Minutes of the Environment and Sustainability Committee
10 September 2026

Present:

Councillor J.A. Turner (Chair)

Councillors:

L. Barker	K.M. Grant	J.R. Sexton
M. Beecher	K. Howkins	H.R.D. Williams
D.C. Clarke	L. E. Nichols	P.N. Woodward

Substitutions: Councillors D. Saliagopoulos (In place of A. Mathur)

Apologies: Councillors J.R. Boughtflower, T. Burrell and J.T.F. Doran

39/26 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

40/26 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

41/26 Questions from members of the Public

The Chair informed the committee that Question Two submitted with the committee agenda had been withdrawn since publication.

Question from Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition Partners:

“As leader of the 2024 independent research by Royal Holloway, University of London, into groundwater flood risk in Staines, Dr Jonathan Paul unarguably knows more than anyone about the highly complex characteristics and dynamics of what is recognised to be a critical threat from new developments to the town’s residents, its environment and sustainability. The threat is increasingly exacerbated by climate change. Several months ago we (and Dr

Paul himself) were told that Dr Paul would be an integral member of the group working on the Council's new policy directive to ensure the below-ground structures of all new developments in the town will not further increase the risk of flooding in the area around them. This has not happened, with no explanation to him or us. How and when does the Council intend to engage with Dr Paul on the content of the new policy?"

Response from Chair:

"The Council remains committed to working with Surrey County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, and the Environment Agency to prepare a Groundwater Technical Note. The Council is currently progressing procurement of this work. Once commissioned, engagement will take place with relevant technical stakeholders, including Dr Jonathan Paul, whose expertise and contribution to the Royal Holloway groundwater flood risk research is recognised and valued. Dr Paul has indicated that he is willing to engage in the process and provide comments on draft documents. Subject to procurement being completed as anticipated, the Technical Note is expected to take approximately four months to prepare, allowing for its adoption before 31 March 2027."

Some members of the committee expressed dissatisfaction with the status of the update. It was proposed by Councillor Nichols and seconded by Councillor Williams that an update be brought to a future meeting. This suggestion was rejected as some members of the Committee felt that the November meeting was too late for an update, so the Chair suggested this be circulated via e-mail when received.

42/26 Public consultation response for proposed Multi-Use Games Area in Memorial Gardens Staines-upon-Thames

The Committee considered a proposal for a Multi-Use Games Area in Memorial Gardens, Staines-upon-Thames following public consultation. The consultation received 760 responses, with 74.47% of respondents indicating they were unsupportive/very unsupportive of the proposal. Written comments indicated that a majority of respondents did not think the location was suitable for the proposal, and objected to the loss of green space near the riverside. The Police had also responded in support of the principle, but objected to the proposed location. As the consultation outcome did not satisfy the threshold established by the Committee in March 2026, it was recommended that the project not proceed.

Some members of the Committee expressed concern over the data presented as part of the consultation as they felt this did not accurately reflect the demographic that the proposal would appeal to. The Committee were reminded that a majority of respondents indicated that they were current users of the Memorial Gardens. Members of the Committee acknowledged that they would wish for the proposal to progress, but not on the proposed site.

The Committee **resolved** to

1. Acknowledge the outcome of the public consultation on the proposed Multi-Use Games Area in Memorial Gardens, Staines-upon-Thames;
2. Agree that the current Memorial Gardens Multi-Use Games Area proposal should not progress in its present form and location, having considered the consultation outcome, site-specific issues, financial implications, legal considerations and deliverability matters; and
3. Note that any future consideration of alternative recreation provision, alternative locations or lower-impact improvements would require a separate options report, funding route, consultation where appropriate, and relevant committee or successor authority approval.

The Committee **resolved** that future consideration of alternative recreation provision, alternative options or lower-impact improvements be brought to the next committee meeting.

43/26 Council Emergency Plan V9.0

The Committee considered updates to the Spelthorne Borough Council Emergency Plan. The Emergency Plan served as the Council's formal framework for emergency preparedness, response and recovery. The Council has a legal obligation to maintain up-to-date emergency plans and to ensure it can deliver its requirements. The key change to the document was dividing it into separate policy and operational response documents.

The Committee acknowledged a number of incidents in the borough and the agencies in charge of dealing with them as well as the risk ratings for emergencies. The Committee noted there was little information available at this time as to how West Surrey as the successor authority would be dealing with emergencies. It was proposed by Councillor Nichols, seconded by Councillor Sexton and **resolved** that the Committee be presented with information on the arrangements that will replace the current Council Emergency Plan once known.

The Committee **resolved** to agree the update to the Spelthorne Borough Council Emergency Plan.

44/26 Governance Assurance update - Meeting the Council's Zero Carbon Targets and Wider Environmental Responsibilities

The Committee considered a report that sought to inform and assure members on the "Meeting the Council's Zero Carbon targets and Wider Environmental Responsibilities" section of the Council's Governance Assurance Register.

The Committee noted that opportunities for future work were limited due to Local Government Reorganisation and the departure of key team members.

The Committee wished to convey their thanks to the team who had undertaken work so far.

The Committee **resolved** to

1. Note the current overall assurance level for the Governance Assurance Area “Meeting the Council’s Zero Carbon Targets and Wider Environmental Responsibilities” included in the Council’s Governance Assurance Register and;
2. Acknowledge the key focus areas, concerns and issues relating to this Governance Assurance Area as set out in the appendix.

45/26 Updates from Task and Finish and/or Working Groups

The Committee received an update on the work of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Task Groups, and verbal updates on the work of the Climate and Nature Working Group.

The Committee **resolved** to note the updates.

46/26 Forward Plan

The Committee received the forward plan for future committee business.

The Committee **resolved** to note the forward plan for future committee business with the inclusion of a report on Emergency Plan Arrangements in the Successor Authority, and a r report on Alternative Options for Recreation Provisions.