

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SURREY
HEATH BOROUGH COUNCIL held at
Surrey Heath House, Camberley on
26 October 2022**

+ Cllr Helen Whitcroft (Mayor)
+ Cllr Pat Tedder (Deputy Mayor)

+ Cllr Dan Adams	+ Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans
+ Cllr Graham Alleway	+ Cllr David Lewis
+ Cllr Peter Barnett	+ Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath
+ Cllr Rodney Bates	+ Cllr Charlotte Morley
+ Cllr Cliff Betton	+ Cllr Alan McClafferty
+ Cllr Stuart Black	+ Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam
+ Cllr Richard Brooks	+ Cllr Liz Noble
- Cllr Vivienne Chapman	+ Cllr Adrian Page
- Cllr Sarah Jane Croke	+ Cllr Robin Perry
+ Cllr Paul Deach	+ Cllr Darryl Ratiram
+ Cllr Colin Dougan	+ Cllr Morgan Rise
+ Cllr Tim FitzGerald	- Cllr John Skipper
+ Cllr Sharon Galliford	+ Cllr Graham Tapper
+ Cllr Shaun Garrett	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
- Cllr Mark Gordon	+ Cllr Valerie White
* Cllr Edward Hawkins	+ Cllr Kristian Wrenn
+ Cllr Josephine Hawkins	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented
* In attendance virtually

20/C Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Vivienne Chapman, Sarah Jane Croke, Mark Gordon, Edward Hawkins, and John Skipper. It was noted that Councillor Edward Hawkins had joined the meeting virtually but would not be entitled to vote.

21/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 27 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

22/C Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor referred to the recent death of Alderman Delores Martell, who had served as a councillor from 1983 until 1999. She had been Mayor of Surrey Heath in the 1993/94 municipal year and conferred as an Alderman in 2000. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor sent condolences to Alderman Martell's family.

The Mayor paid tribute to Mrs Louise Livingston, the Head of HR Performance and Communications, who would be leaving the Council's employment at the beginning of the following month to join Wokingham BC. On behalf of the Council she thanked Louise for her service and wished her well in her new role.

The Council was informed of the variety of events the Mayor had attended since the meeting in July. This included a number of flag raising ceremonies at Surrey Heath House, including the raising of the Pride flag to mark Pride in Surrey month, the raising of the Ukrainian Flag on Ukrainian Independence Day, and the rescheduled Emergency Services Day event to thank and remember those whose service kept the borough safe.

The Mayor also referred to the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September 2022 and reflected on her association with the borough. She also thanked the Chief Executive and his staff for the additional work undertaken and the support she had received during that period.

23/C Leader's Announcements

The Leader informed the Council that Surrey Leaders' Group, along with Surrey Chief Executives, had been discussing the role of boroughs and districts in the County Deal bid being prepared by Surrey County Council (SCC).

Members were reminded that the Executive had recently agreed a funding scheme for charities and not for profit organisations to help set up Warm Banks in the borough. Additional seating was also being provided in the Square. It was also advised that, by end of September, £2.5m had been distributed to households in Council Tax Bands A-D as part of the Energy Rebate Scheme, and a further £33,000 had been distributed to residents in need as part of the discretionary scheme. The efforts of the Council's Revenues and Benefits team in distributing these grants was recognised.

The Leader referred to the impact of the Bin Strike in August. He reported that Food Waste and Refuse had continued to be collected during the 2 week period of industrial action and Green Waste customers had received extensions to their contracts to reflect any disruption to the service.

The Council was informed that SCC had confirmed its intention to centralise the operation of its grounds maintenance, including the maintenance of highway grass verges, and the enforcement of on-street parking, which had previously been undertaken by the borough and district authorities. SCC was expecting to have the new arrangements in place by April 2023.

It was reported that the Mindenhurst construction team had received a rating of outstanding following an inspection by assessors from the Considerate Constructors Scheme; the construction team had received maximum scores for all three categories against which it was assessed, which included Respect for the Community, Care for the Environment, and Valuing the Site's Workforce.

The Leader welcomed Martin Breeden, the new Head of Investment & Development, who had recently joined the Council, and informed Members that

Sally Kipping had been appointed to the role of Head of HR, Performance & Communications earlier that month. He also extended his thanks to Louise Livingston, the current Head of HR, Performance & Communications for all of her work and wished her well in her new role at Wokingham BC.

24/C Executive, Committees and Other Bodies

- (a) Executive – 16 August, 20 September and 18 October 2022

It was moved by Councillor Alan McClafferty, seconded by Councillor Shaun Garrett, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 16 August, 20 September, and 18 October 2022 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted as set out below:

36/E Adoption of the Working Definition of Anti-Semitism

RESOLVED that the Working Definition of Anti-Semitism (IHRA) and other minority groups, as proposed by the Equality Working Group, be adopted.

51/E Local Community Improvement Fund Bids

RESOLVED that £15,000 (net) for Southcote Park Play Area Refurbishment be added to the Council's Capital Programme.

- (b) Planning Applications Committee – 4 August, 1 September and 6 October 2022

It was moved by Councillor Victoria Wheeler, seconded by Councillor Robin Perry, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Applications Committee held on 4 August and 1 September 2022 be received.

It was moved by Councillor Liz Noble, seconded by Councillor Graham Tapper, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Applications Committee held on 6 October 2022 be received.

- (c) Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee – 13 July and 28 September 2022

It was moved by Councillor Sashi Mylvaganam, seconded by Councillor Valerie White, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee held on 13 July and 28 September 2022 be received.

- (d) Audit and Standards Committee – 25 July 2022

It was moved by Councillor Cliff Betton, seconded by Councillor Darryl Ratiram and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 25 July 2022 be received.

- (e) Licensing Committee – 30 August and 19 October 2022

It was moved by Councillor Pat Tedder, seconded by Councillor David Lewis and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Committee held on 30 August and 19 October 2022 be received.

- (f) External Partnerships Select Committee – 6 September 2022

It was moved by Councillor Morgan Rise, seconded by Councillor Josephine Hawkins and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the External Partnerships Select Committee held on 6 September 2022 be received.

- (g) Employment Committee – 13 October 2022

It was moved by Councillor Stuart Black, seconded by Councillor Cliff Betton and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Employment Committee held on 13 October 2022 be received.

- (h) Joint Staff Consultative Group – 22 September 2022

It was moved by Councillor Sharon Galliford, seconded by Councillor Stuart Black and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Group held on 22 September 2022 be received.

25/C Motions

It was moved by Councillor Sharon Galliford and seconded by Councillor Morgan Rise

“the Council

- (i) notes that:
 - a) First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men;
 - b) In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections; meanwhile, internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect parliaments in more than 80 countries; those countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.
 - c) PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and those seats won match votes cast; under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of local communities and the nation; MPs better reflecting their communities leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken;
 - d) PR would also end minority rule: in 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power;
 - e) PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. So why not Westminster?;
 - f) PR is used in Metro Mayoral elections, the London Assembly and Police Crime Commissioner elections and would also be desirable for local government elections;
- (ii) writes to H.M. Government calling for a change in the country's outdated electoral laws to enable Proportional Representation to be used for general elections and to be considered for local elections; and
- (iii) writes to the MP for Surrey Heath Michael Gove to lobby government in favour of the adoption of PR."

Following debate, the motion was put to the vote and lost.

RESOLVED that the motion set out in the agenda report not be adopted.

26/C Pay Settlement

The Council considered a report proposing a consolidated pay increase of 8% for all pay scale points, to be applied from 1 October 2022 to reflect the inflationary pressures affecting staff. The proposed pay award had been subject to negotiation with Staff and Member Representatives through the Joint Staff Consultative Group and had subsequently been recommended for adoption by the Employment Committee.

Members were advised that a number of factors had been taken into consideration when negotiating the proposed pay award, including staff turnover and morale. The need to reduce costs, find further savings and find additional sources of income to accommodate this award had also been recognised.

The Council was reminded that the Members' Allowances Scheme adopted in February 2020 provided for the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, and Carers' Allowances to be increased annually in line with the percentage staff pay award; it was therefore expected for this increase to be applied from 1 April 2023.

Members discussed the application of the staff pay award to Members' Allowances and it was suggested that, rather than applying it from 1 April 2023, the increase should be introduced for the councillors elected in May 2023. It was proposed by Councillor Rodney Bates and seconded by Councillor Victoria Wheeler that the date from which the increase should be applied be amended to 1 May 2023. Following further discussion, it was agreed to alter this date to 8 May 2023, which would correspond with the start of the new Council term.

RESOLVED that

- (i) a consolidated 8% pay rise be applied on all pay scale points from 1 October 2022, as proposed by the Employment Committee; and**
- (ii) the consequent 8% increase to Members' Allowances be applied from 8 May 2023.**

27/C Governance Working Group

The Council received a report from the Governance Working Group on the matters it had discussed at its meeting on 30 September 2022.

The Working Group had reviewed and made a number of recommended changes to mandatory training, as set out in Article 13 of the Constitution. This principally referred to clarifying how often, or recently, specific forms of training would need to be received in order to make decisions on those matters. More specific changes included clarification that mandatory training on HR matters was only required in relation to participating in Hearing or Appeals Sub Committee meetings. Furthermore, it was proposed to remove the requirement for Equality Training to be undertaken in order for a councillor to make any decision; whilst the intent of this requirement was recognised, it was not considered to be proportionate nor enforceable.

A number of changes had been proposed to the Protocol for Nomination/ Appointment to Outside Bodies, one of the Documents Which Supports the Constitution. This included a streamlined process for making appointments to positions reserved to portfolio holders, plus clarifying that ward councillors would be prioritised for appointments where the outside body was location specific. A schedule of minor changes to the Constitution had also been recommended for consideration by the Council.

RESOLVED that

- (i) Article 13 – Decision Making at Part 2 of the Constitution be updated as set out at Annex A to the agenda report;**
- (ii) the Protocol for Nomination/ Appointment to Outside Bodies, one of the Documents Which Supports the Constitution, be updated as set out at Annex B to the agenda report; and**
- (iii) minor amendments to the Constitution, as set out at Annex C to the agenda report, be agreed.**

28/C Questions from Members of the Public

The Finance & Customer Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Robin Perry, responded to a question from a member of the public, Mr. Bain, concerning the effect of rising interest rates on the Council's financial performance.

29/C Questions from Councillors

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Alan McClafferty, and the Environment & Health Portfolio Holder, Councillor Colin Dougan, responded to a question from Councillor Graham Tapper outlining the work being undertaken to address recent concerns about overflowing dog waste bins. Councillor Dougan indicated that he would provide a written update to all councillors once this work was further progressed.

In response to a question from Councillor Sashi Mylvaganam, the Leader referred to the work being undertaken in relation to the Council's finances to address the impact of the national economic situation.

The Leader received a question from Councillor Victoria Wheeler regarding an ongoing problem in her ward with a leak that had not been fixed by the water company. In response, he advised that he would speak to the Chairman of the External Partnerships Select Committee about reviewing this matter and he would write to the water company setting out the Council's concerns. The Leader also undertook to liaise with the Council's Corporate Enforcement team following concerns raised by Councillor Wheeler about the lack of action taken by a landowner to an ongoing unauthorised incursion on private land.

Mayor