

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL HELD AT  
WOODHATCH PLACE, 11 COCKSHOT HILL, REIGATE, SURREY, RH2 8EF,  
ON 23 MAY 2023 COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM, THE COUNCIL BEING  
CONSTITUTED AS FOLLOWS:**

Saj Hussain (Chair)  
Tim Hall (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
Harry Boparai	Ernest Mallett MBE
Liz Bowes	* Michaela Martin
Natalie Bramhall	Jan Mason
Helyn Clack	Steven McCormick
Stephen Cooksey	Cameron McIntosh
* Colin Cross	Julia McShane
Clare Curran	Sinead Mooney
Nick Darby	Carla Morson
* Fiona Davidson	Bernie Muir
Paul Deach	Mark Nuti
Kevin Deanus	John O'Reilly
Jonathan Essex	Tim Oliver
Robert Evans OBE	Rebecca Paul
Chris Farr	George Potter
Paul Follows	Catherine Powell
Will Forster	Penny Rivers
* John Furey	* John Robini
Matt Furniss	* Becky Rush
Angela Goodwin	Joanne Sexton
Jeffrey Gray	Lance Spencer
David Harmer	Lesley Steeds
Nick Harrison	Mark Sugden
Edward Hawkins	Richard Tear
Marisa Heath	Ashley Tilling
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

**24/23 CHAIR [Item 1]**

*Joanne Sexton, George Potter and Julia McShane joined the meeting at 10.05 am.*

Under the motion of Will Forster, seconded by Amanda Boote, it was unanimously:

**RESOLVED:**

That Saj Hussain be elected Chair of the Council for the Council Year 2023/24.

**STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:**

Saj Hussain made the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

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

**25/23 ELECTION OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR [Item 2]**

The Chief Executive formally reported that Ashley Richard Tilling was duly elected as the new County Councillor for the Walton South and Oatlands division following the by-election held on 4 May 2023.

The Chair welcomed the new Member to Surrey County Council and looked forward to working with him.

**26/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 3]**

Apologies for absence were received from John Beckett, Colin Cross, Fiona Davidson, John Furey, Andy Lynch, Michaela Martin, John Robini, Becky Rush, Fiona White.

**27/23 MINUTES [Item 4]**

The minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 21 March 2023 were submitted, confirmed and signed.

**28/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 5]**

There were none.

**29/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [Item 6]**

The Chair:

- Welcomed all to the AGM and looked forward to working together.
- Thanked Helyn Clack for laying such solid foundations since the move to Woodhatch Place and hoped to build on her work.
- Noted that he would announce his theme at the next Council meeting.
- Noted that he would be hosting the upcoming Surrey Civic Network, welcoming the new Mayors and Chairs of Surrey's district and borough councils, along with the Lord Lieutenant and Vice Lord Lieutenant.
- Expressed pride in Surrey's volunteers.

- Highlighted that during Armed Forces Week a flag would be raised to honour Surrey's armed forces on 19 June in the Memorial Garden at Woodhatch Place, and he hoped to see Members there.

### **30/23 VICE-CHAIR [Item 7]**

Under the motion of Clare Curran, seconded by Nick Harrison, it was unanimously:

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Tim Hall be elected Vice-Chair of the Council for the Council Year 2023/24.

#### **STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:**

Tim Hall 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.

### **31/23 MOTION OF THANKS TO RETIRING CHAIR [Item 8]**

*Buddhi Weerasinghe and Ernest Mallett MBE joined the meeting at 10.22 am.*

Under the motion of the newly elected Chair, seconded by Catherine Powell, followed by a speech from Will Forster on behalf of the Group Leaders in support of the motion, and speeches from Jonathan Essex and Robert Evans OBE, 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 Helyn Clack during her tenure of office of Chair of the Council from 25 May 2021 to 23 May 2023.

Helyn Clack made a farewell speech (Appendix A).

### **32/23 LEADER'S STATEMENT [Item 9]**

The Leader of the Council made a detailed statement. A copy of the statement is attached as Appendix B.

Members raised the following topics:

- Congratulated Catherine Powell on her appointment as the new Group Leader for the Residents' Association/Independent Group, and thanked Nick Darby as the former Group Leader for all his hard work over the past four years.
- Noted that as well as being ambitious, the Council should be caring and collaborative making a positive difference for all, using Members' diverse knowledge and experience to be the voice of the most vulnerable and for them to be at the core of decision-making and treated as the highest priority.
- Noted that the potential impacts of decisions must be reviewed before they are made, it was vital to understand who was being left behind and why, listening to those affected and implementing policies and strategies that help them.

- Stressed that the Council must focus on prevention, noting that the loss of preventative services was costly to the Council in terms of negative impacts to residents and money saving, such as the closure of family centres in 2019.
- Noted that many families were significantly impacted by the Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) delays and the recent loss of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) respite care services.
- Regarding highways, noted that the proposed measures and changes were appreciated, however the recent lack of consultation and engagement with all councillors Surrey-wide was a missed opportunity to address issues arising from the changes to verges and on-street parking.
- Noted that Members could be most effective by being informed, reports received should be concise, accurate, timely and identify areas of concern as well as positives; problems could only be solved if acknowledged.

*Julia McShane left the meeting at 10.57 am.*

- Noted that many residents were angry about the state of the county's roads and they wanted action; despite the Leader's focus on the issue, the Medium Term Financial Strategy would cut next year's road budget by nearly £52 million.
- Noted the results of May's local elections, whereby the Liberal Democrats now run four of Surrey's district and borough councils, with one controlled by the Conservative Party. It was also noted that two new Liberal Democrat Members were elected at the most recent county by-elections.
- Welcomed the commitment to improve cross-party collaboration with the district and borough councils, and asked how that would be achieved politically in terms of delivery and lobbying the Government for the funding and policy changes needed to deliver huge long-standing challenges.
- Noting that the Council's waste contract was coming to an end, sought better collaboration on waste and recycling to realise the Council's climate and wider greener future ambitions.
- Asked for the details to be shared publicly of how the Council's resources could be used to better enable a more joined up delivery on areas that are the responsibilities of district and borough councils.
- Noted that the aims of the Surrey-wide Housing Strategy were at odds with the district and borough councils which were pressured to meet the Government's unfair Green Belt housing targets which serve London's housing market need; London needed to collaborate with Surrey's leaders.
- Noted the chance of aligning the opportunities provided by the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) with the Surrey Local Transport Plan (LTP4) in terms of more investment in walking, cycling and public transport, conversely ULEZ negatively impacted Surrey through the scrappage scheme and failure to improve bus and train travel between Surrey and London.
- Asked what engagement the Leader has had with the Government to secure support and funding to areas around ULEZ in ways that would help Surrey achieve its own climate ambition and LTP4.
- Thanked the Leader for his recent visit to Stanwell and Stanwell Moor, however noted many residents in the county felt left behind concerning ULEZ, the lack of public transport and blight of anti-social behaviour - asked the Leader to prioritise this - exacerbated by the lack of response from the police; noted the refusal by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey to engage.
- Welcomed the overdue resurfacing of Town Lane that links Ashford to Stanwell, however other roads were in an appalling state and the Council needed to continue to prioritise roads, potholes and high quality repairs.

- Welcomed the Leader's positive contributions towards the investment in Surrey's roads, particularly roads in north west Surrey.
- Referred to a Liberal Democrat local election leaflet, claiming that it contained misinformation about the Council's cuts to future highway spending and that Individual Member Highways Allocations of £100,000 would be 'completely abolished' from 2024/25; sought an apology from the Liberal Democrat Group's Leader.
- Requested that the Leader's commitment in examining every intervention available to address the problems regarding potholes, could be applied to the Council's performance in improving the woeful EHCP statistics.
- Sought clarity on whether the Individual Member Highways Allocations would continue at £100,000 for future years or would be reverting to £50,000 or £0.
- Sought information on the highways Task and Finish Groups so Members could provide input around any specific concerns.
- Noted that pavement parking was banned in London but not in the surrounding counties; it would be helpful if the administration could find out when the Government would publish the results of its 2019 consultation on pavement parking and what actions it might take.
- Highlighted the qualities of the new leader of the Residents' Association/Independent Group, noting that she had recently had her hair cut and recycled for charity, had a broad knowledge, a forensic attitude to getting to the crux of issues and an ability in debate to articulate complex issues simply.
- Noted that the introduction of the verge parking regime was a disaster in Epsom and Ewell, many residents had complaints; hoped the review referenced by the Leader would be taken seriously, ensuring up to date information on the website and reviewing residents' concerns and ensuring that future cuts would happen before the grass covers up street nameplates.
- Welcomed the Leader's focus on addressing the condition of Surrey's roads and asked the Leader to redouble his efforts to obtain more capital funding from the Government in recognition of Surrey's roads only being second to London's roads in terms of the volume of traffic.
- Asked whether the Leader or the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience had information on water penetration resistant tarmac types which would reduce the problem of potholes.
- Noted that back in 2017 the Individual Member Highways Allocations was around £20,000, thanks to the Leader and his administration that amount increased to £50,000 and then doubled to the current £100,000; that allocation was not under threat and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience had given assurance to Members that due to inflation their projects would still be funded if they exceeded £100,000.
- Welcomed that the 2024/25 highways budget was not being abolished and noted that it would be clearer if announcements were not made at Council meetings and the administration's messages were consistent.
- Referred to a Conservative Party leaflet circulated in Guildford falsely claiming that the Liberal Democrats on Guildford Borough Council were planning to introduce a congestion charge; asked the Leader to confirm that the Council would not be introducing a congestion charge in Guildford.
- Noted concern in a Surrey Liberal Democrats online article which used the Council's headquarters as a background to spread untruths and misleading comments about the administration cutting services to vulnerable residents.
- Regarding the volume of traffic carried on Surrey's roads, noted that a few years ago had launched a six-month petition on fairer funding for Surrey's roads however that fell short of the signatures needed with the lowest amount in Epsom and Ewell, and Guildford; stressed the need to work together.

- Had a road resurfaced recently in their division, however the residents were in uproar as they were given two days' notice of the road being closed.
- Referred to a recent email on the continuing lack of provision for children with additional needs and disabilities/SEND at a local school from the leaving Chairman of Governors, noting the non-existent support and funding by the Council for those children. An assistant teacher had been funded however they do not have the appropriate skills for the scenario; reiterated that the £750,000 spent on Community Liaison Officers would be better spent on children with additional needs and disabilities/SEND.
- Welcomed the Leader's comments on the extra funds that were being spent on both road and pavement resurfacing.
- Asked the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience to talk to the highways Works Communications Team to ensure that information circulated to residents is accurate and work is completed on time, avoiding constant changes and delays.
- Stressed that the most recent elections concerned the district and borough councils, not the County Council, and noted dismay in past campaigning leaflets reporting misinformation about the County Council.
- Praised the Individual Member Highways Allocations of £100,000 and urged Members to make use of that allocation to help their areas of highest need.
- Noted that residents' anger was reflected in the loss of over 1,000 Conservative Party seats nationally at the local elections, urged for action to happen prior to the 2025 County Council elections.
- Emphasised that the delivery of the Council's services was a constantly evolving process, allocating resources to need and balancing important agendas. For example, due to the climate emergency being declared the Council's highways policies adapted to support Surrey's ecosystems, to provide clean air for communities, manage risk on Surrey's roads and undertake appropriate tree maintenance; highways resourcing was being reviewed to address the impact of seasonal and extreme weather conditions.
- Noted that shaping the Council's services relied on constructive contributions to the four select committees, informed by observations from all Members.
- Noted that the Council meetings should be an opportunity to reflect on the hard work of the Council's staff and Members, not a platform to undermine trust.
- Asked the Leader to repeat that there is greater value in all working together collectively to get on and deliver for residents, rather than just criticising.

### **33/23 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME [Item 10]**

#### **Questions:**

Notice of twenty-one questions had been received. The questions and replies were published in the supplementary agenda on 22 May 2023.

A number of supplementary questions were asked and a summary of the main points is set out below:

**(Q1) Ernest Mallett MBE** had no supplementary question.

**Steve Bax** welcomed the question and response which would be appreciated by residents. He noted that he had attended meetings regarding Mole Bridge since 2015 and that it needed replacing as soon as possible. He asked whether the administration could commit to delivering the new bridge by 2025 and to commit that the public would be involved in consultation as much as possible.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience responded that there were issues regarding the utilities companies, the design and reaching a legal agreement with Elmbridge Borough Council. He committed that the Council would work continuously to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

**(Q2) Catherine Powell** welcomed the Leader's acknowledgement that prevention must be central, but she noted that the services lost by the funding gap created by the decisions made would not be filled by the additional grant. She sought confirmation from the Cabinet Member as to whether the gap would continue and whether she would not consider releasing reserves to fill the gap. She asked the Cabinet Member to confirm that she would identify the number of families that were affected by the loss of those services and the number of children that were on the waiting list, to ascertain the number of children who would be left behind.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families noted that regarding whether she would reconsider the funding for the critical support, as stated in the response the budget would be reviewed for short breaks services for 2024/25. In the current year the Council had managed to bridge the gap and it was reviewing what it could do for forthcoming years. She would provide a written response regarding the details around children on the waiting list.

**(Q4) Joanne Sexton** asked whether the Cabinet Member would agree that the unilateral decision taken by the Cabinet without any consultation with the district and borough councils was a huge mistake, and many residents did not feel heard. She asked the Cabinet Member to contact all the district and borough councils to understand what feedback they had received and to address their issues as soon as possible. She asked the Cabinet Member to send out a clear communication to all residents and councillors county-wide covering frequently asked questions (FAQs), setting out items including the frequency of visits from NSL, new parking enforcement Service Level Agreements (SLAs), Key Performance Indicators, working hours and communication channels.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience disagreed that the decision taken was a mistake. He noted that there was a large volume of communications with the district and borough councils via correspondence and newsletters. Regarding the FAQs and SLAs he noted that performance information would hopefully be available in June via the highways Task and Finish Groups.

*Julia McShane rejoined the meeting at 11.49 am.*

**(Q6) Catherine Baart** asked how the Cabinet Member planned to demonstrate to Members and the public that the new verge management regime was achieving the significant opportunity for increasing biodiversity as quoted on the Council's website.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience would provide a written response.

**(Q7) Robert Evans OBE** referred to the section in the response around mitigation for residents and businesses in Surrey, however asked whether the Cabinet Member was aware that in every other city in England where a ULEZ type scheme had been introduced, the Government had funded more generous and sophisticated scrappage schemes for surrounding areas; regarding London that would include Surrey.

**George Potter** asked whether the Cabinet Member could explain why the administration continued to be angry about the lack of consultation over ULEZ when it did not practise what it preached regarding consultation with residents or the district and borough councils.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth in responding to Robert Evans OBE noted that it had been clear in all the Council's responses to the Mayor of London's Office and Transport for London (TfL), that they needed to consider the impact on residents outside of London. That was one of the reasons that the Council was taking legal action against the ULEZ expansion. He noted that he was aware that in large ULEZ schemes the Government had been engaged by the areas wanting to implement them for a wider scrappage scheme, that had not been done in all cases across cities in the UK. He urged the Member to work with his colleagues in London, for them to halt the current scheme until sufficient mitigation would be provided to Surrey residents and the other surrounding counties.

**(Q8) Steve Bax** had no supplementary question.

**Ernest Mallett MBE** asked whether the Cabinet Member was aware that there were two other equally isolated walking routes to Heathside Walton-on-Thames School, concerning Hurst Road and the towpath. He noted that parents were concerned and asked whether the Cabinet Member would take safeguarding issues into serious consideration regarding providing a bus service for the Molesey children. He asked whether the Cabinet Member was aware that the reason given for the refusal of providing a pickup and drop off area for the school was that Waterside Drive was wide enough for parent parking - however it was yellow lined - and that the nearby Elmbridge sports centre car park could be used - it was busy.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth noted that the question covered multiple portfolios and so he would arrange a site visit with the relevant officers to discuss the matter. He noted that the Council took safeguarding and children's safety seriously and he was constantly looking to expand bus provision and routes, which was why the Council was introducing the half price fare for those aged under twenty-one years old.

**(Q9) Jonathan Essex** asked the Cabinet Member to consider that the Council calls for a meeting to discuss ULEZ to be attended by representatives of both the Mayor of London's Office and the Government at the same time so each cannot blame the other for not working with the Council to make it happen. He asked for non-attendance by either party to be highlighted to the public.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth noted that the Council had asked for a meeting with the Mayor of London's Office and reiterated that the Council was in legal proceedings against ULEZ expansion. He was happy to extend that invitation also to either the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State or a representative of the Department for Transport.

**(Q10) Ernest Mallett MBE** had no supplementary question.

**Steven McCormick** asked the Cabinet Member if Members could see the AI strategic road map in development reflected in the Council's Data Strategy framework.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources explained that the road map was in development and it was anticipated that it would take the rest of the municipal year to complete, once completed it would be shared with Members.

**(Q11) Catherine Powell** noted that there was no mention of the consultations in the letter sent to current permit holders and councillors in those areas were not advised. She asked the Cabinet Member to advise how people were informed about the consultations and could he confirm that the responses from the consultations would be taken into consideration through the highways Task and Finish Groups.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience noted that there was a list available of the consultation undertaken and he was happy to have a conversation with the Member to provide the information requested.

**(Q13) Catherine Baart** asked whether the Cabinet Member could confirm that the end target when processes have been improved and fully staffed would be for 100% of EHCPs to be turned around within the legal time limits.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Learning noted that the Council did not have to publish such targets, however she noted that in the past the Council had hoped to get to around 60% by spring, that had not yet been achieved despite the hard work. She agreed that the Council's goal was for all assessments to be completed within the statutory timescale and for all children to have their reviews completed on time.

**(Q14) Robert Evans OBE** asked whether the Cabinet Member would agree that there was a dichotomy in that Surrey was saying to London that it does not like the ULEZ scheme, but it wants to be part of the Travelcard scheme. He reiterated the Member's ask in Q9 of the need for the Council to set up a joint meeting to discuss issues; ultimately funding would be from the Department for Transport, not TfL or the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth noted that the Council had not been notified of the consultation and he noted disappointment in response to TfL. He noted that he was happy to arrange a meeting with the Minister of London to discuss the issues raised. He noted that London was putting walls up between itself and its surrounding authorities, indicating that cross-border public transport was not wanted unless Surrey and the other counties were willing to pay more or drive their car, which was counterproductive in terms of improving air quality. He noted that the matter required support from partners, that was not currently the case hence the Council was taking legal action.

**(Q15) Jonathan Essex** noted residents' feedback around P3 potholes which were not deep enough to be repaired in a week unlike P2 potholes so were highlighted by a red ring and were not repaired in many weeks. He asked whether there was a better way to review the whole system for example through the highways Task and Finish Groups ensuring cross-party scrutiny, rather than just using the standard national matrix; recognising that there might be some dangerous potholes that need to be better prioritised to be repaired more quickly ensuring a less dangerous road for all users, especially in light of worsening weather in the years ahead.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience referred to the response which outlined the different priorities and how they were addressed. He highlighted that there were 15,000 P2 reports, that involved a large amount of work in terms of reviewing each one. He noted that the Task and Finish Group would look at the matter and findings would go to the select committee for potential policy changes to be identified, that process would continue over the next four to six weeks.

**(Q16) Catherine Powell** noted that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member might not be aware that Defra had taken two dead birds away from Tice's Meadow Nature

Reserve and bird flu had been confirmed. She noted that the group of volunteers who run Tice's Meadow contacted the Council's Countryside team on 10 May regarding what to do about bird flu, they had yet to receive a response. They sent a follow up email today copying in senior members of the organisation and she requested that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member work with those officers to provide a response, and that she reviews why the query had taken so long to respond to.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Community Safety confirmed that those birds were removed for testing and one had been confirmed as positive for bird flu. Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards was working closely with the Animal and Plant Health Agency, and Defra; that communication would take place to the Member's residents.

**(Q17) Steven McCormick** referring to the response in that the Council's online reporting tool had been developed over the past ten years, asked the Cabinet Member whether it would make sense to use other apps that would help residents report potholes and other issues. That would improve the Council's move towards greater digital inclusion and would help Members' with the service provided to residents. He asked for the Cabinet Member to consider revisiting the improved integration with FixMyStreet and similar apps on the iOS and Android platforms.

**Jonathan Essex** asked whether it was possible to look at the number of requests that were being received via the different routes in order to review the level of demand for these routes.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience highlighted the response which stated that there were limitations to FixMyStreet. He was happy to review whether technical advancements allowed it to be revisited and improved, however there were restrictions and it did not quite do what was wanted.

**(Q19) Robert Evans OBE** asked whether the Cabinet Member was aware that any extension of Zone 6 to parts of Surrey was not dependent on TfL, in fact TfL and South Western Railways supported that enlargement, an obstacle to that was the Department for Transport. He asked for the Secretary of State for Transport to be included in the meeting to be arranged to see if the Department for Transport could underwrite the extension.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth noted that he was aware that the extension into Zone 6 by parts of Surrey was dependent on the Department for Transport's engagement and funding, along with another Member and residents he had sought engagement with them on the matter. He was happy to engage with the Department for Transport to see whether that could be extended.

**(Q20) Jonathan Essex** noted the need to ensure that the highways Task and Finish Groups involve Members in setting the terms of reference rather than just reviewing the outputs. He asked for there to be some comparison of the performance of the parking contract over its first couple of months of operation, rather than only comparing performance after twelve months of operation. He noted that some feedback had been positive and it would be important to measure the improvement, as well as to understand where it was not working well.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Resilience explained that one of the issues was that the daily, weekly and monthly staffing level for example in the district and borough councils, had not been provided to the Council on all areas, nor had enforcement data for 2022/23. He was happy to undertake comparisons once the

data has been provided. He estimated that there were approximately 40 Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) across Surrey, that figure did not include vacancies. There were three base managers, supervisors and an analyst. Looking at performance for the first month there were 3,423 Penalty Charge Notices issued.

*David Harmer, Robert Evans OBE and Robert King left the meeting at 12.14 pm.*

**(Q21) Steven McCormick** had no supplementary question.

**Bernie Muir** noted that she had been involved in the Chalk Pit issue for many years; the noise and dust from the site affected 1,000 people and at least 400 children went to school nearby. She asked the Cabinet Member to revisit the site to see the current situation as the focus seemed to be on the trommel machine having been silenced, however she noted that there were ongoing problems connected with the movement of the vehicles and skips. She asked for the Cabinet Member to ensure that alongside the Council, the other agencies - Environment Agency and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council - provide a detailed commitment of actions and how quickly they would act, explaining to residents what they could expect.

The Cabinet Member for Transport, Infrastructure and Growth thanked Bernie Muir for organising that meeting with residents where he and the Leader obtained their feedback on the matter. He was happy to visit the site with local Members and Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP. He noted that following a visit from the Council's enforcement team and the Environment Agency stopped mechanical picking and the trommel; he was happy to arrange another enforcement visit. He urged for the Community Liaison Group to be stood up so that issues could be fully resolved.

#### **34/23 STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS [Item 11]**

Catherine Powell (Farnham North) made a statement on a large spillage of cooking oil which occurred on 17 May on the A3016, Upper Hale Road. The emergency crew closed the road and tried several times to clean it without success, one lane was later reopened that evening followed by emergency works undertaken on Friday to resurface the road, it was fully reopened on Saturday. She thanked the Contact Centre and the Director - Highways and Transport for keeping her up to date with the situation and thanked the Highways team and their contractors for their prompt action. Local residents praised the handling of the situation and she was working with them and the property claims team on the recovery of costs.

Amanda Boote (The Byfleets) made a statement on the fire at the Access Self Storage building on Oyster Lane, Byfleet on 18 May. The first crew from Woking arrived within ten minutes, ten fire engines and an aerial appliance were sent to the scene from Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), supported by appliances from Royal Berkshire FRS, and West Sussex FRS. Fire fighting continued throughout Friday and the last embers were extinguished yesterday. She thanked SFRS and all the emergency services involved for all their hard work and compassion; she praised the generosity of residents in providing sustenance. She empathised with all those who lost treasured possessions, noting that she too lost family heirlooms.

#### **35/23 APPROVAL OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR ABSENCE [Item 12]**

The Leader introduced the report noting that John Furey had undergone an operation and was now in rehabilitation with limited mobility. The Leader hoped that he would make a full recovery soon.

**RESOLVED:**

That John Furey may continue to be absent from meetings until October 2023 by reason of ill health. The Council looks forward to welcoming him back in due course.

### **36/23 ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY [Item 13]**

The Leader introduced the report noting that Group Leaders had reviewed the calculations and were in agreement regarding the allocation of seats.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Council adopted the scheme of proportionality as set out in Annex 1 to this report for the Council year 2023/24 (Appendix C).

### **37/23 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES [Item 14]**

*Penny Rivers, George Potter and Paul Follows left the meeting at 12.25 pm.*

Before referring to the nominations in the supplementary agenda, the Chair noted a correction in recommendation 3 concerning the appointment to the Surrey Police and Crime Panel, the correct year was 2023/24. He noted a correction to the Green Party Group's nominations: Jonathan Essex was nominated to the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee, Catherine Baart was nominated to the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Council agreed: (Appendix D)

1. To appoint Members to serve on the Committees of the Council for the Council year 2023/24 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 Council's representative to the Surrey Police and Crime Panel for the Council year 2023/24.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. To note the Leader's appointments to the Council's Executive Committees as outlined above.

### **38/23 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN [Item 15]**

The Chair referred to the nominations in the supplementary agenda. He had been notified that Chris Townsend had been nominated as the second Select Committee Task Group Lead position on the Children, Families, Lifelong Learning and Culture Select Committee.

The Chair explained that as the second Select Committee Task Group Lead position on the Resources and Performance Select Committee was contested between Lesley Steeds and Hazel Watson, a vote needed to be taken to confirm the appointment under

Standing Order 6.11. A clear majority of Members voted in favour of Lesley Steeds' appointment.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Members listed (Appendix E) are duly elected as Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen respectively of the Select Committees and Regulatory Committees as shown for 2023/24.

**39/23 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23 [Item 16]**

The Chair of the Select Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs' Group introduced the report and highlighted the four select committees' outputs for 2022/23. He noted that the report showed that scrutiny had improved. He thanked select committee members especially the Chairmen and Task Group Leads, Democratic Services officers, report authors, witnesses, and the Leader and the administration for answering questions at the meetings. He noted that new select committee members would need training and detailed forward planning sessions. He stressed that public awareness and involvement in select committees needed to be improved, as well as using remote technology more and using varied scrutiny styles.

John O'Reilly praised the non-partisan work of the select committees and the work of the Chair of the Select Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs' Group. The select committees had improved greatly since 2019 with an increased number of substantive reports; the Council had improved as a result and an extra step was needed for the Council to be ranked as a top scrutiny authority. He noted the need to use Task and Finish Groups more - deep diving into topics - and to bring in external witnesses more to give evidence, ensuring that reports are more informed.

The Leader echoed the thanks noted above and welcomed the new Chair of the Select Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs' Group. He recognised that there was more work to do and he hoped that he had delivered on his commitment that the Council would not change its policies without scrutiny by the select committees' first. He noted the importance of the select committees' early engagement, undertaking deep dives into issues such as the new Task and Finish Groups on highways issues.

**RESOLVED:**

That Members noted the work done by the Select Committees and supported the next areas of improvement identified by the report.

**40/23 APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL [Item 17]**

The Leader introduced the report noting that the three recommended appointments were well-suited to the Panel based on their experience.

**RESOLVED:**

That the County Council ratified the appointments of the Independent Remuneration Panel for a three year term.

**41/23 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION [Item 18]**

The Leader introduced the report noting that the reason for having the Consumer Price Index (CPI) linked increase to the Members' Allowances Scheme was to avoid the

need for a debate annually. The capped increase of 3% was appropriate as opposed to the unanticipated 8.8% increase due to inflation and noting the average pay increase for staff of 5%. He explained that the CPI increase would need to be reviewed by July 2024, to be looked at by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

**RESOLVED:**

That Council approved the updated Members' Allowances Schedule (Annex A).

**42/23 REPORT OF THE CABINET [Item 19]**

The Leader presented the report of the Cabinet meetings held on 28 March 2023 and 25 April 2023.

**Recommendations on Policy Framework Documents:**

There were no reports with recommendations for Council.

**Reports for Information/Discussion:**

**28 March 2023:**

- A. A Housing, Accommodation and Homes Strategy for Surrey
- B. Re-Modelling the Strategic Short Breaks Offer for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism
- C. Future Bus Network Review and Local Bus Service Investment

**25 April 2023:**

- D. Transformation of Accommodation with Care and Support for Working Age Adults: Delivery Strategy for Modernising and Transforming Accommodation with Support for People with Mental Health Needs
- E. Reigate Fire Station - Redevelopment Scheme
- F. Godstone Depot – Redevelopment
  
- G. Quarterly Report on Decisions Taken Under Special Urgency Arrangements: 4 February 2023 - 12 May 2023

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. Noted that there had been no urgent decisions in the last three months.
- 2. Adopted the report of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 28 March 2023 and 25 April 2023.

**43/23 MINUTES OF CABINET MEETINGS [Item 20]**

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.

[Meeting ended at: 12.42 pm]

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**Chair**