

# **Guildford Borough Council**

Report to: Executive

Date: 12 June 2024

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Author: Carrie Anderson

Tel: 01483 444072

Email: [carrie.anderson@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:carrie.anderson@guildford.gov.uk)

Lead Councillor responsible: Julia McShane

Tel: 01483 837736

Email: [Julia.McShane@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.McShane@guildford.gov.uk)

Report Status: Open

## **Executive Councillor Appointment to Outside Bodies: Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board**

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Council appoints councillors to a number of external organisations for which they undertake a range of governance or advisory roles.
- 1.2 Following a major review in 2016-17, the Council made a number of changes both to the type of external organisation to which councillors were appointed, and to the manner by which those appointments were made. These changes included:
  - To appoint councillors only to such external organisations that:
    - (i) support the Council's Corporate priorities, and/or
    - (ii) assist in delivery of Council services, and/or
    - (iii) are using Council facilities
  - To categorise certain appointments as Council appointments and

others as Executive appointments.

- To either appoint for a period of four years or, if mid-term, until the next Local Elections take place.
- 1.3 Appointment to the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board (“JSP”) was not included in the last round of appointments to external organisations in 2023 and it is proposed this anomaly be rectified.
  - 1.4 It is proposed that the proper appointee to the JSP is the Portfolio Holder for Planning.
  - 1.5 The JSP is comprised of local authorities acting together in accordance with their powers under S2(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 in respect of their powers to promote the environmental wellbeing of their areas, together with other groups having an interest in the TBHSPA by virtue of a managerial/landownership responsibility or technical advisory role. Consequently, the Executive is the correct appointing body.

## **2. Recommendation to Executive**

That the Executive approves the appointment of the Portfolio Holder for Planning to the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board until the next review of appointments to external organisations in 2027.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendation:**

- 3.1. It is important that the council has an appointee to the JSP to represent the borough. Every ward overlaps with one or more of the following: the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (“the SPA”), the SPA 400m exclusion zone, the SPA 4-5km zone (where the impact of new homes must be mitigated), and 7km zone (where the impact of larger residential schemes may need mitigation).
- 3.2. The Portfolio Holder for Planning is the correct councillor to appoint to the JSP for reasons of relevance, and seniority to work with partner agencies to maintain the long-term protection of the SPA.

#### **4. Exemption from publication**

There is no exempt content in this report.

#### **5. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to appoint the Portfolio Holder for Planning to the JSP until 2027.

#### **6. Strategic Priorities**

- 6.1 This Council is committed to delivering high quality design, renewal and regeneration in our borough, whilst protecting our hectares of special natural landscapes and unique heritage.
- 6.2 This Council will make every effort to protect and enhance our biodiversity and natural environment.

#### **7. Background**

- 7.1. The Council has extensive involvement with a wide range of external partnerships and organisations. Councillors may be informally involved on an individual basis with many organisations including community organisations, sports and recreation clubs, housing associations charitable trusts and companies. The main objective of the formal appointment of councillors to external organisations by the Council is to develop positive relationships with partner agencies and local organisations in the interests of residents.
- 7.2. The SPA was designated on 9 March 2005 and is protected from adverse effects by law. The SPA is one of the South East's most important natural assets with the lowland heath supporting important populations of Dartford Warbler, Nightjar and Woodlark, all of which are vulnerable ground-nesting birds that are protected by legislation.
- 7.3. The JSP Board acts as an advisory body for local planning authorities affected by the SPA.

- 7.4. The following planning authorities will be full members of the JSP Board and have full voting rights at meetings of the Board:

Bracknell Forest Borough Council  
Elmbridge Borough Council  
Guildford Borough Council  
Hart District Council  
Mole Valley District Council  
Runnymede Borough Council  
Rushmoor Borough Council  
Surrey Heath Borough Council  
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead  
Waverley Borough Council  
Woking Borough Council  
Wokingham Borough Council  
Hampshire County Council  
Surrey County Council.

- 7.5 Full member organisations will be represented by one nominated elected member, or a nominated substitute elected member.

- 7.6 There is an officer group to support and advise the JSP.

- 7.7 Meetings of the JSP are scheduled for 26 June and 4 December 2024.

## **8. Consultations**

None required.

## **9. Key Risks**

- 9.1 It is important that the Council has a senior councillor representative appointed to the SPA to keep abreast of developments.

## **10. Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **11. Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

## **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

There are no direct Climate Change or sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **15. Summary of Options**

The Executive may opt to appoint a member other than the Portfolio Holder for Planning or may opt not to appoint a councillor to the JSP at all.

## **16. Conclusion**

The council produced its Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Avoidance Strategy in 2017 and is currently undertaking public consultation on a Draft Special Protection Area Tariffs Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) under the supervision of the Portfolio Holder for Planning. Consequently, it is argued the appointment of the Portfolio Holder for Planning is the logical choice in regard to the JSP appointment.

## **17. Background Papers**

None.

## **18. Appendices**

None.