

**Minutes of the Council
7 August 2025**

Present:

Councillors:

J.T.F. Doran	J. Button	A. Mathur
S.A. Dunn	J.P. Caplin	S.C. Mooney
M.M. Attewell	D.C. Clarke	Neall
C. Bateson	S.M. Doran	L. E. Nichols
S.N. Beatty	R.V. Geach	K.E. Rutherford
M. Beecher	D.L. Geraci	D. Saliagopoulos
S. Bhadye	M. Gibson	J.R. Sexton
M. Bing Dong	K.M. Grant	J.A. Turner
H.S. Boparai	S. Gyawali	B. Weerasinghe
M. Buck	K. Howkins	H.R.D. Williams
T. Burrell	M.J. Lee	

Apologies: Councillors M. Arnold, L.H. Brennan, J.R. Boughtflower, R. Chandler, A. Gale, N. Islam and P.N. Woodward

77/24 Disclosures of Interest

Councillors Attewell, Boparai, Mooney, Sexton and Weerasinghe advised they were also Surrey County Councillors.

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

78/24 Motion - Stanwell Hotel

In accordance with Standing Order 16 the Council received one written Notice of Motion.

Councillor Sexton moved and Councillor Bateson seconded the following motion:

The Council call upon the Homes Office to:

1. Immediately reconsider its plans to utilise the Stanwell Hotel to house adult male only asylum seekers,
2. Actively consult and work with the Local Authority,
3. Continue engaging with key stakeholders and support the existing client group of families and single female asylum seekers at the Stanwell Hotel; and
4. Give due regard to public concerns, local services and the local community

It was proposed by Councillor Lee and seconded by Councillor Mooney to amend the motion to add another request to the four above, as follows:

1. Call the immediate and permanent closure of the hotel used as a asylum seeker facility and urge the Home Office to return the hotel back to the local community.

Councillor Lee requested for a named vote to be taken.

For	Councillors Attewell, Bhadye, Bing Dong, Buck, Clarke, Geraci, Howkins, Lee, Mathur, Mooney, Rutherford, Saliagopoulos, Weerasinghe – 13 votes
Against	Councillors J Doran, Dunn, Bateson, Beatty, Beecher, Boparai, Burrell, Button, Caplin, Gibson, Grant, Gyawali, Neal, Nichols, Sexton, Turner Williams – 17 votes
Abstain	Councillor Geach

The amended motion **FELL**

The Leader read out the following statement to the Chamber:

“We are here tonight because the people of Stanwell have serious and valid concerns about the proposed changes to the Stanwell Hotel. To be clear, the Home Office will determine the outcome regarding the hotel independently. Whilst they are not obligated to consult with us or consider our representations, they are now actively engaging with us.

While we can express our views and pass motions, we must operate within the limits of existing legislation. That said, I - and every member of this chamber, will do everything in our power to protect the interests of our residents and to challenge decisions that are not in the best interest of our community.

I want to speak directly to every resident and reassure you, your voices are being heard, and your concerns are not being ignored by this Council.

Earlier today, alongside Councillor Jon Button, I met with senior officials at the Home Office. We went into that meeting with one clear mission: to ensure that the voices of Stanwell are carried straight to the top.

We left no room for doubt. Once again, we made it absolutely clear that the Stanwell Hotel is not, and never will be, a suitable location for this proposal. We have repeated, firmly and unequivocally, that this plan does not work for our community.

However, I must be honest with you: as of now, we have not received the reassurances we wanted. The Home Office has not yet committed to stopping this proposal.

We remain strongly opposed, and we will continue to challenge their plans at every possible opportunity. I will be seeking external legal advice on behalf of our community, and you can be rest assured that we will keep residents updated at every stage.

Following today's meeting, I have immediately written to the Home Office, asking for a full written response to every issue we raised. This isn't just about words, this is about accountability, transparency, and standing up for our community.

Stanwell is a small, close-knit village, and the Home Office's plan to rehouse only single male asylum seekers in the hotel is simply not suitable. Housing one specific demographic in isolation, without integration plans or engagement, risks creating social tension and does not serve the wellbeing of either the local community or individuals moving in.

This arrangement does not reflect a balanced or sustainable approach. Right now, the hotel is home to families, including vulnerable women and children – who have settled here, whose children attend local schools and who have formed strong connections within our community. Uprooting them now would cause severe and unnecessary disruption to their lives. That is not something we can stand by and accept quietly.

This council has a proud record of supporting asylum seekers and refugees. We recognise the importance of fair and humane processes. And while we support the Home Office's broader goal of reducing reliance on hotels, the Stanwell Hotel is not the right location for this particular plan.

Despite the Home Office's recent engagement, I remain deeply concerned about the potential consequences. So tonight, I am calling directly on the Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum, Dame Angela Eagle DBE MP. To listen to the local authority and to listen to the community. Reconsider this decision and reverse it.

In recent days, we have seen residents gather outside the hotel and here tonight to make their voices heard, peacefully and respectfully. I, along with my fellow councillors, want to thank everyone who exercised their democratic right to protest in a calm and lawful manner.

Unfortunately, there have also been isolated incidents involving criminal behaviour, which have prompted the need for additional security measures at the hotel. We condemn such actions. It is vital that we continue to address this issue with respect, calm, and unity.

This Council stands together in our commitment to the wellbeing of Stanwell and the wider Borough. This is our home.

We urge the Home Office to urgently to find a different solution that is fair, safe, and appropriate.

Thank you”.

The motion was carried and it was **resolved** that the Council would write to the Home Office.