

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

held on 30 March 2023

Present:

Cllr S Hussain (Mayor)  
Cllr M I Raja (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr H Akberali	Cllr D M C Jordan
Cllr A Azad	Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr T Aziz	Cllr A Kirby
Cllr A-M Barker	Cllr R N Leach
Cllr A J Boote	Cllr L S Lyons
Cllr A Caulfield	Cllr L M N Morales
Cllr G T Cosnahan	Cllr J P Morley
Cllr K M Davis	Cllr E Nicholson
Cllr S Dorsett	Cllr S M Oades
Cllr G W Elson	Cllr D Roberts
Cllr W P Forster	Cllr J R Sanderson
Cllr P J T Graves	Cllr T G Spenser
Cllr I Johnson	Cllr M A Whitehand

Absent: Councillors M Ali and J Brown

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Mayor reported that two long standing officers of the Council – Leigh Clarke, Director of Finance, and Jo McIntosh, Director of Legal and Democratic Services – would be retiring at the end of the month. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked both Officers for their long service to the Council.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor J Brown.

**2. MINUTES.**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 9 February and 23 February 2023 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**3. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.**

The Mayor reported on the recent events he had attended across the Borough and beyond. These had included a community play reading – Testing Times – at the Surrey History Centre, a Woking based story around the 1919 influenza and 2020 Covid pandemics.

A further event had been the centenary celebration of the American Veteran Monuments Commission, and the Mayor had also attended the Surrey Armed Forces Covenant Conference with the Deputy Mayor and Councillor Boote.

#### **4. URGENT BUSINESS.**

No items of Urgent Business were considered.

#### **5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

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 on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Strategic Director - Corporate Resources, Kevin Foster 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 Foster could advise on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Strategic Director - Place, Giorgio Framalitto, 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 Framalitto could advise on those items.

In accordance with the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Strategic Director - Communities, 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 on those items.

#### **6. QUESTIONS.**

Copies of questions submitted under Standing Order 8.1 together with draft replies had been published in advance of the meeting. The replies were confirmed by Members of the Executive, supplementary questions were asked and replies given as set out below:

1. Question from Councillor Rob Leach

“How many residents are benefiting from the Meals on Wheels Service?”

Reply from Councillor Ellen Nicholson

“During February 2023, we delivered 4,595 meals to 197 customers. The biggest take-up was hot lunches (3,118 delivered) followed by the tea time bag (1,153 delivered). As discussed previously the Community Meals Service offers so much more than a meal and is a highly valued service by our vulnerable residents.”

Supplementary Question

“Thank you Mr Mayor, yes I do. A very brief one you’ll be pleased to hear.

Are there any trends, I would like to ask the Portfolio Holder, in the need for the meals service and its use?

Thank you.”

Reply from Councillor Ellen Nicholson

“Thank you, Councillor Leach.

I wouldn’t say there are necessarily any trends that we are actually seeing. I would say that all of our residents who partake in the community meals are vulnerable and actually are needing that service.

I had the opportunity to go out with the community meals service earlier this week and I was incredibly impressed by the dedication of the staff, both in the Council but also the staff on the ground who are actually delivering the meals.

It is an essential service for our vulnerable residents, just checking in with them daily to see about their needs and I am really pleased, actually. As a child I went out with community meals services and actually the ethos and caring remains the same, you know, decades later, so I am very pleased about that. So nothing further to report.

Thank you.”

The Mayor

“Thank you, Councillor Nicholson.

I can actually also say that I did too went with the Community Meals and they do more than just deliver meals. They’re an extra emergency service, as you might say. Long may it continue.”

2. Question from Councillor Steve Dorsett

“Considering the recent decision to scrap the Town Centre Buggy, Cllr Forster said the Council would be looking at other methods to replace those services for the residents who rely on them. Can he update Council as to where we are with that?”

Reply from Councillor Will Forster

“As I stated during the February Full Council meeting in my response to a question from Councillor Colin Kemp, the Council did not make the decision to end the town buggy service. Although aware of it, the provider did not meet the deadline to submit a full application for funding from the Council’s Community Grants budget.

Despite best efforts, the town buggy service had seen dwindling passenger numbers, coupled with increasing running costs in recent years. The service is sadly no longer financially viable.

The town centre buggy service was just one of a number of offers of support for vulnerable residents in Woking. Woking's Town Centre offers accessible shops and facilities and a well designed public realm. The Council supports Woking Shopmobility services which enables residents to access a range of equipment and specialist transport. The full offer is published on the Woking Shopmobility website."

Supplementary Question

"Yes I do, Mr. Mayor, thank you.

I thank the Portfolio Holder for his reply, but he doesn't really answer as to what will be replacing the Town Centre Buggy. There are alternative services available, but none that do a similar role that the Buggy had for residents.

The loss of the buggy, which I believe has operated for over 20 years now, is deeply upsetting for those who regularly need to use its service.

I've spoken with the gentleman who's provided the service. He still maintains that he believed he got the application in on time. It feels there may have been a bit of a mistake made here somewhere and it seems a real shame if the reason that we're losing this service is down to a mistake.

I understand that it costs £22,000 a year to run which £22,000 pounds is a lot of money but in the scheme of what the Council spend is not the greatest sum. He feels, and I agree, that this is a step back for social inclusion in Woking.

Could Councillor Forster please advise me as to what I should say to the handful of residents that have phoned me up in tears, not knowing how they're going to be able to get around the town to do their essential shopping."

Reply from Councillor Will Forster

"Thank you Mr. Mayor.

Earlier this week, the Council and Woking Community Transport, who provided the Town Centre Buggy, agreed a joint statement to highlight to residents to properly communicate what has happened with the service and a part of it I will read briefly. 'That despite best efforts, this difficult decision was made due to dwindling passenger numbers coupled with increasing running costs and loss of grant funding that has meant the service is no longer financially viable.

The service, sadly, was no longer financially viable; it cost £8 to take someone across Jubilee Square. That isn't viable for anyone. However, this joint statement points residents to alternative provision, namely Woking Shopmobility and Woking Community Transport's Dial-a-Ride service.' Please look at the Council website for further details, as I appreciate you'll cut me off at some point, but there are alternative provision available, and that's what we state in our response and on the website. So that's what I recommend Councillor Dorsett to tell his residents who are concerned.

Thank you, Mr. Mayor."

3. Question from Councillor Steve Dorsett

“As part of this Council’s commitment to a greener Woking and a more sustainable environment, the Council would provide blue recycling bins to local events taking place in the Borough. This service was convenient for event organisers and ensured waste was properly recycled. I understand the Council has now decided to stop this practice. Can the portfolio holder update the Council on this and explain the reasoning behind it?”

Reply from Councillor Peter Graves

“The Controlled Waste Regulations categorise waste from a market or fair as commercial waste. Producers of commercial waste are responsible for employing suitably licensed waste collection contractors and paying for its collection and disposal. There are a range of local providers able to offer this service and provide a range of bins. The service can continue to be arranged via the Council’s waste collection contractor. If an event organiser wishes to employ the Council’s household waste collection contractor (Amey) they are now asked to contact Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) directly to discuss their requirements. JWS manage the Amey contract on the Council’s behalf and are best placed to oversee these arrangements. JWS will liaise with Amey and provide the event organiser with a quotation for providing the service (providing/retrieving bins, separate collection of the commercial waste and commercial waste disposal etc). The event organisers would need to pay this cost to Woking Borough Council (in-turn the Council will pay Amey’s commercial collection and Surrey County Council’s commercial disposal costs). This arrangement ensures that the full cost of a commercial service is met by the event organiser, which may not have always been the case in previous years. This arrangement was successfully used for the Surrey Half Marathon Event in March.”

Supplementary Question

“Yes, I do, Mr. Mayor, thank you.

It’s disappointing to hear that residents will not be getting the support needed from Council to host events by retaining the blue bin service, considering support for communities is a key part of the Woking strategy.

The end result may be that voluntary groups will no longer be able to host events and that would be a huge loss for us all. The Pyrford Village Show is one such event and indeed one of the largest events held by the Borough, attracting thousands of visitors to the village, organised by a team of local volunteers. Both volunteers who have contacted me and asked me to ask Councillor Graves this question in Council, bearing in mind he is also a Pyrford Ward Councillor.

So by supplying this service, the Council was supporting this fantastic event and ensuring waste was properly recycled. Is the Portfolio Holder sure that he wants to turn his back on the show and the good people of Pyrford?”

Reply from Councillor Peter Graves

“Thank you for that question, Councillor Dorsett, and thank you, Mr. Mayor.

There will be elements of that answer of that question I have to come back to you on because I’m not fully au fait with all of the details. But the truth is that the cost of

providing the bins, for example, to the Surrey half marathon, was about £600 to the Council, and that comes straight out of the Council Tax income that we take.

The other side of this is that, unfortunately, a lot of the, a lot of the recycling that we collect from events from fairs and, indeed, sadly from the Pyrford Show, sadly that is, is actually virtual recycling. It ends up in the, it ends up in the black bins, so it is unfortunate that that is the case, and so really it is a service that we'd love to provide, but again it is stretching the Council's finances further. And it is of the 1,000 or 2,000, I think, people that attended the Pyrford Show last year, it may be that we have to ask them to contribute 20p more or so to cover the cost of those, of those bins.

The other elements of Mr., of Councillor Dorsett's answer I will come back to because I have to refer to the officers.

Thank you."

4. Question from Councillor Louise Morales

"How much in repayments does the Council have to find each year to pay back its borrowing? Please could the portfolio holder provide the figures for the next 3 years."

Reply from Councillor Dale Roberts

"In 2023/24 the debt service costs charged to the Revenue Budget will be £62m and in the two years following the figure is likely to rise to £67m by 2025/26. Clearly this will depend on the cost of borrowing which is not in the Council's control and the extent to which the Council chooses to invest in assets funded by prudential borrowing."

Supplementary Question

No.

5. Question from Councillor Melanie Whitehand

"Would the Leader of the Council agree with me that our Residents expect us to attend all Council meetings to fulfil our duties as elected Members.

Obviously circumstances may change at short notice and cause a Member to miss the occasional meeting, but to repeatedly miss meetings may be considered a dereliction of duty.

Would the Full Council attendance by all Members be published as part of the reply please?"

Reply from Councillor Ann-Marie Barker

"I thank Councillor Whitehand for her question and agree that attendance at meetings, whether Council, Committee or Working Group, is an important responsibility of all elected representatives.

Set out below are the attendance records for the meetings of Full Council held in the 2022/23 Municipal Year. The figures for this evening's meeting have not been included.

The attendance figures for all meetings are published on the Council's website, under the details of individual Councillors.

In May 2017 the Council considered the attendance record of Councillors at Committee meetings. The Council resolved the following, in light of the poor attendance record at some meetings:

"The relevant Group Leader be advised in the event a Member fails to attend two or more meetings of a Committee or Working Group to which they had been appointed with a view to improving general attendance."

In accordance with this resolution, the Head of Democratic Services notifies the respective Group Leader in writing in the event a Member of their Group fails to attend two or more consecutive meetings of the Council, the Executive, Committees, Working Groups, Task Groups or Panels."

Attendance at Meetings of Full Council – 2022/23 Municipal Year

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>19/05</b>	<b>23/05</b>	<b>21/7</b>	<b>13/10</b>	<b>1/12</b>	<b>9/2</b>	<b>23/2</b>	
Akberali, H	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	6/7
Ali, M	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	2/7
Azad, A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Aziz, T	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6/7
Barker, A-M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Boote, A	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	4/7
Brown, J	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Caufield, A	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	4/7
Cosnahan, G	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	6/7
Davis, K	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Dorsett, S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Elson, G	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	5/7
Forster, W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Graves, P	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Hussain, S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7

Johnson,	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Jordan, D	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6/7
Kemp, C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Kirby, A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Leach, R	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Lyons, L	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Morales, L	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Morley, J	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Nicholson, E	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	6/7
Oades, S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Raja, I	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Roberts, D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Sanderson, J	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Spenser, T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Whitehand, M	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	6/7
Attendance	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	

Supplementary Question

Yes I do Mr Mayor, excuse my voice people.

Very pleased to see this table, but I am somewhat concerned that on some of the results, there are just above a 50% attendance, which I think is quite concerning when the residents of Woking expect us to do our duty and attend a Council meeting and in one instance there's a very, very high percentage of absenteeism.

Could the Portfolio Holder or Leader of the Council determine exactly how many will automatically qualify you for it a disqualification.

Thank you."

Reply from Councillor Ann-Marie Barker

"Thank you, Councillor Whitehand.

I understand the criteria for disqualification is for not having attended any statutory Council meeting for six months, so there's quite a high barrier and of course it's really important for people to attend Council meetings.



We need to do the business of the Council and it's a shame when people can't do it, but there can be many reasons why people are unable to make Council meetings. I can see that you missed one yourself this year, I'm sure for a very good reason and you know Councillors do an awful lot of other work in the, in the community as well, so it's not only attending Council meetings that is important. As is mentioned in the response there, we have instituted something so if Councillors are missing a couple of meetings, a couple of meetings on the run, then that is advised to their, their Group Leaders and the Group Leaders are then able to, to take that, that up.

I realise that it is obviously Councillors from Groups other than your own that are the issue this time but I actually believe that criteria came in when there were several Conservative Councillors that routinely didn't attend meetings, so it happens across the Chamber at times. It's unfortunate, but I hope that we can control that and encourage people to attend the meetings."

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE WBC23-016.**

Councillor A-M Barker moved and Councillor W Forster seconded the reception and adoption of the report and recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 23 March 2023.

### **7a. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) EXE23-016.**

The recommendations of the Executive in respect of the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26 were presented by Councillor Roberts, Portfolio Holder for Finance. The report submitted to the Executive had outlined the position of the initiatives which the Council had agreed to commit to in order to pursue financial resilience and to constrain expenditure. It was noted that a further, more significant update of the MTFS would be brought to the Executive in July 2023. Councillor Roberts referred to the ongoing work on restrictions on expenditure and the detailed technical work required for minimal revenue provision, both of which related to the risk issuing a Section 114 Notice.

The provisions within the paper were debated and the importance of adopting approaches which would have the effect of maximising income in the future was highlighted. However, concerns were expressed over changes in parking charges and their impact, particularly on users of Woking Leisure Centre. The factors that led to the current financial position of the Council were discussed, recognising the impact of Covid and the increase in inflation on the income and expenditure of the Authority.

Following the debate, Councillor Roberts was provided with the opportunity to respond to the points raised before the Mayor referred the Members to the recommendations set out in the report before the Council. In accordance with Standing Order 10.8 the recommendations were put to a vote.

The names of Members voting for and against the recommendations were recorded as follows:

In favour: Councillors H Akberali, T Aziz, A-M Barker, A Boote, A Caulfield, G Cosnahan, W Forster, P Graves, I Johnson, D Jordan, A Kirby, R Leach, L Lyons, L Morales, J Morley, E

	Nicholson, S Oades, M I Raja, D Roberts, J Sanderson and T Spencer.
Total in favour:	21
Against:	None.
Total against:	0
Present not voting:	The Mayor, Councillor S Hussain, and Councillors A Azad, K Davis, S Dorsett, G Elson, C Kemp, and M Whitehand
Total present not voting:	7

The recommendations of the Executive were therefore carried by 21 votes in favour and no votes against.

**RESOLVED**

- That (i) the latest iteration of the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved;
- (ii) approval of the proposed Flexible Use of Capital Receipts in 2023/24 and submission of a plan to DLUHC be delegated to the Strategic Director – Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder;
- (iii) the Parent Company Guarantee (PCG) be extended by delegation to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, for the provision of Gas to Thamesway Central Milton Keynes Ltd (TCMK); and
- (iv) from 1 April 2023 loans advanced to Thamesway Central Milton Keynes Ltd. (TCMK) to be at the relevant PWLB interest rate with no margin be approved.

**7b. Review of the Constitution EXE23-033.**

The Council's Constitution had been reviewed in recent months, taking onboard feedback received from Councillors to ensure that the new Constitution would be easier to navigate and understand. The Council would ensure that the document became a 'living' document, regularly refreshed to ensure it remained up-to-date, relevant and usable. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Barker, introduced the recommendations of the Executive, welcoming the new approach and thanking those involved for their hard work.

A number of the key changes to the Constitution were highlighted by the Leader, including clarification of the process for questions and notices of motion, new standards for dress codes and no longer having to stand to speak at meetings of the Council.

The Councillors welcomed the revised provisions with the Constitution and thanked the officers for their work.

**RESOLVED**

- That (i) the Constitution and all the provisions contained within it be adopted with effect from 5 May 2023; and
- (ii) the Corporate Governance Working Group be formally established in accordance with the Terms of Reference included within the body of the Constitution.

**7c. Affordable Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) EXE23-008.**

Councillor Lyons, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy, introduced the recommendations of the Executive in respect of the adoption of the revised Affordable Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning Document. The Document would be key in managing development across the Borough and other planning decisions.

The draft Document had been the subject to a public consultation in response to which thirteen representations had been received. No significant changes had been proposed, though the implications for planning were highlighted by Councillor Morales, Chairman of the Planning Committee.

**RESOLVED**

- That (i) the various representations to the Affordable Housing Delivery 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 Affordable Housing Delivery 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; and
- (iii) the requirements of the SPD should apply from the date of adoption, in this case 30 March 2023.

**8. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WBC23-013.**

Councillor Azad, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the annual report of the Committee, outlining the key activities undertaken during the year and the work of the Task Groups that sat under the Committee. The Vice-Chairman further outlined the comprehensive programme of work undertaken over the past year and the ambitions of the Committee for the coming year.

Councillor Azad thanked the Members of the Committee for their support over the year, noting the many achievements that they had brought about.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**9. ANNUAL REPORT BY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES WBC23-014.**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Barker, introduced the report and welcomed the contributions from the Council's representatives on outside bodies.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

**10. ANNUAL REPORT ON MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT WBC23-015.**

Councillor Leach, Lead Councillor for Member Learning and Development, presented the annual report on the Council's learning and development activities over the past year.

It was noted that there would no longer be a budget to commission training events for the coming Municipal Year. However, Officers would ensure that a comprehensive programme was provided over the year, identifying opportunities both within the Authority and through agencies such as the Local Government Association without incurring a financial cost to the Council.

Included in the report was the Council's Policy for Member learning and development which had been reviewed and was before the Council for approval.

RESOLVED

That (i) the Elected Member learning and development activities of 2022-23 be noted; and

(ii) the updated Policy for Elected Member Learning and Development, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be adopted.

**11. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023-24 WBC23-001.**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Barker introduced the report on the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24. The Leader highlighted key elements of the report, including the fact that Woking Borough Council had a local pay policy and that the Authority continued to provide a living wage standard, and was currently seeking accreditation through the Living Wage Foundation.

RESOLVED

That the Pay Policy Statement be approved for publication

**12. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICER DIRECTOR TO COUNCIL GROUP COMPANIES WBC23-017.**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Barker, introduced a report which proposed the appointment of Directors to the Council Group Companies. The proposals would ensure that the Boards continued to have the appropriate skills and experience that was both

advantageous and appropriate to the companies, whilst ensuring that Council appointed Officers had control of the Boards.

RESOLVED

That (i) the Head of Digital and Transformation be appointed to the Boards as outlined in table 2.2 as at 1 April 2023; and

(ii) the Strategic Director - Corporate Resources be appointed to the Boards as outlined in table 2.3 as at 1 April 2023

**13. NOTICES OF MOTION.**

Two notices of motion had been received from Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 5.0.

**13a. Councillor E Nicholson - Retrospective Surface Water Action.**

Councillor E Nicholson

The following motion was moved by Councillor Nicholson and seconded by Councillor Lyons and referred to the Executive on 15 June 2023 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“Retrospective Surface Water Action The latest State of the UK Climate report indicates the UK has become wetter over the last few decades, although with significant annual variation. 2011-2020 was 9% wetter than 1961-1990. From the start of the observational record in 1862, six of the ten wettest years across the UK have occurred since 1998.

The recent UK climate projections (UKCP18) provide the most up-to-date assessment of how the UK climate could change over the 21st century. Overall, the UK is expected to experience wetter winters and drier summers.

However, rain that does fall in summer will likely be more intense than what we currently experience. For example, rainfall from an event that typically occurs once every 2 years in summer is expected to increase by around 25%. This will impact on the frequency and severity of surface water flooding, particularly in urban areas.

In towns and cities, flash floods are a growing problem. Concrete can't soak up rainwater, so in heavy downpours it has nowhere to go except into drains, overloading sewers and setting off flash floods. During the recent heavy rainfall, the water caused slippages within the station underpass and led to pooling of water within areas of the town centre.

Therefore this motion proposes that this Council:

1. Engages with South West Trains to seek to secure surface water drainage systems are retrospectively fitted to the two entrances to the station underpass and /or other measures to capture rainwater are installed to reduce the excess water overspill causing slippage within the underpass.
2. That Woking planning applications continue to be assessed with surface water drainage systems in mind and that the County, as the lead flood authority is consulted on planning applications where required.

3. That Woking Borough Council work proactively with the partners to green Victoria Square, and introduce features such as rainwater gardens in line with the aspirations of the town centre Masterplan.”

**13b. Councillor K Davis - Digital Backbone.**

Councillor K Davis

The following motion was moved by Councillor Davis and seconded by Councillor Whitehand and referred to the Executive on 15 June 2023 in accordance with Standing Order 5.7.

“At the March Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting, Enterprise M3, the Local Enterprise Partnership discussed the Guildford to Basingstoke Digital Spine and confirmed that Woking would not have a spur to join the Gigabit link.

Connecting to the Internet via Gigabit links is a key part of the Digital Strategy as it is important for the economic output of the borough as well as the limitless opportunities high speed links provides to residents.

Would the Council please investigate opportunities that exist with a view to ensuring that the borough is connected to the fastest possible digital backbone as soon as possible and certainly within three years if it cannot be achieved within the Digital Strategy period.”

**14. VOTE OF THANKS.**

The Leader of the Council and Group Leaders thanked the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for their service over the past year and expressed their appreciation of the work undertaken by Officers and Councillors.

It was noted that Councillor Mohammed Ali, Councillor Ayesha Azad, Councillor Gary Elson, Councillor Colin Kemp and Councillor James Sanderson would be standing down as Councillors at the next Election. The Council recorded their thanks for the outstanding roles they had taken on during their terms of office. Best wishes were further extended to all those standing in the Borough elections on 4 May 2023.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 8.53 pm

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

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