

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL



**MIAH
MAYOR**

Contact Officer:

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2 October 2023

To the Councillors of Guildford Borough Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council for the Borough of Guildford to be held in the **Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB** on **TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2023** commencing at 7.00 pm.

Tom Horwood
Chief Executive

Millmead House
Millmead
Guildford
Surrey GU2 4BB

www.guildford.gov.uk



Guildford Borough Council

Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB

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:	3 minutes
Response to questions from councillors:	3 minutes
Proposer of a motion:	10 minutes
Seconder of a motion:	5 minutes
Other councillors speaking during the debate on a motion:	5 minutes
Proposer of a motion's right of reply at the end of the debate on the motion:	10 minutes
Proposer of an amendment:	5 minutes
Seconder of an amendment:	5 minutes
Other councillors speaking during the debate on an amendment:	5 minutes
Proposer of a motion's right of reply at the end of the debate on an amendment:	5 minutes
Proposer of an amendment's right of reply at the end of the debate on an amendment:	5 minutes

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 11 - 20)

To confirm the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 30 August 2023.

4. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive any communications or announcements from the Mayor.

5. LEADER'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive questions or statements from the public.

7. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To hear questions from councillors of which due notice has been given.

8. FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN - OCTOBER UPDATE REPORT

(Pages 21 - 42)

9. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 (Pages 43 - 86)

10. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23 (Pages 87 - 106)

11. AMENDMENTS TO THE GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AND WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL JOINT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE (Pages 107 - 116)

12. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER (Pages 117 - 120)

13. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY RECORDER (Pages 121 - 126)

14. MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE (Pages 127 - 138)

To receive and note the attached minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 20 July and 24 August 2023.

15. NOTICE OF MOTION DATED 29 SEPTEMBER 2023: MONTHLY REPORTING OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, Councillor David Bilbé to propose, and Councillor Bob Hughes to second the following motion:

“Guildford Borough Council is in an unprecedented situation with respect to financial management, service provision, staff morale and

management stability. The people who will be totally affected by this significant set of circumstances are the tax paying public and those expecting support and information from the councillors whom they elected. Councillors cannot give clear confidence to voters without having accurate and cogent information. Councillors should be conversant with initiatives which affects their ability to give confident, consistent, and accurate messages to residents of respective wards.

Most well-run businesses produce a brief summary of key variables which show the health or otherwise of the underlying enterprise. This is normally a key document for senior management. This proposal will provide informed information sufficient for councillors to have confidence in the processes and to assure the residents of their ward and Guildford generally that proper action is being taken in the context of circumstances.

Therefore, this Council resolves:

To prepare a regular monthly report in summary format (maximum 4 pages) of key performance indicators (KPIs) for circulation to all councillors containing at least the following information:

- (i) a forecast of projected current deficit or surplus in the next 3-month period together with a rolling forecast for the next 12 months;
- (ii) details of service cost expenditure by service category comparing performance to both original and more importantly revised budget (as submitted to full Council today);
- (iii) a summary of cost saving proposals and consequences for service delivery;
- (iv) proposed asset disposals and yield enhancement performance progress;
- (v) a schedule of expected non-current expenditure costs including capital project payments, debt repayments, costs of planning appeals (inter-alia); and
- (vi) any other significant matters which are considered to have an effect on financial outcome or management stability.”

16. NOTICE OF MOTION DATED 29 SEPTEMBER 2023: SHARING OF SENIOR STAFF

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, Councillor Richard Mills to propose, and Councillor Honor Brooker to second the following motion:

“In the light of developments in the last few months it is now clear that for the next few years the Council faces continuing and severe financial constraints as well as major challenges in its Housing and Planning Departments. This will inevitably place an exceptionally heavy burden on the Council’s most senior officers who under arrangements introduced by the last administration now have to carry out functions jointly for both Guildford and Waverley.

Such “Job Sharing” arrangements between two organisations, especially at such a senior level, are extremely rare. They tend to be onerous and inefficient for the staff concerned, and while they may temporarily obscure problems, they seldom resolve them. Understandably therefore, most organisations prefer to have dedicated officials whose sole concern is for the enterprise for which they work.

It is now clear that, for Guildford at least, this partnership arrangement has not been effective, either in terms of costs or performance. Indeed, in view of the poor financial performance of the Council in recent years, it could be argued that instead of saving money, by spreading managerial resources too thinly, it has actually become an extremely expensive experiment. It now needs to be brought to an end as soon as practicable.

Therefore, this Council resolves:

- (a) after consultation with Waverley Borough Council, to end the current arrangement for sharing senior staff as quickly as possible.
- (b) to review “Job Sharing” contracts rapidly, so as to bring them under the sole managerial authority of GBC.
- (c) to ensure that all future senior appointments are dedicated appointments solely for the benefit of GBC.”

17. NOTICE OF MOTION DATED 29 SEPTEMBER 2023: MANAGEMENT OF HOUSING MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS AND THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, Councillor Matt Furniss to propose, and Councillor Philip Brooker to second the following motion:

“This Council is extremely concerned to hear of yet more financial irregularities taking place, this time around a Council Housing Maintenance Contract.

Again, it follows a lack of financial controls and political oversight by this Council over the past four years which has led to the significant financial issues this Council now faces.

Therefore, this Council resolves:

- (1) That the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) be requested to send in a Best Value Commissioner no later than four weeks from today, to independently assess the Housing Contracts and management of the Housing Revenue Account at Guildford Borough Council.
- (2) That all documentation be transparently published for the public to be able to see the extent of the challenges faced by the Council”.

18. NOTICE OF MOTION DATED 29 SEPTEMBER 2023: VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, Councillor Philip Brooker to propose, and Councillor Bilal Akhtar to second the following motion:

“Guildford Borough Council is experiencing significant financial issues with respect to being able to set a balanced budget for years 2024 – 2025 and beyond, with the realistic prospect that a section 114 notice (insolvency) may have to be issued next year. This situation appears to have primarily been brought about through the erosion of reserves since 2019.

Further, there have been recent disturbing disclosures within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). These disclosures indicate that a contractor has overrun his contract value by several million pounds. Councillors have only been made aware of this vast overspending in mid-September 2023. It has to be said that such astronomic differences between contract value and authorised payments would have been well documented with detailed reasons given in virtually any other commercial organisation. However, within Guildford Borough Council, it seems to have taken senior officers and controlling portfolio holders by surprise, indicating a total breakdown in all types of financial control and management.

The current Leader of the Council was in office as Leader for part of the coalition administration and was also the portfolio holder for Housing for the whole of the period covering the excess payments being made within the HRA; she is deeply associated with these debacles.

Therefore, this Council expresses no confidence in the current Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Housing, and requires her immediate resignation.”