

MINUTES  
OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WOKING**

held on 19 January 2021

Present:

Cllr Mrs B A Hunwicks (Chair)  
Cllr S Hussain (Vice-Chair)

Cllr M Ali	Cllr D Harlow
Cllr S Ashall	Cllr K Howard
Cllr A Azad	Cllr D E Hughes
Cllr T Aziz	Cllr I Johnson
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr D J Bittleston	Cllr R N Leach
Cllr J E Bond	Cllr L S Lyons
Cllr A J Boote	Cllr N Martin
Cllr M A Bridgeman	Cllr R Mohammed
Cllr G G Chrystie	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr G S Cundy	Cllr M I Raja
Cllr K M Davis	Cllr C Rana
Cllr G W Elson	Cllr J R Sanderson
Cllr W P Forster	

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

Absent: Councillor M A Whitehand.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Melanie Whitehand. It was noted that Councillor Forster had indicated that he would join the meeting late.

**2. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.**

The Mayor advised that she had not attended any events since the last meeting of the Council, held earlier in the month.

**3. URGENT BUSINESS.**

No items of Urgent Business were considered.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillor D J Bittleston 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 A Azad declared a nonpecuniary 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 nonpecuniary 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 nonpecuniary 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 G S Cundy declared a nonpecuniary interest in any items concerning the companies of which he was a Council appointed director. The companies are listed in the attached schedule. The interests were such that speaking and voting were permissible.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Chief Executive, Ray Morgan, 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 Morgan could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Deputy Chief Executive, Douglas Spinks, 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 Spinks could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, declared a disclosable personal interest (nonpecuniary) 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 Bryant 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 the companies of which she was a Council-appointed director. The companies were listed in an attached schedule. The interests were such that Mrs Clarke 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 Community Services, Julie Fisher, declared a disclosable personal interest (nonpecuniary) 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 Finance, Leigh Clarke, declared a disclosable personal interest (non-pecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GoDev Woking Limited development. The interest arose 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 was such that Mrs Clarke could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Peter Bryant, declared a disclosable personal interest (nonpecuniary) in any items concerning Woking Football Club and/or the GoDev Woking Limited development. The interest arose 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 was such that Mr Bryant could advise the Council on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Director of Community Services, Julie Fisher, declared a disclosable personal interest in item 5, Appointment of Chief Executive. The interest is such that Julie left the meeting during the determination of the item.

## **5. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE WBC21-004.**

The Council received a report on the appointment of Chief Executive. Councillor Azad moved and Councillor Ashall seconded the recommendation before the Council, namely the appointment of Julie Fisher as Chief Executive.

The matter had been considered at a Special Council meeting held on 7 January 2021 at which the Members had resolved to defer consideration of the appointment to give Members the opportunity to meet Julie Fisher. An all-Member private meeting with Julie Fisher had therefore been held on Thursday, 14 January 2021.

Councillor Azad introduced the report, drawing attention to the key challenges faced by the Council and the importance of the role played by the Chief Executive. The recommendation to appoint Julie Fisher was strongly commended to the Council, with the Leader of the Council noting Julie's long and valued roles in Local Government with Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council.

The proposal before the Council was debated and several Councillors expressed their dissatisfaction with the process adopted by the Council. Other Councillors, however, warmly welcomed the proposal, noting that Julie had clearly demonstrated her suitability for the post during the recruitment process. Following the discussion and in accordance with Standing Order 10.8, the names of Members voting for and against the recommendation were recorded. The Mayor advised that she would not be voting.

In favour: Councillors S Ashall, A Azad, D Bittleston, G Cundy, K Davis, G Elson, D Harlow, K Howard, D Hughes, S Hussain, I Johnson, C

Kemp, R Leach, L Lyons, N Martin, R Mohammed, L Morales, M I Raja, C Rana and J Sanderson.

Total in favour: 20

Abstained: Councillors M Ali, T Aziz, A-M Barker, J Bond, A Boote, M Bridgeman, G Chrystie.

Total abstained: 7

Present not voting: The Mayor, Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks

The recommendation was therefore carried by 20 votes in favour and no votes against. Seven Councillors abstained from voting.

(NOTE: Councillor Forster joined the meeting after the vote had been taken.)

RESOLVED

That Julie Fisher be appointed as the Council's Chief Executive with effect from 1 April 2021.

Julie Fisher re-joined the meeting following the decision of Council and The Mayor congratulated Julie on her appointment. Julie advised that she was honoured and delighted with the appointment and looked forward to working with the staff, Councillors and partners of Woking Borough Council.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 7.45 pm

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_