

Minutes of West Surrey Shadow Authority Standards Committee

2 September 2026

Present:

Councillor Jane Austin, Waverley Eastern Villages
Councillor Chris Bateson, Staines
Councillor Harleen Boparai, Staines South & Ashford West
Councillor Steve Greentree, Knaphill & Goldsworth West
Councillor Jonathan Hulley, Thorpe, Longcross & Ottershaw
Councillor Nirmal Kang, Heatherside & Parkside
Councillor Sarbie Kang, Camberley West & Frimley
Councillor Carl Mann, Thorpe, Longcross & Ottershaw
Councillor Louise Morales, Woking South
Councillor Isabel Mullens, Egham
Councillor Rory O'Brien, Sunbury Common & Ashford Common
Councillor Joanne Shaw, Guildford East
Councillor Sally Shorthose, West Surrey Shadow Authority
Councillor Richard Wilson, Bagshot, Windlesham & Chobham Ward

Apologies:

Councillor Scott Lewis, Woodham & New Haw

13/SD Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Scott Lewis. Councillor Bob Hughes was in attendance as his substitute.

14/SD Declarations of Interest

There were none.

15/SD Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 06 July 2026 were agreed subject to the following amendments:

2/SD – be amended to:

‘Councillor Richard Wilson nominated and Councillor Shorthose seconded Councillor Joanne Shaw as Vice-Chair of the West Surrey Shadow Authority Standards Committee’,

9/SD – to be amended to:

‘A Member of the Shadow Authority may ask the Leader’

16/SD Appointment of Additional Independent Persons

The Committee considered a report that sought consideration of the appointment of an additional Independent Person and a recommendation to be made to the West Surrey Shadow Authority to approve the appointment.

The Committee were advised that it was due to an administrative error that Murray Litvak was not able to be considered for the position of an Independent Person at the previous Standards Committee.

The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that a further recruitment exercise to appoint Independent Persons would be undertaken post vesting along with the recruitment of an Independent Member from a Parish Council.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the West Surrey Shadow Authority to:

1. Approve the appointment of Murray Litvak as an Independent Person for the remainder of the Shadow Period until 31 March 2027; and
2. Approve an allowance of £1,159 per annum, per rata, as detailed in the Shadow Authority's Members' Allowance Scheme be paid, together with expenses for travel, where such costs are incurred in connection with the Independent Person's duties.

17/SD Member Development Programme Report Update

The Committee considered a report that sought to provide an update to the Standards Committee on Shadow Authority member training and development, including:

1. Training completed by members as part of Phase 1 (May- July 2026); and
2. Training principles and approach agreed for Phase 2 (September 2026 – April 2027)

Committee members were also asked to note the progress to date, the approach underway for Phase 2 and to provide feedback on any training gaps.

The Committee requested that a spreadsheet be produced to register all training undertaken by individual members to ensure that any compulsory training had been completed and also to ensure that members did not repeat any training.

Members identified some training that had not been scheduled within the Member Development Programme, such as scrutiny, inclusion and diversity. The Committee was advised that the programme would be reviewed and additional training sessions added.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the update on Phase 1 delivery of the induction programme,
2. Note the Phase 2 Member Development Principles and Training Plan;
and
3. Provide feedback on the approach to delivery and any identified training gaps and additional requirements for members.

18/SD Governance Arrangements for Constitution Work

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

This item had been discussed at the Constitution Sub-Committee meeting held 27 August 2026. The proposal was not agreed by all members of the Sub-Committee with concerns raised about the lack of transparency if the Working Group met without the meeting being recorded and available to the public and without proper minutes.

Following a debate, it was agreed by a consensus that minutes would be taken and attached to the papers for the next formal Standards Meeting.

Councillor J Austin proposed and Councillor J Hulley seconded a motion that the Terms of Reference for the Working Group be amended to reflect that the meeting would be recorded and available for the public to view on the Future Surrey website.

Following a debate on Councillor Austin's motion, a vote was taken as follows:

For – 6
Against – 8
Abstain – 1

The motion **FELL**

Following further debate, a vote on the substantive motion to create a Constitution Working Group was taken as follows:

For 9
Against 6

Councillors Austin, Hulley, Hughes, Mann, Mullens and O'Brien, who voted against the substantive motion requested that their names to be noted in the minutes.

Councillors N Kang and Shaw who voted for the substantive motion requested that their names be noted in the minutes.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

Make a recommendation to Council 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 this report; and
2. Delegate to the Monitoring Officer the authority to amend the Constitution to reflect any consequential changes arising from this decision and make arrangements for meetings to be recorded, with an attendance link to be provided to all members and the minutes from each Working Group meeting to be circulated to all members and attached to the papers for the next formal meeting of the Standards Committee.

19/SD Amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Employment Committee

The Committee considered a report that sought a recommendation to Council to revise the Terms of Reference for the West Surrey Employment Committee.

Following a debate, the Committee **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Council to:

1. Approve the revised Terms of Reference of the Employment Committee, as set out in Appendix 1; and
2. Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to make the necessary amendments to the Constitution.

20/SD Proposed Amendments to the Member-Officer Protocol

The meeting was adjourned at 15.20

The meeting reconvened at 15.27

The Committee considered a report that sought a recommendation to Council to agree the revised Member Officer Protocol.

Councillor Wilson proposed and Councillor Shaw seconded the following further amendment to the protocol:

‘Although a statutory duty of candour does not currently apply, members and officers are expected to act in the spirit of candour in their dealings with each other and with the public. Neither should knowingly mislead others and if a member or officer becomes aware that they have provided materially inaccurate or incomplete information, or that there is a material error or failure relevant to the other’s role, they should ensure it is brought promptly to the attention of the officer or member (or other appropriate person or body) and where possible, corrected or explained, This section does not require the disclosure of information where such disclosure would be unlawful or would result in the improper release of exempt information under Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972’.

Councillor Austin requested a short adjournment to allow members time to consider Councillor Wilson’s amendment.

The meeting was adjourned at 15.50
The meeting reconvened at 15.52

During the debate members were advised that there was currently a Bill going through the parliamentary process in respect of candour. This was yet to be considered by the House of Lords so there was no current timeline with regard to the possibility of being granted Royal Assent. Some members suggested that the Committee therefore agree to defer this amendment and bring it to the Constitution Sub-Committee for consideration. Other members stated that there was no benefit to waiting and that West Surrey could use this to help set the culture for the new authority.

A vote was taken to agree the proposed amendment as follows:

For – 9 votes
Against – 1 vote
Abstain – 5 votes

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the amendment

Councillor Austin proposed and Councillor Hulley seconded a motion to defer the amendment to a meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee.

A vote was taken to defer the amendment as follows:

For - 6
Against – 9
Abstain – 0

The Committee **RESOLVED** to not defer the amendment to a meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that the revised Member Officer Protocol set out in Appendix 1 to this report be agreed and

that the Monitoring Officer be delegated to amend the Constitution accordingly.

21/SD Social Media Policy for Councillors

The Committee sought clarification around whether it was acceptable for members to download footage of their participation in any meeting and posting it onto their own social media page. The Monitoring Officer advised that this was acceptable for a member's own participation but did not include other member's participation.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Council to:

1. Approve the Social Media Policy for Councillors for inclusion in the Constitution, both during the Shadow Period and for Post Vesting Day; and
2. Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee, to make minor amendments to the Policy to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, Local Government Association guidance or Council arrangements provided that such amendments do not materially alter the purpose or effect of the Policy.

22/SD Gifts and Hospitality Policy

The Committee was advised that the Implementation Team had introduced a new procedure that would require members to complete an on-line form with declarations of any gifts or hospitality accepted or declined.

Following a debate the Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider and agree the proposed Guidance for Members on Gifts and Hospitality as reviewed by the Constitution Sub-Committee attached at Appendix 1,
2. Make a recommendation to the West Surrey Shadow Authority to:
 - a) Adopt the Guidance for Councillors on Gifts and Hospitality, attached at Appendix 1 to this report, into the West Surrey Shadow Authority Constitution and for post Vesting Day, the West Surrey Council Constitution,
 - b) Note that the Monitoring Officer will maintain a Register of Gifts and Hospitality declared by councillors and co-opted members and arrange for relevant entries to be published on the Future Surrey Website; and

- c) Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee, to make minor administrative, legislative and formatting amendments to the Guidance where these do not materially alter its purpose or effect.

23/SD Member Conduct Complaint Arrangements

The Committee considered a report that sought a recommendation to Council.

Members were advised that whenever possible complaints would be resolved informally and only serious complaints would be progressed to an investigation.

Concerns were raised in respect of the outcome of an investigation being published on the Council's website. The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that only a Decision Notice would be published that would outline the accusations and the outcome of the investigation; no exempt information would be publicised. Complainants are made aware that if their complaints are progressed to an investigation their name would be published on the website. Members agreed that if a person that had been complained against was exonerated following an investigation, they would be asked whether they wanted a Decision Notice published on the Council's website or not. The Committee were advised that the wording in Paragraph 14.1 would be amended to reflect this.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

Make a recommendation to the Shadow Authority that the revised Standards Arrangements, set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the report are agreed and that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

24/SD Committee Forward Work Programme

The Committee were advised that the decision of where the Head Quarters of the West Surrey Authority would be, had been deferred to the October meeting of the Executive.

Members were advised that the Draft West Surrey Council Constitution would be considered at the meeting of the Constitution Sub-Committee on 15 December 2026.

An additional meeting of the Standards Committee would be scheduled in for 22 October 2026.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the Standards Committee Work Programme.