

**Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee  
24 March 2025**

**Present:**

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

Councillors:

M. Beecher	R.V. Geach	M.J. Lee
J.R. Boughtflower	M. Gibson	L. E. Nichols
J. Button	K.M. Grant	H.R.D. Williams
S.M. Doran	K. Howkins	

**33/25 Apologies and Substitutes**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mooney and Rybinski.

Councillor Clarke attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor Rybinski.

**34/25 Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 10 February 2025 and the Extraordinary meeting held 17 March 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

**35/25 Disclosures of Interest**

Councillor Sexton declared that she was also a Surrey County Council Councillor.

Councillor Nichols declared that he was a Director on the Knowle Green Estates Board.

**36/25 Questions from members of the Public**

There were none.

**37/25 Q3 KPI Update**

The Committee considered a report that sought to inform members of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Q3 2024/25.

The Committee queried some of the figures in the report and asked if Leisure Centre free passes were still provided to those residents that met the criteria needed to qualify for such a pass. The Group Head of Commissioning & Transformation advised that she would liaise with colleagues within Leisure Services and send an email to all members of the committee with a response.

The Committee **resolved** to acknowledge the Key Performance Indicators for Q3 2024/25.

### **38/25     Revised Corporate Key Performance Indicators**

The Committee were advised that a report would be produced quarterly and put on the Council's website to provide transparency. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) would also be presented to Committees on a quarterly basis to enable members to monitor their progress. The figures would be compared to the Council's statistical neighbours, not just other Surrey Authorities to provide a more accurate comparison.

The Committee queried the Assets KPIs and the disparity between how some of the figures were shown. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that for Audit purposes some of the figures had to be shown as accruals but that these could be translated into a non-accruals basis for ease of members' understanding.

The KPIs in respect of the assets investments were queried and officers were asked to include the actual rental figures that the Council received. The Committee were advised that this was likely to be a service KPI and that if this was the case then the figures would be presented to the Business and Investment Committee.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the proposed amendments to the Corporate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

### **39/25     Corporate Debt Policy**

The Committee considered a report that sought approval of the proposed amendments to the Corporate Debt Policy.

The Leader read out the following statement:

"The Corporate Debt Policy required a review to make it clearer and to meet the latest best practice guidelines. The new policy focuses on making it clear to customers the different types of debt and how the Council recovers those different types of debt. It also outlines support for those dealing with debt.

The Council is committed to serving the community by ensuring monies owed to the Council are collected efficiently and effectively. This benefits all taxpayers and helps to prevent anyone from falling into debt. With the cost of living crisis we see more people struggling and by adopting a clear policy with

early contact and consolidated action, we should be able to assist customers as far as possible in paying their debts”.

The Committee queried whether the Citizen Advice Bureau still provided a service at Sunbury Library as quoted in the report. The Committee were advised that this would be checked and Committee members would be advised.

Concerns were raised with regard to recovery of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates and in particular how rapid the recovery process seemed to be. The Committee were advised that any resident or business that were struggling to pay their Council Tax/ Business Rates should contact the Council as soon as they fell into arrears. The Programme Manager advised that the back of the Reminders and Final Notices issued by the Council provided information to residents/businesses on what they could do next with regard to their arrears. The Committee were told that a copy of the back of the Reminders and Final Notices for both Council Tax and Business Rates would be sent to them so that they were aware of the information/advice given.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the proposed amendments to the Corporate Debt Policy.

#### **40/25     Discretionary Rate Relief Policy on Non-Domestic Rates**

The Committee considered a report that sought approval of the Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

The Committee were advised that Councils had the power to award rate relief in respect of properties occupied by charities and other not-for-profit organisations under Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011. Any discretionary rate relief will be in addition to the mandatory relief that Councils must grant to the following:

- Charities where the property is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes
- Registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs for any club with appropriate registration with the HMRC

The Group Head of Commissioning and Transformation advised the Committee that the revised policy was intended to be more transparent and easier for charities/non-profit making organisations to ensure that they are in receipt of any discretionary rate relief that they are entitled to.

Committee **resolved** to approve the Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

#### **41/25     Outline to the Renters Rights Bill**

The Committee considered a report on the Renters Rights Bill that sought to inform them of details of the Bill and the potential impact on Spelthorne Borough Council.

The Committee were advised that the Bill was likely to receive Royal Assent in late Spring 2025 with a proposed commencement date of October 2025.

The Joint Senior Environmental Health Manager advised the Committee that funding from the Government was expected to help implement and manage this new Bill but until it is implemented there are no details about exactly how much this would be.

The implementation and the monitoring of the bill will result in a large increase in work

Members requested that we need to ensure that the Council's residents are made aware of the Renters Rights Bill and how it could help all social, private and Housing Association tenants.

#### **42/25 In year Growth Bid for 2025-26 for Additional Resourcing in Environmental Health**

This item was not considered at this meeting. It is to be presented to the Community Wellbeing & Housing Committee for them to consider and made a decision on at their next meeting on 03 June 2025.

#### **43/25 Calendar of Meetings 2025 - 2026**

The Committee **resolved** to recommend to Council that it approves the Calendar of Meetings for 2025-2027.

#### **44/25 Transformation & Reorganisation Board Terms of Reference**

The Committee considered a report that outlined the proposed Terms of Reference for the new amalgamated Reorganisation and Transformation Board.

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Confirm the merging of the Reorganisation Board and the Transformation Board, with the combined Board to oversee the Council's Transformation Programme and any changes required as part of the Local Government Organisation in Surrey; and
2. Agree the Terms of Reference for the combined Reorganisation and Transformation Board as outlined in Appendix A of the report.

#### **45/25 Recommendation for Member Director on the Spelthorne Direct Services Board**

The Committee were asked to approve the recommendation from the Environmental & Sustainability Committee that Councillor Woodward be appointed as the Member Director on the Spelthorne Director Services Board.

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services advised the Committee that Spelthorne Direct Services was a Commercial Waste Company that was owned by the Council. It had been recommended by Grant Thornton, as part of their audit, that to provide better governance and transparency it would be advisable to have a Spelthorne Councillor on the Board.

The Committee **resolved** to approve the nomination of Councillor Woodward to sit on the Spelthorne Direct Services Board.

#### **46/25 Forward Plan**

The Committee queried the Asset Portfolio Exit Strategies and asked whether this would be the strategies that were over 9 months old or would members be asked to look at the more recent business plans that were currently being considered by the Commercial Assets Sub-Committee. The Committee were advised that a response would be sent to all Committee members to advise them.

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

#### **47/25 Exclusion of Public & Press (Exempt Business)**

It was proposed by Councillor Bateson and seconded by Councillor Gibson and the Committee **resolved** to move the exclusion of the Press/Public for the following item as the report contains exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006 Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because, disclosure to the public would prejudice the financial position of the authority in any lease, contract or other type of negotiation with the tenant or developer, who could then know the position of the Council

#### **48/25 Urgent Action**

The Committee **resolved** to:

1. Acknowledge the urgent action report in respect of the Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 Extension to purchase additional properties;  
and
2. Agree to make a recommendation to Council to add a supplementary estimate to the Capital Programme for 2025-26.