

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Guildford Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB on Wednesday 22 March 2023

- * The Mayor, Councillor Dennis Booth
- * The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Masuk Miah

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| * Councillor Paul Abbey | * Councillor Julia McShane |
| * Councillor Tim Anderson | Councillor Ann McShee |
| * Councillor Jon Askew | Councillor Bob McShee |
| * Councillor Christopher Barrass | Councillor Richard Morris |
| * Councillor Joss Bigmore | * Councillor Marsha Moseley |
| Councillor David Bilbé | * Councillor Ramsey Nagaty |
| * Councillor Chris Blow | * Councillor Susan Parker |
| * Councillor Ruth Brothwell | Councillor George Potter |
| * Councillor Colin Cross | Councillor Jo Randall |
| Councillor Guida Esteves | * Councillor John Redpath |
| * Councillor Graham Eyre | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| Councillor Andrew Gomm | * Councillor John Rigg |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | Councillor Tony Rooth |
| Councillor David Goodwin | Councillor Will Salmon |
| * Councillor Angela Gunning | * Councillor Deborah Seabrook |
| * Councillor Gillian Harwood | * Councillor Pauline Searle |
| * Councillor Jan Harwood | * Councillor Paul Spooner |
| * Councillor Liz Hogger | * Councillor James Steel |
| * Councillor Tom Hunt | Councillor Cait Taylor |
| * Councillor Diana Jones | * Councillor James Walsh |
| * Councillor Steven Lee | * Councillor Fiona White |
| * Councillor Nigel Manning | * Councillor Keith Witham |
| * Councillor Ted Mayne | * Councillor Catherine Young |

*Present

Honorary Freeman Keith Churchouse was also in attendance.

CO146 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Bilbé, Guida Esteves, Andrew Gomm, David Goodwin, Ann McShee, Bob McShee, Richard Morris, George Potter, Jo Randall, Tony Rooth, Will Salmon and Cait Taylor, and also from Honorary Aldermen Catherine Copley, Jayne Marks, Tony Phillips, and Lynda Strudwick.

CO147 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

CO148 MINUTES

The Council confirmed, as a correct record, the minutes of the Budget Meeting held on 8 February, and the extraordinary meetings held on 22 February and 16 March 2023. The Mayor signed the minutes.

CO149 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor thanked councillors for their kind messages wishing him a speedy recovery from his recent illness and thanked the Deputy for chairing last week's extraordinary Council meeting.

The Mayor also thanked everyone at Challengers for their support in organising the forthcoming Mayor's Charity Ball on Saturday 25 March, together with those who had generously donated auction and raffle prizes.

CO150 LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Leader welcomed the Mayor back to the Council following his recent illness and thanked him for all his hard work as Mayor over the past year, and also for his work in raising money for his Charity.

The Leader read out a statement on behalf of Councillor David Goodwin in which he expressed his thanks and appreciation to colleagues and officers who had helped and advised him throughout his 24 years as a councillor.

The Leader updated the Council on further plans for the Voter ID Roadshow to visit some of the parished areas to raise awareness of residents about the upcoming local elections and their need for photo ID when they go to vote at a polling station.

The Leader reported that website accessibility user testing was taking place with disabled members of our community to ensure that our digital content was accessible for everyone.

The Leader also reported that the Guildford Design Awards 2023, which were organised by the Guildford Society in partnership with the Council, were now open. The Awards recognised and rewarded excellence in architecture, urban design planning and public art across the borough. The deadline for receipt of nominations was no later than Friday 26 May 2023.

The Leader updated councillors on the continuing work and support being given to our local communities. The Council continued to support our Ukrainian guests a year on from the introduction of the Homes for Ukraine initiative. The Council's commitment to our communities and residents experiencing difficulties associated with the cost-of-living crisis had continued and we would be administering the further tranche of household support funding from April.

Voluntary sector partners continued to work with our Community Services teams to ensure we were reaching as many of our most vulnerable residents as possible, and this had been highlighted in our recent cost of living partnership forum. Our teams, along with other agencies, were co-ordinating a one-stop agency hub on the road in various locations at various times across the borough to enable people to access help when needed. Councillors were asked to share posts on social media and on our website about where those events were taking place with their local communities.

The Leader reflected on the huge challenges faced by the Council over the previous four years in supporting people and strengthening communities across the borough, particularly through the pandemic, and paid tribute to officers, councillors and local communities for all their hard work during those difficult times.

The Council had also managed unprecedented financial challenges by making savings and finding new ways to deliver services. The collaboration with Waverley would assist in making ongoing savings and protecting public services. Despite these challenges, the Leader was very

proud of the Council's unprecedented investment in council housing and plans to build more on Weyside and at Guildford Park Road.

The Leader thanked councillors for their contributions to the Council and to the community over the past four years and noted the sad passing of Councillors Patrick Sheard and Richard Billington during that time.

CO151 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There had been no questions or requests to make statements from the public.

CO152 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillor Keith Witham asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane, the following question:

"In the interests of full openness and transparency, for both Councillors and the public, would the Leader of the Council please advise the Council:

- (a) how many job posts in GBC have now been deleted as a result of the GBC/WBC collaboration, and list the job titles?*
- (b) how much has been spent from GBC funds – of all funds whether from revenue, capital, or reserve funds to enable those jobs to be removed? and as well as a total, can the relevant figure be shown for each job post deleted?*
- (c) Have phases 1 and 2 of the collaboration now been completed, i.e. the removal of all the senior posts, and joint posts recruited, or if Interims are in post how long will it be to have all joint positions in permanent post?*
- (d) how soon is it expected to then move to phase 3; or when will it be known how many Officer posts in that phase are intended to be deleted and replaced with shared posts?*
- (e) Please also list the additional costs of extra support staff for the joint management team?"*

The Leader of the Council's response to the question was as follows:

"I thank Cllr Witham for this opportunity to set out clearly the financial benefits and costs of the partnership with Waverley Borough Council. The councils' decision to work together in this way, the first such partnership in Surrey, has already brought financial and other benefits to both councils and will assist us in providing sustainable public services in the face of the massive financial challenge caused by rising costs, increasing demand from residents who need our support, and the reduction in government funding.

While Cllr Witham's questions and this response focus on the financial impact of the partnership, it may be noted that the councils are at this early stage benefitting in other areas, such as the greater pool of expertise, and reduced duplication in policy work, consultation responses and attendance at wider meetings.

(a) How many job posts in GBC have now been deleted as a result of the GBC/WBC collaboration, and list the job titles?

Guildford Borough Council (GBC) and Waverley Borough Council (WBC) both agreed in July 2021 to create a Joint Management Team (JMT). This was in place in October 2022. It comprises: 1 Chief Executive, 3 Strategic Directors and 12 Executive Heads of Service. WBC's former structure was 1 Chief Executive, 2 Directors and 8 Heads of Service, which were all deleted. GBC's roles in scope, which were all deleted, were 1 Managing Director, 3 Directors and 10 senior officers as follows:

- Managing Director
- Resources Director
- Service Delivery Director
- Strategic Services Director
- Head of Asset Management
- Head of Community Services
- Head of Culture, Heritage & Leisure Services
- Head of Customer, Case & Parking
- Head of Environment & Regulatory Services
- Head of Housing Services
- Head of Operational & Technical Services
- Head of Place
- Head of Regeneration & Corporate Programmes
- Strategy & Communications Manager

Therefore, 14 roles at GBC and 11 roles at WBC were deleted, and the new JMT of 16 roles was created. Taking account of some additional executive support that has been put in place to support the JMT, the cost to this council of the new structure is currently £421,176 per year less than the old, a saving that will contribute to meeting the severe financial challenges facing our provision of services to local people. We will keep this figure under close review and update annually the data on what the costs of the old teams would have been to ensure that we can report an accurate comparison to councillors in future.

(b) How much has been spent from GBC funds – of all funds whether from revenue, capital, or reserve funds to enable those jobs to be removed? and as well as a total, can the relevant figure be shown for each job post deleted?

The full costs for 2022/23 will be reported at the end of year accounts stage, so the following is provisional and represents the current picture.

The largest costs associated with the transition were redundancy costs associated with the deletion of posts and any staff members that consequently left GBC or WBC. These costs are one-off, in contrast to the savings which recur annually.

Four GBC employees and three WBC employees left as a consequence and the relevant policies were applied. The costs were also shared between the councils on the principles set out in the Inter-Authority Agreement and agreed by the respective Full Council meetings of April 2022. In practice, the costs are higher for GBC to reflect the more generous redundancy policy that applies and the length of service of employees affected.

One of the GBC employees was the former Managing Director. The costs entailed a redundancy payment to the individual, a payment in lieu of part of the notice period and a larger payment to the Surrey local government pension fund in the financial year 2021/22. The redundancy-associated costs were approved by the Full Council meeting on 5 October 2021. The final total cost was £475,448. WBC contributed 50% of the redundancy payment (i.e. £71,554) and so the net cost to GBC was £403,894. This cost was met from the realisation of a capital asset according to the council's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy 2021.

The remaining costs (for the financial year 2022/23) do not relate to the jobs but are personal to the individuals who held them. They are, therefore, personal information that should not be listed per person publicly. They can be shared with councillors on a confidential basis on request and have been sent to Cllr Witham. For one individual, the correct approval from Full Council was given on 11 October 2022 because the costs exceeded £95,000. The total cost (redundancy payment to the individual plus any payment to the pension fund if the individual is eligible) of all three GBC employees was £373,133. WBC contributed £76,422. GBC then

contributed £65,230 to WBC employee-related costs, and so the net cost to GBC was £361,941.

The GBC one-off costs associated with redundancy were drawn from the Invest-to-Save reserve, which was c. £0.8m at the start of the financial year 2022/23.

In addition, there are some ad hoc costs and savings as a result of legal advice and some temporary expeditious sharing. This further increases 2022/23's in-year savings and will be reported in the end-of-year finance reports.

(c) Have phases 1 and 2 of the collaboration now been completed, i.e. the removal of all the senior posts, and joint posts recruited, or if Interims are in post how long will it be to have all joint positions in permanent post?

The councils in July 2021 agreed to (i) create a JMT, and (ii) request that the JMT bring forward business cases for further collaboration. The first is complete. The second has started and proposals will be brought forward to the new councils on options. As per the original July 2021 council report, these will include options on services, premises, IT and HR policies.

(d) How soon is it expected to then move to phase 3; or when will it be known how many Officer posts in that phase are intended to be deleted and replaced with shared posts?

As there are no concrete or agreed proposals, this is not known, and will be discussed with the new councillor leaderships after the May 2023 elections. Any proposals that affect employees will require the proper consultations with them and the recognised unions.

(e) Please also list the additional costs of extra support staff for the joint management team?

In the old structure, GBC had 2 full-time equivalent employees providing executive support and WBC had 7. The new structure has 11.5 and is shared between the councils. Therefore, the cost to GBC has increased by £99,027. This is included within the figure in section (a) above to give the overall annual saving to GBC of £421,176 as a result of the creation of the JMT."

In response to a supplementary question which sought assurance from the Leader that the effectiveness of the senior management team would be evaluated before the Council moved to the next stage of the collaboration project, the Leader confirmed that this would be something for the new administration to take forward.

CO153 ADOPTION OF GUILDFORD BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

The Council received a report on The Local Plan: Development Management Policies ('the LPDMP'), which was the second part of Guildford's Local Plan. Once adopted, it would supersede extant Local Plan 2003 policies and become part of the Council's Development Plan. The LPDMP provided the more detailed policies to be used by Development Management in the determination of planning applications.

Following submission of the LPDMP by the Council to the Secretary of State in June 2022, the Plan was subject to Examination in Public. This included a set of written matters and questions from the Government appointed Planning Inspector, responses from the Council and consultees, and a series of hearing sessions into those issues that the Inspector considered necessary to explore further with all relevant parties. Those sessions took place from 15 to 17 November 2022, following which, the Inspector proposed that several necessary main

modifications be made for the plan in order for it to be found 'sound'. The proposed main modifications to the Plan underwent a formal consultation for a 7-week period from 15 December 2022 to 2 February 2023. The consultation related only to the main modifications and not to additional/minor modifications, or the remainder of the plan. On completion of the consultation, the Inspector considered the representations and prepared his report.

Following its receipt by the Council on 22 February 2023, the Inspector's draft report was subject to a 'fact check'. This check allowed the Council the opportunity to review the accuracy of its contents, but it was not an opportunity to question the Inspector's conclusions or findings. The Inspector's final report, a copy of which was appended to the report submitted to the Council, was published by the Council on 3 March 2023. The final report had confirmed the LPDMP to be sound, subject to several Main Modifications being made.

Following the Inspector's recommended Main Modifications, the Council has also made several additional/minor modifications to the LPDMP, details of which were also appended to the report submitted to the Council. These modifications were minor in nature, did not materially affect the plan's policies, and were not matters of soundness. They were designed to aid clarity, consistency, and accuracy. During the examination, minor modifications were shared with the Inspector who agreed that they were correctly described as minor in nature and did not therefore need to be consulted upon.

Councillors noted that the report had also been considered by the Executive at its special meeting held on 20 March 2023. At that meeting, the Executive had also considered and adopted, subject to the formal adoption by the Council of the LPDMP, "Parking Standards for New Development Supplementary Planning Document" (SPD), which linked to Policy ID10 on parking standards.

The Executive had commended the adoption of the LPDMP to the Council.

Upon the motion of the Deputy Leader of the Council, and Lead Councillor for Finance and Planning Policy, Councillor Joss Bigmore, seconded by the Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Housing and Community, Councillor Julia McShane, the Council

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Local Plan: Development Management Policies (as set out in Appendix 4 to the report submitted to the Council), which incorporates the Inspector's Main Modifications (at Appendix 2 to the report) and the Council's Minor Modifications (at Appendix 3 to the report), be adopted.
- (2) That the Secretary of State be requested to exercise his powers to revoke the 'residual' policies of the 2003 Local Plan.
- (3) That updates to the Guildford Borough Policies Map be adopted in line with the Local Plan: Development Management Policies including additions proposed at Appendix A of the Local Plan: Development Management Policies, as amended by the Inspector's main modification 6.
- (4) That the Lead Councillor with portfolio responsibility for Planning Policy be authorised, in consultation with the Joint Strategic Director of Place, to make such minor alterations to improve the clarity of the LPDMP as they may deem necessary.

Reasons:

1. To enable the adoption of the Local Plan: Development Management Policies in line with the Council's Local Development Scheme and for the plan to become part of the Council's development plan, carrying full weight in the determination of planning applications.
2. To enable the revocation of the 'residual' Local Plan 2003 policies that are not superseded by policies contained in the Local Plan: Development Management Policies.
3. To ensure that changes are brought about to the policies map in line with the adoption of the Local Plan: Development Management Policies.
4. To enable minor alterations to be made to the Local Plan: Development Management Policies should they be necessary prior to publication.

CO154 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FORMAL REVIEW OF THE INTER-AUTHORITY AGREEMENT AND THE COLLABORATION RISK REGISTER (DECEMBER 2022)

The Council noted that, at its first meeting on 9 December 2022, the Guildford and Waverley Joint Governance Committee considered reports on:

- (a) the formal review of the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA), to ensure that it continued to be fit for purpose, with any changes required being recommended to both Full Councils; and
- (b) the six-monthly review of the collaboration risk register.

In relation to the review of the IAA, the Committee noted that the Terms of Reference of the Joint Appointments Committee, which were included within the IAA, currently provided that its membership shall comprise the leaders of both councils plus two members appointed by Guildford Borough Council and two members appointed by Waverley Borough Council, with no substitutes permitted.

The Committee, noting that substitutes were permitted in respect of the Joint Governance Committee, felt that substitutes should be allowed on the Joint Appointments Committee and agreed to recommend to both councils that the terms of reference of the Joint Appointments Committee should be amended to reflect the membership as specified by each council.

In their discussion on the review of the risk register, the Committee raised a number of queries in respect of specific risks. With regard to Risk No. 6 (*that either or both councils will decide to terminate the partnership*), councillors queried the relation of this risk to clauses 21 and 22 of the IAA, and whether:

- (i) there was still a need for those clauses, and
- (ii) the notice periods were correct.

It was noted that legal advice had been to include dispute resolution arrangements in the IAA, and that further legal advice would be needed before changing these clauses. The Committee therefore asked officers to obtain legal advice on this issue so that the risks could be reflected correctly in the risk register. The risk register needed to reflect that the closer the collaboration became, the more impactful an ending of the partnership would be to the councils.

The Council considered a report which set out details of the further legal advice sought and suggested an amendment to the wording of the IAA, which would also require the formal approval by the full Councils of both authorities.

Councillors noted that the Committee, at its meeting on 17 March 2023, had considered and commended the adoption of the proposed amendment to the wording of the IAA to both councils.

Upon the motion of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Julia McShane, seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joss Bigmore, the Council

RESOLVED:

(1) That the terms of reference of the Joint Appointments Committee be amended as follows:

(a) Delete the following:

“SUBSTITUTES: Substitutes shall not be appointed”

(b) Insert the following:

“SUBSTITUTES: Substitutes may be appointed. Guildford Borough Council may appoint two substitute members. Waverley Borough Council may appoint two substitute members, with one being nominated by the Leader of the council, and one nominated by the Leader of Waverley’s Principal Opposition Group.”

(2) That clause 21.1 of the Inter-Authority Agreement be amended to read:

“21 TERMINATION FOR CAUSE

21.1 Without affecting any other right or remedy available to it, any Party may terminate this Agreement ~~with immediate effect~~ by giving ~~written notice to a~~ **minimum of three months’ notice in writing** to the other Party.”

Reason:

To ensure that any recommended change to the inter-authority agreement following a review is reported to the full Council meetings of both authorities.

CO155 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Council received and noted the minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 26 January, 22 and 23 February 2023.

CO156 VOTE OF THANKS

As this was the last Council meeting before the elections on 4 May, the Council joined the Mayor in formally expressing thanks and appreciation of the service to the community and the Council to those councillors who were not seeking re-election and offering them best wishes for the future.

The meeting finished at 8.00 pm

Signed

Mayor

Date