

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WOKING

held on 10 February 2022

Present:

Cllr L S Lyons (Mayor)
Cllr S Hussain (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr S Ashall	Cllr I Johnson
Cllr A Azad	Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr A Kirby
Cllr A J Boote	Cllr R N Leach
Cllr M A Bridgeman	Cllr N Martin
Cllr J Brown	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr K M Davis	Cllr E Nicholson
Cllr S Dorsett	Cllr M I Raja
Cllr G W Elson	Cllr C Rana
Cllr W P Forster	Cllr D Roberts
Cllr D Harlow	Cllr J R Sanderson
Cllr K Howard	Cllr M A Whitehand
Cllr D E Hughes	

Also Present: Claire Storey, Independent Co-Opted Member.

Absent: Councillors M Ali, T Aziz and R Mohammed.

1. MINUTES.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 2 December 2021 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor M Ali, Councillor T Aziz and Councillor R Mohammed.

3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

The Mayor reported on the many events he had attended over the Christmas period including the annual Christmas tree festival in West Byfleet, the turning on of the Christmas lights in Sheerwater, numerous carol services and Christmas markets in Byfleet and Horsell. In the new year, the Mayor had attended a number of musical events, including the Pianothon in The New Victoria Theatre and the Woking Young Musician competition.

As part of the celebrations of Her Majesty The Queen's platinum jubilee, the Mayor had attended a special service at Guildford Cathedral hosted by the Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff.

4. URGENT BUSINESS.

No items of Urgent Business were considered.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor A Azad declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor K M Davis declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor D Harlow declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor C S Kemp declared a non-pecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Julie Fisher, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that Mrs Fisher could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Joanne McIntosh, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that Mrs McIntosh could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Planning, Giorgio Framalico, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council-appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that Mr Framalico could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Neighbourhood Services, Geoff McManus, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council-appointed

director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that Mr McManus could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Housing, Louise Strongitharm, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that Mrs Strongitharm could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Finance, Leigh Clarke, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GolDev Woking Limited development. The interest arose from her husband having a small shareholding in Woking Football Club. The interest was such that Mrs Clarke could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor I Johnson declared an interest in respect of Item 9 – Dr Gifty Edila's Report and Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge – Update to Council on Recommendations – in light of reference within the report to Woking Football Club. The interest arose from his wife's position as Chairman of Woking Football Club and was such that Councillor Johnson left the Council Chamber for the item.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor A-M Barker declared an interest in respect of Item 8A – Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2022-23 – in light of reference within the report to EY. The interest arose from a family member's employment by EY, though was such that Councillor Barker could speak and vote in respect of the item.

6. QUESTIONS.

Copies of questions submitted under Standing Order 8.1 together with draft replies were laid upon the table. The replies were confirmed by Members of the Executive, supplementary questions were asked and replies given.

7. COUNCIL TAX WBC22-002.

The Mayor set out the procedure to be adopted in determining the Council Tax for 2022-23 and the Recommendations of the Executive.

The Mayor would take the report on Council Tax first, together with the recommendations of the Executive on 3 February 2022 relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators, Housing Revenue Account Budgets, the Investment Programme and the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies.

The recommendations from the meeting of the Executive on 20 January 2022 would be considered once the Council Tax for 2022-23 had been determined. A procedure note had been prepared which clearly set out all the recommendations before the Council.

Councillor Ayesha Azad moved and Councillor Simon Ashall seconded the reception and adoption of the report and recommendations of the meetings of the Executive held on 20 January 2022 and 3 February 2022.

The Council had before it the recommendations of the Executive for the Medium Term Financial Strategy, General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2022-23, the Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2022-23, the Investment Programme 2021-22 to 2025-26, and the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies. A report on the 2022-23 Council Tax was also before the Council.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Azad, made a statement on the Budget for 2022-23. Councillor A-M Barker, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor M I Raja, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, and Councillor A Boote, Leader of the Independent Group, were invited to respond to the budget statement.

Following the statements by the Group Leaders, there was an opportunity for Councillors to raise any points in respect of the Council Tax proposals and associated recommendations of the Executive. Following discussion, the Council was directed to the recommendations set out in items 8A to 8D, together with the Council Tax 2022-23 proposals.

In accordance with Standing Order 10.8 the names of Members voting for and against the recommendations, as set out in the reports before the Council, were recorded.

In favour: Councillors S Ashall, A Azad, J Brown, K Davis, S Dorsett, G Elson, D Harlow, S Hussain, C Kemp, N Martin, C Rana and Whitehand.

Total in favour: 12

Against: None.

Total against: None.

Present not voting: The Mayor, Councillor Lyons, and Councillors A-M Barker, A Boote, M Bridgeman, W Forster, K Howard, D Hughes, I Johnson, A Kirby, R Leach, L Morales, E Nicholson, M I Raja, D Roberts and J Sanderson.

Total present not voting: 15

The recommendations were therefore carried by 12 votes in favour to no votes against.

RESOLVED

That (i) the revenue estimates for 2022/23, as submitted, be approved;

(ii) it be noted that the Chief Financial Officer, in accordance with the terms of his delegated authority, has calculated the following amount for the year 2022/23 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act) as:-

a) 41,519.00 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year;

- (iii) the Council calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 is £10,606,601;
- (iv) the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
- a) £165,644,375 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act;
 - b) £155,037,774 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act;
 - c) £10,606,601 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4 a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4 b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year;
 - d) £255.46 being the amount at 4 c) above divided by the amount at 2 a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31 B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year;
- (v) it be noted for the year 2022/23 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings in the Council's area as shown in the table below.
- (vi) the Council, in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of council tax for the year 2022/23 for its area and for each of the categories of dwellings :-

Valuation Band	Surrey County Council Basic	Adult Social Care	Total Surrey County Council	Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner	Woking Borough Council	Aggregate of Council Tax Requirements
	£	£	£	£	£	£
A	960.61	123.65	1,084.26	197.05	170.31	1,451.61
B	1,120.71	144.26	1,264.97	229.89	198.69	1,693.55
C	1,280.81	164.87	1,445.68	262.73	227.08	1,935.48
D	1,440.91	185.48	1,626.39	295.57	255.46	2,177.42
E	1,761.11	226.70	1,987.81	361.25	312.23	2,661.29
F	2,081.31	267.92	2,349.23	426.93	369.00	3,145.16
G	2,401.52	309.13	2,710.65	492.62	425.77	3,629.03
H	2,881.82	370.96	3,252.78	591.14	510.92	4,354.84

- (vii) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52 ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES WBC22-004.

8A. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2022-23 EXE22-001

RESOLVED

- That (v) the Revenue Estimates and Human Resource requirements for 2022/23 be approved;
- (vi) a Band D Council Tax for the Borough of Woking for 2022/23 of £255.46 be approved; and
- (vii) the Prudential Indicators at Appendix 3 to the report be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Final Government Settlement.

8B. Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2022-23 EXE22-002

RESOLVED

- That (i) the draft Housing Revenue Account budgets for 2022/23, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed; and
- (ii) with effect from 4 April 2022, rents be increased by 4.1%.

8C. Investment Programme 2021-22 to 2025-26 EXE22-003

RESOLVED

- That (i) the Investment Programme 2021/22 to 2025/26 be approved subject to reports on projects where appropriate; and
- (ii) the proposed financing arrangements be approved.

8D. Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies EXE22-004

RECOMMENDED to Council

- That (ii) the Capital and Investment Strategies for 2022/23 be approved; and
- (iii) the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators set out in table 1 of Section 4 of the Treasury Management Strategy and the MRP policy set out in Appendix A be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Government Funding Settlement.

8E. Notice of Motion - Cllr M Whitehand - Women's safety in public places EXE22-020.

Councillor Harlow, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, introduced the recommendation of the Executive to support the Motion submitted by Councillor Whitehand, which sought the adoption of policies which would seek to ensure that women felt safe in Woking's public places.

The motion was welcomed by the Council and it was

RESOLVED

That the Motion be supported.

8F. Notice of Motion - Cllr E Nicholson - Male violence against Women EXE22-021.

The Executive had considered the Motion by Councillor Nicholson which dealt with the issue of violence against women, and recognised the importance of the White Ribbon Campaign. The Motion recommended that the Council should raise awareness of the White Ribbon Campaign, make White Ribbon Day part of the civic calendar and host annual awareness training for elected Members. Councillor Harlow introduced the recommendation of the Executive to support the Motion, welcoming the objectives of the proposals.

RESOLVED

That the Motion be supported.

8G. Notice of Motion - Cllr A-M Barker - Goldsworth Park lake footpath lighting EXE22-022.

Councillor Barker had submitted a Motion with proposed that the footpath lighting around Goldsworth Park lake should be updated to an LED system, recognising that the existing lighting had suffered from several failures in recent times and that LED lighting would lead to benefits in terms of cost effectiveness and energy use.

The Executive had considered the Motion at its meeting on 20 January 2022 and had supported the proposals, noting that Officers would continue to explore funding options. Councillor Kemp introduced the recommendation of the Executive and encouraged the Council to support the Motion.

RESOLVED

That the Motion be supported.

8H. Phase 2 – Infrastructure Capacity Study and Delivery Plan (IDP) - East of the Borough and Borough-wide Study EXE22-014.

Councillor Elson, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy, introduced the recommendation of the Executive in respect of the proposals for the future infrastructure requirements of the east of the Borough, drawn up through a joint study with other local authorities. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan had also reviewed the borough-wide infrastructure needs to support the delivery of the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations DPD. In light of the

comments received at the meeting of the Executive, the Delivery Plan had been updated and included with the papers before the Council.

Following discussion of the proposals, Councillor Elson responded to the points raised and recommended that the documents should be noted and approved.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the Infrastructure Capacity Study and Delivery Plan be noted and approved.

8I. Review of the Outlook, Amenity and Daylight Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) EXE22-012.

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive in respect of the Outlook, Amenity and Daylight Supplementary Planning Document and the representations received during the consultation. An updated version of the paper, identifying changes made following the discussions at the meeting of the Executive had been included with the agenda papers.

RESOLVED

- That (i) the various representations to the Outlook, Amenity and Daylight Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation together with Officer's responses and recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (ii) the revised Outlook, Amenity and Daylight SPD included in Appendix 2 to the report be adopted as Supplementary Planning Document for the purposes of managing development across the borough and other planning decisions;
- (iii) Appendix 2 of the SPD which relates to examples of separation distances of other local authorities be deleted; and
- (iv) the requirements of the SPD should apply from the date of adoption, in this case 10 February 2022.

8J. Review of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy EXE22-013.

Councillor Elson introduced the recommendations of the Executive in respect of the responses to the public consultation on the draft Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy. The proposals for additional cycle accessibility were welcomed, though disappointment was expressed over the level of disabled access to the SANGS. Councillor Elson highlighted the importance of improving accessibility and advised that proposals to increase accessibility were being considered.

RESOLVED

- That (i) the various representations to the consultation on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy together with Officer's responses and recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;

- (ii) the revised Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy in Appendix 2 to the report be adopted as Supplementary Planning Document for the purposes of avoiding harm to the integrity of the Special Protection Areas due to development pressures;
- (iii) the requirements of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy should apply to all relevant decisions from the date of adoption, in this case 10 February 2022; and
- (iv) Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council work in partnership to ensure access to SANGs and other parts of the Borough by all modes are considered, and this to be added to the remit of the Infrastructure Task Group.

8K. Review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) EXE22-011.

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive arising from the review of the Statement of Community Involvement. Whilst the report was welcomed, it was noted that the response to the consultation had been low. Councillor Elson, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy, advised that Officers were reviewing the consultation arrangements with a view to increasing responses to future reviews.

RESOLVED

- That (i) the various representations to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) consultation together with Officers' responses and recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (ii) the revised Statement of Community Involvement included in Appendix 2 to the report be adopted for the purposes of setting out how the Council wishes the local community to be involved and engaged when preparing key planning policy documents and determining of planning applications; and
 - (iii) the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement should apply from the date of adoption, in this case 10 February 2022.

9. DR GIFTY EDILA'S REPORT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE - UPDATE TO COUNCIL ON RECOMMENDATIONS WBC22-007.

The Council received a report which outlined the measures taken by the Authority to ensure that improvement in all areas of public life continued, particularly across the areas identified through Dr Gifty Edila's report and the Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge. The progress achieved was welcomed by the Council, with key elements highlighted during the discussion, including the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED

That the report be received.

10. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION REVIEW PANEL WBC22-006.

Claire Storey, Independent Co-Opted Member and Chairman of the Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel, introduced the Annual Report of the Panel. The report set out the election and electoral registration activities undertaken in 2021, including the annual canvass, maintenance of the Electoral Register and the Woking Borough Council, Surrey County Council and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Elections. The hard work of the Elections Team was acknowledged, noting the successes of the year.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Report of the Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel be received.

11. DESIGNATION OF POLLING PLACE - WARD OF ST JOHNS WBC22-008.

The Council was presented with a proposal to designate the Surrey History Centre as a new Polling Place for the Ward of St Johns. The venue had two large meeting rooms, was fully accessible and had off-street parking, providing an ideal location for a polling station in future elections. The proposal had recently been considered by the Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel and been supported by the Ward Councillors.

In outlining the proposal, the Chairman of the Panel, Claire Storey, expressed appreciation for the support of the Al Asr Community Centre which had served as the Polling Place in recent years.

RESOLVED

That (i) the Surrey History Centre be designated as the polling place for the St John's East polling district (K3) in the St John's Ward; and
(ii) the Council's appreciation be expressed to the Al Asr Centre for its assistance in recent years.

12. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022-23 AND GENDER PAY GAP DATA WBC22-003.

Councillor Azad introduced the report on the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 and the gender pay gap data, noting that the gender pay gap data was based on the snap-shot date of 31 March 2021.

RESOLVED

That (i) the Pay Policy Statement be approved for publication;
(ii) the Gender Pay Gap data be approved for publication; and
(iii) the Ethnicity Pay Gap data be noted.

13. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR(S) TO COUNCIL COMPANIES WBC22-005.

The Council considered a report which dealt with the appointment of an Independent Director to a number of Council companies to provide strategic oversight, skills and knowledge. The report recommended the appointment of Terry Price to Thamesway Maintenance Services Limited and the Energy Centre for Sustainable Communities Limited. It was noted that the appointments were an interim measure whilst the Council undertook a review of the governance of the Council's Companies.

RESOLVED

That Terry Price be appointed as Independent Director of the following Companies:

- Thamesway Maintenance Services Limited; and
- Energy Centre for Sustainable Communities Limited.

14. NOTICES OF MOTION.

Councillor W Forster

Councillor Forster moved and Councillor Nicholson seconded the following motion, proposing that the Motion should be determined on the night rather than referred to the next meeting of the Executive in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“Woking Borough Council notes that the Prime Minister has misled Parliament and lied to the residents of our Borough.

This Council notes that while the Prime Minister attended Downing Street parties, residents of Woking Borough obeyed the lockdown rules, often at huge personal cost or sacrifice.

This Council notes the significant financial impact upon local businesses who have been closed due to the lockdown or tier regulations.

This Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister stating that the Council has no confidence in his leadership and calls for him to resign.

This Council also calls upon the Leader of the Council to write to Woking's Member of Parliament requesting that they represent this Council's view in Parliament and call for the Prime Minister to resign.”

Councillor Forster spoke in support of his Motion, stating that the Prime Minister was under a Police investigation, had broken the law and had failed to uphold the law. The Motion was debated by the Council before a vote was held. In accordance with Standing Order 10.8 the names of Members voting for and against the motion were recorded.

In favour: Councillors A-M Barker, A Boote, M Bridgeman, W Forster, D Hughes, I Johnson, A Kirby, R Leach, L Morales, E Nicholson, M I Raja, D Roberts and J Sanderson.

Total in favour: 13

Against: None.

Total against: None.

Present not voting: The Mayor, Councillor Lyons, and Councillors S Ashall, A Azad, J Brown, K Davis, S Dorsett, G Elson, K Howard, D Harlow, S Hussain, C Kemp, N Martin, C Rana and Whitehand

Total present not voting: 14

The Motion was therefore carried by 13 votes in favour to none against.

RESOLVED

That the Motion be supported.

Councillor A Kirby

The following motion was moved by Councillor Kirby and seconded by Councillor Hughes and referred to the Executive on 24 March 2022 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“Easy access to Council recordings

This Council resolves that all video recordings of public meetings of Council and its Committees will henceforth be made available for public viewing on demand, in perpetuity.

Archive recordings of all previously public meetings of Council and Council Committees will also be made available for public viewing on the same platform, wherever this is legally and technically possible.”

Councillor S Dorsett

The following motion was moved by Councillor Dorsett and seconded by Councillor Ashall for consideration by the Executive at its meeting on 24 March 2022 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“This council recognises the importance of democratic choice at the ballot box, of fair representation of our communities and that every person should have the greatest possible opportunity to vote positively for a party that represents their values and viewpoint.

Parties deciding to not field candidates on ballot papers in essence robs supporters of the choice of parties who truly reflects their views. This practice undermines voters and democracy overall.

This council urges all parties to stand in the maximum number of wards in all forthcoming elections for which they are able to find candidates so that elections in Woking result in a true reflection of the different views of voters.”

Councillor Barker asked for the Motion to be determined on the night rather than referred to the next meeting of the Executive. The Council was advised that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Mayor could determine whether a motion should be determined on the night if it could be convenient and conducive to the despatch of business.

The Mayor chose to ask Members to indicate in an unnamed vote whether they wished to refer the motion to the Executive or determine it on the night. A total of 14 Councillors voted in favour of determining the motion on the night, against 5 Councillors who wished to refer it to the Executive before being brought back to the Council. In view of the results of the vote, the Mayor took the decision to determine the motion on the night and invited Councillor Dorsett to speak in support of the Motion.

Councillor Dorsett explained that the Motion sought to encourage the Political Parties to put forward candidates in the available wards where possible to provide the electors with the widest choice of candidates. Councillor Barker moved and Councillor Forster seconded the following amendment to the Motion (changes highlighted in bold):

“This council recognises the importance of democratic choice at the ballot box, of fair representation of our communities and that every person should have the greatest possible opportunity to vote positively for a **PERSON OR** party that represents their values and viewpoint.

~~**Parties deciding to not field candidates on ballot papers in essence robs supporters of the choice of parties who truly reflects their views. This practice undermines voters and democracy overall.**~~

~~**This council urges all parties to stand in the maximum number of wards in all forthcoming elections for which they are able to find candidates so that elections in Woking result in a true reflection of the different views of voters.**~~

~~**This council notes that only 2 countries in Europe use the first past the post system.**~~

~~**Council believes a proportional voting system would offer local voters greater choice and produce a Council that represents the widest range of views across the borough.”**~~

The Council was advised, however, that an amendment could not seek to substantially change the meaning of a Motion, and accordingly the amendment was not accepted. The Council proceeded to debate the Motion as submitted, with a number of Councillors speaking against it. Councillor Nicholson subsequently moved and Councillor Barker seconded an amendment which had the effect of changing the motion to read (changes highlighted in bold):

“This council recognises the importance of democratic choice at the ballot box, of fair representation of our communities and that every person should have the greatest possible opportunity to vote positively for a **person or a** party that represents their values and viewpoint.

~~**Parties deciding to not field candidates on ballot papers in essence robs supporters of the choice of parties who truly reflects their views. This practice undermines voters and democracy overall.**~~

~~**This council urges all parties to stand in the maximum number of wards in all forthcoming elections for which they are able to find candidates** so that elections in Woking result in a true reflection of the different views of voters.”~~

The amendment was debated before the Mayor invited the Elected Members to indicate whether they supported the Motion as amended. The amendment was supported unanimously and it was

RESOLVED

That the motion, as amended and as set out below, be supported.

“This council recognises the importance of democratic choice at the ballot box, of fair representation of our communities and that every person should have the greatest possible opportunity to vote positively for a person or a party that represents their values and viewpoint so that elections in Woking result in a true reflection of the different views of voters.”

15. COUNCILLOR K HOWARD

At the end of the meeting, Councillor Leach made a statement in respect of Councillor Ken Howard, who was standing down as a Councillor at the forthcoming elections after serving the Borough for over twenty years. The Council thanked Councillor Howard for his service and, noting that he would be unable to attend the last Council meeting of the Municipal Year, extended the Council’s best wishes for the future.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and ended at 10.25pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____