

**Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
20 April 2026**

Present:

Councillor J.R. Sexton (Chair)
Councillor C. Bateson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:

J. Button	S.M. Doran	L. E. Nichols
D.C. Clarke	M. Gibson	H.R.D. Williams

Substitutions: Councillors K. Howkins (In place of J.R. Boughtflower)
S.A. Dunn (In place of J.A. Turner)

Apologies: Councillors M.M. Attewell, M.J. Lee and S.C. Mooney

33/26 Apologies and Substitutes

Apologies were received from Councillors Attewell, Boughtflower, Lee, Mooney and Turner. Councillor Dunn attended as Councillor Turner's substitute, and Councillor Howkins attended as Councillor Boughtflower's substitute.

34/26 Minutes

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 3 February 2026, and the meeting held on 17 February 2026 and 23 February 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

35/26 Disclosures of Interest

Councillor Sexton advised she was also a Surrey County Councillor.

Councillor Nichols advised that he was on the Board of Directors for Knowle Green Estates.

36/26 Questions from members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public.

37/26 Improvement and Recovery Plan Progress Update

The Committee considered a report from the Interim Chief Executive detailing the progress on the Improvement and Recovery Plan. The report, if agreed by Council, would be submitted to Commissioners to formally track the Council's progress from recovery towards sustained improvement. The report set out actions and activities against the themes set out in the Plan, and highlighted priority actions for the next review period.

The Committee noted the priorities against the time the Council had remaining as an authority, and the focus required to accomplish to achieve progress on those priorities. The Committee suggested that timelines for progress would be a useful addition to the report. Progress reports would be presented to the Committee periodically in future.

The Committee **resolved** to recommend to Council approval of the Improvement and Recovery Plan Progress Report for onward submission to the Commissioners.

38/26 Adoption of a Commercial Strategy for Spelthorne Borough Council

The Committee considered the adoption of a Commercial Strategy that would cover all Council commercial activity. The Commercial Strategy would provide a clear framework to strengthen financial resilience, embed commercial thinking across all services, and ensure the Council was fully prepared for transition to the new unitary authority in 2027. The strategy consolidated commercial, procurement, and governance expectations into a single approach focused on value for money, good governance compliance and public benefit.

Councillor Nichols suggested a minor amendment regarding direct awards and suggested any direct awards be signed off by the Chief Executive. This was agreed by the Committee.

The Committee noted how the strategy would be incorporated into future commercial activity and its ties to procurement and contract management.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the adoption of the Commercial Strategy covering all Council commercial activity.

39/26 The Spelthorne Borough Council Off-Street Parking Places (Amendment No.3) Order 2026

The Committee considered selected proposed variations to the Spelthorne Borough Council Off-Street Parking Places (Amendment No. 3) Order 2026 following a recommendation from the Environment and Sustainability

Committee. The Group Head Neighbourhood services summarised the proposals which included reducing a nil-charge first hour to a 30-minute free period in certain car parks, reclassifying specific car parks as free parking spaces, introducing a restriction on return within a specific time period, updating Tariffs on Car Parks in Staines, and including the Leisure Centre Car Park within the parking order.

The Committee noted the recommendation of the Environment and Sustainability Committee in relation to retaining the current one-hour nil tariff period. Some members of the Committee acknowledged that reducing the time would encourage parking turnover and if the car parks were not making a return in income, this was being subsidised by all residents. Other members of the Committee acknowledged the comments in response to the consultation and felt the one-hour nil tariff period should be retained.

The Committee expressed support for removing specific car parks from the schedule of chargeable tariffs and were assured they would continue to be maintained.

A recorded vote was requested by Councillor Clarke.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Retain the current one-hour nil tariff period in car parks and make no changes to the order or the tariffs
2. Removal of Abbey Drive, Dumsey Meadow, Old Bathing Station and Green Street from Schedule 1 chargeable tariffs, and addition of same car parks to Schedule 3 with 11 hours maximum stay.
3. Introduce a “no return within the same charging period” in all car parks listed in Appendix 2 Schedule 1
4. Revise the Parking Order map for Spelthorne Leisure Centre, to accurately reflect the new layout, as detailed in Appendix 3.
5. Introduce other minor amendments as detailed in Appendix 1 and 2 and schedules 1, 2 and 3.
6. Change of the Staines-upon-Thames Short and Long Stay tariffs and introduction of reference to the charges being per parking session, as detailed in Appendix 2, Schedule 4 and Schedule 5.

40/26 Amendments to the Corporate Debt Policy and Financial Regulations

The Committee considered amendments to the Corporate Debt Policy and Financial Regulations following an audit conducted by Southern Internal Audit Partnership. The audit highlighted some limitations within the operational debt processes, and a number of processes-driven updates were required. These reflected practical adjustments designed to strengthen financial controls, promote consistency across services, and further reduce risks associated with income recovery.

The Committee noted the issues raised through the internal audit, and were assured that processes and recovery were continuing to improve as there was

more coordination across services in responding to debt. The Committee noted that there were legal time limits and processes regarding recovery that the Council was obligated to address.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Approve the amendments to the Corporate Debt Policy required following the Southern Internal Audit Partnership audit conducted in October 2025.
2. Approve the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations (Part 4d of the Constitution) as detailed in Appendix A; and
3. Subject to the comments from the Committee System Working Group, to recommend to Council to adopt the revised Financial Regulations and for the Constitution to be amended accordingly.

41/26 Write-off report - Temporary Accommodation

The Committee considered a request to write-off sundry debt of £50,695 which related to irrecoverable debt relating to Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation cases and one emergency accommodation case. The amounts required writing off as there was no forwarding address, and all other avenues of recovery had been exhausted.

The Committee queried whether there were avenues to obtain funds in advance but noted restrictions through universal credit timings and legislation.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the Sundry Debt write-off of £50,695 which relates to irrecoverable debt relating to eight Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation cases and one emergency accommodation case.

42/26 Corporate Key Performance Indicator Report - Quarter 3 2025/26

The Committee received the Corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for Quarter 3 of 2025/26. The KPI report included narratives for each KPI which provided context and insight into performance trends. Three KPI's were currently scored as RED and the Committee were provided with narratives behind those ratings.

The Committee explored the ratings and narratives behind other KPIs.

The Committee **resolved** to agree it was informed and assured in relation to the Corporate Key Performance Indicators data for Quarter 3 2025/26.

43/26 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

The Committee considered the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for adoption. An audit in early 2025 identified gaps in the Council's coverage of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and one of the actions to fulfil was to develop a strategy. The Group Head – Commissioning and Transformation acknowledged that the strategy was short, but given that the Council would

cease to exist in a year and it would be superseded by early work in the West Surrey shadow authority, it was fit for purpose.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

44/26 Solar Canopy Project Closure Report

The Committee considered a report to formally end the solar canopy project in the Eclipse leisure centre car park. The Committee were provided with a timeline which set out conditions that increased the cost of the project and made it more difficult to pursue. The position of the Council had also changed since project initiation due to the impact of Local Government Reorganisation and directives issued by the Secretary of State. The capital funding was no longer available which made the project unviable.

The Committee expressed disappointment that the project was not continuing as it presented a commitment to climate change. The Committee expressed concern over the amount of time spent on the project, but acknowledged the lessons learned.

The Committee **resolved** to agree to formally end the solar canopy project.

45/26 Forward Plan

The Committee **resolved** to note the contents of the Forward Plan.

46/26 Urgent Actions

The Committee received two urgent actions that had been taken since the last meeting.

The Committee were assured in relation to one action that the results would be trackable through work on the Improvement and Recovery Plan.

It was proposed by Councillor Bateson, seconded by Councillor Clarke and **resolved** to exclude the public and press for the remainder of the discussion on this item in accordance with paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) because it was likely to disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the disclosure to the public would prejudice the financial position of the authority in being able to undertake even handed negotiations and finalising acceptable contract terms.

The Committee were assured that in relating to the second urgent action, the action was taken to commence negotiations. Any further decision would be brought before the Committee for approval.

The Committee **resolved** to note the urgent actions.