Council who had worked collaboratively to reduce the budget gap, and

RESOLVED:

To recommend the following to Council (at its Budget Meeting on 7 February 2024):

1. That the General Fund Budget for 2024/25 as summarised in Appendix 1, incorporating the budget variations included at Appendix 2, be approved.
2. That a 2.99% increase in Guildford Council's Band D Council Tax Charge for 2024/25, be approved with resultant increases to the other council tax bands.
3. That the Council's existing Local Council Tax Support Scheme, with uprating as set out in Appendix 6 and the £40,000 discretionary hardship fund that runs alongside it, be continued.
4. That, from 1 April 2025, the Council varies its determination of 26 February 2019 under Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, so that the long-term empty dwelling levy starts after a property has been empty and unfurnished for one year.
5. That, from 1 April 2025, the Council will charge a premium (levy) of 100% on periodically used dwellings as defined by section 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
6. That the schedule of Fees and Charges, as set out in Appendix 3 to this report, be approved.
7. That the use of the 2023-24 underspend as set out in paragraph 8.5 of this report, be approved.

Reason(s):

1. The General Fund Budget is a major decision for the Council and setting a balanced budget is a statutory requirement.
2. Scrutiny of these MTFP and Budget proposals demonstrate transparency and good governance.
3. The Council has been well positioned to respond to these challenges and whilst the latest MTFP for the subsequent years ending 2026/27 continues to project future financial pressures, and opportunities, the Council is able to take action to ensure sufficient funding is in place to deliver and maintain services.

EX54 Guildford Borough Council Whistleblowing Policy

The Lead Councillor for Regulatory and Democratic Services introduced the report.

Guildford Borough Council encouraged staff and others to report any cases of suspected wrongdoing or misconduct, illegal acts, or failure to act within the council as part of its commitment to act with integrity and openness in the best interest of its residents and communities. To govern any such disclosures, the council had a Whistleblowing Policy. That Policy had been reviewed and updated and was set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Executive heard that it was proposed Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council attempt to align their respective Whistleblowing Policies as far as it was appropriate to do so, whilst accepting there might be local differences. Proposals similar to those contained in the report were due to be considered at Waverley Borough Council shortly.

The report had been considered by the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee on 18 January 2024 and the comments and recommendations arising from that meeting were set out in the Supplementary Information Sheet at Appendix 2. Those recommendations included correcting two factual errors in the draft policy and to propose a delegation to the Monitoring Officer to make minor amendments as appropriate for the purpose of keeping it up to date.

The Executive agreed that the council must be an open and transparent organisation and the Joint Chief Executive, in particular, was commended for his work in developing this approach. An annual report was proposed. The revised Whistleblowing Policy was considered fit for purpose with the changes recommended by the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee incorporated. Consequently, the Executive:

RESOLVED:

To adopt the policy set out in Appendix 1 to the report incorporating the recommended amendments from the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee.

Reason(s):

1. It was right and proper to uphold the principles of transparency to encourage individuals to make any disclosures and raise any concerns where they suspect wrongdoing.

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- 2. It is important that the Council has a policy in place to govern such disclosures and that such policy is kept under regular review.

The meeting finished at 7.02 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman

Executive

22 February 2024

* Councillor Julia McShane (Chairperson)

* Councillor Tom Hunt (Vice-Chair)

* Councillor Angela Goodwin

* Councillor George Potter

* Councillor Catherine Houston

* Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith

* Councillor Richard Lucas

* Councillor Fiona White

Councillor Carla Morson

*Present

Councillors Yves de Contades, Joanne Shaw and James Walsh were also in attendance.

EX55 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carla Morson.

EX56 Local Code of Conduct - Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

EX57 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2024 were confirmed as correct. The Chairman signed the minutes.

EX58 Leader's Announcements

Crowdfund Guildford free workshop

Another free Crowdfund Guildford virtual workshop would take place on Friday, 8 March. Residents could access support and funding for their ideas and projects, learn about available resources, the application process, and how to bring community initiatives to life. Residents and local groups were encouraged to attend. More information was available on the website www.spacehive.com/movement/guildford.

Pride in Surrey announcement

The Leader was proud to announce Guildford would be the location for the 5th anniversary celebration of Pride in Surrey, set to unfold at Stoke Park on Saturday, 21 September 2024.

Tickets for the event were available via the [Pride in Surrey website](#) and were offered on a 'pay what you can basis' keeping Pride accessible for as many people as possible.

Guildford museum retains Arts Council Accreditation

The museum had retained its Full Accreditation from Arts Council England in recognition of the work the heritage team had put into every aspect of the museum from looking after the collection of objects to meeting relevant standards for policies and procedures.

Congratulations were expressed to the team.

Public inquiry for planning appeal at land at Guildford Cathedral

An appeal would be determined by public inquiry. The inquiry would open on 5 March 2024 and was due to last 10 days. Times and dates were subject to change as advised by the Planning Inspector. More information was available on the council's newsroom webpage.

EX59 O&S Recommendations to the Executive - Modern Slavery

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) made recommendations to the Executive from time to time as it saw fit and the Executive was required to consider any such recommendations within a two-month period. Set out in the paper were recommendations arising from the O&S meeting held on 19 December 2023. The recommendations related to the council's obligations towards tackling modern slavery. The council was required to monitor its own performance in this regard via an annual report which was received by O&S. The Executive was asked to agree to progress certain actions within sections 7.5-7.8 of the Annual Report on the Modern Slavery Motion which specifically related to the council's procurement processes and these were set out in the paper along with suggested responses.

The Leader of the Council introduced the paper and welcomed the Chairman of the O&S, Councillor James Walsh, who was in attendance online. Cllr Walsh commended officers and the quality of the annual monitoring reports that had been received by O&S since Council's adoption of the Modern Slavery Motion in 2018.

The Executive echoed the comments from Cllr Walsh. The recommendations were welcomed and described as sensible and would provide positive additions to the council's robust approach to tackling Modern Slavery. It was noted that the council's adopted standards in this regard extended externally via the procurement process to partners and service providers and so ensured the safeguarding of residents across the council's activities.

The Executive expressed its gratitude to the O&S for bringing the recommendations and its commitment to a positive working relationship between the two bodies. Consequently, the Executive,

RESOLVED:

That the proposed responses and the reasons for those responses, as set out in the table at item 5, be approved.

Reason(s):

Modern slavery was a serious crime that violated human rights. The Council as a public body had a duty to ensure that it was not complicit in modern slavery practice by utilising contractors who were breaching the Act. Implementation of the recommendations would make the council's processes more effective in that regard.

EX60 Freehold Disposal of Old Manor House, East Horsley

Old Manor House comprised a large, detached Grade II Listed building providing eight residential flats that were previously leased to persons of state pensionable age. The building had been unoccupied for some time and required complete refurbishment and modernisation, including fabric replacement and renewal. The capital cost to refurbish the property to bring it into occupational use for housing was significant and was further exacerbated by the necessary reconfiguration of the existing internal layout and the energy performance upgrades required.

The Lead Councillor for Finance and Property introduced the item. The asset was held in the General Fund. Occupation of the property was not possible in its current condition. In view of the budgetary impact to the council, Housing Services had determined it was not suitable for development and surplus to support their service. With all alternative options for property explored, it was recommended the Executive agree to a freehold disposal of the property on the open market.

It was confirmed that access to Lovelace Cottages would have to be safeguarded by any future owner of Old Manor House.

The Executive noted that despite its commitment to providing housing for local people, the extent of the dilapidation of the property and the necessary reconfiguration to bring it back to use would not be the best use of council resources. It was explained there were significant damp issues, rewiring was needed and the internal reconfiguration for a listed building would be complex and costly. It was suggested that given the building's protected status, disposal to a new owner to bring the building back into habitational use would be the best option for the community and for the building itself as a local heritage asset.

The Executive heard that to delay a decision in regard to the future of the building would result in a greater decline of its condition and increased future costs, therefore, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Executive Head for Assets and Property be authorised to auction sale the property or negotiate terms for a disposal at best consideration on the open market via private treaty, and to enter into all relevant legal documentation required to complete the transaction of the Council owned land comprising Old Manor House in return for a capital receipt.

Reason(s):

To generate a capital receipt and remove void property costs from future revenue budgets.

The meeting finished at 6.24 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman

Executive

18 April 2024

* Councillor Julia McShane (Chairperson)
Councillor Tom Hunt (Vice-Chair)

* Councillor Angela Goodwin	Councillor George Potter
* Councillor Catherine Houston	* Councillor Merel Rehorst-Smith
* Councillor Richard Lucas	* Councillor Fiona White
* Councillor Carla Morson	

*Present

Councillors George Potter and Yves de Contades were in remote attendance.

EX61 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom Hunt and George Potter.

EX62 Local Code of Conduct - Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

EX63 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February were confirmed as correct. The Chairman signed the minutes.

EX64 Leader's Announcements

Guildford and Waverley businesses were invited to the second year of a free networking event organised by Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils. Business Question Time would take place on Monday 3 June at the University of Surrey from 5pm to 7pm. The keynote speech would focus on the national and regional economic forecast for local businesses. It would be followed by questions to a panel of business leaders. To obtain a free ticket, visit the Eventbrite website.

Over the past few months, the council had been working with Surrey Police and Experience Guildford to introduce changes to help make Guildford town centre safer for everyone.

- There were now additional police officers patrolling in Guildford town centre at the weekends and street marshals were present in the town centre on Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00pm to 8:00pm whose role was to:

- Help reassure visitors and residents in Guildford town centre.
- Work with police to enforce Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) that are in place; and
- Deal with other environmental and public realm issues, such as littering.
- Over the next few weeks, Surrey County Council's Targeted Youth Support (TYS) would begin a youth outreach project.

The street marshals and youth outreach project were initiatives funded through the Safer Streets Fund. In Guildford, this funding was being used to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Guildford town centre. This would continue throughout 2024 and into 2025.

This month the council was encouraging residents to try something new to keep fit. There was a variety of sports places to visit around the borough such as Guildford Spectrum, the Lido, and the outdoor gyms to keep active during this month. More information was available on the website by searching for 'Spectrum', 'Lido' or 'outdoor gyms'.

EX65 O&S Recommendations to the Executive - Air Quality

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered an air quality update report on 5 March 2024. The report had provided the Committee with an update on progress of air quality projects and other statutory air quality priorities in fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 Local Air Quality Management, as amended by the Environment Act 2021. In conclusion of the Committee's consideration of the update report two recommendations for the Executive were agreed. Firstly, that the Executive adopt a Motor Vehicle No Idling policy for staff, contractors and visitors on council premises, and staff using a vehicle for conducting council business. Secondly, that the Executive improve the council's communications on air quality, particularly the air pollution concentrations in the Borough and the benefits of clean air.

The Lead Councillor for Regulatory and Democratic Services introduced the report and the Senior Specialist (Environment) Officer was in attendance.

The meeting heard that in the space of a few months an anti-idling draft policy would be submitted to the Executive for its consideration. Although the council had no formal powers to require drivers to switch off their engines when stationary, the policy would set out to deliver behaviour change wherever possible, but most certainly on its own estate. It would be expected that all council staff, unless there was a legitimate reason, would act in compliance when carrying out their duties. Appropriate signage would be designed to be placed in suitable locations to raise awareness that engine idling was bad for the environment and for public health. It was suggested that local vehicle drivers who

endorsed the council's message in this regard might be given car stickers to display to spread the message wider.

The response to the second recommendation was to propose a broader air quality communications campaign to engage with residents not just in the case of driver behaviour but, for example, lighting bonfires and burning solid fuel to heat homes. A particular target cohort for the programme would be young people and the council would be working with partners to deliver its message in schools. It was noted that the funding for the campaign had been ringfenced by the council and had not been externally sourced.

The Executive agreed it was correct for the council to lead by example in this matter and the target list for the campaign should include all councillors. It was important to enable residents to understand the levels and sources of air pollution, how to mitigate against pollution and how to become involved in tackling air quality issues or how to raise a concern. One key message to residents should set out that individual actions can and do make a difference to improve the quality of life for neighbours and the borough as a whole. Consequently, the Executive,

RESOLVED:

To agree the proposed responses and the reasons for those responses as set out in the table at item 5.

Reason(s):

1. In order to help improve air quality and reduce emissions.
2. To improve the Council's communications in regard to air quality, particularly the air pollution concentrations in the Borough and the benefits of clean air.

EX66 Option Agreement with Blackwell Park Limited in respect of purchase of Council-owned land - Outcome of call in of decision taken by the Strategic Director: Place

The Strategic Director: Place had taken a key executive decision on 29 February 2024 in relation to entering into an Option Agreement on 8 March 2024 with Blackwell Park Limited providing the option for them to purchase a small parcel of Council-owned land necessary to enable development on Blackwell Park. This decision was called in by a number of councillors for review by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). The OSC considered the call-in at its special meeting held on 19 March 2024. The purpose of the report before the Executive was to set out formally the outcome of the decision by the OSC. In the absence of the

Lead Councillor for Regeneration, the Leader of the Council introduced the report.

The report minute of the OSC described the scrutiny process as having been robust and that the OSC had ultimately endorsed the officer decision. There had been a suggestion during the OSC debate that such a decision was of public interest and consequently should have been taken by the Executive itself in public session. The Leader noted this suggestion and would reflect upon this for future business. On behalf of the Executive, the Leader thanked the OSC for its thorough review of the matter.

The Executive,

RESOLVED:

To note the outcome of the call in by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the decision taken by the Strategic Director: Place on 29 February 2024 in respect of the Option Agreement with Blackwell Park Limited providing for the purchase of Council-owned land, which was to endorse that decision.

Reason(s):

The Executive was now aware of the decision and the outcome of the call-in.

EX67 Asset Disposal Strategy

In response to the recent cost of living crisis and high inflationary pressures, the Council was seeking to reduce its General Fund borrowing requirement. To achieve this goal, the council had already stripped back its capital programme and now sought to generate £50m (net) of capital receipts from the disposal of property assets held within the General Fund over the coming three years. This activity was an identified critical workstream within the Financial Recovery Plan endorsed by Full Council at its meeting on 30 August 2023.

A careful and considered strategic approach to identifying and progressing an accelerated volume of property asset sales was required and consequently a strategy had been drawn up and was appended to the Executive report for consideration and approval.

The Council's financial accounts identified General Fund property assets into two major categories that were in scope for consideration. Those were Investment Properties held purely for income generation or value appreciation but which did not fulfil any service objective, and Land and Buildings assets held for operational or strategic reasons. Other categories also in scope were defined in the financial

accounts as Surplus assets which were those no longer needed and surplus to requirement, and Community assets that included open space and land assets.

The Lead Councillor for Finance and Property introduced the report. It was emphasised that each individual asset identified through the process would be subject to a thorough strategic, commercial and operational evaluation and would be presented to the Executive on a case by case basis with its own detailed report setting out a clear rationale for disposal. Where appropriate, the council would consider disposal with planning permissions if this would maximise market value. This would be an ongoing process over the course of the coming three years to achieve the target income. The Executive would have regard to any political, operational or community sensitivities.

It was noted that the process had already commenced with the disposal of certain council properties in Castle Street and Quarry Street which had achieved a higher market price than the valuation had suggested.

The Executive was hopeful that during the course of the three-year period the national economic picture would improve, but in the meantime the draft strategy was well-drawn up and was fit for purpose.

The Leader thanked the members of the cross-party working group for consideration of, and feedback on, the draft strategy and noted that individual ward councillors would be consulted as appropriate.

The Executive,

RESOLVED:

To approve the draft Asset Disposal Strategy set out at Appendix 1 and to note the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2 of the report.

Reason(s):

To set out a strategy to generate capital receipts through the sale of assets to meet the £50M (net) target as part of the Financial Recovery Plan to reduce Council debt to achieve a sustainable financial position.

EX68 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural Prosperity Fund (REPF)

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was a part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund. In 2022, as a Lead Local Authority, Guildford Borough Council was given £1 million with full discretion to spend over three years on capital and revenue projects so long as those projects aligned with the overarching ambition of the Fund. In the absence of the Lead Councillor for Regeneration, the Leader introduced the report.

To date the council had spent funds in support of local business and community groups; running local events, offering grant funding opportunities and developing a Local Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plan.

In addition to the UKSPF, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) launched the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) in 2023 which allocated Guildford £400,000 to spend on capital grants to support rural businesses and communities. During the past year the council had been working in partnership with a number of other local authorities to run a grant scheme to support rural businesses. There was £300,000 of REPF to distribute this year.

The report before the Executive set out proposed projects to benefit from the final tranche of UKSPF and REPF grant funding for 2024-25. Some UKSPF-funded projects were new, and some were ongoing from last year and included a new e-bike scheme for Guildford and the continuation of the Crowdfund Guildford programme. Amongst other projects there would be funding for play and open spaces, including the Youth Games and a play rangers' scheme that would run in six areas across the borough this summer.

Businesses and community groups in the borough were encouraged to apply as the funding must be awarded by the end of March 2025.

The meeting heard that when the vacancy for the Local Economic Development Officer post was filled then strands of the Economic Development Strategy, such as promoting Guildford as a film location could proceed.

The REPF funding opportunity was being promoted via the usual channels, LinkedIn, social media channels and the Rural Forum. Councillors were also encouraged to spread the word.

The Executive,

RESOLVED:

1. To agree the revised project allocations of Guildford's UKSPF grant funding for 2024/25, as outlined in the report.
2. To delegate to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Regeneration, authority to enter into such contracts and legal agreements connected with the UKSPF and REPF as may be necessary in compliance with Procurement Procedure Rules and within the allocated grant funding budget.
3. To delegate to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Regeneration, authority to reallocate budget across projects as required in order to meet the grant spend deadline.

Reason(s):

The £790,320 total capital and revenue funding Guildford Borough Council had been allocated from the UKSPF for 2024-25 was a significant sum of money that could have a positive impact on the borough's local communities and businesses.

The projects put forward aligned with the borough's local priorities and it was intended to leverage collaboration with the Council's partners to maximise value for money.

EX69 Creation of new post of Head of Business Improvement

A new role of Head of Business Improvement was required at Guildford Borough Council and this role would report directly to the Joint Chief Executive. Because this new post would report directly to the Chief Executive, it was defined in law as a Non-Statutory Chief Officer, even though the role was below either Strategic Director or Executive Head level. Consequently, approval was sought from the Executive to authorise the funding for the role. The Lead Councillor for Community and Organisational Development introduced the report.

There were strategic, operational and governance improvements required at the council to improve efficiencies and effectiveness. Although the council had begun to address these matters in areas such as finance and updating the Constitution was underway, there was a need for a lead officer in this regard. The new role of Head of Business Improvement would lead this activity and drive forward an overall improvement plan to deliver better outcomes for residents and local businesses. The cost of the role would be covered by the savings arising from the recent retendering of the council's insurance provision. The role would initially be a Guildford-only role.

The Executive acknowledged that improvements were required across the council, some of which would be challenging. The commitment to a dedicated role to lead on this work was endorsed. Consequently, the Executive,

RESOLVED:

1. To note the Chief Executive / Head of Paid Services' decision to revise his staff structure with the creation of the role of Head of Business Improvement; and
2. To approve the budget for the new role of £95,484 (which included on-costs) funded from the savings made on the insurance contract renewal which had recently been completed, which would be vired to cover the cost of the new post.

Reason:

To ensure resources are available to create and drive an improvement plan and to address governance challenges in the Council.

The meeting finished at 6.56 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman