

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SURREY
HEATH BOROUGH COUNCIL held at
Surrey Heath House, Camberley on
25 October 2023**

+ Cllr Pat Tedder (Mayor)
+ Cllr Sarbie Kang (Deputy Mayor)

+ Cllr Alan Ashbery	+ Cllr Liz Noble
+ Cllr Louise Ashbery	+ Cllr Jacques Olmo
+ Cllr Cliff Betton	+ Cllr David O'Mahoney
+ Cllr Jonny Cope	+ Cllr Ying Perrett
+ Cllr Kel Finan-Cooke	+ Cllr Jonathan Quin
+ Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke	+ Cllr Bob Raikes
+ Cllr Shaun Garrett	+ Cllr Morgan Rise
- Cllr Mary Glauert	+ Cllr Murray Rowlands
+ Cllr Mark Gordon	- Cllr John Skipper
+ Cllr Julie Hoad	+ Cllr Josh Thorne
+ Cllr Nirmal Kang	+ Cllr Kevin Thompson
+ Cllr Rob Lee	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Cllr Shaun Macdonald	- Cllr David Whitcroft
- Cllr Leanne MacIntyre	- Cllr Helen Whitcroft
+ Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath	+ Cllr Valerie White
+ Cllr Lewis Mears	+ Cllr Richard Wilson
+ Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented

27/C Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mary Glauert, Leanne MacIntyre, John Skipper, David Whitcroft, and Helen Whitcroft.

28/C Minutes

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 26 July 2023 be approved as a correct record.

29/C Questions from Members of the Public

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Shaun Macdonald, responded to a question from Windlesham Parish Councillor Carole Marr concerning the impact of non-coterminous boundaries in Windlesham.

30/C Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor referred to the death of former councillor and Mayor Charles Gimblett, who had served as a councillor from 1976 and 1983, and subsequently between

1988 and 1999, representing Watchetts ward. He had been Mayor in the 1996-97 municipal year. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor sent condolences to Mr Gimblett's family and friends.

The Council was informed that the Mayor would be attending the RBL Poppy Launch at Pirbright and the RBL Poppy event for Camberley the following day.

The Mayor reported that her Civic Service would be held at St Lawrence Church, Chobham on 21 January 2024.

31/C Leader's Announcements

The Leader updated the Council on a range of matters including:

- (i) the Council's position on the ongoing conflict in Israel and the Palestinian territories;
- (ii) the recent Camberley Mosque open day;
- (iii) the commencement of the service and budget planning process for 2024/25 and review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- (iv) the outcome of the Local Government Association Peer Challenge;
- (v) the recent consultation on Farnborough Airport expansion;
- (vi) ongoing concerns about the closure of the M3 footbridge at Bagshot and Lightwater;
- (vii) noting the attendance of Councillor Julie Hoad after an extended period of physical absence from Council activities due to ill-health, during which time she had continued to engage virtually with the Council; and
- (viii) long-service and professional training successes within the organisation.

32/C Executive, Committees and Other Bodies

- (i) Executive – 19 September and 17 October 2023

It was moved by Councillor Shaun Macdonald, seconded by Councillor Morgan Rise, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 19 September and 17 October 2023 be received

It was moved by Councillor Jonathan Quin, seconded by Councillor Jonny Cope, and

RESOLVED that

- (i) **£1,500 be awarded to High Cross Church for the installation of a Bike Repair Point; and**
- (ii) **£20,800 be added to the Council's Capital Programme for the installation of an outdoor gym and 2 picnic tables at Frimley Green Recreation Ground.**

- (ii) Planning Applications Committee – 27 July, 24 August and 21 September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Cliff Betton, seconded by Councillor Victoria Wheeler, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Applications Committee held on 27 July and 21 September 2023 be received.

It was moved by Councillor Cliff Betton, seconded by Councillor Nirmal Kang, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Applications Committee held on 24 August 2023 be received.

- (iii) Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee – 13 September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Shaun Garrett, seconded by Councillor Liz Noble, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee held on 13 September 2023 be received.

- (iv) External Partnerships Select Committee – 5 September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Rob Lee, seconded by Councillor Kevin Thompson and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the External Partnerships Select Committee held on 5 September 2023 be received.

- (v) Audit and Standards Committee – 3 October 2023

It was moved by Councillor Cliff Betton, seconded by Councillor Bob Raikes and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 3 October 2023 be received.

- (vi) Employment Committee – 12 October 2023

It was moved by Councillor Lisa Finan-Cooke, seconded by Councillor Morgan Rise and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee held on 12 October 2023 be received.

- (vii) Joint Staff Consultative Group – 14 September 2023

It was moved by Councillor Valerie White, seconded by Councillor Ying Perrett and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Group held on 14 September 2023 be received.

Note 1: It was noted for the record that, in relation to the application for the installation of a Bike Repair Point at High Cross Church, as referred to at (a) above,

- (i) Councillor Shaun Macdonald declared on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group that they knew the applicant as he was the Chair of Surrey Heath Liberal Democrats. The Group left the Chamber during the consideration of that decision; and
- (ii) Councillor Shaun Garrett declared that he knew the applicant as they served on a number of trustee bodies together.

Note 2: It was noted for the record that Councillor Jacques Olmo declared that he was the applicant for the application to install an outdoor gym and two picnic tables at Frimley Green Recreation Ground, as referred to at (a) above.

33/C Motion

It was moved by Councillor Richard Wilson, seconded by Councillor Victoria Wheeler, and

RESOLVED that

(i) the Council

- a) recognises that the borough ward boundaries review of 2016/17 split Windlesham village over two new wards, causing frustration and distress to its residents;**
- b) understands that this division of an established settlement area has led to residents feeling disenfranchised and, despite the best endeavours of all councillors representing this area, as though the village does not have a single voice;**
- c) accepts that the creation of the 2016/17 ward boundaries, covering Bagshot, Chobham and Windlesham, had a negative impact on democratic representation across these areas because the pattern of wards no longer reflects community ties and identities and has not led to effective and convenient local government;**
- d) recognises that Windlesham village and Bagshot village, individually, have a strong sense of community cohesion and belonging, which has been damaged in Windlesham by the unnecessary division caused by**

the 2016/17 borough ward boundary changes and would be strengthened if the changes were reversed;

- e) **understands that all residents of Windlesham, north and south, use the same amenities and resources;**
- f) **notes that many residents of Windlesham feel they were not consulted effectively during the 2016/17 boundaries review, unlike residents of other villages; and**

(ii) the Chief Executive be asked to write, on behalf of the Council and the residents of Windlesham and the wider Borough, to the Local Government Boundaries Commission for England to request an urgent review of borough ward boundaries, with the objective of reversing the changes in the previous review affecting Bagshot, Windlesham and Chobham villages and re-creating a separate borough ward for Windlesham.”

Note 1: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, a recorded vote on the motion was taken.

The following Members voted in favour of the motion:

Councillors Alan Ashbery, Louise Ashbery, Cliff Betton, Jonny Cope, Kel Finan-Cooke, Lisa Finan-Cooke, Shaun Garrett, Mark Gordon, Julie Hoad, Nirmal Kang, Sarbie Kang, Rob Lee, Shaun Macdonald, Emma-Jane McGrath, Lewis Mears, Sashi Mylvaganam, Liz Noble, Jacques Olmo, David O'Mahoney, Ying Perrett, Jonathan Quin, Bob Raikes, Murray Rowlands, Morgan Rise, Pat Tedder, Josh Thorne, Kevin Thompson, Victoria Wheeler, Valerie White, Richard Wilson.

Note 2: It was noted for the record that the Bagshot and Windlesham & Chobham ward councillors recognised that they would be impacted by any changes to the current ward boundaries.

34/C Motion

It was moved Councillor Jonathan Quin, seconded by Councillor Lisa Finan-Cooke, and

RESOLVED

- (i) **to note that Camberley experienced a persistent and intolerable odour issue over the summer due to the local sewage works operated by Thames Water, and in response to the community's complaints, notes that Thames Water expressed, in a number of meetings, a desire to make a financial contribution to a local community project in order to acknowledge the impact on residents over a five month period from May to September;**
- (ii) **to note that Thames Water has since backtracked on its offer to make a financial contribution to a project, leaving the community frustrated and angry;**

- (iii) to call on Thames Water in the strongest possible terms to honour its previous commitment to make a financial contribution to a community project, and commits to publishing a statement to this effect on the council website and on social media;**
- (iv) that the Leader of the Council be asked to write to Thames Water and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to express dissatisfaction regarding management of the situation triggered by the importing of sludge onto the Camberley site; and**
- (v) that Thames Water be invited to appear at an External Partnerships meeting of this Council.”**

Note: It was noted for the record that Councillor Victoria Wheeler declared that she had family members who had been impacted by the issue.

35/C Motion

It was moved by Councillor David O'Mahoney, seconded by Councillor Nirmal Kang, and

RESOLVED

(i) to note that

- a) Frimley Park Hospital is administered by the Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust which provides hospital and health services for over 900,000 people across an area covering parts of Surrey, Hampshire, Berkshire, and South Buckinghamshire;**
- b) Frimley Park is one of the largest employers within Surrey Heath;**
- c) Frimley Park was originally opened in 1974 and over the years has expanded its services, as well as becoming host of one of the Ministry of Defence's Hospital Units;**
- d) Government funding has been identified to deliver a new state-of-the-art hospital;**
- e) Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust does not cover the entirety of Surrey Heath, and residents in the east of the borough may be covered by Ashford and St Peter's NHS Foundation Trust;**

(ii) that the Council believes that:

- a) **Frimley Park is an excellent hospital, and a new hospital will be a major benefit to the healthcare needs of the borough's residents;**
 - b) **the new hospital should be located within Surrey Heath;**
 - c) **residents should not be required to travel long distances to receive medical care, and if the replacement hospital is located outside the borough it could add significant time to residents receiving care, attending appointments and visiting loved ones;**
 - d) **losing the hospital from the borough would result in the loss of a major employer of Surrey Heath residents;**
- (iii) to proactively encourage the replacement hospital to be located within Surrey Heath and to consider potential sites for relocation, which could be included within in a wider regeneration scheme;**
- (iv) to call on the Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust to actively seek sites within Surrey Heath.**
- (v) to ensure that any site for the new hospital will deliver the necessary infrastructure, including direct and sustainable public transport options to connect the new hospital with key transport hubs; and**
- (vi) that the Leader of the Council be asked to write to the MP for Surrey Heath, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust Board to request their support for the replacement hospital to be located within the borough of Surrey Heath.**

Note: In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct Councillor Victoria Wheeler declared a pecuniary interest as her business provided services at Frimley Park Hospital. Councillor Wheeler left the Council Chamber during the consideration of the item.

36/C Governance Working Group

The Council received a report from the Governance Working Group. The report detailed a number of proposed changes to committee procedural rules including the quorum of meetings and amending the substitution procedure rules to allow for other members of the group to substitute for a committee member where the nominated substitutes were not available. The membership of Appointments Sub Committees had been altered to allow for participation by opposition group leaders who were not members of the Employment Committee.

Members were informed that it was proposed to rename the Audit and Standards Committee as the Audit, Standards and Risk Committee, to ensure that more emphasis on risk management functions. The Committee's Terms of Reference

would be updated to reflect this emphasis, along with gaining clear responsibility for the Council's treasury management functions.

It was proposed to introduce Public Questions at all of the Standing Committees of the Council, except for the Planning Applications Committee, which already had a public speaking scheme in operation, and the Employment Committee, which was focused on internal matters. Public Question Time broadly reflected the current process for questions at Council meetings, although questions would need to relate to matters included on the relevant agenda.

The Working Group had proposed amendments to the Council's petitions scheme by reducing the threshold for considering petitions and allowing petitions submitted through third party sites to be considered under the scheme. It was also proposed to align the petitions scheme with the Residents Panel process agreed by the Executive earlier that month.

The Protocol for the appointment and role of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen had also been updated to reflect gender neutral terminology, as far as current legislation permitted.

RESOLVED that

- (i) Article 9 of the Constitution be updated, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report;**
- (ii) the Terms of Reference of the Executive, Committees and Other Bodies at Part 3, Section E of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex B to the agenda report;**
- (iii) the Executive Procedure Rules at Part 4, Section B of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex C to the agenda report;**
- (iv) the Committees, Sub Committees and Other Bodies Procedure Rules at Part 4, Section D of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex D to the agenda report;**
- (v) the Substitution Procedure Rules at Part 4, Section K of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex E to the agenda report;**
- (vi) the Public Speaking Procedure Rules at Part 4, Section E of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex F to the agenda report;**
- (vii) the Petitions Scheme at Part 4, Section L of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex G to the agenda report; and**
- (viii) the Protocol for the appointment and role of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen at Part L of the Documents which support**

the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex H to the agenda report.

37/C Review of Committees and Political Proportionality

The Council was informed that the Governance Working Group had agreed by majority to recommend that the size of the Standing Committees of the Council be reduced. The Group also proposed amending the membership of the Joint Staff Consultative Group to six councillor representatives and six Staff Representatives, and its own membership be amended to seven members comprising four representatives from the Liberal Democrats group and the opposition group leaders.

It was reported that that the size of committees was high in comparison to other Surrey authorities when factoring the size of the Council. Furthermore, the changes were intended to free up Members' time to participate in working groups and other councillor activities.

Members discussed the proposal to reduce the committees' sizes alongside the greater flexibility in the arrangements for nominating substitutes. Differing views were presented on how this would affect the quality of Councillor engagement in debate and decision making, and affect the balance of councillors' workloads. Members also considered feedback on how the proposals aligned with the arrangements in neighbouring Councils. It was noted that the changes would not result in any savings for the Council.

The Council was reminded that changing the size of the standing committees would require the scheme of proportionality to be amended. It would also noted that the memberships would need to be updated to reflect the altered scheme; any changes to memberships would be agreed by the Chief Executive using delegated authority and reported to the next meeting. It was clarified that the changes were proposed to be effective from 1 December 2023.

It was moved by Councillor Richard Wilson, seconded by Councillor Morgan Rise, and

RESOLVED that

- (i) the size of the Standing Committees of the Council and other bodies of the Council be amended, as set out at paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 of the agenda report;**
- (ii) the revised the scheme of proportionality, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, be adopted for the remainder 2023/24; and**
- (iii) the revisions to the membership of the Committees, as set out at Annex B to the agenda report, be agreed.**

Note 1: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, a recorded vote was taken.

The following Members voted in favour of the recommendation to change the size of committees:

Councillors Alan Ashbery, Louise Ashbery, Cliff Betton, Kel Finan-Cooke, Lisa Finan-Cooke, Julie Hoad, Nirmal Kang, Sarbie Kang, Rob Lee, Shaun Macdonald, Sashi Mylvaganam, Liz Noble, Jacques Olmo, David O'Mahoney, Ying Perrett, Jonathan Quin, Bob Raikes, Murray Rowlands, Morgan Rise, Kevin Thompson, Richard Wilson.

The following Members voted against the recommendation to change the size of committees:

Councillors Jonny Cope, Shaun Garrett, Mark Gordon, Emma-Jane McGrath, Lewis Mears, Pat Tedder, Josh Thorne, Victoria Wheeler, Valerie White.

38/C Waiver of Six Month Councillor Attendance Rule

The Council was informed that, as Councillor Julie Hoad was present at the meeting, the item did not need to be considered.

39/C Questions from Councillors

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Shaun Macdonald, responded to a question from Councillor Murray Rowlands concerning the recent performance of the Royal Mail postal service. He outlined the actions the Council had taken to address these issues with Royal Mail and indicated that representatives should be invited to a meeting of the External Partnerships Select Committee.

The following questions were asked in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11A:

- (i) in response to a question from Councillor Rob Lee, the Leader agreed to escalate the request for Surrey County Council highways representatives to attend the next External Partnerships Select meeting;
- (ii) the Leader responded to a question from Councillor Shaun Garrett and agreed to check information published concerning the recent Local Government Association Peer Challenge;
- (iii) responding to a question from Councillor Kevin Thompson, the Leader acknowledged a need to look at options for improving the condition of the access road to Lightwater Leisure Centre;
- (iv) following a question from Councillor Shaun Garrett concerning the recent decision to extend the planning permission for Lawrence Lodge and recent reports of a tenant experiencing mould and cracks in a wall, the Leader undertook to contact Accent to ensure the building remained fit for purpose and indicated the Council would consider using any statutory and influential powers, as necessary;
- (v) in response to a question from Councillor Rob Lee, the Leader agreed to discuss with officers whether any procedural processes could be used to

enable a petition that was currently live to be considered under the revised scheme adopted earlier that meeting;

- (vi) Councillors Victoria Wheeler and Jonathan Quin raised questions concerning the implementation of the decision to reduce the size of committees, as referred to at minute 37/C.

Mayor