

Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 15 July 2025

PRESENT -

Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors John Beckett, Kate Chinn, James Lawrence, Lucie McIntyre and Humphrey Reynolds

Absent: Councillor Jan Mason

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Cagdas Canbolat (Director of Corporate Services (S151)), Piero Ionta (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), Jon Sharpe (Interim Assistant Head of Service and Transport & Waste Services Manager), Sue Emmons (Chief Accountant), Will Mace (Corporate Governance & Strategy Manager) (Items 7-10 only) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

7 QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions or statements were received from members of the public.

8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

9 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 25 March 2025 and Minutes and Restricted Minutes of the two Special Meetings held on 17 June 2025 and authorised the Chair to sign them.

10 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee received a report setting out an updated Procurement Strategy, providing the council's vision, values and objectives for its procurement function.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Contract waivers.** In response to a question from a Member, the Corporate Governance and Strategy Manager informed the meeting that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee would consider the inclusion of a

procurement exceptions report onto its work programme at its meeting of 17 July.

- b) **Transparency.** A Member of the Committee expressed the view that information evidencing the reasons for the evaluation scoring of contract tenders should be provided to Members within committee reports.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Approve the updated Procurement Strategy (Appendix 1 to the report).**

11 2024-25 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN

The Committee received a report summarising the Council's provisional financial performance for 2024/25 and providing details of the capital budgets to be carried forward for schemes where costs will be incurred in 2025/26.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Section 106 funds.** In response to a question from a member, the Chief Accountant informed the Committee that the majority of the Council's received Section 106 balances related to affordable housing. Where balances were time-bound the council sought to use them before they expired.
- b) **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG).** In response to a question from a member, the Chief Accountant informed the Committee that any unspent DFG balances were rolled forward to the new financial year, but that the council also held a creditor balance of the same amount for use in the event that the grant was required to be paid back to the government. The Committee was informed that there had been a backlog of DFG works created by the Covid pandemic but that the Government had provided an extension to the period for existing funds to be used.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Receive the report on provisional financial outturn for 2024/25;**
- (2) Approve the carry forward £1.923 million budget for capital schemes to be added to the 2025/26 capital programme.**
- (3) Note that the provisional outturn position is subject to external audit. Should any material changes arise from the audit, these will be reported back to members.**

12 2026/27 STRATEGIC FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Committee received a report recommending budget targets for 2026/27 and providing an update on financial planning for 2027/28 to 2028/29 as recommended by the Financial Strategy Advisory Group.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Benchmarking.** In response to a question from a Member, the Director of Corporate Services and S151 Officer informed the Committee that data from Spelthorne Borough Council had been omitted from the benchmarking data provided within the report due to the significant variance between its data and that of the other authorities within the County (a reported useable reserve of 431%).

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

- (1) **To accept the recommendations of Financial Strategy Advisory Group held on 27 June 2025 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and;**
- (2) **Agree the amendment to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy position and note the budget gap for the relevant years as set out in table 4.2 in Appendix 2 to the report.**
- (3) **Agree the proposed Medium-Term Financial Strategy is in line with council priorities, prudent and sets a framework for a strong financial control.**
- (4) **To recommend to Full Council the proposed changes to the General Fund unallocated reserve levels set out in section 4.13 of Appendix 3 to the report.**

13 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS AND CHAIR OF THE SHAREHOLDER SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report seeking to agree the appointment of Members and a Chair to the Shareholder Sub Committee for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Appoint Members and a Chair for the Shareholder Sub Committee as required by its Terms of Reference, and set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report, namely:**
 - **Councillor Neil Dallen (Chair)**
 - **Councillor John Beckett**
 - **Councillor Kate Chinn**
 - **Councillor Hannah Dalton**
 - **Councillor Humphrey Reynolds**

14 URGENT DECISION

The Committee received a report informing it of a decision taken by one of the Directors and / or Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency, in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution. The report related to Urgent Decision 154 - Postponement of committee decision relating to a charitable organisation operating in the borough, to consider further information which has been supplied, and act accordingly.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Management arrangements.** In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Property and Regeneration provided the Committee with a verbal summary of the management arrangements for tenants of the council's properties.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the urgent decision taken and the reasons for that decision.**

15 BOURNE HALL LODGE

The Committee received a report setting out six potential options to consider the future use of Bourne Hall Lodge.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Locking of park gates.** In response to a question from a Member, the Chair informed the Committee that park gates in Ewell and some sites in Epsom were locked daily. The Head of Property and Regeneration informed the Committee that the gates at Bourne Hall were currently locked by operational staff and the arrangements for the future was a matter to be decided with the tenant.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Agree for Bourne Hall Lodge to be refurbished for residential accommodation, as detailed in Option 1 (Appendix 2, paragraphs 1.1 – 1.12 of the report).**
- (2) Agree to fund the refurbishment budget of up to £340,000 from S106 developer funds.**
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Head of Property & Regeneration, Head of Housing & Community in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and Head of Legal, to take all necessary actions further to the above decision being made that commit resources, as is necessary and appropriate, to progress the selected option to completion.**

16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

During the Committee's debate on Item 10 of the agenda (Transport Fleet Vehicle Renewal), the Committee considered that due to the sensitivity of the information contained within the appendices to the report, an exclusion of the Press and Public would be necessary in order to enable effective debate on the matter in question.

The Chair proposed a motion that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended) and that pursuant to paragraph 10 of Part 2 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Committee unanimously agreed the motion as set out by the Chair.

17 TRANSPORT FLEET VEHICLE RENEWAL

The Committee received a report informing it that the Council's vehicle fleet will require replacement starting mid-2027 and recommending that a decision is taken to extend the existing contract.

The matters that were considered by the Committee in relation to this item following the exclusion of the Press and Public is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted minute.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Authorise that the extension of the existing transport fleet contract be awarded to Specialist Fleet Services Limited, on the basis of lease with full maintenance, as now at an annual cost detailed within Exempt Appendix 1 to the report.**
- (2) Nominate and authorise the Head of Operational Services, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, the Director of Corporate Resources and Head of Legal, to take all necessary steps to finalise the extension in accordance with the existing agreement terms so as to bring into effect the recommendations resolved by this Committee.**
- (3) Nominate and authorise the Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Housing, Environment and Regeneration, to take all necessary steps to enter into and approve all individual Contract Hire Schedules – including extensions, if vehicles are kept for longer than the originally intended term - in accordance with the existing agreement terms so as to bring into effect the recommendations resolved by this Committee.**

Following the consideration of this item the Chair expressed his thanks to the Interim Assistant Head of Service and Transport & Waste Manager for the work of the council's staff to provide the council's waste management services.

18 LEASE ARRANGEMENTS - RELATE 2025/6

The Committee received a report considering options for future funding arrangements for RELATE Mid and East Surrey for 2025-2027.

The Head of Property and Regeneration informed the Committee that he had been informed that RELATE Mid and east Surrey had changed its name on 1 July 2025 to Surrey Counselling and Mediation.

The matters that were considered by the Committee in relation to this item following the exclusion of the Press and Public is recorded in a separate (not for publication) restricted minute.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved with 6 votes for and 1 abstention to:

- (1) Agree the funding arrangements for RELATE Mid & East Surrey (Surrey Counselling and Mediation) for 2025-2027 as detailed in Alternative Option 1 as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2 to the report.**

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.36 pm

COUNCILLOR NEIL DALLEN (CHAIR)