

Minutes of West Surrey Shadow Authority Constitution Sub Committee

27 August 2026

Present:

Councillor Jane Austin, Waverley Eastern Villages
Councillor Jonathan Hulley, Thorpe, Longcross & Ottershaw
Councillor Louise Morales, Woking South
Councillor Rory O'Brien, Sunbury Common & Ashford Common
Councillor Joanne Shaw, Guildford East
Councillor Sally Shorthose, Farnham South
Councillor Richard Wilson, Bagshot, Windlesham & Chobham Ward

12 Apologies

There were none.

13 Declarations of interest

There were none.

14 Minutes of previous meeting

The Sub-Committee considered the minutes of the previous meeting held 06 August 2026 and requested that the following text be added:

1. Members of the Sub-Committee requested that members of the Shadow Authority, who were not members of the Standards Committee, could be allowed to sit on the Constitution Sub-Committee provided that they had participated in the required training; and
2. It was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would write to the Shadow Authority members clarifying the use of council meeting webcast footage for social media purposes, reminding members that they could use footage of their own contributions but not of other members and/or officers without prior permission.

15 Proposed Amendments to the Member and Officer Protocol

The Sub-Committee considered the report that outlined the suggested amendments to the Member Office Protocol, for adoption into the Constitution.

The following amendments were requested and agreed by the Sub-Committee:

2.12 – The words ‘in particular when this takes place in public’ to be deleted

2.17 – Add the Monitoring Officer as an escalation option

3.3 – The word ‘spokesmen’ to be amended to ‘spokesperson’

3.6 – Additional wording be added to reflect that this would run in parallel with the Members Code of Conduct

4.9 – The word ‘issue’ to be amended to ‘casework’ and the word ‘speak’ to be amended to ‘contact’

8.3 – reference to private printing be added alongside photocopying

Further amendments were suggested but the Sub-Committee were advised that they would be included within other protocols.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Constitution Sub-Committee recommends that the Standards Committee:
2. Recommend to the Council that the revised Member Officer Protocol is agreed and that the Monitoring Officer be delegated to amend the Constitution accordingly.

16 Scrutiny Structure

The Sub-Committee considered a report that sought feedback from the Committee to input into the future design of the post-vesting day scrutiny function for West Surrey.

A multiple thematic scrutiny model with a small number of members on each was considered to be the best model of scrutiny for West Surrey.

The Sub-Committee were advised that a dedicated Scrutiny Officer had been recruited for the shadow authority period.

The final structure would be developed after consultation with the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Group Leaders.

The Constitution Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider the legislative requirements of a Local Authority scrutiny function alongside the Government’s statutory scrutiny guidance and best practice information,
2. Note the post vesting day arrangements that were put in place for the scrutiny function of councils that have recently undergone Local

Government Reorganisation (LGR) and those of the seven predecessor councils in West Surrey; and

3. Provide feedback and steer to input into the development of the West Surrey Council post vesting day scrutiny arrangements and endorse the proposed approach to engagement with political groups on further development of these to come back to a future meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee for approval; and
4. To recommend option 1 to the Standards Committee:

To consider the best practice guidance and information from other LGR Unitary Authorities and provide feedback to officers to enable them to draw up detailed proposals for future consideration.

17 Governance Arrangements for the Review and Preparation of the Constitution

The Sub-Constitution considered a report that sought a recommendation to the Standards Committee to disband the Constitution Sub-Committee and establish a Constitution Working Group.

It was identified that 5.1 within Appendix 1 needed to be amended to remove reference to the Sub-Committee and to be replaced with Working Group.

Concerns were raised by some Committee Members that the establishment of a Working Group would create a lack of transparency as the public would not be able to attend or listen to the meeting as best practice dictated that Working Groups did not need to be open to the public to attend or livestreamed and that minutes did not need to be compiled and published.

However, the Monitoring Officer advised that minutes would be produced and circulated to all members of the Working Group and the facility to enable the public to view the meeting through Teams would be explored though this could be restricted due to the technology available.

Members were advised that if a Working Group was established meetings could be remote or hybrid. The Sub-Committee agreed that the meeting to be held in December would be an in-person meeting as this would be the final meeting before the Constitution would be presented to the Standards Committee and then to onto Council to be adopted.

A vote was taken to disband the Constitution Sub-Committee and establish a Working Group:

For – 4
Against – 3

A vote was taken to make a recommendation to the Standards Committee to recommend to Council that they approve the disbanding of the Constitution Sub-Committee and the establishment of a Working Group:

For – 4

Against – 3

The Constitution Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Standards Committee that:

Subject to the resolution of Council to disband the Constitution Sub-Committee, establish a Constitution Working Group with immediate effect, with the same membership, for the same purpose, with the same Chair and Vice Chair as the Constitution Sub-Committee, and with the Terms of Reference as in Appendix 1 of the report; and

Recommend to Council that they resolve to:

1. Disband the established Constitution Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee and note that the Standards Committee will, with immediate effect, establish a Constitution Working Group with the same membership and for the same purpose, with the Terms of Reference as in Appendix 1 to the report; and
2. Delegate to the Monitoring Officer the authority to amend the Constitution to reflect any consequential changes arising from this decision.

18 Amendments to the Employment Committee Terms of Reference

The Sub-Committee considered a report that sought consideration of an amendment to the current Terms of Reference for the Employment Committee to allow the Committee to approve employment policies without the need for them to be considered at Full Council, and a recommendation to be made to the Standards Committee.

The Constitution Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Standards Committee recommend to Council:

- a) That the revised Terms of Reference of the Employment Committee, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved: and
- b) That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to make the necessary amendments to the Constitution.

19 Responses to Shadow Authority Member Raised Issues

The Sub-Committee considered a report that set out requests from councillors for areas of the West Surrey Shadow Authority Constitution they wanted to see reviewed and amended.

Any areas for review accepted by the Sub-Committee would be added to the Work Programme and be brought forward for consideration at a later meeting.

The following members' requests had been submitted for the Sub-Committee's consideration:

1. Councillor Mullens- Group Leader's Allowance - This was considered to be low priority at this time but would be considered by an Independent Remuneration Panel early next year.
2. Councillor Mullens – Amendments to meeting dates/start times - This would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 17 September under Council Procedure Rules.
3. Councillor Austin – Recorded Votes - This would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 17 September under Council Procedure Rules.
4. Councillor Wilson – Recorded Votes - This would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 17 September under Council Procedure Rules.
5. Councillor Wilson – Supplementary Questions - This would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 17 September under Council Procedure Rules.
6. Councillor Wilson – Carry over of unfinished business - This would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 17 September under Council Procedure Rules.

20 Work Programme

The Sub-Committee considered the Work Programme for the Constitution Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the Work Programme for the Constitution Sub-Committee.