

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD
AT WOODHATCH PLACE, 11 COCKSHOT HILL, REIGATE, SURREY, RH2
8EF, ON 25 MAY 2021 COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM, THE COUNCIL BEING
CONSTITUTED AS FOLLOWS:**

Helyn Clack (Chair)
Saj Hussain (Vice-Chair)

Maureen Attewell	Eber Kington
Ayesha Azad	Rachael Lake
Catherine Baart	Victor Lewanski
Steve Bax	David Lewis (Cobham)
John Beckett	David Lewis (Camberley West)
Jordan Beech	Scott Lewis
Luke Bennett	Andy Lynch
Amanda Boote	Andy MacLeod
Liz Bowes	Ernest Mallett MBE
Natalie Bramhall	Michaela Martin
Stephen Cooksey	* Jan Mason
Colin Cross	Steven McCormick
Clare Curran	Cameron McIntosh
Nick Darby	Julia McShane
Fiona Davidson	Sinead Mooney
Paul Deach	Carla Morson
Kevin Deanus	Bernie Muir
Jonathan Essex	Mark Nuti
Robert Evans	John O'Reilly
Chris Farr	Tim Oliver
Paul Follows	Rebecca Paul
Will Forster	George Potter
John Furey	Catherine Powell
Matt Furniss	Penny Rivers
Angela Goodwin	John Robini
Jeffrey Gray	Becky Rush
* Alison Griffiths	Tony Samuels
Tim Hall	Joanne Sexton
David Harmer	Lance Spencer
Nick Harrison	Lesley Steeds
Edward Hawkins	Mark Sugden
Marisa Heath	Richard Tear
Trefor Hogg	Chris Townsend
Robert Hughes	Liz Townsend
Jonathan Hulley	Denise Turner-Stewart
Rebecca Jennings-Evans	Hazel Watson
Frank Kelly	Jeremy Webster
Riasat Khan	Buddhi Weerasinghe
Robert King	Fiona White
	Keith Witham

*absent

27/21 CHAIRMAN [Item 1]

Under the motion of Tim Oliver, seconded by Robert Evans, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

That Helyn Clack be elected Chair of the Council for the Council Year 2021/22.

STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:

Helyn Clack made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

The newly elected Chair expressed her thanks to the Members of the Council for electing her as Chair and gave a short speech.

28/21 MINUTES [Item 2]

The minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 16 March 2021 were submitted and confirmed.

29/21 ELECTION OF COUNTY COUNCILLORS [Item 3]

The Chief Executive, as County Returning Officer, formally reported the return of the County Councillors at the Elections held on 6 May 2021 for each of the 81 County Electoral Divisions in the County.

The Chair welcomed the new and returning Members to the meeting, the first Council meeting being held at the Council's new headquarters - Woodhatch Place.

30/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 4]

Apologies for absence were received from Alison Griffiths and Jan Mason.

31/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 5]

The Chair made the following announcements:

A huge welcome everyone to today's AGM - I hope you and your loved ones are all safe and well.

A particularly warm welcome to the many new faces I see before me. May I wish you all - both new and returning Members - many congratulations on your recent success at the polls and commiserations to those who lost their seats. This was certainly an election like no other - at the end of a year like no other.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Members who stood for all parties. I think you will agree with me when I say that campaigning in the middle of a pandemic was no small feat - but as Members do time and time again - we still got the job done. You should all feel very proud.

And let us not forget all the wonderful volunteers at the polling stations who ensured that our residents could not only vote - but do so safely. For that I am truly grateful.

I would also like to take the opportunity to say a big 'thank you' and 'very well done' to all the retiring Members for all that they have achieved throughout their tenure. Surrey is certainly a better place for having them represent their residents and local areas - and I am very grateful and appreciative of all that you have done. Thank you once again and I wish you every success in your next endeavours.

I will not make this too long as we have lots of work ahead of us and you will be hearing a lot from me over the next Council Year - so I will end by wishing you all here today the very best of luck and every success in your roles as Surrey County Councillors - and I look forward to working with you to help make our great county even greater.

32/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 6]

Rachael Lake declared a non-pecuniary interest noting that her son was an employee of Surrey County Council.

33/21 VICE-CHAIRMAN [Item 7]

Under the motion of John Furey, seconded by Rachael Lake, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

That Saj Hussain be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the Council Year 2021/22.

STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:

Saj Hussain made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

The newly elected Vice-Chair expressed his thanks to the Members of the Council for electing him as Vice-Chair and gave a short speech.

34/21 MOTION OF THANKS TO RETIRING CHAIRMAN [Item 8]

Under the motion of the newly elected Chair, seconded by Paul Deach, followed by a speech from Nick Darby on behalf of the Group Leaders in support of the motion, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

That we, the Chair and Members of the Surrey County Council, record our warm appreciation of the distinguished services given to the County and its inhabitants by Tony Samuels during his tenure of office of Chair of the Council from 9 October 2018 to 25 May 2021.

Tony Samuels made a farewell speech.

35/21 ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL [Item 9]

Under the motion of Bernie Muir, seconded by Robert Hughes, it was:

RESOLVED:

That Tim Oliver be elected Leader of the Council for a four-year term, expiring on the day of the post-election annual meeting in 2025.

36/21 LEADER'S STATEMENT [Item 10]

The Leader thanked the outgoing Cabinet for their enormous contributions over the past two and a half years, he made a detailed statement (Appendix A) and reported on the appointment of the Members of the Cabinet (Appendix B) noting that Becky Rush was appointed as Deputy Leader and that there would be a further appointment to the portfolio of Cabinet Member for Health which he would hold for the time being.

He noted that the details of each of the Cabinet Member portfolios would be made available on the Council's website and that he and the Cabinet Members would be arranging drop-in sessions with Members in the coming weeks.

Members raised the following topics:

- Noted the newly constituted Council, four-year term ahead and Council headquarters, as well as the challenge of Covid-19 recovery going forward.
- Emphasised that it was the role of the opposition to highlight issues, scrutinise thoroughly and oppose where necessary; the Residents' Association and Independent Group as the official opposition would act as a critical friend to ensure the best for all residents including the most vulnerable.
- Highlighted the issues within Children's Services, that despite recent improvements there were areas that needed to be addressed and that it was vital to scrutinise the newly commissioned Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Contract (EWMH) with a particular focus on the transition from Children's to Adult Social Care Services.
- That the momentum gained in the last year regarding adult mental health must be maintained, ensuring that recommendations from the Mental Health Task Group continue to be implemented.
- Noted the continued disappointment in central government on the lack of funding and pressure in local authorities regarding Adult Social Care.
- That the focus for Land and Property Services must be on using the Council's assets more productively, by growing in-house expertise regarding the provision of extra care housing and by working closely with borough and district councils. It was crucial to spend wisely so as not to allow the costly deterioration of the Council's property assets.
- Hoped that the planned overall £3 million in savings from the move to Woodhatch Place and the Dakota building would be achieved and monitored.

- Noted the need to constantly review the Council's finances, that the £176 million in efficiencies over the next four years must not be at the cost of service reduction.
- That the Council must not lose sight of climate change in all its work.
- Congratulated the newly elected Chair and all Members, despite political differences it was a privilege to serve the county.
- Noted that the enlarged and experienced pool of Liberal Democrats would play their part on the committees by scrutinising the Leader and Cabinet, on areas such as Covid-19 recovery, climate change, Adult Social Care, Children's Services and ensuring better value for money for residents.
- Praised staff for enabling the socially distanced meeting, noting disappointment in the Government's decision to not extend the provision for remote formal council meetings.
- Welcomed the more politically balanced Council, was pleased that Members could meet in person in the new Council headquarters and hoped that the way Woodhatch Place was utilised would set the tone for how the Council could lead on the delivery of Surrey's climate commitments whilst improving the wellbeing of its residents.
- Noted that Covid-19 had exacerbated challenges which needed to be overcome, by pressing for improvements in Children's services and Adult Social Care, to re-provide youth services, to expand mental health support for young people, to expedite extra care sites for older residents and deliver the new special needs places for vulnerable children in Surrey.
- That with the Council operating within the county and remote working a norm, asked the Leader to provide an update on plans to reduce Woodhatch Place's carbon emissions and the progress on the promised transport measures such as the new bus service.
- Noted the decline in long distance business airline travel as a result of the pandemic and that Surrey's future must link the wellbeing and work of its residents with the Council's plans to cut carbon emissions to zero.
- That the focus must be on green recovery, businesses in Surrey must deliver much of the £15 billion needed to cut the country's carbon emissions to zero and halve carbon emissions in Surrey by 2025.
- Stressed the need to end persistent unemployment and to replace airport job losses, and asked how the Council with government investment would lead to create diverse local economies including the provision of long-term climate and care jobs in Surrey - utilising National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and new training opportunities.
- Congratulated the Leader and Conservative Group on their continued administration, as well as the political parties which had increased their seats, welcoming the new Labour and Co-operative Member.
- Reiterated that it was the role of all Members to support and challenge the administration.
- Highlighted three local issues of concern to residents including the disarray at a local borough council, the cuts to Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and the negative state of roads including potholes.
- Asked the Leader to press the eleven Surrey Members of Parliament to lobby the Government to provide national investment to tackle local issues, including support to those in Surrey with Grenfell Tower style cladding.
- Stressed that one issue that had not changed was the county's Ofsted rating, despite improvements the recent interim visit highlighted

problems within Children's Services including disability services, children's long-term neglect and children's placements. To be regarded as successful, over the next four years the Council must achieve a 'Good' Ofsted rating or better.

- Highlighted the Leader's omission of Surrey's Climate Change Strategy, that climate change and biodiversity decline were existential threats and asked whether the Leader would ensure that there would be targets in place and lines of accountability across the county to measure progress.

37/21 ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY [Item 11]

The report was introduced by the Leader of the Council.

Robert Evans referred to the error on page 7 of the supplementary agenda within the table in paragraph four in which the 'Number of seats on committees' for the Labour Group was replaced by a comma rather than a 2.

Noting the above amendment which would subsequently be made to the supplementary agenda, it was:

RESOLVED (with no Members voting Against):

That the committee sizes and scheme of proportionality be adopted for 2021/22 (Appendix C).

38/21 APPOINTMENTS OF COMMITTEES [Item 12]

The Chair referred to the nominations in the supplementary agenda.

RESOLVED (with no Members voting Against):

That the Council agreed: (Appendix D)

1. To appoint Members to serve on the Committees of the Council for the Council year 2021/22 in accordance with the wishes of political groups.
2. To authorise the Chief Executive to make changes to the membership of any of the Council's Committees as necessary during the Council year in accordance with the wishes of political groups.
3. To appoint the County Councillors representing divisions in the Woking borough area and Councillor Matt Furniss to serve on the Woking Joint Committee for the Council year 2021/22.
4. To appoint the County Councillors representing divisions in the Spelthorne borough area to serve on the Spelthorne Joint Committee for the Council year 2021/22.
5. To appoint the County Councillors representing divisions in the Runnymede borough area to serve on the Runnymede Joint Committee for the Council year 2021/22.
6. To appoint the County Councillors representing divisions in the Guildford borough area to serve on the Guildford Joint Committee for the Council year 2021/22.
7. To appoint the remaining County Councillors for each district/borough area to serve on the appropriate Local Committee for the Council year 2021/22, and to authorise the Chief Executive to

appoint an equal number of district/borough councillors to the Local Committees following nominations by the district and borough councils, which they should be requested to make politically proportional to their Membership.

8. To appoint the Council's representative to the Surrey Police and Crime Panel for the Council year 2021/22.
9. To appoint four Members (one of whom must be a Cabinet Member and the others County Councillors representing divisions that include the Basingstoke Canal) to the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee.
10. To appoint up to two Members to the Buckinghamshire County Council and Surrey County Council Joint Trading Standards Service Committee, one of whom must be a Cabinet Member; the other in an advisory non-voting role.
11. To note the Leader's appointments to the Council's Executive Committees as outlined above.

39/21 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN [Item 13]

The Chair referred to the nominations in the supplementary agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the Members listed (Appendix E) are duly elected as Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen respectively of the Committees as shown for 2021/22.

40/21 SURREY PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/2022 [Item 14]

The Leader of the Council introduced the report, highlighting the main points that must be covered by the Statement and outlined the cross-party composition of the People, Performance and Development Committee (PPDC) which acted as the Council's remuneration committee.

He noted that there had been challenging negotiations with the Trade Unions over the past year, resulting in their refusal to enter into a collective agreement as the Council adopted the Government's guidelines of giving no salary increases to any members of staff earning more than £30,000. He explained that 86% of staff entitled to both a pay award and incremental increase, received a real increase in pay. The details of remuneration levels for staff including Chief Officers were on the Council's website.

Robert King paid tribute to Yvonna Lay, a previous Member for her political service.

He referred to the Kickstart Scheme which was beneficial in terms of getting young people into work, noting that the pandemic had a negative impact on the pay settlement for those aged under twenty-five. He asked the Council to review the Kickstarter Pay Rates which he considered to be poverty pay.

In response, the Leader would take the matter back to the PPDC.

RESOLVED:

That Council agreed the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/2022.

41/21 REPORT OF THE CABINET [Item 15]

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Cabinet meetings held on 30 March 2021 and 27 April 2021.

Recommendations on Policy Framework Documents:

There were none.

Reports for Information/Discussion:

30 March 2021:

- A. Alternative Curriculum Pathways and Reintegration Support
- B. Management and Enforcement of HGV Weight Restrictions- 'HGV Watch'
- C. A New Rail Strategy for Surrey 2021

27 April 2021:

- D. Surrey's Economic Future: Progress Update
- E. Acquisition of Land in Support of the River Thames Scheme
- F. Quarterly Report on Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Arrangements: 17 March 2021 - 25 May 2021

RESOLVED:

1. That Council noted that there had been one urgent decision in the last two months.
2. That the report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 30 March 2021 and 27 April 2021 be adopted.

42/21 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETINGS [Item 16]

No notification had been received by the deadline from Members wishing to raise a question or make a statement on any matters in the minutes.

Chair's concluding remarks:

The Chair recognised that the meeting had been held in an unusual fashion outside of the Council Chamber in order to comply with social distancing requirements and thanked Members for their patience and cooperation.

[Meeting ended at: 11.17 am]

Chair

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