



## **COUNCIL**

**8 April 2021**

To: The Mayor and Members of  
WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### **SUMMONS TO A MEETING**

You are hereby summoned to attend an ORDINARY MEETING of the COUNCIL to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking on THURSDAY, THE EIGHTH DAY OF APRIL 2021 AT 7.00 pm to transact the business specified in the agenda overleaf

The meeting will be held virtually and webcast publically through the Council's website in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020 and The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (S.I.2020 No. 392).

RAY MORGAN  
Chief Executive

Civic Offices,  
Woking

NOTE: Filming Council Meetings

Please note the meeting will be filmed and will be broadcast live and subsequently as an archive on the Council's website ([www.woking.gov.uk](http://www.woking.gov.uk)). The images and sound recording will also be used for training purposes within the Council. By joining the meeting remotely you are consenting to being filmed.



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# AGENDA

Prior to the commencement of business, Mr Steve Petch, Pastor of the Welcome Church, Woking will say prayers.

## 1. MINUTES.

To approve the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 11 February 2021, as published.

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

## 3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

## 4. URGENT BUSINESS.

To consider any business which the Chairman rules may be dealt with under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

## 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. (Pages 7 - 8)

- (i) To receive declarations of interest from Members and Officers in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.
- (ii) In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor A Azad declares a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which she is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that speaking and voting are permissible.
- (iii) In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor C S Kemp declares a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which he is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that speaking and voting are permissible.
- (iv) In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor D Harlow declares a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which she is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that speaking and voting are permissible.
- (v) In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor G S Cundy declares a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which he is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that speaking and voting are permissible.
- (vi) In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Julie Fisher, declares a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that Mrs Fisher may advise the Council on those items.
- (vii) In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, declares a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which he is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such

that Mr Bryant may advise the Council on those items.

- (viii) In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Finance, Leigh Clarke, declares a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that Mrs Clarke may advise the Council on those items.
- (ix) In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Housing, Louise Strongitharm, declares a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she is a Council-appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests are such that Mrs Strongitharm may advise the Council on those items.
- (x) In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Finance, Leigh Clarke, declares a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GolDev Woking Limited development. The interest arises from (i) her husband having a small shareholding in Woking Football Club and (ii) being a Council-appointed director of Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited. The interest is such that Mrs Clarke may advise the Council on those items.
- (xi) In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, declares a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GolDev Woking Limited development. The interest arises from (i) him being a member of the Cards Trust (the supporters' club for Woking Football Club), (ii) providing occasional unpaid assistance to Woking Football Club, e.g. acting as returning officer at the election of directors and (iii) being a Council-appointed director of Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited. The interest is such that Mr Bryant may advise the Council on those items.

## **6. QUESTIONS.**

To deal with written questions submitted by Members under Standing Order 8.1. Copies of the questions and of the draft replies (which are subject to amendment by the Leader of the Council) will be laid upon the table.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE, COMMITTEES AND TASK GROUPS WBC21-012. (Pages 9 - 28)**

To receive and consider recommendations from the Executive.

- 7a. Housing Topic Scrutiny Review.
- 7b. Members' Code of Conduct
- 7c. Delegated Authority in Respect of Taxi and Private Hire Licensing LIC21-003
- 7d. Corporate Plan EXE21-037
- 7e. Medium Term Financial Strategy EXE21-006
- 7f. Height and Scale of New Buildings across Woking EXE21-021
- 7g. Notice of Motion - Cllr I Johnson - York Road Project EXE21-028
- 7h. Notice of Motion - Cllr L Lyons - Paperless meetings EXE21-029
- 7i. Notice of Motion - Cllr L Lyons - Woking Station Pedestrian Underpass EXE21-030
- 7j. Notice of Motion - Cllr L Lyons - Provision of Affordable Homes Onsite EXE21-031
- 7k. Notice of Motion - Cllr L Lyons - Construction Site Noise Limits EXE21-032

8. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** WBC21-013. (Pages 29 - 50)
9. **ANNUAL REPORT BY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES** WBC21-014. (Pages 51 - 66)
10. **ANNUAL REPORT ON MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT** WBC21-015. (Pages 67 - 88)
11. **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS TO COUNCIL COMPANIES** WBC21-018. (Pages 89 - 96)
12. **APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR/OFFICER DIRECTORS TO COUNCIL COMPANIES** WBC21-017. (Pages 97 - 100)
13. **MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS** WBC21-016. (Pages 101 - 104)
14. **NOTICES OF MOTION.**

The following motion has been received in accordance with Standing Order 5.0.

Any further motions received before the deadline has passed for the receipt of motions will be published and a copy of the list will be tabled at the meeting.

Councillor Will Forster

“This Council notes that more people than normal have enjoyed spending time in Woking’s parks since the first national lockdown was ordered due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Council acknowledges that one of the Borough’s open spaces, Brookwood Cemetery, has been granted a Green Flag Award, whereas in neighbouring Guildford Borough, ten of their parks have Green Flag Awards. The Council notes that our parks could be better managed for the residents who use them, the environment and future of our Borough.

Accordingly, this Council resolves to ask Officers to investigate how to improve the Borough’s parks and open spaces so more would be eligible for a Green Flag Award and enable local people to enjoy their leisure time in better public spaces.”

15. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

The Mayor will move, and the Deputy Mayor will second:-

"That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 16 in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.”

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **PART II – PRESS AND PUBLIC EXCLUDED**

### **16. QUESTIONS**

To deal with any written questions submitted by Members under Standing Order 8.1 which may include reference to information which, if members of the press and public were present, would disclose to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.

AGENDA ENDS

Date Published - 29 March 2021

# Agenda Item 5

## Schedule Referred to in Declaration of Interests

### Council-appointed directorships

<b>Councillor A Azad</b>	
Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited	Thameswey Housing Limited
Thameswey Central Milton Keynes Limited	Thameswey Limited
Thameswey Developments Limited	Thameswey Maintenance Services Limited
Thameswey Energy Limited	Thameswey Solar Limited
Thameswey Guest Houses Limited	Thameswey Sustainable Communities Limited

<b>Councillor C S Kemp</b>	
Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited	Thameswey Housing Limited
Thameswey Guest Houses Limited	Thameswey Limited

<b>Councillor D Harlow</b>	
Thameswey Guest Houses Limited	Thameswey Housing Limited
Thameswey Limited	

<b>Councillor G S Cundy</b>	
Brookwood Cemetery Limited	Brookwood Park Limited
Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited	

<b>Julie Fisher, Director of Community Services</b>	
Victoria Square Woking Limited	

<b>Peter Bryant, Director of Legal and Democratic Services</b>	
Brookwood Cemetery Limited	Thameswey Energy Limited
Brookwood Park Limited	Thameswey Guest Houses Limited
Energy Centre for Sustainable Communities Limited	Thameswey Housing Limited
Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited	Thameswey Limited
Rutland Woking (Carthouse Lane) Limited (alternate for Ray Morgan)	Thameswey Maintenance Services Limited
Rutland (Woking) Limited (alternate for Ray Morgan)	Thameswey Solar Limited
Thameswey Central Milton Keynes Limited	Thameswey Sustainable Communities Limited
Thameswey Developments Limited	Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited

<b>Leigh Clarke, Director of Finance</b>
Kingfield Community Sports Centre Limited

<b>Louise Strongitharm, Director of Housing</b>	
Thamesway Developments Limited	Thamesway Housing Limited
Thamesway Guest Houses Limited	Thamesway Limited



COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE, COMMITTEES AND TASK GROUPS**

### **Executive Summary**

The Council is invited to consider the recommendations from the meetings of the Housing Task Group held on 2 March 2021, the Standards and Audit Committee held on 4 March 2021, the Licensing Committee held on 9 March 2021 and the Executive held on 25 March 2021. The recommendations of the meetings are outlined below.

### **HOUSING TASK GROUP – 2 MARCH 2021**

#### **7A. HOUSING TOPIC SCRUTINY REVIEW.**

At its meeting on 2 March 2021 the Housing Task Group considered a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the outcome of a scrutiny review of housing. The recommendations to arise are set out below. A copy of the report considered by the Housing Task Group is attached as an appendix to this report for information.

#### **RECOMMENDED to Council That;**

- (i) the locally set commuted sum formula be reviewed when the Affordable Housing SPD is next updated;**
- (ii) the Borough should set the example and seek to bring forward more of its own sites for affordable housing developments;**
- (iii) where a viability case results in fewer affordable homes being proposed, a S106 agreement in order to provide the option for the actual costs and values to be completed;**
- (iv) a town centre strategy be brought forward in consultation with residents on the nature of new build housing in this area to inform future policy;**
- (v) increased vigour and support be given to the return of empty homes into occupation; and**
- (vi) the Planning Committee has a session on the viability assessment process in their regular update training.**

STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 4 MARCH 2021

**7B. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, introduced the report on the Members' Code of Conduct and stated that the Local Government Association (LGA) had undertaken a consultation on a new Model Members' Code of Conduct that could be adopted by Councils, as part of the LGA's work on supporting the local government sector to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. All members of Woking Borough Council and neighbouring authorities had been given the opportunity to respond to the consultation and, following consideration of the responses, the LGA published its new Model Code of Conduct in December 2020. The Committee was requested to recommend to Council that the new Model be adopted from the start of the next Municipal year (20 May 2021).

The Chairman noted that breach of locally approved protocols under the existing code of Conduct would continue under the new Model, as set out in paragraph 2.9 of the report, and that the Confidentiality Protocol would continue to apply to Member complaints regarding another Member.

A change to the existing Code was that there was an option for Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests to be extended to include unpaid Council-appointed Directors, which the Council was recommended to adopt. Under section 33 of the Localism Act, the Monitoring Officer held authority to grant dispensations to Members who held a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and the intention was that the authority would be used solely for Councillors to participate in business affecting the companies of which they were an unpaid Council-appointed Director. It was noted that as the Councillor and Officer Directorships were unpaid, with only the Independent Directors receiving a small payment, any proposal to change that arrangement would require a decision by Full Council.

The dispensations were recorded in the Register of Members Interests, received by the Committee annually and available on the Council's website. There would also be a stand-alone Register of Dispensations available in hard copy form for inspection and also included as a Register on the website.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL That**

- (i) the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct appended to this report be adopted with effect from the start of the 2021/22 Municipal Year (20 May 2021);**
- (ii) Council notes the intention to grant dispensations to Members to participate in items where they have an interest arising from being appointed, by the Council, to the body concerned; and**
- (iii) Council resolves that compliance with Standards Protocols shall be deemed to be a requirement of the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct, as adopted by the Council.**

## Recommendations of the Executive, Committees and Task Groups

### LICENSING COMMITTEE – 9 MARCH 2021

#### **7C. DELEGATED AUTHORITY IN RESPECT OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING LIC21-003**

Joanne McIntosh introduced the report on Delegated Authority and advised that significant changes had been made to the officer recommendation since the report received at a previous meeting, taking into account the desire from Members to have a greater level of involvement in the decision making process through the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee.

The report proposed that the Scheme of Delegations be changed. Any proposed refusal of a new application would be referred to the Sub-Committee, which had previously been undertaken by officers. It had previously been agreed that any proposed action under the new Points Based System would be referred to the Sub-Committee. Authority would remain with the Legal Services Manager to approve or refuse renewal applications, as a decision would need to be made quickly as during the renewal process the taxi driver can continue to operate. No change was proposed to urgent revocations being carried out by the Legal Services Manager in consultation with the Chairman, in line with Department for Transport guidance, for example where notification of a serious crime had been received by Surrey Police. The proposal set out a balance between Delegated Authority and Member involvement and ensured that the Licensing Authority could continue to ensure the safety of the travelling public.

The option of a call-in of decisions had been considered cumbersome and unnecessary, with no similar process undertaken by neighbouring authorities, which either used Delegated Authority or referral to Sub-Committee. If the proposal was introduced, all Committee members would need to receive training which would be organised shortly. There would also be extra resource issues for the Licensing, Legal and Democratic Services teams, and so the impact would be monitored with a review undertaken in due course.

Also attached to the report was the petition received by Full Council on 11 February 2021 along with an extract from the minutes of the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the report and advised that applicants or taxi drivers could ask officers for advice on whether a specific vehicle would meet the Vehicle Specification Policy, prior to purchasing it.

Following a question by Councillor Leach, it was noted that if a renewal was refused the applicant would have the right to appeal to the Magistrate's Court. The Licensing Committee had previously approved a Criminal Convictions Policy.

Councillor Hussain welcomed the proposal and thanked officers for their work in bringing it before the Committee.

Following a question by Councillor Howard, it was noted that there was a fee for taxi drivers to submit an application and they would be able to informally ask officers beforehand whether their application would be likely to meet the criteria for acceptance, in light of issues such as medical grounds or a criminal record. The Licensing team also referred medical matters to a Council appointed GP for their opinion.

The Portfolio Holder for Licensing, Councillor Harlow, welcomed the report and noted the importance of giving the taxi drivers the opportunity to have their case considered by a Sub-Committee, along with the mandatory training for Committee Members. Councillor Harlow asked Members to bear in mind the potential extra costs of the proposal, which could require taxi licence fees to increase in the future.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL That**

- (i) **The Council's scheme of delegations be amended on page 115, Delegated Authority to the Legal Services Manager, to read as follows:-**

**Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Applications:**

- (1) Applications: To approve applications for licences for private hire operators, private hire drivers and taxi drivers:**
  - (2) New Applicant: To issue a "minded to" refuse letter to a new applicant in respect of an application for a private hire operator, private hire driver or a taxi drivers licence and refer the matter to the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee for determination as to whether or not the driver is "fit and proper" to hold a licence:**
  - (3) Renewals: To approve or refuse applications for renewal of licences by existing licence holders:**
  - (4) Penalty Points Scheme: To issue a formal notice to a licence holder that they have reached the requisite number of penalty points under the Penalty Points Scheme and refer the matter to a Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee for determination:**
  - (5) Revocation/Suspension of Licences: In consultation with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee (or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman) to suspend or revoke private hire operators' and drivers' and taxi drivers' licences in appropriate cases under Section 61 (2B) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976**
  - (6) Vehicles: To approve or refuse applications for private hire vehicles and taxis:**
- (ii) **All Members of the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee shall undertake mandatory training:**

**EXECUTIVE – 25 MARCH 2021**

**7D. CORPORATE PLAN EXE21-037**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Azad, introduced the Corporate Plan for 2021-22 and explained that the Plan provided an overview of the Council's strategic objectives for the coming year. Councillor Azad advised that the Plan encapsulated commitments made previously by the Council and brought them together into a single plan of action. The Executive noted that the development of a five year Corporate Strategy for 2022-27 would be guided by engagement with residents, businesses, partners and staff.

Following a comment on the promotional nature of the Corporate Plan, the Executive heard that it was usual practice for Council documents to be introduced by the responsible Council Member.

Following a question on upgrading outdated systems and practices referred to in the Plan, the Executive was informed that the Council had committed to invest in Microsoft 365 in 2021 which would improve remote access for staff when supporting residents in their own homes. The Council would also invest in a new Housing system to support its decision to bring Housing services in house.

Transport links were raised and it was commented that reference to the Borough's transport links could be enhanced in the Corporate Strategy.

Discussion ensued on the Council's financial position referred to in the Plan and it was noted that the position would be discussed in more detail under the Medium Term Financial Strategy item on the agenda. The Chief Executive reiterated that the Council had borrowed for strategic reasons and for the regeneration of the Borough, not for yield purposes.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That (i) the Corporate Plan, as attached to the report, be adopted;  
and**

**(ii) the work to develop a five year Corporate Strategy for 2022-2027 be supported.**

Reason: To enable the Council to clearly articulate its strategic objectives and focus of work within the Council and beyond.

**7E. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY EXE21-006**

Councillor Ashall, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Financial Planning and Policy, introduced the report which provided a forecast of the financial position of the Council for the four years to 31 March 2025 with the 2021-22 budget approved by the Council in February as a base. Councillor Ashall advised that the current environment remained uncertain due to the Covid-19 pandemic and highlighted the Council's shortfall of income during the current financial year, namely around car parking income, commercial rents and the level of support expected from Government. The Executive noted that the government's published roadmap provided some optimism going forward.

The Executive was advised that the Council had applied to the government for 'exceptional support' to fund Covid related income losses in 2020-21 and 2021-22. A decision on the Council's application was expected in mid to late May 2021.

## **Recommendations of the Executive, Committees and Task Groups**

The Executive welcomed the news that the Council had been awarded a Decarbonisation Grant of £3.1m from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to connect Export House and Midas House to the Poole Road Energy Centre. It was explained that a Council contribution towards the Export House connection costs was required as it was a more expensive building to decarbonise and it would not generate sufficient carbon savings to pay for the works required. It was highlighted that the works to both buildings would help positively towards the Council's Climate Change Strategy goals.

Discussion ensued on HG Wells and the plans in place for alternative conference facilities and alternative premises for community groups. The Executive was advised that the new hotel in the Victoria Square development would be used by the Council for civic functions. Regarding displaced community groups and users of HG Wells, the Executive was informed that Officers hoped to accommodate all groups. For example, an auditorium was available at the Welcome Church, and work was underway for a new performance space as part of the Victoria Square development which would be suitable for smaller groups. Officers would deal with groups on an individual basis to assess their requirements.

Following a question from Councillor Hughes regarding an estimation of the unanticipated costs in paragraph 9.7 of the report, Councillor Ashall agreed to provide Councillor Hughes with an answer outside of the meeting.

Following a question regarding Morris House, the Chief Executive provided an update on the reason for its original acquisition by the Council and the future plans for the building. The Executive heard that Victoria Square would use the space for some six months to accommodate some of its operatives, after which it was expected that a proposal would come forward for its future use.

The Executive thanked the Finance Director and her team for their hard work in compiling the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### **RECOMMENDED to Council**

- That (i) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report be approved;**
- (ii) the Council accepts the £3.148m Decarbonisation Grant from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), to connect Export House and Midas House to the Poole Road Energy Centre, and approves the Council contribution of £1.479m in the Investment Programme to be funded temporarily by borrowing and recovered through service charges; and**
- (iii) an allowance of up to £600k from the Economic Regeneration budget be allocated for a programme of works to the Council's assets to facilitate letting of vacant space, to be approved by the Director of Finance.**

Reason: The decision is sought to agree the framework for Officers to develop further proposals for consideration, in due course, by the Council to ensure the medium term financial stability of the Council.

**7F. HEIGHT AND SCALE OF NEW BUILDINGS ACROSS WOKING EXE21-021**

Following the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Lyons and supported by Council on 3 December 2020, the Executive received a report setting out the existing guidance on ensuring high quality design and the implications for introducing height restrictions on development within the town centre. A correction was highlighted in the first line of paragraph 2.1 of the report; the word 'undermined' should read 'underpinned'.

The Executive heard that Councillor Lyons had submitted the Motion in light of concerns over the number of planning applications received by the Council for large scale tower blocks and the changing character of the Town Centre. Officers advised that the Local Plan documents referred to in the report would remain in force until the next review of the Core Strategy scheduled to be undertaken in 2023. As proposed in the Corporate Plan 2021-22, residents would be engaged through the Big Conversation and this would inform the next Core Strategy review.

The Leader of the Council invited Councillor Lyons to provide Ernest Amoako, Planning Policy Manager, with potential sites in the Town Centre which Officers could explore.

The Deputy Chief Executive drew attention to the Council's obligation to properly plan the development of the Borough in excess of 15 years. The need to ensure that the policies in place were properly applied was stressed, as those policies had been through proper and due process. The Executive noted that a possible height limit on tall buildings could become a minimum target height for developers resulting in buildings of the same tallness being proposed.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

- That (i) the existing guidance on the design of development, including tall buildings in the town centre, as set out in Section 2 of the report, be noted;**
- (ii) the consequential impacts for introducing height limits on development in the town centre, as set out in Section 3 of the report, be noted; and**
- (iii) the current suite of Local Plan documents referred to in the report remain in force until the next review which is due in 2023 and which will be informed by the Big Conversation which is proposed in the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2022.**

Reason: To inform Members of the existing guidance on the design of development and the implication for setting height limit on development at the town centre.

**7G. NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR I JOHNSON - YORK ROAD PROJECT EXE21-028**

At its meeting on 11 February 2021, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor I Johnson

“That the Council, in relation to York Road Project

- a) appreciates the valuable work of the Project to support Woking’s homeless people through its hostel, move on services and day facilities,
- b) recognises the need of the Project to find permanent modern facilities fit for the challenges of the future and
- c) resolves to work with the Project and a developer, potentially as part of the Housing Infrastructure Fund, to provide such facilities in, or near to, the town centre.”

Councillor Johnson attended the meeting and spoke in support of the Motion.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That the Motion be supported.**

**7H NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR L LYONS - PAPERLESS MEETINGS EXE21-029**

At its meeting on 11 February 2021, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor L Lyons

“Following new practice as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, this Council has operated hugely successfully without the need to print papers and courier them to Members across the Borough.

- (i) As a permanent matter of policy, this Council will operate all public meetings and task group meetings without printed papers, instead distributing them to Members and relevant Officers by electronic digital means.
- (ii) This Council will work towards operating all functions, involving all members of staff and associated contractors, without the need for printed papers.
- (iii) Exceptions may be made for complex planning documents containing diagrams and images, or which may be presented on non-standard paper sizes.
- (iv) Due consideration and exceptions will be made for those Members and Officers with additional physical needs.
- (v) Appropriate training will be offered to Members and Officers to enable them to use electronic digital alternatives to printed papers effectively.”

Councillor Lyons attended the meeting and spoke in support of the Motion.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That the Motion be supported.**



**7I NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR L LYONS - WOKING STATION PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS EXE21-030**

At its meeting on 11 February 2021, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor L Lyons

“The pedestrian underpass underneath Woking Station has become dilapidated and is in a poor state of repair and decor. It has also become an eyesore in the town centre. At times, it can be unpleasant for pedestrians transiting between south Woking and the town centre.

- (i) This Council will take advantage of the significantly lower numbers of pedestrians using the underpass underneath Woking Station as a result of the current coronavirus restrictions, and arrange for its refurbishment at the earliest opportunity.
- (ii) This Council will seek to make such arrangements with other stakeholders as are necessary to achieve the refurbishments.”

Councillor Lyons attended the meeting and spoke in support of the Motion.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That the Motion be supported.**

**7J NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR L LYONS - PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOMES ONSITE EXE21-031**

At its meeting on 11 February 2021, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor L Lyons

“CS12 of the Council’s Core Strategy requires that new developments over 15 dwellings will provide at least 40 per cent affordable homes onsite, and that those brought forward by this Council will provide 50 per cent of affordable homes onsite.

- (i) This Council notes that some applicants have successfully avoided having to provide any or all of these affordable homes as a result of viability assessments which have concluded that such a development would not be economically viable, were they to do so.
- (ii) Irrespective of any viability assessment, this Council, along with any of this Council’s arms-length companies (including but not limited to Thamesway), will not have any involvement in a development - save for determining its planning application - unless at least 40 per cent of the homes provided onsite are affordable homes.”

Councillor Lyons attended the meeting and spoke in support of the Motion. Councillor Lyons commented that he would need to give further consideration to the suggested amendment to (ii) of the Motion set out in the Officer comment. The Executive was not minded to support the Motion because to do so would be counterproductive and would rule out the ability for the Director of Housing to secure grants from Homes England.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That the Motion be not supported.**

## Recommendations of the Executive, Committees and Task Groups

### 7K NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR L LYONS - CONSTRUCTION SITE NOISE LIMITS EXE21-032

At its meeting on 11 February 2021, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor L Lyons

“In accordance with the Control of Pollution Act (Noise) 1974, construction sites operating in Woking must currently limit site noise to the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturday and not at all on Sunday, with no noise permitted to be audible from the site boundary outside of those hours.

- (i) These times are to be confirmed as a matter of Council policy, and any review of, or amendments to, these times must be determined by the Council.
- (ii) Any permission to vary from these times may only be granted to an applicant with the permission of the Planning Committee.
- (iii) Any such permission by the Planning Committee will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and for a limited and specified period.
- (iv) Permission to vary these times on a single occasion, for a maximum period of one day, may be granted by relevant Officers under delegated powers. Subsequent applications, or applications for longer than one day, must be considered by the Planning Committee.
- (v) On all such instances of permission to vary from these times being granted, residents likely to be affected will be notified by post.
- (vi) Works deemed to be an emergency will continue to be exempt from these restrictions.”

Councillor Lyons attended the meeting and spoke in support of the Motion. Due to the level of confusion arising as a result of the matter being both a Planning and Environmental Health issue, the Executive was not minded to support the Motion.

**RECOMMENDED to Council**

**That the Motion be not supported.**

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Reporting Person:** Julie Fisher, Chief Executive with effect from 1 April 2021  
Email: julie.fisher@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3333

**Contact Person:** Frank Jeffrey, Democratic Services Manager  
Email: frank.jeffrey@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3012

## **Recommendations of the Executive, Committees and Task Groups**

**Portfolio Holders:** Councillor Ayesha Azad  
Email: [cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk)

Councillor Debbie Harlow  
Email: [cllrdebbie.harlow@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrdebbie.harlow@woking.gov.uk)

**Shadow Portfolio Holders:** Councillor Ann-Marie Barker  
Email: [cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk)

Councillor Ken Howard  
Email: [cllrken.howard@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrken.howard@woking.gov.uk)

**Date Published:** 29 March 2021

REPORT ENDS



## **HOUSING TOPIC SCRUTINY REVIEW**

### **Executive Summary**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) were asked to undertake a review of Housing as a topic by the Housing Task Group. Following consultation with all members of the Council on the agenda for the work programme for 2020/21 it was decided to make this the major topic for Review and Scrutiny over this municipal year for this Committee.

This review has been undertaken over three consecutive months in three sessions. This paper is a summing up of the findings from O&S and incorporates work conducted since on developer viability arguments for affordable housing. This paper is to be viewed in conjunction with the framework commenced by Housing Officers and is designed to support the new housing strategy.

The Committee are cognisant that they only covered a small section of this topic, what became evident was the issue of the lack of affordable housing was fundamental to the discussion. Next steps are for the recommendations which have come from this scrutiny topic to be considered by the Council for inclusion into the new Housing Strategy due to be published and adopted in June 2021 following public consultation.

### **Recommendations**

#### **RECOMMENDED to Council That;**

- (i) the locally set commuted sum formula be reviewed when the Affordable Housing SPD is next updated;**
- (ii) the Borough should set the example and seek to bring forward more of its own sites for affordable housing developments;**
- (iii) where a viability case results in fewer affordable homes being proposed, a S106 agreement in order to provide the option for the actual costs and values to be completed;**
- (iv) a town centre strategy be brought forward in consultation with residents on the nature of new build housing in this area to inform future policy;**
- (v) increased vigour and support be given to the return of empty homes into occupation; and**
- (vi) the Planning Committee has a session on the viability assessment process in their regular update training.**

**Background Papers:** Viability case study group notes and report.

**Reporting Person:** Cllr Deborah Hughes  
Email: [cllrdeborah.hughes@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrdeborah.hughes@woking.gov.uk)

**Contact Person:** Cllr Deborah Hughes

**Date Published:** 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to undertake a review of Housing as a topic by the Housing Task Group. Following this request, the topic was added to the 2020/2021 Work Programme and approved following consultation with all members of the Council. It was then decided to make this the major topic for Review and Scrutiny over this municipal year for the O&S Committee.
- 1.2. The O&S Committee has been assisted by the Housing department, in particular Mrs Louise Strongitharm (Director of Housing), Mr Jonathon Herbert (Strategic Housing and Development Manager), Mr Ernest Amoako (Planning Policy Manager) and Mr Thomas James (Planning Manager). In collaboration the topics for three sessions of the Committee over three consecutive months were determined.
- These were;
- Session 1. Affordable Housing Need
- Session 2. Challenges to addressing the affordable housing need.
- Session 3. Future Housing Strategy
- 1.2 Following robust discussions on the reasons why we are not meeting our basic targets for the provision of affordable homes in the Borough, the O&S Committee set up a small case study group to review several different real examples of use of the viability argument/ assessment which permits developers to adjust or remove the requirement for affordable homes. This sat over three sessions and produced a report which was used in the compilation of this report. Lead member was Cllr Whitehand, supported by Cllr Chrystie, Cllr Sanderson, Cllr Hussein and Cllr Bond.
- 1.3 A further member briefing on the viability argument was arranged particularly for members of the Planning Committee, but was open to all Council members.
- 1.4 It was originally hoped for this report to be presented to O&S in December, but was delayed due to the availability of the viability assessment surveyors to meet with the case study group.
- 1.6 The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees review is intended to support and inform an updated Housing Strategy, to supersede the last one adopted in 2011.

### 2. Links to Health and Well Being

- 2.1 The clearly identified link of the provision of safe, suitable homes for all residents to the Wider Determinants of Health is well documented.
- 2.2 The wider determinants of health are those aspects which impact on a person's health and well- being which are not necessarily healthcare related. This is well documented by Sir Michael Marmot in his two major publications on this topic, the first in 2010 'Health in All Policies' and the second a follow up in 2020 which showed a widening gap in health inequalities. The impact of housing is included in this.
- 2.3 The Health and Well Being task group, which sits under the Woking Joint Committee, has been working this year on engagement of all aspects of Council business in the integration of H&WB into wider policy.
- 2.4 The new Housing Strategy and the new Health and Well Being Strategy are being produced so that these complement each other in their delivery.

**3. Changes in Government legislation and impact on WBC**

- 3.1 Government White Paper; Planning for the Future (Aug.'20). Here the calculation of housing need for Woking is thought to be 348 dwelling per annum. The Government has decided not to use the approach promoted in the. 'Planning for the future consultation document' as a means to calculate housing need. At present under the 2014 household projections, which the Government requires Councils to use in calculating housing need, the housing need for the borough is 431 dwellings per year. The Core Strategy sets a housing requirement of 292 dwellings per year. This is what the Council is presently seeking to provide.
- 3.2 Government consultation paper - 'Changes to the current planning system' (released in August 2020) - indicated the Government's intention to increase the affordable housing threshold from 10 dwellings to 40 - 50 dwellings in order to stimulate the economy as a response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. An update on this implementation is awaited.
- 3.3 The Social Housing White Paper was published by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government on 17 November 2020. The white paper presents a charter setting out seven commitments that social housing residents should be able to expect from their landlord. The overarching themes are building and resident safety, and resident voice. It also aims to deliver the improvements in transparency and accountability promised in the 2018 green paper.

**4. Empty Homes;**

- 4.1 As at January 2021 there were 540 long term empty properties of which 107 have been empty for more than 24 months. Work to promote these being returned to occupied homes has been delayed by two factors. Initially the officers involved were diverted to deliver on the Councils new licensing scheme in Canalside and just as this was up and running, they were then diverted by the pandemic to other essential duties.
- 4.2 O&S has had a couple of presentations on empty homes in recent years and appreciates that this is a long term and time-consuming process. However, it must be considered that the impact of just a proportion of these being returned into the housing stock could make a significant impact to those searching, in particular for a family home.
- 4.3 Empty homes are often a target for anti-social behaviour and are a frequent cause for resident complaints.
- 4.4 A suggestion was made that Ward members be approached for any information on empty properties in their Wards in order to speed up the process of identification and thereby action can be taken to expedite work needed to address the issue.

**5. Affordable Homes;**

- 5.1 The primary area of concern which became increasingly apparent from all the sessions was the lack of provision of affordable homes. The WBC Core Strategy sets an overall target of 35% of all new homes to be affordable, this is not being met. The definition of affordable housing is defined by Annex 2 of the NPPF, and it includes affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership. The Core Strategy provides guidance on the tenure split of



affordable housing needed in the borough. The SHMA (2009) identifies that there is a need for 70% of new affordable dwellings to be in the rented tenure (social and affordable) and 30% at intermediate level (including shared ownership). It was noted that the price of land in the Borough often precludes these being included in a development. Socially rented housing which comes under this definition has also been challenged by the government's Right to Buy scheme, and the numbers of Social Housing in the Borough has fallen from 3410 in 2013 to 3361. In addition, 'Buy To Rent' schemes are not required to deliver as high a percentage of affordable housing.

- 5.2 The Council has used innovative methods to create additional homes via such schemes as Let's Rent, offering incentives to landlords to let their properties through the Council. The 'Earn your Deposit' scheme, which encourages tenants to become homeowners, is just having its first takers.
- 5.3 The Committee was informed that there is an acute need in the Borough for more affordable homes of all types, sizes and tenures. Specifically it was informed that the greatest need is for 1 bed units at 41%; then for 2 bed units at 31% and for 3 bed units at 22%. It was noted that this proportion was not the same in the private market where more family homes were needed (80% 2 bed and above). Also concern was raised that the developments coming through planning in recent months seemed to be predominantly for one bed and studio accommodation.
- 5.4 Concern was raised by the Committee at the number of successful challenges made by developers to the Borough's requirements for 40% affordable housing on developments of more than 10 units.
- 5.5 Questions were raised that as the viability arguments/ assessments were largely agreed, how would the Borough provide affordable homes in future? It was considered that the Borough should set the example and that in all Council led/ Council owned/ or where land is owned by WBC, but is to be developed by a third party and own developments that Core Strategy 12 should be fully adhered to.
- 5.6 102 dwellings per annum are required under our Affordable Housing Core Strategy Policy CS12 to provide 1737 by 2026. To date we have provided 581, so we are short by 1,156. The Committee was informed that there are a further 436 affordable homes planned to be delivered by 2023/24, still leaving us with a deficit on our needs.
- 5.7 The projected number in the pipeline to be provided is 436 units, which still leaves us short of our target by 720. There is also the issue of the mismatch of numbers of families and individuals who are on the housing register, as at January 2021 this stood at 1,108.
- 5.8 The challenge to many seeking to purchase or rent at affordable rates is that due to the high price of land, fewer affordable homes are viable. Even WBC new developments have not provided the 40% affordable in the past. The members briefing on this topic indicated that we are unlikely to get any affordable homes built within our town centre as it will not be viable to do so.
- 5.9 The commuted sums provided in lieu of affordable delivery have not always been forthcoming and the numbers of properties provided in this way falls short of what could normally be expected on site. Overage agreements also do not provide the percentage of affordable as per our policy. However, it is noted that there is an argument that any affordable is better than none.

- 5.9 Social housing; continued loss of this via the Right to Buy programme with 13 a year lost in 2012 compared to 6 a year to date in 2020-2021.
- 5.10 Questions were raised by the Committee and case Study Group on the Borough's acceptance of the viability self-assessments. One of the major companies who is employed by the Council to advise us on this was interviewed by the case study group in order to understand various real examples of this.

### **6.0 The Viability Argument**

- 6.1 The Committee found it challenging to understand how so few developments in recent times were providing the 40% affordable provision and felt that the process behind this needed to be understood and possibly challenged. Questions such as whether we need a stronger mechanism to encourage developers to provide affordable homes or do we as a Council need to review of the realistic number of affordables expected within a development?
- 6.2. A small original group of the O&S committee were given three planning application examples to test the system. Each real example had been selected as the viability assessment was different on each application.
- 6.3. Woking has a Core Strategy Policy which it adopted in 2012 which sets out its housing requirements. And within that the basis is set for percentage requirement of affordable housing, all of which is subject to viability.
- 6.4. Certain sites are deemed as high value, Town centres for example, but the higher the existing use value the less surplus so the incentive to reach maximum affordable units in this type of development will be reduced. Building costs rise as you go higher and individual buildings in town centres have high infrastructure costs. Therefore, the high rise developments within the town centre are unlikely to yield affordable homes.
- 6.5. The case study group learnt that the Viability assessment has been a feature of planning for the last 10 years, but as the land values have risen increasingly the viability argument for no affordable homes is successful.
- 6.7. The Case Study Group and the Members in the briefing challenged the surveyors who undertake the viability reviews as to whether the developers' self-assessments are inflated and what actions they can take on this. The presentation and the responses to searching questions indicated that the companies that WBC employs to undertake a review of these viability self-assessments is robust and that they do indeed challenge developers for more affordable housing units. It is the high land value and the calculations which are prescribed which preclude these from being included in many developments.
- 6.9. There remains the dilemma that if the Council does not permit high rise in the town centre then the green belt would be more challenged. Green Belt capacity and the Town Centre capacity were inexorably interlocked and WBC had a High Rise Strategy agreed for Town Centre. HIF conditions applied to the Town Centre and committed more High Rise.
- 6.10. Woking was amongst many LPA'S having difficulty in achieving its Core Strategy requirements for affordable housing and the trend did not show signs of improving.

- 6.11. Use of the green belt; Green Belt offered more prospect of achieving a higher number of affordables but public opinion was a significant factor against usage plus the balance with the health and well-being that the green belt affords.
- 6.12. The case study group and members were informed that developers frequently tried to overstate costs and all agreed that it seemed the balance had turned too far in favour of developers. Members were informed that the use of S106 was useful in this regard as a review of the actual costs and values could be utilised during and after the actual build. A reconsideration of the viability could then be done. This was being increasingly used, but was a useful adjunct and perhaps could be usefully employed here to protect against developers inflating their initial costs.
- 6.13 The Case Study Group and the Members in the briefing challenged the surveying company who undertake viability reviews on behalf of WBC as to whether the developer's self-assessments are inflated and what actions are taken on these calculations. Following the presentation, the responses to searching questions indicated that the companies that WBC employ to undertake reviews of these viability self-assessments is robust and that challenges to developers for more affordables are made and are sometimes successful.
- 6.14. The specific concerns and recommendations from that study group are;
- A) It was suggested that Planning Committee members receive training in understanding the viability argument process. (This has been conducted).
  - B) The three case studies all showed how difficult it is to demonstrate the viability of providing affordable housing on brownfield sites.
  - C) With brownfield sites especially in an area like Woking with higher land values it is very difficult to prove the viability of affordable housing especially with the provision of developer profit of up to 20%.
  - D) Clear that the higher storey buildings are proportionately more expensive to build and this is likely to offset the higher value for higher storey apartments.
  - E) Use of overage clauses which come in once 75% of units sold. But this is too late to extract an on-site contribution.
  - F) If the Council were to itself build on the brownfield sites potentially affordable could be realised as the 20% developers profit would not be relevant.
  - G) A balance between the numbers of affordables and the overall housing stock may not be feasible but needs addressing in the next Local Plan.

### **7.0 Future Housing Strategy**

- 7.1 This has been worked on by the Housing team over the same period as the O&S review was conducted. The team were able to present the emerging priorities in their last presentation to O&S for the next 3-5 years.

### **8. Conclusion.**

- 8.1 Please note that the Committee considered many other facets of housing need, but this paper has focussed on areas where recommendations were made.

REPORT ENDS



COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### Executive Summary

Each year, the Chairman of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee prepares a report outlining the activities undertaken by the Committee. This year, the Committee has reviewed a wide range of topics and has completed both scrutiny and pre-decision scrutiny of the work of the Executive and the Council as a whole. The three Task Groups of the Committee – the Economic Development, Finance and Housing Task Groups – have continued to monitor and review these three core areas of the Council's activities.

The Work Programme of the Committee is regularly reviewed and updated to take account of issues affecting the Borough at the time.

The Council is now invited to receive the report.

### Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

**RESOLVE That** the report be received.

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.
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**Background Papers:** None.

**Reporting Person:** Councillor D Hughes, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Email: [cllrdeborah.hughes@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrdeborah.hughes@woking.gov.uk)

**Contact Person:** Councillor D Hughes, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Email: [cllrdeborah.hughes@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrdeborah.hughes@woking.gov.uk)

**Date Published:** 29 March 2021



## **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is wide-ranging and includes a variety of areas for consideration that have been reviewed over the past year. These included areas such as the finance of major developments; internal scrutiny of Council processes; review of joint ventures and partnerships; contractual performance as well as various updates, such as progress on the Sheerwater development.
- 1.2 The past work of the Committee was challenged in November by the Peer Review, their full report was received in June 2020. It was suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needed to be more robust in its challenge and to be able to demonstrate clear actions and changes which have come from its discussions. This Committee have taken this criticism on board and this report attempts to demonstrate where actions and changes have been forthcoming.
- 1.3 The Committee at various points were reminded of the Committee's terms of reference - the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are responsible for examining all functions and responsibilities of the Council. The Committee would ensure that the Council delivers its key aims and objectives, by creating an open, transparent mechanism for Councillor's to shape, question, evaluate and challenge the Council policies, decisions and performance.
- 1.4 Due to the Covid 19 pandemic the committee remained unchanged and its meetings have all been virtual over the year. The usual update of training has not happened, however the Committee membership has been consistent for the majority of the period with only one change of the 9 member committee.

### **2.0 Summary of Work Undertaken**

- 2.1 Areas brought forward from the 2019/20 municipal Year;
  - Freedom leisure – A follow up from the scrutiny work conducted by this committee has not been conducted as the Leisure Centre has been closed for long periods this year. Therefore any repeat survey of residents on use and perceptions of the service would not have been fair or appropriate. This follow up will be taken forwards to the work programme of 2021/22 once the services have had chance to resume normal working.
  - A request was received from the Housing Task Group for this committee to look at the lack of affordable housing in the Borough. As this was deemed to be a major topic it was agreed that it would be the primary focus of the O&S for scrutiny in this year.
  - Safer Working Partnership and the Community Safety plan will come to the next municipal year plan, this again has been impacted due to the pandemic.
  - The outcome and report of the Woking Football Club and Associated Developments.
  - Follow up on the Council's Play area provision/ strategy and renovation framework, the updated refurbishment and renovation programme to come back to the Committee.
  - Follow up on the Joint Waste Solutions and the performance of Amey on the waste contract.
  - Follow up from the change in the children's centres and the formation of the family centres.
- 2.2 Every effort was made to ensure that the Committee was working with the forward plan for the Council to ensure forward scrutiny of decisions.

**3.0 Areas identified for Scrutiny**

**3.1 Woking Football Club and Associated Developments**

3.2 This was the major piece of scrutiny work conducted by a task and finish group from O&S, but the report and recommendations were delayed due to the cancellation of the March 2020 committee.

3.3 The rationale for the scrutiny by this committee are as follows; 'The proposed developments at both Kingfield/ Westfield and on the Egley Road are major projects which have been subject to many debates in the Council and in the Executive. They were also subject to a petition submitted by local residents to the Council. This Task Group seeks to assure the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (and therefore the Council and residents) that appropriate due process has been applied'.

3.4 The scrutiny was undertaken in the main by the task group in several ways. It interviewed key witnesses, both internal council officers and external stakeholders; it reviewed the contracts, development agreement; over 100 references relating to the project; it had minuted meetings and concluded with a report of its findings which was taken to the full O&S committee for agreement and consent to take through to Council.

3.5 The Task Group report found gross failings in the governance of the project by the Council.

3.6 The report initially had to be divided into two documents. The Part 1 document consisted of a summary of the findings of the task group and its initial 16 recommendations. The Part 2 of the report was the main body of the report and was kept confidential as it contained some commercially sensitive information. This report in redacted form was released for public scrutiny in November 2020. The O&S committee has asked for these redactions to be removed and this is still pending.

**3.7 Actions from this scrutiny; and outputs**

- The report in two parts. Discussion by O&S of the findings and recommendations to proceed to Council by O&S.
- Council in June accepted the paper and all of the recommendations which included the final recommendation for a further independent review into the processes and decisions of the council in respect to this development.
- The Independent review was conducted by Dr Gifty Edila in Nov/Dec 2020 and her report was published at Christmas. This report not only endorsed the task group report she went further, for example;
  1. Legal implications for proposals should be included; and the legal powers on which agreements have been reached be included in Council and Executive reports.
  2. All major projects should have a completed risk assessment, which should be supported by contingency plans for the mitigation of those risks.
  3. Legal Services should seek Lexcel accreditation form the Law Society of England and Wales.
  4. Recommendation for the Council to set up a resident panel to facilitate regular consultation with residents.



## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5. Part 2 confidential information in reports dealing with development projects should be limited to information that should not be in the public domain at that point in time and should not apply to the entire report.
  6. WBC to consider amending the Ostensible Authority arrangement.
  7. Where a Special Purpose Vehicle company is used to deliver a project a risk template should be produced particularly addressing viability and identifiable risks.
  8. On the purchase of land by the Borough, Dr Edila is clear that a valuation should be sought to assist councillors in making a prudent decision on the purchase.
  9. The Council should avoid appointing statutory officers, especially the Section 151 officers onto external companies or trust with whom the council has or is likely to have an association.
  10. External training for Officers and Councillors on the Nolan Principles.
  11. The O&S committee should have a reasonable budget and also be allocated a part time scrutiny officer to assist with our work.
- This independent report was brought to Special Council for discussion on 7<sup>th</sup> January. The Council agreed to accept the recommendations in full from the independent reviewer, and rejected an alternative report on the same submitted by the Chief Executive. She praised the work of the task group, stating that the group had 'performed expeditiously with admirable skill in reviewing the project. They identified important matters that needed attention'. She expressed surprise at the 'lack of a business case, project plan and risk template for a project of this size', and the lack of resource made available to support this committee in its function.
  - O&S conducted a review of all aspects in the report which suggested improvements in its function.
  - O&S have submitted suggestions for inclusion into the new scrutiny officer job description to the Chief Executive following the February meeting.
  - This item will need to come back for review post implementation of the recommendations in the next year.
  - Full disclosure of the whole of the task group report following a lifting of the redactions.

### 3.8 Housing Scrutiny

3.9 This was planned to be the major item for the committee for this municipal year. It was conducted over several meetings;

1. Housing; Current position
2. Housing; Delivery
3. Housing; Future Housing Strategy

3.10 The area which kept coming up in these meetings was the affordable housing provision and the use by developers, including the council of the viability argument. The Committee probed particularly around the issue of affordable housing provision, an area where the council is not meeting its annual targets. It sought to understand the issue, to investigate the perceptions around developers 'getting out of' providing affordables to the number required by the council

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

in the core strategy. It transpired that only 19% of affordable were implemented via a section 106. The need to consider alternative ways of providing affordable homes was discussed.

- 3.11 The use of the viability argument turned out to be a major item as this seemed to be the reason why so few affordable homes were being delivered particularly in the town centre as the high cost of land mean that the inclusion of affordable units are deemed not to be financially viable for developers. Concern was raised on what are the implications for future affordable housing on brownfield sites, particularly in the town centre. It was stated to the case study group that the higher the building the more proportionately expensive the building is to build and this will make it difficult to include affordable housing in future high rise developments!
- 3.12 In order to look at this in more detail a small case study group was set up. This looked at 3 different examples of where the viability argument had been used. This met 3 times and had input from WBC Planning Department, the Planning Policy Manager and one of the external companies that are commissioned by the Council to advise on the implementation and relevance of the viability assessments as provided by developers etc it provided a report which was incorporated into the summary scrutiny paper for consideration by council.
- 3.13 The poor provision of affordable units in the town centre is likely to be considered further in the awaited Town Centre Strategy.

### 3.14 Action and outputs:

Recommendations from this scrutiny were;

- (i) The locally set commuted sum formula to be reviewed when the Affordable Housing SPD is next updated,
- (ii) The Borough should set the example and seek to bring forward more of its own sites for affordable housing developments.
- (iii) Where a viability case results in fewer affordable homes being secured, a S106 agreement in order to provide the option for the actual costs and values to be validated.
- (iv) A town centre strategy to be brought forwards in consultation with residents on the nature of new build in this area to inform future policy.
- (v) Increased vigour and support to the return of empty homes into occupation.
- (vi) That the Planning Committee has a session in viability assessment process in their regular update training.

Outputs and actions were;

1. A briefing for members on the viability argument given by Kempton Carr Croft was provided for all councillors following this. This is to be a regular training in future for members of the Planning committee.
2. A report from the Case Study Group on the use of the viability argument by developers.
3. A report following this scrutiny topic was presented to O&S in February. This focussed on the areas where recommendation can support a forthcoming Housing Strategy, areas for discussion on planning policy and the link toe Health and Wellbeing.

The Committee determined that the Housing paper go back to the Housing Task Group prior to going to Council.

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### 3.15 Joint Waste Solutions; Performance update.

3.16 This was a follow up from the presentation and discussions last year where issues of an underlying dip in performance was not visible to members in the KPIs submitted in the Green Book.

3.17 The Covid 19 pandemic has had huge impact on this service over the past year, but the service has been successful in maintaining an effective refuse collection service, and indeed one is which there have been less residents' concerns identified.

3.18 Areas of concern identified last year have been addressed, namely the availability of vehicles due to a more proactive maintenance process and reciprocal agreements with other similar organisations. The issues of staffing also appears to have been improved.

3.19 The service has continued in its education and identification of areas of poor recycling around the Borough and has worked locally with residents, particularly those in flats with shared waste facilities. This has been shown to be effective and beneficial.

3.20 Areas where progress has not been made have been in the utilisation of new technologies to enable the increased recycling of waste that is not recycled at present.

3.21 Opportunities were identified for the inclusion of commercial waste from the town centre. This is apparently included within their contract but is not being utilised at present. Another opportunity area is the recycling of food waste from the councils own community centres.

### 3.22 Play Area Maintenance

3.23 This has naturally been adversely impacted over the pandemic with play areas and MUGA's closed for long periods. The team has continued to make its inspections and routine maintenance.

3.24 A play strategy and a planned framework for refurbishment of our 42 play areas which was anticipated last year has not been forthcoming. However some play areas have had new equipment and replacement of worn out features. The committee continue to be concerned at the 25 year cycle of refurbishment as being too long and not being responsive to changes in need and climate change.

3.25 The committee was pleased to see the plans for a complete planned refurbishment of a play areas in Loop Road which will take on the concerns of residents who petitioned for a disabled accessible and friendly play area. This is out for public consultation.

3.26 Concern was raised that due to the council's financial position the future funding for further improvements is unclear.

### 3.27 Joint Waste Solutions and Amey

3.28 The JWS team presented the data regarding performance of AMEY over the past year. Issues in performance were apparent at the end of last year and the committee sought assurance that these were being addressed. The key areas of concern were staff and vehicle capacity, both of which the members were informed are being expanded. Members discussed the present provision against their understanding of the initial contract.

### 3.29 Actions:

- Cllr Davis as Portfolio holder offered to review the KPIs which are presented on this performance in the green book. This is following comments that the deteriorating quarter 3 and 4 position were not picked up by the present indicators. It was suggested that a

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

review of these KPIs be undertaken so that in future any issues can be identified and picked up by members via this route.

- Enhanced communication and education from JWS for residents over their recycling offer.
- Update on expanded provisions for other areas of recycling as discussed to come back to the committee.

### 3.30 Community Infra Structure Levy. (CIL)

3.31 This item was scheduled for scrutiny on 23<sup>rd</sup> of March as this meeting was cancelled it was discussed in this year.

3.32 The concern was that the CIL monies available to communities was not being utilised and the suggestion was that the process was not clear and cumbersome.

3.33 We had a robust discussion on the issues with Ernest Amoako our Planning Strategy Manager and worked with him on suggestions for improving clarity and stimulating increased use of these funds in future.

3.34 At the time of the meeting there was £4,543,832 CIL monies available for use in the local communities.

Actions;

1. Paper written by O&S to the Woking Joint Committee where decisions on the application of CIL are addressed. This included recommendations for a more streamlined process including the setting up of a sub group to consider consent to CIL proposals on a more regular basis.
2. Chair of O&S spoke to this paper at the Joint Committee.
3. Virtually all the recommendations of O&S were accepted and have now been implemented, including a more streamlined flow chart of the process.

### 3.35 Serco, Performance review

3.36 This looked at the performance of Serco who are contracted to undertake planned work works in the Borough under environmental contracts of grounds and trees. They demonstrated a flexible approach over the pandemic. Stated that their staff capacity was adequate to meet the needs of the contract.

3.37 The committee asked questions and were assured via the responses.

3.38 Items not included in this report but on the March agenda are the follow up from the Family Centre review and a piece on Climate Change, asking the question of what progress the council has made on this since declaring a climate change emergency.

## 4.0 **For Overview;**

4.1 Celebrate Woking; this was deferred this year as all municipal events were cancelled due to the pandemic.

4.2 Complaints, consideration of trends. This saw a large increase of 17.5% in the number of complaints under the heading of 'other'. It was felt that the committee could not evaluate any

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

trends within this such large category which was responsible for 50% of the complaints. A request was made for a more defined breakdown if possible.

- 4.3 FOI requests. The report showed a drop in requests being submitted by 17%. The numbers of FOIs that breached the recommended time frame had increased to 11% from 3% the previous year. This was attributed to staff being diverted to cope with the challenges of the Covid pandemic. The numbers of FOI requests that were refused had dramatically reduced from 9% to only 2% in the period. Again it was difficult to evaluate any trends and a request that the report should at least mention those FOI's in summary form that had gone onto the Ombudsman should be included next year for completeness of the report.
- 4.4 Update on the progress of the Sheerwater project. Building has now commenced and the recreation facilities are due to be opened in the summer. 46% of the new homes in this development are due to be at affordable/social rents.
- 4.5 Surrey Police and Youth Support. Detective Inspector Dave Bentley presented and took questions from the committee. He covered 5 main points in the public health approach; 1. Population 2. Partnership 3. Prevention 4. Data and evidence bases 5. Cause of causes. It was explained that there is an emphasis on early intervention, and increase in partnership working with a wide range of stakeholders. The impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences was also highlighted. A preventative and proactive approach is being followed in addressing issues in this area.
- 4.6 Youth Service Provision. WBC Youth Development Manager, Sandie Bolger presented on this and highlighted the impact of Covid 19 on this. The impact on the mental health of young people and the inability for groups to meet has been damaging. The Youth team has continued to do as much as possible working remotely with young people and has worked with other stakeholders such as the ROC (Redeeming Our Communities) who also presented to O&S. The impact on youth employment was explored, and an expanded youth provision focussing on supporting 18-24 year olds back to employment is anticipated. An increased provision for the 'Friday night project' with an additional evening is also anticipated once the Leisure centre is able to reopen.
- 4.7 Anti-Social Behaviour. Detective Inspector Dave Bentley presented an update to the committee on incidents throughout the borough. He asked that residents should continue to report incidents. He announced that there was to be an uplift in Neighbourhood resources, and demonstrated the close links that the team have with the Community Safety Team at WBC. He emphasised the Public Health Approach to Policing Document, which highlights the need to identify and work on the root causes, such as poor mental health and deprivation. WBC have updated their ASB policy in line with recent legislation, with an updated guide to support residents providing a clear path for their concerns.
- 4.8 Outstanding actions
1. A list of empty homes by ward was agreed for sharing confidentially to ward councillors.
  2. The publication of the full part 2 WFC&AD task group report.
  3. Safer Working Partnership and the Community Safety
  4. Update of the Joint Waste Solutions KPIs in the Green Book
  5. Job Description for the new scrutiny officer to come back to committee for information.
  6. A section on the Victoria Square to be included in the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information, the 'green book' was agreed in the previous year, in the same

## **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

way as Sheerwater is reported. This has not been forthcoming. Details of the Victoria Square development are discussed regularly in the Victoria Square Oversight Group.

### **5.0 Financial Scrutiny and Overview**

5.1 This was conducted throughout the year via a review of the Green Book and presentation of the Mid-Year Treasury management report to the committee. More detailed review was conducted via the Finance task group.

### **6.0 Pre scrutiny**

#### 6.1 Corporate Peer Challenge

6.2 This was put on the agenda following the verbal feedback from the LGA team in November 2019 which indicated areas in which the O&S committee could improve.

6.3 The O&S committee had been concerned that this report was produced in December 2019 and not seen by all members until June. The CE apologised for the delay in the release of this document.

6.4 The Committee was asked by the Chief Executive (CE) to pre scrutinise a paper that he planned to present to the Executive on the LGA report following their Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2019.

6.5 This pre scrutiny was conducted at a few days' notice for submission to the Executive and was contributed to by the committee within the meeting and afterwards.

6.6 The O&S pre-scrutiny paper highlighted significant differences in the LGA recommendations and those of the CE to be presented to the Executive for decision. Both the O&S pre scrutiny paper and the CE paper were submitted to the Executive for discussion and decision.

6.7 It is of grave concern that the requested pre scrutiny paper was not presented, nor discussed in the Executive as is the statutory right of papers from this committee.

Actions.

1. The pre scrutiny paper was attached to the minutes of the next O&S for reference
2. A decision was made that no pre scrutiny request would be accepted at such short notice in future. Not only did this create a huge amount of work for O&S, but the Executive members also did not have chance to read the document.
3. Representations were submitted following the Executive committee citing the concern at how this item was managed, and the failure to permit the presentation or discussion on the O&S paper.
4. A request that the LGA team revisit and attend O&S one year post their original visit was declined by officers.

### **7.0 Membership**

7.1 The Constitution permits membership of 10 councillors. The membership this year has been 9: Councillor D Hughes (Chairman), Councillor M Whitehand (Vice-Chairman), Councillor J Bond, Councillor G Chrystie, Councillor S Hussain, Councillor R Mohammed, Councillor M Raja, Councillor C Rana and Councillor J Sanderson.

## **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 7.2 Following a change of Council Leader, Cllr Rana was moved and Cllr Bittleston joined the Committee in December.
- 7.3 Subjects for the agenda have arisen from the Chairman and Vice Chairman, from resident concern, plus from fellow members and Committee members. The attendance record for the Members of the Committee is set out at Appendix 1.
- 7.4 As last year an additional meeting was included from the original advance dates, this was held in December so the committee will have met formally 9 times this year.

### **8.0 Task Groups**

- 8.1 Scrutiny of the Council's activities often takes place in task groups. There are three standing task groups which come under the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- Economic Development Task Group (Chairman Councillor I Johnson)
  - Finance Task Group, (Chairman Councillor K Davis)
  - Housing Task Group and Economic Development Task Group (Councillor I Johnson)
- 8.2 The fourth was an ad hoc task and finish group, this completed its work in March 2020, but is included in this paper as its report and recommendations were not considered until this municipal year;
- Woking Football Club & Associated Developments Task Group (Chairman Councillor D Hughes)
- 8.3 Appendix 2 contains the makeup of the task groups, recently updated remits and summary reports on the task groups activities and discussions throughout the year that have been regularly reported to the Committee.
- 8.4 A Case Study group met three times to support the work of the O&S committee on the Housing Scrutiny topic. They looked specifically at the use of the viability argument in the delivery of affordable homes. This was led by Cllr Whitehand and produced a report which contributed to the housing scrutiny paper which summarised the committee's findings.
- 8.5 A group was also formed led by Cllr Sanderson following up on a request from the Executive for O&S to consider the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership and the role of WBC. This has reported back to the committee, and its conclusions are due to come to the July 2021 meeting.

### **9.0 Further Areas of Scrutiny**

- 9.1 The main subjects are shown in 2 above. In addition, the Committee monitors financial and other indicators in the "Green book" which is a monthly set of management information and also looks at the treasury mid-year review. Over the year it was discussed as to how effective the O&S committee meetings were in monitoring the financial performance. It was decided that the emphasis of this would be within the Finance Task Group. Whilst the O&S committee would focus on the monitoring and review of the non-financial performance.
- 9.2 Over the past year areas for follow up and future review have been noted on a forward plan as a suggestion for further deliberation by the committee (appendix 3). This includes area where a review of implementation and actions are required for assurance. It is also recommended that the next committee ensure that areas of scrutiny already conducted are followed up to ensure that implementation of recommendations are robust and fit for purpose, providing the openness and transparency that all expect.

## **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

9.3 It has not been possible to include all the topics referred for Overview and Scrutiny in the year due to pressure of time. However these are included in the suggested forward plan.

### **10 Acknowledgements**

10.1 The task group contributions are vital to the work of the Committee. The three standing task groups continue to provide review and scrutiny into topics which both come directly from Overview and Scrutiny and also from within their direct Terms of Reference. The review of the terms of reference of the three task groups was a piece of good housekeeping, ensuring that the value of these groups was being appropriately picked up in O&S. The question was raised as to whether the reporting to O&S was still relevant. Taking national guidance into account the three task groups now have a defined scrutiny function within their TOR and hence O&S is still the most relevant report to committee. The role of the task groups will be to take areas from O&S and look at them in more detail, reporting back, in a cycle of scrutiny and review.

10.2 Support from Officers to the Committee has been outstanding, particular thanks to Hanna Taylor, Gareth John and Joanne McIntosh.

10.3 The Committee has looked into a wide range of topics and has taken an in-depth approach to several of these. This has meant that guests have been asked to attend on several occasions to present and answer questions. The Committee are grateful to all of the guests who have been open and clear when responding to questions and providing information for scrutiny and information.

10.4 Thanks to the cross party support for this important Committee and contributions from all members. The committee is small and the additional work of the task groups, the case study group and the group who looked into the SLLP were all conducted by committee members. There have also been several examples of reports and work that continued beyond the committee where members were asked to contribute opinion and subject matter to reports.

10.5 Also to those portfolio holders who have generously attended to support and add insight into areas within their influence.

10.6 Finally, a particular thanks to Cllr Melanie Whitehand who ably supported the Chair and the committee as Vice Chair over this year.

### **11 Conclusions**

11.1 This Committee has made a huge contribution to the enhancement of governance of the Council in its processes and actions going forwards. It has not shied away from asking the difficult questions and investigating detail. The Committee has provided robust scrutiny and challenge in areas which will result in permanent change in Council processes particularly in project management, due diligence and providing a documented audit trail of decision making in the future.

REPORT ENDS



**Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2020/21**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Committee Members in Attendance</b>	
15 June 2020	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr G Chrystie Cllr S Hussain	Cllr R Mohammed Cllr M I Raja Cllr C Rana Cllr Sanderson
13 July 2020	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr G Chrystie Cllr S Hussain	Cllr R Mohammed Cllr C Rana Cllr Sanderson
14 September 2020	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr G Chrystie Cllr S Hussain	Cllr R Mohammed Cllr M I Raja Cllr C Rana Cllr Sanderson
19 October 2020	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr G Chrystie Cllr S Hussain	Cllr M I Raja Cllr C Rana Cllr Sanderson
23 November 2020	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr G Chrystie Cllr S Hussain	Cllr M I Raja Cllr C Rana Cllr Sanderson
21 December 2020	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr D Bittleston Cllr G Chrystie	Cllr S Hussain Cllr R Mohammed Cllr M I Raja Cllr Sanderson
25 January 2021	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr G Chrystie	Cllr S Hussain Cllr M I Raja Cllr Sanderson
22 February 2021	Cllr D Hughes (Ch) Cllr M Whitehand (V-Ch) Cllr J Bond Cllr D Bittleston Cllr G Chrystie	Cllr S Hussain Cllr R Mohammed Cllr M I Raja Cllr Sanderson



**Reports of the Task Groups**

**Housing Task Group**

Chairman – Cllr Ian Johnson

Purpose	Membership
<p>The Task Group covers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steer development, and monitor implementation, of strategies and policies to provide, in particular, affordable housing availability (based on housing needs), reduction of homelessness, improving housing conditions, management and maintenance of Council homes and linkages with social care provision.</li> <li>• Monitor performance and the delivery of key housing projects.</li> <li>• Any other topics are to be considered as suggested by the task group, officers or other council bodies. In addition, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may refer matters to the task group for further scrutiny and consideration and vice versa.</li> </ul> <p>This is a standing task group.</p>	<p>Councillor Tahir Aziz                      Councillor Mary Bridgeman                      Councillor Will Forster                      Councillor Debbie Harlow                      Councillor Ian Johnson                      Councillor Rashid Mohammed                      Councillor Melanie Whitehand</p>

Annual summary of the Housing Task Group:

Covid-19

Following the knock-on effects of Covid-19, the first meeting of the task group was cancelled. Once able to meet again the group received an update on the arrangements made and the activities undertaken by the Housing Service in light of the pandemic. It had been a challenging time for the service, with government directions on the provision of accommodation for rough sleepers coinciding with the closure of most hotels in the UK. Working with York Road Project the Council secured space at Woking Hotel and Travelodge, along with the conversion of the HG Wells centre with bedroom pods. At the time of the meeting there were 33 rough sleepers in these spaces.

Housing Policies / Strategy

The Housing policies were under review and the team had focused on the Housing Strategy which was last produced in 2011. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had undertaken a large piece of scrutiny on Housing in the 2020/21 municipal year. The group noted the paper relating to the comments by Overview and Scrutiny on the working draft of the Housing Strategy. Where appropriate housing related matters were being taken into account, such as dealing with empty homes as quickly as possible, while others, such as town centre strategy were more appropriate for consideration by the planning team. The planning department would have sight of all the recommendations. In due course the Housing Strategy would be going to Full Council for approval.

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### New Vision Homes

The annual report of New Vision Homes showed they had clearly gone to great lengths to support tenants despite changes in management and a high turnover of staff. Overall performance had been maintained, including estate inspections and property repairs. There had been calls to vulnerable tenants which had generated excellent feedback and tenant engagement continued. The sustainment of tenancies remains a key objective. NVH noted the significant collaborative and flexible work with WBC especially with the challenges faced in recent months.

NVH were working well in the final year of their contract while TSG (gas contractor) had struggled with staff illnesses and had only been able to carry out emergency repairs. An independent consultant had been engaged to review the 20+ contracts of NVH in anticipation of migration of the housing management service to WBC in 2022.

### Affordable Housing

The task group had consistently reviewed the progress on the provision of affordable housing throughout the year. Sheerwater and Broadoaks would start to come on stream in the coming year along with other schemes scheduled further into the future.

The task group was pleased to note the successful bid for funding under the government's Next Steps Accommodation programme and congratulated colleagues for their work.

### Selective Licensing

Covid-19 had impacted the inspection of properties within the Selective Licensing scheme. Nevertheless, a number of properties had been visited and improvements made. Questionnaires to tenants were being issued to better assess performance of the scheme.

### Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the task group were due for update. A draft was reviewed and it was agreed that subject to a few points it would be passed to CMG and then on to O/S in accordance with the usual procedure.

### Moving Forward

In the coming municipal year, the group will continue to review work on the Housing Strategy, monitor the tendering process for NVH contracts and begin to assess the performance and future of the Licensing Scheme. The task group recognised the enormous contribution by the housing team to support residents at these most difficult of times.

## **Economic Development Task Group**

Chairman – Cllr Ian Johnson

Purpose	Membership
To promote a thriving and growing local economy in Woking, while ensuring that residents, community groups and businesses feature in a high quality environment that continues to be an attractive and healthy place to live in, work in and visit.	Councillor Mohammad Ali Councillor Ayesha Azad Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Councillor John Bond Councillor Kevin Davis

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To review and monitor the current Economic Strategy of the Council.</li><li>• The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may refer matters to the task group for further scrutiny and consideration and vice versa.</li></ul>	Councillor Gary Elson Councillor Ian Johnson
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Annual summary of the Economic Development Task Group:

The Task Group first reviewed the Framework for Recovery document, the purpose of which was to identify the issues and challenges presented by Covid-19 to the Borough's commercial centres as lockdown is relaxed by Government and to prioritise objectives. The Framework had been drafted with the assistance of Simon Matthews Associates who had been involved in the preparation of the Council's Economic Development Strategy and had been submitted to the Executive.

The Framework identified the following main objectives:

1. Introduction of measures to create a safe environment and ensuring through marketing and PR that people are made aware
2. Restoration of consumer/customer foot-flow to the commercial centres as soon as possible
3. Encourage Borough-based employees to transition back to pre-Covid workplaces
4. Identification and support to the business community, with particular focus on SME's at risk
5. Engage and build capacity across key internal and external stakeholders
6. Planning for the stages of crisis through to recovery.

The physical state, involving cleanliness and signage of the town centre public realm, had been a key aspect of work by the Neighbourhood Services team and Serco, while Environmental Services had been advising businesses on safe restarts. The Finance and Business Rates departments have worked miracles in getting government grants to firms in a timely fashion.

By linking all the aspects of the aims of the different stages of the Framework through from Crisis to Recovery, Woking's investment in the town centre provides an opportunity to look beyond Covid-19 to how the town might need to adjust the offer in light of the enormous increase in online shopping and the impact on traditional high streets.

The staff have been extremely busy supporting business in difficult circumstances and as they recover from the immediate crisis, thought needs to be targeted towards the future, to maintain resilience and at the same time create a destination where people want to live and work.

The task group reviewed the updated version of the Framework for Recover again in October, prior to the latest restrictions. The Business Liaison team's activity was focused on the action plan to reopen the economy following lockdown, providing good communications with business and the public and managing the public realm to enable the local economy to open successfully and safely.

Messaging campaigns through "Love Local" as an extension to #WeAreWoking "we are open" to encourage people back into Woking, along with a re-enforcing health message were all designed to promote a post-lockdown Woking. This marketing material was used on social media and in public spaces, car parks, Woking Magazine and Woking News & Mail.

Help was provided to business via the Woking Works website, which gave guidance on reopening, with support from a number of local firms, one to one business support and promotion of services provided by Surrey Chambers and Woking Chamber of Commerce. A number of webinars were produced with guest presenter, including Cllr Kevin Davis as portfolio holder in one case, which were well attended. Other Council teams who were busy providing advice included Environmental Health who had advised 130 businesses, particularly in respect of social distancing such as at supermarkets.

## Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

These efforts were showing some signs of success as footfall slowly improved though judging by car park ticketing was still nearly 50% down in September over 2019. A great deal of effort had been put into creating a positive and safe environment throughout the town centre, including in privately controlled premises.

In these challenging times these firms have done Woking, and themselves, proud and deserve congratulations on their successes.

### The Finance Task Group

Chairman – Cllr Kevin Davis

Purpose	Membership
<p>The Task Group has been established as a Standing Task Group to review financial issues as identified either by itself or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Task Group will receive financial information, including reports to the Executive, to enable it to undertake effective scrutiny of the financial performance of the Council.</p> <p>The Task Group will receive reports on areas such as Treasury Management, Budget Process and Financial Forecast, Statement of Accounts, Investment Programme, Review of Fees and Charges, General Fund Budget, Update on Commercial Rents, Update on Irrecoverable Debt, and matters arising from the Green Book. Its Work Programme will be received at each Task Group meeting.</p>	<p>Councillor Simon Ashall Councillor Ayesha Azad Councillor Tahir Aziz Councillor John Bond Councillor Kevin Davis Councillor Deborah Hughes Councillor James Sanderson</p>

Annual summary of the Finance Task Group:

Throughout the year the task group had discussed and reviewed the following items:

The sale of Midas House sale to SCC had fallen through, but the group were pleased to note that existing tenants were still engaged and paying rents.

The auditors had taken a very long time to approve last years' accounts, and whilst the group had expressed its disappointment at the delay, it's pleased that progress is being made.

The Victoria Square financial modelling, which would be effected by Covid-19 and was suggested that a new model is developed and was followed by a member briefing and report to Council.

The Finance Task Group had considered the 2020/21 financial position, and the approach to budget setting for 2021/22. The financial impact in 2020/21 has been across a number of areas of the Council's budgets:

- Revenue expenditure in dealing with the response
- Some savings as activities have slowed down
- Income loss from fees and charges and commercial rents
- Government support grants
- Cost and timing of capital projects

## **Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Even with the known current situation it remained very difficult to forecast for rest of the year as position continues to change. The task group had shared a summary note on the Council's financial position due to the concerns raised from the Covid-19 pandemic. The note covered the following topics:

- Additional costs in the Housing and Leisure sectors, as well as equipment for employees to work from home and also provision of PPE.
- Savings as some activities have slowed down eg Celebrate Woking, the extent of this is currently being established to ensure cost variations are savings and not a rescheduling of costs.
- Income Loss – such as commercial rents and on/off street parking.
- Government Support provided.
- Financial Forecasting.
- Management Action - The Council has reviewed staffing costs and has taken a number of posts out of the establishment, therefore securing savings for 2020/21 as reported in the Green Book, and will be incorporated in the 2021/22 budget.





**Work Programme for 2021/22**

<b>Decision to be Taken</b>	<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Officer Comment</b>
<b>Safer Woking Partnership – Community Safety Plan.</b> The Police and Justice Act 2006 gave local authorities responsibility for considering crime and disorder matters. In 2010 the Committee agreed that the Safer Woking Partnership Plan would be brought forward annually for scrutiny.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	It was scheduled to be viewed at the meeting on 23 March 2020, which was cancelled due to the Covid outbreak.
<b>Investment Strategy.</b> To understand the Council’s position on funding for projects and schemes such as the Flood Alleviation Plan, due to Covid-19.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	This item will be carried over into the 2021/22 municipal year.
<b>Freedom Leisure.</b> For the Committee to receive an annual review and an update since the 2019/20 review.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	This item will be carried over into the 2021/22 municipal year.
<b>Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership.</b> For the Committee to receive an update on the planned projects and activates at the Lakeview Community Centre in June 2021.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	This item will be review at a meeting near in June 2021.

**Annual Items of the Committee**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Month Scheduled</b>	<b>Reporting Officer</b>
JWS Management Performance	January	Sarah Beck
Annual FOI report Annual Overview of Complaints Report	February	Hanna Taylor Jo McIntosh
Safer Working Partnership – Community Plan Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	March	Camilla Edmiston Chairman of the OS Cttee
Celebrate Woking Review and Forward Plan Treasury Management Mid-Year Review	November	Chris Norrington / Riette Thomas Leigh Clarke



COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## ANNUAL REPORT BY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

### Executive Summary

Each year, Woking Borough Council appoints elected Councillors to outside bodies as representatives for the Council. The appointments were reviewed by a Member Task Group in 2014 which presented a series of recommendations to the Executive for determination by Council. In June 2014, the Council adopted the recommendations which had the effect of reducing the overall number of appointments made. This was in line with the Council's objective of rationalising all positions held by Councillors by 2016, to take into account the change in the size of the Council from 36 Councillors to 30 Councillors.

The Council also adopted a formal reporting process for those Councillors appointed to Outside Bodies, with an annual report to be presented to Council. This paper sets out the reports provided by the Council's representatives for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

### Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

**RESOLVE That** the report be noted.

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.
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<b>Background Papers:</b>	None.
<b>Reporting Person:</b>	Julie Fisher, Chief Executive with effect from 1 April 2021. Email: julie.fisher@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3301
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Frank Jeffrey, Democratic Services Manager Email: frank.jeffrey@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3012
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor A Azad Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
<b>Shadow Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor A-M Barker Email: cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk
<b>Date Published:</b>	29 March 2021



## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2014 the Council reviewed its scheme of appointments to outside bodies, following a question from Councillor Cross at Council in December 2013. A Member Task Group was established to undertake the review.
- 1.2 A report by the Task Group was considered by the Executive on 1 May 2014 before being determined by Council at its meeting on 9 June 2014. The recommendations were supported by the Council and a series of changes were adopted.
- 1.3 Details of the appointments for 2020/21 are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

### 2.0 The Reports

- 2.1 In February 2021 the Members appointed to Outside Bodies were asked to complete a report on the activities of the Body to which they had been appointed. A template was provided to assist the Councillors. The following reports have been received:
  - Woking Access Group – Councillor Rob Leach (Appendix 2)
  - Ashford & St Peters – Councillor Deborah Hughes (Appendix 3)
  - Surrey Police and Crime Panel – Councillor Will Forster (Appendix 4)
  - Fair Oaks Airport Consultative Committee – Councillor Ken Howard (Appendix 5)
  - Woking Community Transport – Councillor Gary Elson and Councillor Deborah Hughes (Appendix 6)
- 2.2 In considering the reports, it should be noted that the comments have been made by the Councillors appointed to the Outside Bodies and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council.

### 3.0 Implications

#### Financial

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### Human Resource/Training and Development

- 3.2 There are no human resource or training/development implications arising from this report.

#### Community Safety

- 3.3 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

#### Risk Management

- 3.4 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

#### Sustainability

- 3.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

#### Equalities

- 3.6 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

### Safeguarding

3.7 There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

REPORT ENDS

**Appointments to Outside Bodies 2020/21**

<b>Ad Hoc Authorities and Committees</b>	
Ashford & St Peters Hospital NHS Trust	Councillor Deborah Hughes
Basingstoke Canal Jt Management Cttee	Councillor Kevin Davis Councillor Rob Leach
Corporate Trustee – Woking Palace	Councillor Amanda Boote
Countryside Partnership Board	Councillor Kevin Davis
Fairoaks Airport Consultative Committee	Councillor Ken Howard
Maybury Centre	Councillor Rashid Mohammed Councillor M Ilyas Raja
National Parking Adjudications Service Jt Cttee	Councillor Colin Kemp (Sub: Councillor David Bittleston)
Police and Crime Panel	Councillor Will Forster
Shopmobility	Councillor Will Forster
South East Employers	Councillor Colin Kemp
Sport Woking (formally Woking Sports Council)	Councillor Tahir Aziz Councillor Ian Johnson
Surrey County Playing Field Association	Councillor Colin Kemp
Sutton Green Village Hall Management Cttee	Councillor Simon Ashall Councillor Ayesha Azad
Woking Access Group	Councillor Rob Leach
Woking Community Transport	Councillor Gary Elson Councillor Deborah Hughes
Woking People of Faith Forum	Councillor Louise Morales
Woking Youth Council	Councillor Colin Kemp Councillor Rob Leach Councillor Ayesha Azad (Substitute)

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

<b>Ex-Officio Appointments</b>	
Allotments Consultation Group	Councillor Saj Hussain
Goldsworth Park Lake & Recreation Ground Users Group	Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Councillor Chitra Rana Councillor James Sanderson
Jt Cttee for Oversight of Delivery of Surrey Public Authority Services	Councillor Ayesha Azad
Lakeview Working Group	Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Councillor Chitra Rana Councillor James Sanderson
Ostensible Authority Standing Panel	Councillor Ayesha Azad Councillor Simon Ashall Councillor Colin Kemp
Surrey Climate Change Partnership Members Group	Councillor Kevin Davis
Surrey Waste Partnership	Councillor Kevin Davis
Surrey Waste Partnership – Joint Waste Collection Services Cttee	Councillor Kevin Davis
Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership	Councillor Gary Elson
Transport for Woking Board	Councillor Colin Kemp
Woking Chamber of Commerce	Councillor Kevin Davis
Woking Palace Consultative Panel	Councillor Gary Elson Councillor Will Forster Councillor Deborah Hughes Councillor Louise Morales



## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Appendix 2

<b>Outside Body:</b>	Woking Access Group
<b>Councillor(s):</b>	Rob Leach
<b>Date Completed:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
<b>Meetings Attended:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2020, 10 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 (June 2020 meeting cancelled)
<b>Description of Outside Body:</b>	Woking Access Forum is an organisation that supports Woking Borough Council, Surrey County Council, the NHS (Surrey Heartlands) and the voluntary sector to resolve any access issues. It works towards an inclusive, accessible environment, enabling disabled and non-disabled people to participate equally and lead the style of life which they choose.
<b>Update on Recent Activities</b>	<p>The Group received updates from Network Rail including the plans to provide a bus service for those with disability to get from one side of the Victoria Arch to the other during its planned 2year closure from October 2021. The need to improve the pedestrian underpass for vulnerable pedestrians was also discussed.</p> <p>Updates on Victoria Square development were given, highlighting provision for those with disability including a 'changing places' toilet.</p> <p>Plans to reconfigure Guildford Road were discussed with regard to access issues and the need to protect vulnerable pedestrians from reckless cycle users.</p> <p>The new laws on use of pavements and open spaces in the town centre were discussed including how this would protect the visually impaired and wheelchair users.</p> <p>New town centre disabled parking arrangements were explained.</p> <p>The new Eastwood Sports Centre in Sheerwater was discussed and the provision of 11 disabled parking bays was welcomed. The importance of having staff in the Centre who were trained in mental health issues was stressed.</p>
<b>Future Activities:</b>	Ongoing oversight of the town centre and Guildford Road developments with a view to ensuring ease of access and use by those with a disability.

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

<b>Matters of Note or Concern:</b>	<p>Downside disabled access at Brookwood station was an ongoing issue and it was thought that some form of joint funding may be necessary to remove the need for steps.</p> <p>There was concern that the management of the Sheerwater development was not engaging adequately with residents, some of whom were vulnerable and at risk from criminal trespassers on site.</p>
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REPORT ENDS

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Appendix 3

<b>Outside Body:</b>	Ashford St Peter's Hospital (ASPH) Governing Body
<b>Councillor(s):</b>	Cllr Deborah Hughes
<b>Date Completed:</b>	March 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2021
<b>Meetings Attended:</b>	<p>34 meetings will have been attended over the municipal year. These include the Council of Governors meetings; agenda setting; remuneration and appraisal committee; informal meetings with the Chair of the Trust and the CEO.</p> <p>However, the normal on site visits have not happened this year due to Covid pandemic.</p> <p>There are 25 members of the governing body; 14 are publically elected; 5 are staff; and 6 are from either Local Authorities or the HEIs.</p> <p>The role of the governing body is to provide seek assurance from the non- executive directors representing members of the Trust and the interests of the public.</p>
<b>Description of Outside Body:</b>	<p>ASPH is our secondary care health facility for North West Surrey. It sits in the same Integrated Care area as we are also a partner and have also signed up recently to the Alliance Contract, as have we.</p> <p>We usually have a presentation by the leads to the Councillors annually, but this has not happened this year.</p>
<b>Update on Recent Activities</b>	<p>Activities this year have been via Teams.</p> <p>Recently been appointed to the Remuneration and Appraisal Committee, this considers the pay and appraisals of the non-executive directors and the Chair of the Trust.</p> <p>It is fair to say that the role of Governor in the Trust has been more challenging over this year as we are not permitted to be on site.</p> <p>It should be noted that we have new public governors for Woking and Guildford. These are;</p> <p>Shirley Holmes; Michael Smith and Miranda Alcock. The first 2 of these live in Woking. (should we have ASPH to present in future it would be good to have these 3 new governors also invited to meet councillors)</p> <p>The relationship between ASPH and WBC has grown over this year, building on the work that Julie Meme and her team were doing with supporting discharge. It is fair to say that there is increased understanding of the role of the Borough and how we can support our health colleagues and residents. Woking has also supported the relocation of some of the Physiotherapy services to the Leisure Centre when the PT department was used as an extra</p>

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

	<p>ward facility, has probably hastened the move of clinical services into the community on a more permanent footing.</p> <p>There have been a significant number of new facilities opened throughout the year, including a new theatre at Ashford, and 2 modular theatres; 2 mobile endoscopy units and a modular CT unit at St Peters; US and Dexa scan facilities at Woking Community Hospital and an expanded ITU. Ashford continued to be operated as the non covid site enabling many clinical investigations, clinics and procedures to continue throughout the pandemic.</p> <p>The Health and Well Being Task Group has had close links with this work, and it had been helpful to be Chair of this TG over this year also as the two roles complement each other.</p>
<b>Future Activities:</b>	<p>The Trust has continued to work on its new IT platform in conjunction with the Royal Surrey which will provide enhanced access to patient records for key staff, Surrey Safe Care. It will provide new clinical pathways as well as electronic patient records.</p> <p>It has had a new multi storey car park built at the front of the hospital which is now open, and a staff wellbeing hub. In the building phase now is the new A&amp;E priority assessment unit which is being built on the old A&amp;E car park. This summer it is anticipated that this new unit will be open with 62 trolley or bed spaces, treatment rooms, offices and staff facilities across 2 floors.</p> <p>Surrey Safe Care due to go live later this year (late Nov) which will transform the patient experience and enhance clinician access to patient information.</p> <p>Councillors are encouraged to sign up to become members of the Trust.</p> <p>Opportunities for increased liaison and integration of pathways with the Borough.</p>
<b>Matters of Note or Concern:</b>	<p>As anticipated in the present climate the waiting lists for elective and some cancer treatments is in excess of ideal, but the trust is working hard on its plans to mitigate, but is still working under the increased wave 3 covid burden.</p> <p>Concern naturally also regarding the long term impact of the prolonged covid pandemic on the health and wellbeing of its staff.</p> <p>The ongoing work on the outpatient redesign provide opportunities for further integration with the Borough, especially in the provision of clinics locally. It is noted that the increased use of Ashford as an out- patient location is challenging for many Woking residents as transport links are poor.</p> <p>It should be highlighted that the leadership and the staff of ASPH have been amazing over this past year in very difficult circumstances and should be congratulated.</p>

REPORT ENDS

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Appendix 4

<b>Outside Body:</b>	Surrey Police and Crime Panel
<b>Councillor(s):</b>	Will Forster
<b>Date Completed:</b>	8th March 2021
<b>Meetings Attended:</b>	30th June, 15th September, 27th October, 24th November, 5th February and 22nd March - as well as private briefings and pre meetings.
<b>Description of Outside Body:</b>	The Surrey Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) regularly meets to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner (Commissioner or PCC). The Panel is made up of representatives from each of the 12 local authorities in Surrey, as well as two independent members. It is important to note that the Panel does not directly scrutinise the Police, just the Commissioner.
<b>Update on Recent Activities</b>	<p><b>Budget and Council Tax</b></p> <p>Unsurprisingly, the most controversial and important matter discussed at the Panel in the last year was the budget and Council Tax rise. Following a public consultation and lengthy debate at the Panel, the PCC decided to increase the Police's share of Council Tax by 5.54%.</p> <p>However, this rise is despite the fact that both the public and panel rejected the rise. The majority of the Panel voted to reject the proposed rise, but as two thirds of the Panel did not vote against the precept increase, there were insufficient votes to veto the rise. As Woking's representative, I was one of the votes against the 5.54% increase</p> <p>As well as the Panel not liking the Council Tax rise, the public did not support it either. The Commissioner's own budget consultation found that 51% of respondents to his consultation had also disagreed with his proposal too.</p> <p>The PCC and Police have committed to using the extra funding to invest in more officers, victim support, rural crime and road safety.</p> <p><b>Coronavirus</b></p> <p>The Panel has received regular briefings on how the PCC and Police are implementing covid restrictions and coping with the pandemic.</p> <p>The Panel was particularly concerned that the 101 service was being overwhelmed during the pandemic, as around 30 to 40% of non-emergency calls to Surrey Police went unanswered at one point.</p>

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

	<p>In August alone nearly 10,000 callers – representing 32% of total 101 calls – gave up in the face of a 4 minute average waiting time, while nearly 1,000 callers had to wait more than 20 minutes to get through. August saw an increase in demand for both emergency (999) and non-emergency calls (101).</p> <p>Justice System</p> <p>Both the Panel and PCC are concerned about the current delays in the criminal justice system. At the end of 2020, the PCC agreed to my request to investigate reopening the Woking Magistrates' Court to help cope with this backlog.</p> <p>Surrey's PCC is now working with the Ministry of Justice, the HM Courts &amp; Tribunals Service and others in the justice system on tackling the backlog in the courts. Capacity at Guildford Crown Court has recently been expanded by installing a portacabin and rebuilding one of its courtrooms to enable 5 court cases to take place there.</p> <p>As more needs to be done, the authorities are looking at reopening the option of Woking Magistrates' Court. The court closed ten years ago and is now used as a Coroner's Court, but it could clearly be used for criminal cases as well.</p>
<b>Future Activities:</b>	<p>The Panel will shortly be reviewing the Police and Crime Panel, Rural Crime Strategy, Annual Police Complaints Review, a paper on recruitment and workforce planning, as well as receive updates from the Victim and Witness Welfare Care Unit.</p> <p>Separately, ensuring Surrey's first transit site in Tandridge is delivered.</p>
<b>Matters of Note or Concern:</b>	<p>The PCC may change due to the election on 6th May 2021.</p>

## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Appendix 5

<b>Outside Body:</b>	Fairoaks Airport Consultative Committee
<b>Councillor(s):</b>	Ken Howard
<b>Date Completed:</b>	17/03/2021
<b>Meetings Attended:</b>	4 Zoom meetings since May 2019
<b>Description of Outside Body:</b>	A committee comprised of airport management and local stakeholders for the examination of any factors that may affect the operation of the airport, airport activities that may affect the local or wider community and received complaints.
<b>Update on Recent Activities</b>	<p>There have been few complaints. Those that have been received have concerned persistent noise and low overflying. All complaints have been answered and investigated where necessary.</p> <p>There is still some unease regarding aircraft safety and the height of Woking's town centre development.</p> <p>Planning permissions for the proposed "Garden Village" are not being pursued at present.</p>
<b>Future Activities:</b>	Now that the threat of closure due to the "Garden Village" has abated it is back to business as usual.
<b>Matters of Note or Concern:</b>	Woking has not still not appointed a deputy representative.

REPORT ENDS





## Annual Report by Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

Appendix 6

<b>Outside Body:</b>	Woking Community Transport
<b>Councillor(s):</b>	Cllr Gary Elson and Cllr Deborah Hughes
<b>Date Completed:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
<b>Meetings Attended:</b>	Quarterly Board Meetings and AGM
<b>Description of Outside Body:</b>	Woking Community Transport or Bustler is available to anyone living in the borough that cannot use other transport because of mobility difficulties. The Bustler buses provide a door to door transport service to both younger and older people whether their mobility difficulty is as a result of permanent or temporary disability, age, accident or illness. As well as providing transport for shopping trips and to visit relatives, Bustler also provides transport to Woking's Community Centres Moorcroft, St. Mary's, The Vyne and Brockhill.
<b>Update on Recent Activities</b>	Despite the lack of customers due to Covid restrictions, Dial-a-ride has been used to help members attend hospital, dental, vaccine and flu appointments during the lockdown period. The town centre buggy and an electric minibus both provided transport from the car park to the vaccination centre. The vehicles have also been used to deliver emergency food boxes to those in need and to transport members to and from the Spelthorne area to the Staines Health Centre. WCT was also asked to provide a vehicle and crew to assist St Peter's hospital with surge transport over a six week winter period.
<b>Future Activities:</b>	WCT has moved in to temporary premises (Red House) in Brookwood due to the continuing issues with parking at Moorcroft during refurbishment of the centre, this means that the buses now need to be parked in 3 different locations due to the lack of single site availability. It is hoped the whole operation will move to a permanent new site in Boundary Road in the future, a planning application has been submitted. WCT is actively pursuing its ambition with SCC to move to all electric vehicles. WCT continues to provide essential travel and other services to the community.
<b>Matters of Note or Concern:</b>	No matters of note or concern have been observed, there is much evidence to support both prudent financial direction and effective organisational governance.



COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## ANNUAL REPORT ON MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

### Executive Summary

Each year the Council puts in place an extensive programme to support the learning and development of Elected Members. This report seeks to give a comprehensive picture of the activities of the past year, the impacts from Covid-19, as well as looking forward to the coming Municipal Year.

In addition, the Policy for Member learning and development is reviewed annually by the Lead Members responsible for promoting learning and development amongst Councillors, and is now before the Council for approval.

### Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

#### RESOLVE That

- (i) the Elected Member learning and development activities of 2020-21 be noted; and
- (ii) the Policy for Elected Member Learning and Development, as set out in Appendix 2 to this report, be noted.

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above.
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<b>Background Papers:</b>	None.
<b>Reporting Person:</b>	Councillor C Kemp, Lead Member for Elected Member Training and Development E Mail: <a href="mailto:cllrcolin.kemp@woking.gov.uk">cllrcolin.kemp@woking.gov.uk</a>
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Hanna Taylor, Democratic Services Officer Email: <a href="mailto:hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk">hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk</a> , Extn: 3056
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor A Azad E Mail: <a href="mailto:cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk">cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk</a>
<b>Shadow Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor A-M Barker Email: <a href="mailto:cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk">cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date Published:</b>	29 March 2021



## **Annual Report on Member Learning and Development**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Over the past year the Council has taken a different approach to members training and development, the events and briefings have been held virtually due to the Covid-19 restrictions and social distancing measures. The Borough elections scheduled for May 2020 were postponed to 2021 and as a result no new Councillors were elected and annual training sessions, such as inductions and Committee training were not undertaken, recognising that Councillors had received the training in the previous year.
- 1.2 This report seeks to bring together all the different elements in a comprehensive review of the past year, with a view to informing the programme for the coming year.

### **2.0 The Lead Members**

- 2.1 In 2015 the Council's Selection Panel proposed that the SEE Charter for Elected Member Development Group should be disbanded and in its place Lead Members were to be appointed to take forward the aims and objectives of Member learning and development.
- 2.2 A Lead Member was appointed from each of the Political Groups, to ensure cross-party involvement. The Lead Members from 2019/20 continued their responsibilities for 2020/21 and are Councillor Kemp, Councillor Leach, Councillor Raja and Councillor Bond. The same protocol was adopted for Councillor Kemp as Lead Member for Woking Borough Council on Elected Member learning and development.
- 2.3 A protocol for the Lead Member was drawn up to set out the roles and responsibilities of those Members appointed to the position. A copy of the protocol is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.4 The four Lead Members have been consulted in the drafting of this report.

### **3.0 The Council's Learning and Development Policy**

- 3.1 The Council's Learning and Development Policy for elected Members was comprehensively reviewed in 2015 by the Member Development Panel, before being agreed at Council. At the time, it was agreed that the Policy would be presented to Council annually in order to ensure that it remains relevant and continues to underpin the Council's approach to Member learning and development.
- 3.2 In their discussions on the policy, the Member Development Group highlighted the need to raise and maintain awareness of the policy. Towards this end, the policy has been integrated in induction sessions for new Councillors and forms part of the new Members' pack.
- 3.3 The Lead Members for Member Learning and Development have been given the opportunity to consider whether any substantial changes are needed to the Policy. A copy of the updated Policy is attached at Appendix 2 to this report; no substantial changes are proposed.

### **4.0 The Charter for Member Learning and Development**

- 4.1 The Charter provides a robust, structured framework designed to help authorities enhance and hone member development and is overseen by South East Employers (SEE), one of the nine regional employers' organisations which represent the interests of local authorities and public sector bodies in England. As the regional employers' organisation for the South East, SEE is independent and not-for-profit.
- 4.2 The Charter recognises that the Authority is committed to Member development. Charter status adds to the positive image and the reputation of the Authority, providing an outward statement of the value the Council places in its elected Members. The Charter provides the

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

quality assurance to the local community that Members have the skills and expertise required of the role of Elected Member.

- 4.3 The Charter demonstrates that the Council:
- is fully committed to developing Elected Members in order to achieve the Council's aims and objectives;
  - has adopted a member-led strategic approach to Elected Member development;
  - has a member learning and development plan in place that clearly identifies the difference development activities will make;
  - sees that learning and development is effective in building capacity; and
  - addresses wider development matters to support Councillors.
- 4.4 The Council first achieved Charter status in January 2008. Every three years the Council needs to confirm that it is committed to re-accreditation and in 2011 the Council successfully sought the Charter for a further three years. Due to exceptional circumstances, in particular the need for the Council to concentrate its resources on the Borough Boundary Review, the 2014 assessment was postponed to 2015. The 2015 assessment was again successful and the Council retained the recognition for a further three years.
- 4.5 In November 2018 the Council, in consultation with the Lead Members, prepared a detailed submission, including a lengthy reference library of documents, to South East Employers. An Assessment Team on behalf of South East Employers visited Woking and interviewed a range of Members and Officers to gain a comprehensive view of the work undertaken by the Council. The assessment was very successful and at Council on 6 February 2019 the Chairman of South East Employers, Rory Love OBE, formally presented the Mayor with the Charter certificate.
- 4.6 The Council now holds the Charter for two years, with a further detailed assessment to be undertaken later in 2021/early 2022 if the Council is to achieve reaccreditation. The mid-term assessment with South East Employers that was scheduled for 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19 and the focus would be on the full assessment later in the year.
- 4.7 As part of the Charter Mark assessment, feedback was received from South East Employers on the Council's performance. The Assessors noted Woking Borough Council's strengths which included excellent feedback from Councillors on the Democratic Services Team, the highly valued new Councillor Induction Programme, Mandatory Member Development and having the Lead Member Role in place across the four Political Groups.
- 4.8 The Assessors identified future priorities for the Council and encouraged the Authority to consider seeking the Charter Plus Mark. The Assessment had highlighted areas for improvement, including increasing Member engagement, joining together the Leaders one to one meetings with Member Development Corporate Development Programme and the suggestion of webcasting training events with a view to making the recordings available to those Councillors who could not attend the session.

### 5.0 Member Learning and Development Programme 2020/21

- 5.1 Each year a programme of training events, briefings and engagement sessions is arranged for Borough Councillors and typically involves Council Officers, external trainers and other agencies and bodies, such as Surrey Police, NHS Surrey and Surrey County Council. However resources had been redirected during the pandemic and therefore only essential briefings and training sessions were held. As the 2020 Election was cancelled and no new Councillors were elected, all members had already received the correct training for their roles and responsibilities from the previous year. Members adapted, quickly and impressively, to

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

the paperless approach to working and training sessions were provided virtually via Zoom. This section summarises the events held over the past Municipal Year.

- 5.2 The majority of these events were led by Council Officers, and were thus free of cost to the Council. Outside trainers were used for special events on two occasions (marked with asterisks on this list). Funds are also kept in reserve for events such as conferences, seminars and longer training courses Councillors may wish to attend.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Member Briefing: Land at Goldsworth Road	2 June 2020
Member Briefing: McLaren – Property & Financial background	22 July 2020
Member Briefing: McLaren Proposals	27 July 2020
Member Briefing: McLaren - Report to Council	29 July 2020
Member Briefing: Wellbeing Strategy briefing and discussion	16 September 2020
Could You be a Councillor? Event	23 September 2020
Member Briefing: Land at Goldsworth Road	18 November 2020
ACM: Media training for newly elected Leader*	December 2020
OSC Workshop: Viability in Planning Assessments*	21 January 2021
Member Briefing: Victoria Square	21 January 2021
Member Briefing: Viability Assessments in Planning Applications	1 February 2021
Member Briefing: Victoria Square - Report to Council	10 February 2021

### Annual Budget

- 5.3 The expenditure on Member Development in the year 2020/21 to-date is summarised below. The annual budget is £7,500.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Cost (excluding VAT)</b>
ACM: Media training for newly elected Leader	£799
Could you be a Cllr? Event (marketing materials)	£120
OSC Workshop: Viability Assessments in Planning Applications	£1,185
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>£2,104</b>

### Leadership Development

- 5.4 In 2017/18 the Council approached Korn Ferry, a company specialising in leadership and management development training, to draw up a programme aimed at the Senior Officers of Woking Borough Council. The programme was extended in 2018 to include the members of the Executive. The objective of the Member programme is to achieve a greater level of strategic thinking and cohesion across the Members of the Executive. The work will equip the Councillors (and Senior Managers) to think about, and plan for, future challenges, including succession planning. It was anticipated that the training would be made available for opposition members in the near future.

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

5.5 The programme includes a personality questionnaire to create individual profiles, feedback sessions three development sessions, looking at the different management techniques and styles that will assist the Councillors in their duties.

5.6 In view of the one-off cost of the training programme, the programme was reported in the Green Book as follows:

*“The Council is currently working with an external organisation to undertake a comprehensive learning and development programme for Senior Managers of the Council and the Members of the Executive. The aim is to build on the capability and resilience of the management of the Borough Council to ensure that it has the ability to cope with the challenges and changes for local government up to 2021/22. It was anticipated that this one-off project would create a significant stretch for the Council’s training budgets; however it was felt that the budgets should not be inflated unnecessarily. The cost of the training programme for Senior Managers and the Members of the Executive has therefore led to an overspend in the current year in the Member learning and Development budget and Staff training budget. The Council continues to support all officers with learning opportunities to ensure our knowledge and skill levels are fit for purpose.”*

### 6.0 Member Learning and Development Programme 2021-22

6.1 The programme for the coming Municipal Year is being developed and currently includes the following:

Event	Date
Induction by CMG (Mandatory)	12 May 2021
Induction by Democratic Services	13 May 2021
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – Computer based training (Newly Elected Cllrs).	May 2021
Safeguarding (Mandatory)	(E-learning) May 2021
Scrutiny (Mandatory)	26 May 2021
Planning (Mandatory)	25 May 2021
Code of Conduct (Mandatory)	TBC
IPad and Mod Gov Training	June 2021
Health and Safety (Mandatory)	1 June 2021
Licensing Training (Mandatory)	15 June 2021
Diversity and Equalities Training (Mandatory)	24 June 2021
Tree Strategy	30 June 2021
Member Briefing: ASB & Community Triggers	14 July 2021
Finance Briefing (Mandatory)	TBC
Could You Be a Councillor? Event	TBC

6.2 During the year itself, additional in-house briefings and training events will be arranged. These will include briefing sessions involving partners (for example Police, Thamesway, Surrey County Council departments, the Lightbox, etc). As in past years, briefing sessions on current issues will be arranged as necessary.

6.3 There will be a number of training sessions on core skills offered during the year.

6.4 Opportunities for training by outside organisations (conferences and seminars etc) will also be offered to Members regularly, usually via Group Leaders.



## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

6.5 In the meantime, all Members of the Council are encouraged to submit suggestions for future training or briefing opportunities which could help them in their roles. Officers will be proactive in seeking these suggestions, communicating regularly with Members.

### 7.0 Mandatory Training

7.1 At its meeting in October 2017, the Council resolved to introduce a programme of mandatory training for Elected Members be introduced as part of the Council's Learning and Development Programme for Councillors from May 2018. The training for each committee was mandatory for those members sitting on it however other members were able to attend the training if it were of interest to them.

7.2 Topics included in the programme are:

- Code of Conduct
- Diversity and Equalities
- Finance Training
- Health and Safety
- Induction Training
- Licensing Training (for members of the Licensing Committee)
- Planning (for members of the Planning Committee)
- Safeguarding
- Scrutiny (for members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

7.3 Group Leaders will be encouraged to monitor the attendance of their Members and if necessary review their membership of Committees if they have not attended the relevant mandatory training. Details of attendance at events over the past year are set out in Section 9.0 of this report.

### 8.0 Online Training

The Council had previously agreed that, where possible, training would be provided online (i.e. computer based training) enabling Members to undertake the training at a time most convenient to them. In May 2018, all Members of the Council were asked to complete an online training module on the General Data Protection Regulation.

8.1 The online training was provided through the Local Government Association which operates a series of modules aimed at Councillors, including the following list. Officers will continue to explore the potential of online training.

Community engagement and leadership	Considers the important role of a councillor as a community leader and advocate for their local area.
Councillor induction	Provides a useful introduction to the increasingly diverse and complex role of being a local councillor.
The Effective Ward Councillor	Looks at the key skills of being an effective Councillor including time management, prioritisation of tasks and the importance of effective communication.

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

An Introduction to Housing	This course will enable Councillors to understand their role in how housing is managed and financed in the public sector.
Licensing and regulation	Looks at why licensing and regulation is necessary, what regulatory services are their role and function and the role of the Councillor in licensing and regulation.
Scrutiny for Councillors	Aimed at councillors who sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of a Council, involved in scrutiny work or wish to learn more about the overview and scrutiny function of a Council.
Planning	An introduction to the planning process and explains the councillor's role in the planning system.
GDPR	Training for Councillors on the General Data Protection Regulation.

8.2 Safeguarding training had been provided for members in 2019, in the form of an e-learning document that was recommended by the Human Resources department. Members were asked to read the document thoroughly and confirm by email once they had read and understood the document. This worked well as no logins were required, members could read the document in their own time and it was distributed via email – therefore providing easy access and no cost.

### 9.0 Attendance at Training Events/Briefings

#### Mandatory Training

9.1 Set out below are details of the training provided to Councillors under the mandatory programme over the past year. Attendance figures for all events across the year are set out in Appendix 3 to this report.

#### Finance Training

9.2 It should be noted that, under the approach adopted by the Council, all Councillors should attend at least one Finance Training session during their four year term. The training is typically held annually however it was not held during the 20/21 municipal year due to Covid-19 however officers have provided up to date information to Full Council.

#### GDPR

9.3 Councillors were invited to complete an online training module on the impact and requirements of General Data Protection Regulation in May 2018. The training was provided through the Local Government Association which provides online training free of charge. In view of the nature of GDPR, the online training was highlighted as mandatory for all Councillors. Councillors were also offered a drop-in session during which they could complete the module and seek the support of Officers if necessary (eight Councillors attended the drop-in session). To-date, 25 of the Borough Councillors and Claire Storey (Independent Co-opted Member) have completed the module. An invitation will be sent to all members following the May 2021 election, to ensure that new councillors had the opportunity to complete the training and also to provide refresher training for existing members.

#### Induction Training

9.4 The Council identified Induction as an area that should be classed as mandatory. The induction training programme currently consists of two evening sessions looking at the

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

corporate priorities and activities and providing practical information to newly elected Members. The dates of the Induction sessions are shared with the Political Groups in advance of the election and since 2019 they are identified as mandatory. As there election was cancelled due to Covid-19 no inductions were conducted in the 20/21 municipal year, however dates have been scheduled for May 2021.

### Licensing Training

- 9.5 Nine of the ten Members of the Licensing Committee attended the mandatory licensing training for the Members of the Committee on 11 June 2019. No training was scheduled within the last year due to Covid-19 however training for the 21/22 municipal year will be held on the evening of the first scheduled meeting of the Licensing Committee on 15 June 2021. It is intended to employ an external provider for training for the Committee Members in the future.

### Planning Training

- 9.6 The last Planning Training was held on 21 May 2019 and was highlighted as mandatory for the Members of the Planning Committee. The training was provided by Planning Officers and is held annually to ensure that the Members are kept informed of the latest guidance. Due to Covid-19 the Planning training was cancelled in 2020/21 but has been scheduled prior to the first meeting of the Planning Committee in the 2021/22 municipal year. Members received training on viability assessments in planning applications on 1 February 2021, 19 councillors attended and the private webcasting was shared with all members, along with the presentation slides.

### 10.0 Could You Be A Councillor? 2020/21

- 10.1 Woking Borough Council hosted an event for individuals interested in standing as a Borough Councillor in 2021. The workshop was free to attend and it was held virtually on 23 September 2020. The event was led by Cllr Elson, with support from Cllr Leach. The roles and responsibilities of a Councillor were outlined, as well as the practicalities of registering to stand as a candidate.
- 10.2 A handbook has been developed to provide information for residents interested in finding out more about Councillors, their roles and how to stand in a local election. The handbook is updated annually and made available online and through Could You Be A Councillor Briefings.

### 11.0 Elected Member Surveys

#### All Member Survey

- 11.1 The Council undertakes a detailed survey of all Councillors every two years.
- 11.2 The survey was introduced as part of the Council's commitment to Member Development and its objectives under the Charter for Member Development. The survey has been developed specifically for the elected representatives of Woking Borough Council and covers two key areas: Councillors' Roles and Responsibilities; and Member Development. A similar survey was undertaken at the end of 2018. The results will help the Council to improve the programme of development and training on offer to Councillors.
- 11.3 The next survey was due to be undertaken in December 2020 however it has been rescheduled for 2021.

#### Retiring Members

- 11.4 A questionnaire will also be sent to those Councillors who step down in May 2021. The questionnaire seeks feedback on their experiences with a view to improving arrangements and

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

facilities for future Councillors. The questionnaire is sent out late May/early June following a Borough election.

### New Members – Six Month Questionnaire

- 11.5 A feedback form is sent to those Councillors elected to the Borough Council during the May elections to seek feedback on the induction process and the support they have received following their successful election. The information is used to improve future arrangements for newly elected Members.

## **12.0 Implications**

### Financial

- 12.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The Council has an allocated budget (£7,500) for Member learning and development which is used to employ external trainers and enable Members to attend events away from the Borough. The budget is carefully managed to ensure that it is not overspent.

### Human Resource/Training and Development

- 12.2 This report sets out the extent of the Council's programme of learning and development offered to Councillors and provides an update on the Council's Charter status, the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and the Authority's policy for Member learning and development.
- 12.3 The Council will seek to promote joint training opportunities for Members and Officers in the coming years to enable them to share experiences, develop closer working relationships and to provide new ideas and support where required.

### Community Safety

- 12.4 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

### Risk Management

- 12.5 There are no risk management issues arising from this report. However, the importance of a comprehensive training programme in regard to risk management is emphasised.

### Sustainability

- 12.6 There are no sustainability issues arising from this report.

### Equalities

- 12.7 There are no equalities issues arising from this report.

### Safeguarding

- 12.8 There are no safeguarding issues arising from this report.

## **13.0 Consultations**

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Lead Members for Elected Member learning and development.

REPORT ENDS





## **Protocol for Cross Party Engagement in the Development of the Learning and Development Programme for Elected Members.**

**2021/22**

In May 2015, Woking Borough Council disbanded its cross-party Panel for Member Learning and Development, noting that the elements overseen by the Panel had become embedded in the processes and services of the Council.

This Protocol has been drawn up to define the role of the Lead Member and put in place measures to ensure that a cross-party approach is maintained following the decision to disband the Panel. Expectations of the roles played by Group Leaders are also referred to in the Protocol. Officers will work with the Lead Member for Elected Member Development over the year on managing and further developing the Council's approach to Member Learning and Development.

- 
- The Lead Member to work with Officers in developing and taking forward new initiatives and approaches in Member learning and development.
  - The Lead Member to lead on the annual review of the Member Learning and Development Policy and to present the Policy to Council on an annual basis.
  - The Lead Member to oversee the continuing development of the Member Learning and Development Framework, presenting the Framework to the Executive and/or Council if necessary.
  - The Lead Member to champion Member learning and development across the authority, including opposition Members.
  - The Lead Member to promote the Council's Charter for Elected Member Development through South East Employers, ensuring that any outcomes arising from the three year reassessments and mid-term assessments are taken forward.
  - Cross-party support to be sought for all elements of the Council's Learning and Development Policy.
  - The Lead Member to ensure that opportunities for learning and development are available to all elected Members, regardless of political affiliation.
  - The Lead Member to ensure that the Council ensures the equality of the Learning and Development Programme, with timing of events to take into account cultural and personal circumstances.

## **Annual Report on Member Learning and Development**

- The Lead Member to champion a wide range of delivery methods to meet the learning styles of Councillors.
- Opposition Groups to be consulted on new learning and development initiatives before their introduction.
- Group Leaders to be consulted on specific requests or proposals for training opportunities received from elected Members, the Lead Member or Officers.
- The Lead Member to review the feedback received from post event questionnaires, the Member Surveys, the surveys of newly elected Councillors and the surveys of recently retired Councillors.
- Group Leaders to promote learning and development opportunities amongst the Members of their political group.
- Group Leaders to review the learning and development needs within their political group and identify any gaps in the programme of events.
- Group Leaders to promote the Council's Learning and Development Framework and the Roles and Responsibilities of Councillors to the Members within their political group.
- The Lead Member to promote and support the annual 'Could You Be A Councillor' event targeting individuals interested in seeking office as a Borough Councillor.
- The Lead Member to monitor the Council's budget for the learning and development programme.
- The Lead Member to monitor Member attendance at the learning and development events, raising any concerns with the relevant Group Leaders if necessary.
- The Lead Member to oversee the development of a strategic approach and comprehensive programme of events in anticipation of the May 2016 all-out elections.
- The Lead Member to monitor the progress of the Elected Member Learning and Development action plan.

### **Member Learning and Development**

#### **Contact Details**

The Council's Learning and Development Programme is managed by Hanna Taylor, Democratic Services Officer, Telephone 01483 743056 or email [hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk](mailto:hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk)



## Woking Borough Council

### Member Learning and Development Policy 2021/22

Reviewed April 2021





### Introduction

Woking Borough Council is committed to the training, development and learning of the elected Members throughout their terms of office, from the point at which they first express an interest in standing as a Borough Councillor to their retirement from public office. Elected Members are integral to achieving the Council's aims and strategic objectives and to the delivery of high quality services.

The Council recognises that Members have different skills and expertise gained through employment and life which can all be used for the benefit of the Council and the community as a whole. As such, Woking Borough Council is keen to enable Members to access as many development opportunities as possible to make them effective in their ever changing role as a Councillor.

Member development can have a significant impact on the performance of the organisation. Well-equipped Members are able to contribute to the running of the Borough, and can deal with the challenges and changes faced by the organisation.

The Member Development Policy applies to all elected Members. It also applies to any co-opted Members, including the Independent Co-Opted Members of the Standards and Audit Committee and the Council's Independent Person. The implementation of this Policy is being led by the Lead Members for Member learning and development.

### The Council's Vision and Values

The Council's Vision is 'Towards Tomorrow Today.' It means:

- achieving things and looking to improve;
- having a forward-thinking attitude;
- building on what is good today; and
- planning and working for the future.

The vision demonstrates that the Borough Council is an organisation that:

- achieves things and looks to improve;
- aims to be innovative and have a forward-thinking attitude, building on what is good today; and
- plan for, and work towards, the future.

This Vision is supported by a statement of intent about shaping the Council's future, comprising a number of value aims under the three key thematic areas of:

- **PEOPLE** - A healthy, inclusive and engaged community
- **PLACE** - An enterprising, vibrant and sustainable place
- **US** - An innovative, proactive and effective Council

### The Council's Priorities

Woking Borough Council provides a wide range of services and facilities and, to ensure that its resources are used in the most effective way, has to set priorities. The Council's focus is on four key priority areas:

- decent and affordable housing
- economic development
- the environment
- health and well-being.

### Woking's Community Strategy

Our Community Strategy sets out a number of aims under six key themes identified by the community:

- A **strong community spirit** with a clear sense of belonging and responsibility;
- A clean, healthy and safe **environment**;
- A **transport system** that is linked and accessible, recognising Woking's potential as a transport hub;
- Access to **decent, affordable housing** for local people and key workers;
- A community which values **personal health and well-being**; and
- Provide opportunities and encourage people to **participate in learning** throughout their lives so they progress and reach their full potential.

### The Role of Members

The locally elected Councillor has a key role in achieving improved outcomes in the community. As Elected Members (Members) of the Council they have to perform a multi faceted role of Community Leader, Community Representative and Community Champion.

In these roles Members have a key part to play in achieving the Council's Service and Performance Plan and in helping it make its contribution to the Community Strategy. The participation by Members in learning will help them reach their full potential and equip them to fully contribute to the delivery of the Service and Performance Plan and the Community Strategy objectives and key priorities.

The purpose of the Member Development programme is to provide a supportive environment to enhance the knowledge, capabilities, and experiences which individual Members identify are required to enable them to perform the Members' role.

All Members have individual responsibility to:

- Identify their own learning and development needs and to seek opportunities to improve their effectiveness and increase their potential.
- Share their knowledge and skills with the peers.

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

- Review and evaluate learning and development activities so as to apply increased knowledge, skills and personal qualities developed through those activities.

Group Leaders are responsible for ensuring that their Members have the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies to carry out their Council and community responsibilities. They are primarily responsible for ensuring that Members participate in the training and development activities which are necessary to enable them to do so, and to achieve the Council's aims and objectives.

### The Council's Commitment to Member Development

By signing up to the South East Charter for Elected Member Development, the Leader of the Executive, the Group Leaders and the Chief Executive of Woking Borough Council, have demonstrated a clear commitment to improving and sustaining the standards of Member development within the Council.

The Council is committed to supporting Members in their role and view the achievement of the South East Charter for Elected Member Development as an important recognition of its efforts. In support of the development of all its elected Councillors to ensure that they are able to meet all the challenges that face them through the wide range of roles and responsibilities they hold, Woking Borough Council is committed to ensuring that:

- all Councillors have access to appropriate learning and development activities to enable them to acquire the skills and knowledge required to be an effective elected Member.
- a planned and structured approach to elected Member learning and development is taken.
- access to learning and development activities is equitable to all.
- learning and development should be linked, wherever possible, to the roles and responsibilities of Members.
- Members are supported in developing their roles as Ward Representatives and as Community Leaders.
- Members' capacity is developed to formulate and keep under review the Council's Policies and Strategies.
- a Member led strategic approach to development is adopted through the Lead Members for learning and development.
- citizenship and a good work-life balance is promoted.
- Member learning and development activities should be adequately resourced and within available budgets.
- Members should be encouraged to identify their own development needs and participate fully in learning and development activities.
- all Members are provided with a development framework to help identify learning and development needs.

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

In furthering these objectives the Council will ensure that:-

- Member development will take place within a structured process, having regard to the needs of the individual and to corporate objectives;
- Members will be offered equal access to development opportunities regardless of their physical circumstances, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, age or religion;
- Member development will be provided and monitored in a way that is respectful to the dignity and privacy of individual Members;
- Member development opportunities will promote work/life balance, community engagement and good citizenship;
- development resources, activities and processes will give Members the knowledge, capabilities, opportunities, networks and experiences they need to fulfil their role as effectively as possible; and
- development resources, activities and processes will be regularly monitored by Members and officers to ensure effectiveness.

### Mandatory Training for Elected Members

In October 2017 the Council agreed to introduce a programme of mandatory training for Elected Members, to be made available online where possible. Topics identified for the programme, together with their frequency and the target Members, are outlined below.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Code of Conduct</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once during each four year term of office.
<b>Required</b>	All Members.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house training session.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Diversity and Equalities</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once during each four year term of office.
<b>Required</b>	All Members.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house training session.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Finance Training</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once during each four year term of office.
<b>Required</b>	All Members.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house training session.

<b>Training</b>	<b>General Data Protection Regulation</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once, at the start of the Councillor's first term of office.
<b>Required</b>	All Members.
<b>Delivery format</b>	Online.

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

<b>Training</b>	<b>Health and Safety</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once during each four year term of office.
<b>Required</b>	All Members.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house and/or external training provider.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Induction Training</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once.
<b>Required</b>	Newly elected Members. Re-elected Members to be encouraged to attend.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house training.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Licensing Training</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual, as part of the agenda for the first meeting of the Committee.
<b>Required</b>	All Members of the Licensing Committee and Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder for Licensing Services.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house training.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Planning</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual.
<b>Required</b>	All Members of the Planning Committee, Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder for Planning Services.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house and/or external training provider.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Safeguarding</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Once during each four year term of office.
<b>Required</b>	All Members.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house and/or external training provider.

<b>Training</b>	<b>Scrutiny</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Annual, as part of the agenda for the first meeting of the Committee.
<b>Required</b>	All Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
<b>Delivery format</b>	In-house and/or external training provider.

### Policy Implementation

The Council has appointed Elected Members from each Political Group to take forward the Council's programme of Member learning and development. These Lead Members for Member Learning and Development are charged with the responsibility of undertaking and maintaining a self-assessment and developing and keeping under review a Learning and Development Plan for Members.

Support for the Lead Members is provided by the Council's Democratic Services Team.

The Lead Members are responsible for monitoring the Council's Member Development programme and identifying any new development opportunities. The Lead Members oversee the budgets and promote Member Development amongst the political groups. Furthermore, any feedback received on the development programme, whether from serving Councillors, newly elected Councillors or

## Annual Report on Member Learning and Development

recently retired Councillors, is reported to the Lead Members, with any matters of concern or improvement highlighted. The majority of the work on Member Development is undertaken in consultation with the Lead Members by email or telephone; however, meetings are arranged when necessary.

The responsibilities of the Lead Members include:

- Helping their peers to identify and find opportunities to meet their learning and development needs.
- Creating an environment that encourages self-development and continuous learning and the sharing of knowledge and skills amongst the Members in the political groups.
- Evaluating investment in learning and development and participation by Members.
- Monitor feedback from Members on the learning and development programmes provided by the Council.
- Regularly review the Council's Member Development Policy.

### Member Development Support and Resources

Core support for the Member Development programmes of the Council is provided by the Officers within the Council's Democratic Services Team, in consultation with the Lead Members.

The Council has a dedicated Member Development Budget which covers the costs external training and development programmes, including conferences, briefings and training events. The programme of externally provided events is supported by an extensive range of events provided by Officers and Members. The full cost of all learning and development is identified and monitored by the Council's Democratic Services Team and is reported to the Lead Members.

The Democratic Services Team is responsible for:

- supporting the Lead Members for learning and development.
- preparing the annual Learning and Development Programme and report as required by the Lead Members for learning and development.
- organising, and in some cases providing, learning and development as identified in the Learning and Development Plan.
- maintaining the Councillors role descriptions and responsibilities, the Councillors Development Framework and the Council's 'Could You be a Councillor' document.
- managing the Member Development budget.
- making the necessary arrangements for the booking of courses and other development events.
- liaising with Corporate Management Group and Business Managers to identify future development topics.

## 2020/21 Attendance at Training

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Member Briefing: Land @ Goldsworth Road	02 June 2020	17
McLaren - Property and Financial Background	22 July 2020	22
McLaren Proposals - report to Council	27 July 2020	21
McLaren Proposals	29 July 2020	21
Wellbeing Strategy Briefing and Discussion	16 September 2020	12
CYBAC Event	23 September 2020	2
Land @ Goldsworth Road	18 November 2020	15
OSC Workshop: Viability in Planning Applications	21 January 2021	3
Member Briefing: Victoria Square	21 January 2021	19
Member Briefing: Viability Assessments in Planning Applications	1 February 2021	19
Member Briefing: Victoria Square - Report to Council	10 February 2021	20



COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS TO COUNCIL COMPANIES

### Executive Summary

In July 2020 the Council agreed to seek the appointment of additional Independent Directors to serve on the Council's subsidiary companies, namely the Thameswey Group of Companies and the Brookwood Cemetery Group of Companies. A further report was considered by the Executive in January 2021 to agree the recruitment process and confirm that a total of six appointments would be sought. The report also highlighted the range of skills and experience, which would be sought through the recruitment process.

This report sets out the recommendations of the Appointment Panel and seeks the Council's approval of the proposed appointments with effect from 1 May 2021.

### Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

#### RESOLVE That

The recommendations of the Appointment Panel be approved as set out below;

- (i) Paul Grimshare be appointed as an Independent Director of Thameswey Energy Limited, Thameswey Central Milton Keynes Limited, Thameswey Solar Limited, Thameswey Sustainable Communities Limited and Thameswey Limited;
- (ii) Chris Reid be appointed as an Independent Director of Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited, Brookwood Cemetery Limited and Brookwood Park Limited; and
- (iii) Shahid Azeem be appointed as an Independent Director of Woking Necropolis and Mausoleum Limited, Brookwood Cemetery Limited and Brookwood Park Limited.

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.
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**Background Papers:** None.

**Reporting Person:** Julie Fisher, Chief Executive with effect from 1 April 2021  
Email: julie.fisher@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3301

**Contact Person:** Amanda Jeffrey, Head of Human Resources  
Email: amanda.jeffrey@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3904

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor A Azad  
Email: ayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk

## Appointment of Independent Directors to Council Companies

**Shadow Portfolio Holder:** Councillor A-M Barker  
Email: [ann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk](mailto:ann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk)

**Date Published:** 29 March 2021

## **Appointment of Independent Directors to Council Companies**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report sets out the background and outcome of the Council's recruitment process for additional Independent Directors to serve of the Thameswey Group of Companies and the Brookwood Cemetery Group of Companies.
- 1.2 The Council is invited to approve the recommendations of the Appointment Panel.

### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 In July 2020, the Council received a report which proposed an increase in the level of independent oversight of the Council's subsidiary companies to reflect the increasing scale of business activity being delivered upon behalf of the Council. The Council resolved that;
  - (i) the number of Independent Directors on Council subsidiaries be increased to two;
  - (ii) the normal term of office of an Independent Director be three years with a maximum of two terms to be served;
  - (iii) the normal maximum term of office of an Independent Director be eight years;
  - (iv) the current Independent Directors be retired on a rolling basis, one each year from 2022, so that experience is retained alongside the appointment of new Directors and all current Directors retire by 2024;
  - (v) a Panel of Members be appointed to oversee the recruitment process and recommend appointments to the Council; and
  - (vi) the Member Panel should seek to recruit Board members who are connected to and representative of the Woking population, particularly in relation to gender and ethnic background.
- 2.2 In January 2021, the Executive was presented with a report which outlined the proposed process for the recruitment of additional Independent Directors to serve on the Thameswey Group of Companies and the Brookwood Cemetery Group of Companies.
- 2.3 In regard to the appointments to the Thameswey Group, the Executive was recommended to increase the number of Independent Directors from the existing three to seven Independent Directors to provide a wide range of skills.
- 2.4 For the Brookwood Cemetery Group, it was considered that two Independent Directors would provide the necessary range of skills. Whilst there is currently one Independent Director, the Executive was advised that, given the demands on the Independent Director's time, it would be sensible to recruit two new Independent Directors at this stage rather than wait another year. The proposal would have the added benefit of ensuring a period of overlap to ensure continuity.
- 2.5 Following consideration of the report, the Executive resolved that:
  - (i) the range of skills and experience sought for the six Independent Directors, as set out in section 2 of the report, be approved;
  - (ii) the Recruitment Panel composition, as set out in section 3 of the report, be approved; and
  - (iii) the timetable, as set out in section 4 of the report, be agreed.

## **Appointment of Independent Directors to Council Companies**

- 2.6 The timetable adopted by the Executive had proposed that the opportunities would be advertised in early February with the deadline for applications to be set for the end of February. Shortlisting was to be undertaken in the subsequent week, with informal interviews to be held in the week of 8 March 2021 and formal interviews in week commencing 15 March 2021.
- 2.7 However, during February all available staff were asked to assist in the surge testing events ('Operation Eagle') which, through intensive testing, sought to identify any residents within defined areas who has contracted the South African variant of Covid-19. The exercises, run at the direction of Public Health England, saw the delivery and collection thousands of test kits to local residents by staff.
- 2.8 As a result, the timetable for the recruitment process was delayed. A summary of the revised timetable is set out below.
- 2.9 The roles were advertised on the Council's website and on the following jobs boards: JobsGoPublic, LG Jobs, and SurreyJobs. It was also included on LinkedIn and other social media channels and Indeed. A press release was issued to local media sources. It also featured in the Councils e-newsletter.
- 2.10 The Council received 12 applications.
- 2.11 Shortlisting took place on 11 and 12 March 2021. Six candidates were taken forward to the next stages of the process.
- 2.12 Two Informal recruitment panels were held with the candidates as follows;
1. Member Directors, held on 17 March 2021, membership included Cllr's Azad, Bittleston, Kemp and Harlow.
  2. Corporate Management Group (excluding the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive), held on 19 March 2021.
- 2.13 Feedback from the Informal panels were presented to the Appointment Panel prior to formal interviews taking place on 23 and 26 March 2021.

### **3.0 Recommendations of the Appointment Panel**

- 3.1 The recommendations of the Appointment Panel are as set out below.
- 3.2 Paul Grimshare be appointed as an Independent Director of Thamesway Companies.
- 3.3 Chris Reid be appointed as an Independent Director of Brookwood Cemetery Companies.
- 3.4 Shahid Azeem be appointed as an Independent Director of Brookwood Cemetery Companies.
- 3.5 A short biography for each candidate can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.6 It is proposed that Mr Grimshare should be appointed to the "energy/sustainability" Thamesway companies (excluding Thamesway Maintenance Services Limited, which is being closed). These companies are Thamesway Energy Limited, Thamesway Central Milton Keynes Limited, Thamesway Solar Limited, Thamesway Sustainable Communities Limited. These companies operate in the areas in which Mr Grimshare expressed a particular interest. As with all directors, Mr Grimshare would also be appointed to the Group Holding company, Thamesway Limited.

## Appointment of Independent Directors to Council Companies

### 4.0 Implications

#### Financial

- 4.1 The cost of undertaking the recruitment has been managed within existing resources.
- 4.2 The respective company to which the Independent Directors are appointed will meet the cost of employing the Independent Directors.

#### Human Resource/Training and Development

- 4.3 As only three appointments were made during this campaign it is likely that the recruitment process will be run again later this year.

#### Community Safety

- 4.4 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

#### Risk Management

- 4.5 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

#### Sustainability

- 4.6 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report. The recruitment of new Independent Directors for Group Companies will support the sustainability of the activities undertaken by them.

#### Equalities

- 4.7 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. In recruiting the Independent Directors, the process has sought to secure candidates representative of the Woking community.

#### Safeguarding

- 4.8 There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

### 5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Council has completed an initial recruitment exercise to appoint additional Independent Directors. The Appointment Panel recommended three candidates as outlined. A further exercise will take place later this year.
- 5.2 Subject to Council approval, the appointments will begin on 1 May 2021.

REPORT ENDS

**Biographies**

Paul Grimshare

An accomplished finance professional and chartered accountant with over 20 years' experience in large and medium sized businesses, mainly in the financial services sector. Previously a board director of a large corporate pension fund. A proven and adaptable leader having built, developed and led multi-location and cross-discipline teams. Experience in enhancing financial management and business partnering to deliver long-term value and profitable growth. A Woking resident, keen to support the development of the Borough in a sustainable manner to create opportunities and protect the local environment for the benefit of current and future residents.

Chris Reid

An experienced business development professional, with a background in managing operations in the UK and internationally. Chris has developed his operational and business skills within the restaurant industry. Experienced at managing multi-site areas across medium to large enterprises. He has held accountability for estates management across large and complex restaurant businesses and worked within tight legal frameworks. Currently employed as a Franchise Business Manager for Papa John. Away from work, Chris has a passion for ecology and gardening. As a Brookwood resident, Chris is a regular visitor and admirer of the Cemetery. He has spent much time learning about its history and enjoying the wildlife and welcomes the opportunity of becoming a dedicated and enthusiastic board member.

Shahid Azeem

Named in Top 100 Most Influential Muslims in the UK, Shahid has established and managed a number of successful businesses within the IT Industry, whilst at the same time investing greatly into youth empowerment and strengthening community relations particularly across faith groups within the Muslim community. Shahid is currently MD of Arcom IT, an infrastructure company, along with MD of Folio3 UK/Europe that employs over 550 people globally. Shahid is the current High Sheriff of Surrey, and has been appointed as Vice president of the Community Foundation of Surrey and Trustee of Gordons School, West End. He is board Director and Commercial chairman of the National Football League and Chairman of Aldershot FC where he is using the power of sport to integrate communities. Shahid is also the Deputy Lieutenant of Surrey and the Chair of Woking Asian Business Forum.







COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR/OFFICER DIRECTORS TO COUNCIL COMPANIES

### Executive Summary

Councillor David Bittleston, Ray Morgan (Chief Executive) and Douglas Spinks (Deputy Chief Executive) are directors of a number of Council companies. Councillor Bittleston retires as a Councillor on 30 March 2021, and Mr Morgan and Mr Spinks retire from the Council's service on 31 March 2021. They will cease to be directors of the companies on those dates.

This report deals with the appointment of replacement directors to those companies which would otherwise not be (i) quorate or (ii) able to function following Councillor Bittleston and Mr Morgan and Mr Spinks ceasing to be a councillor and employees respectively.

### Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

#### RESOLVE That

- (i) Councillor directors be appointed to the companies listed in paragraph 2.1 of this report [Note: Council will be advised of the proposed nominations at its meeting on 8 April 2021];
- (ii) Louise Strongitharm (Director of Housing) be appointed a director of Rutland (Woking) Limited, Rutland Woking (Carthouse Lane) Limited and Rutland Woking (Residential) Limited; and
- (iii) Geoff McManus (Director of Neighbourhood Services) and Giorgio Framalocco (Director of Planning Services) be appointed directors of Woking Shopping Limited and Export House Limited.

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above.
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<b>Background Papers:</b>	None.
<b>Reporting Person:</b>	Peter Bryant, Director of Legal and Democratic Services Email: peter.bryant@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3030
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Peter Bryant, Director of Legal and Democratic Services Email: peter.bryant@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3030
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Ayesha Azad Email: cllayasha.azad@woking.gov.uk

## **Appointment of Councillor/Officer Directors to Council Companies**

**Shadow Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Ann-Marie Barker  
Email: [cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk](mailto:cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk)

**Date Published:** 29 March 2021

## Appointment of Councillor/Officer Directors to Council Companies

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council appointed Councillor David Bittleston, Ray Morgan (Chief Executive) and Douglas Spinks (Deputy Chief Executive) as directors of a number of Council companies. Councillor Bittleston retires as a Councillor on 30 April 2021, and Mr Morgan and Mr Spinks retire from the Council's service on 31 March 2021. They will cease to be directors of the companies on those dates.
- 1.2 This report only deals with the appointment of replacement directors to those companies which would otherwise not be (i) quorate or (ii) able to function. Vacancies on other companies will be addressed through the usual Selection Panel process (following the Borough elections), with appropriate appointments recommended to Council on 25 May 2021. As such, the recommended appointments can be regarded as interim appointments pending that process being completed.

### 2.0 Appointment of Councillor Directors

- 2.1 Councillor Bittleston is the sole Councillor director on the following companies:-

Rutland (Woking) Limited  
Rutland Woking (Carhouse Lane) Limited  
Rutland Woking (Residential) Limited  
Victoria Square Woking Limited  
Victoria Square Residential Limited  
VSW Hotel Limited  
Export House Limited

Replacement Councillor directors should be appointed to these companies.

- 2.2 The Leader of the Council has indicated that her preference is for Opposition member(s) to be appointed as directors to Council companies. This would contribute to cross-party oversight of the Council's subsidiary companies.
- 2.3 Council will be advised of the proposed nominations at its meeting on 8 April 2021.

### 3.0 Appointment of Officer Directors

- 3.1 Mr Morgan and/or Mr Spinks are the only Officer directors on the following companies:-

Rutland (Woking) Limited  
Rutland Woking (Carhouse Lane) Limited  
Rutland Woking (Residential) Limited  
Woking Shopping Limited  
Export House Limited

Replacement Officer directors should be appointed to these companies

- 3.2 It is proposed that Louise Strongitharm (Director of Housing) should be appointed a director of the three Rutland companies.
- 3.3 It is proposed that Geoff McManus (Director of Neighbourhood Services) and Giorgio Framalocco (Director of Planning Services) should be appointed directors of Woking Shopping Limited and Export House Limited.
- 3.4 Prior to the then Chief Executive's leave of absence, Julie Fisher was appointed as a director of Victoria Square Woking Limited (in November 2018). This role will continue.

## Appointment of Councillor/Officer Directors to Council Companies

### 4.0 Implications

#### Financial

4.1 None.

#### Human Resource/Training and Development

4.2 None.

#### Community Safety

4.3 None.

#### Risk Management

4.4 Appointing directors, as proposed in this report, contributes to the Council's oversight of its subsidiary companies.

#### Sustainability

4.5 None.

#### Equalities

4.6 None.

#### Safeguarding

4.7 None.

### 5.0 Conclusions

5.1 It is necessary for the Council to appoint directors to Council companies arising from (i) Councillor David Bittleston retiring as a councillor on 30 March 2021 and (ii) the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive retiring from the Council's service on 31 March 2021. This report recommends the action which should be taken in respect of those appointments.

REPORT ENDS

COUNCIL – 8 APRIL 2021

## MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

### Executive Summary

This report deals with management arrangements resulting from (i) the retirement of Ray Morgan and Douglas Spinks as Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive respectively on 31 March 2021 and (ii) the retirement of Peter Bryant as Director of Legal and Democratic Services on 30 June 2021.

These matters include the appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer, Data Protection Officer and Monitoring Officer.

### Recommendations

The Council is requested to:

#### RESOLVE That

- (i) the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be appointed as Deputy Electoral Registration Officer (Peter Bryant until 30 June 2021, Joanne McIntosh from 1 July 2021);
- (ii) Joanne McIntosh (Director of Legal and Democratic Services designate) be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 1 July 2021; and
- (iii) Joanne McIntosh (Director of Legal and Democratic Services designate) be appointed as the Council's Data Protection Officer with effect from 1 July 2021.

The Council has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above.

<b>Background Papers:</b>	None.
<b>Reporting Person:</b>	Peter Bryant, Director of Legal and Democratic Services Email: peter.bryant@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3030
<b>Contact Person:</b>	Peter Bryant, Director of Legal and Democratic Services Email: peter.bryant@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3030
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Ayesha Azad Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
<b>Shadow Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Email: cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk

**Date Published:** 29 March 2021

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report deals with management arrangements resulting from (i) the retirement of Ray Morgan and Douglas Spinks as Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive respectively on 31 March 2021 and (ii) the retirement of Peter Bryant as Director of Legal and Democratic Services on 30 June 2021.
- 1.2 Julie Fisher's appointment as Chief Executive takes effect on 1 April 2021. It is open to the Chief Executive to designate a Corporate Management Group member as Deputy Chief Executive. Mrs Fisher has indicated that she does not intend to do this.
- 1.3 Peter Bryant, Director of Legal and Democratic Services, leaves the Council's employment on 30 June 2021. Joanne McIntosh, Legal Services Manager, has been appointed Director of Legal and Democratic Services with effect from 1 July 2021.
- 1.4 This report deals with matters consequential on these management changes.

### 2.0 Deputy Electoral Registration Officer

- 2.1 The Chief Executive is formally designated as the Council's Electoral Registration Officer. Normally, the Deputy Chief Executive would be designated, by Council, as Deputy Electoral Registration Officer. In the absence of a Deputy Chief Executive, it is necessary for Council to appoint another Officer to this role. It is proposed that this should be the Director of Legal and Democratic Services (who has management responsibility for electoral services). For the avoidance of doubt, this would be Peter Bryant until 30 June 2021 and Joanne McIntosh from 1 July 2021.

### 3.0 Monitoring Officer

- 3.1 The Council is required to appoint a Monitoring Officer under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to carry out certain statutory functions. These relate to effective governance and ensuring that the Council operates lawfully and fairly in its decision making.
- 3.2 The Director of Legal and Democratic Services is the Council's Monitoring Officer. He has appointed Joanne McIntosh as his deputy.
- 3.3 It is recommended that Joanne McIntosh be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 1 July 2021. Mrs McIntosh possesses the necessary qualifications and experience to undertake this role. She qualified as a solicitor in September 2009 and has been employed by the Council since November 2011 (acting as Deputy Monitoring Officer since January 2012).

### 4.0 Data Protection Officer

- 4.1 In order to comply with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, the Council is required to have a Data Protection Officer. Mr Bryant was appointed as the Council's Data Protection Officer on 5 April 2018. The Legal Services Manager, Joanne McIntosh, is the Deputy Data Protection Officer. It is recommended that Mrs McIntosh be appointed Data Protection Officer with effect from 1 July 2021.

### 5.0 Scheme of Delegations

- 5.1 The recent management changes will require the Scheme of Delegations to be updated to reflect where delegations now sit. As there are no changes to the extent of the delegations, the update can be done by the Monitoring Officer. The updated Scheme of Delegations will be circulated to Members in the new Municipal Year.

**6.0 Implications**

Financial

6.1 None.

Human Resource/Training and Development

6.2 None.

Community Safety

6.3 None.

Risk Management

6.4 Making the appointments recommended in this report will ensure that the Council complies with its legal obligations.

Sustainability

6.5 None.

Equalities

6.6 None.

Safeguarding

6.7 None.

**7.0 Conclusions**

7.1 It is necessary for the Council to address matters which result from management changes arising from (i) the retirement of Ray Morgan and Douglas Spinks as Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive respectively on 31 March 2021 and (ii) the retirement of Peter Bryant as Director of Legal and Democratic Services on 30 June 2021. This report recommends the action which should be taken in respect of those matters.

REPORT ENDS