

**Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held on
16 March 2021**

PRESENT -

Councillor Eber Kington (Chairman); Councillor Clive Smitheram (Vice-Chairman);
Councillors Arthur Abdulin, Steve Bridger, Kate Chinn, Nigel Collin, Hannah Dalton,
David Gulland, Colin Keane and Barry Nash

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Chief Executive), Amardip Healy (Chief Legal
Officer), Brendan Bradley (Chief Accountant), Emma Hill (Principal Programme
Manager), Sarah Keeble (Democratic Services Officer) and Tim Richardson
(Committee Administrator)

70 QUESTION TIME

No questions had been submitted or were asked by members of the public.

71 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration was made in relation to Items of business to be
discussed at the meeting:

Local Government Reorganisation & Collaboration in Surrey

Councillor Hannah Dalton, Other Interest: In the interests of openness and
transparency, Councillor Hannah Dalton declared that she is the founder of the
Residents Single Surrey Unitary campaign.

72 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION & COLLABORATION IN SURREY

The Committee received a report asking them to consider next steps following on
from the analysis by KPMG who were engaged by the Leaders of the 11 Districts
and Boroughs in Surrey to explore alternatives to a single unitary authority in
Surrey.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **On-going process:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer
confirmed that all 11 Districts and Boroughs are currently looking to take
this report to its relevant Committee or Council for approval. It was noted
that once this has been completed, the next steps can be set to work
towards.

- b) **Collaborations:** In terms of collaborations being worked on outside the KPMG, the Officer noted that they hope to bring a report forward for Members' consideration in the next couple of months.
- c) **8 priority areas:** Members noted the 8 priority areas listed in the report. It was noted that this was not a definitive list, and that Epsom and Ewell would have their own priority areas which would be explored, in addition to those noted in the report.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (1) **Agreed to note the Final Report's (Appendix 1) comments on the future structure of Local Government in Surrey;**
- (2) **Authorised the Chief Executive to progress further collaboration opportunities in the following service areas: waste, building control, IT infrastructure, housing, revenues and benefits, procurement, economic development and leisure services;**
- (3) **Authorised the Chief Executive to explore opportunities for collaboration on other service areas and with other local authority partners outside the priority areas and partners identified in the Final Report.**

73 EPSOM & EWELL DRAFT COVID 19 RECOVERY PLAN

To support our communities and local economy recover from the global pandemic, Members are asked to approve the draft Covid 19 Recovery Plan. To ensure that the Council can deliver the Vision, Four Year Plan and the Recovery Plan, there is a need to reconfigure the Council's current operating model. Members are asked to agree the priorities/ambitions which will form the basis for the reconfigured operating model.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **Affordable homes:** Following a question from a Member, the Officer noted that Developers have a wide range of options available in offering homes as affordable, including offering a property as 10% below market value. The Officer noted that an evidence-base would be put in place to demonstrate affordable rented housing as priority.
- b) **Climate change:** Members raised concerns regarding the lack of emphasis on climate change throughout the report, and spoke about the possibility of incorporating some actions into this.

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (1) **Approved the draft Covid19 Recovery Plan to enable recovery work to commence and our partners to be consulted.**

- (2) Agreed the priorities/ambitions for the reconfiguration of the Council's operating model.**

74 SUBMISSION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND ON COUNCIL SIZE

To agree the draft submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on Council size.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) Size submission:** Members noted the proposed reduction in number of Councillors from 38 to 35. It was noted by the Officer that the proposed number is reflective on what the Council believes it needs to function. Once this document is approved by the Committee, it will proceed to Public Consultation via Commission. Members of the public will then comment on whether they think 35 is an appropriate number of Councillors.
- b) Technology in Casework:** Members noted how the report states technology as being one of the most extensive methods of contact between Councillor and constituents, and noted that they might disagree with this. Members noted that, pre-Covid, the vast majority of their work was picked up through residents speaking to them on the streets and at their homes.
- c) Thanks to Task and Finish Group:** The Committee wish to place on record its thanks to all members of the Task and Finish Group in their on-going work for the Boundary Review.

Following consideration, it was resolved with 8 Members voting for, 1 Member voting against and the Chairman not voting that the Committee:

- (1) Agreed the draft proposal to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on Council size, as set out in Appendix 1;**
- (2) Agreed to delegate to the Chief Legal Officer in consultation with the Chairman of Strategy and Resources and the Chair of the Electoral Review Task & Finish Group and changes to the draft Council Size Submission as may be necessary;**
- (3) Agreed to refer to Council, the approval of the Council's submission on Council Size to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on Council size.**

75 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes and the Restricted Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Committee held on 28 January were agreed as a true record and the Committee authorised the Chairman to sign them.

The meeting began at 7.00 pm and ended at 7.52 pm

COUNCILLOR EBER KINGTON (CHAIRMAN)