

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2021**

- \* Councillor Follows – Chair
- \* Councillor Williams – Vice Chair

* Councillor Adam	
* Councillor Boyle	0
* Councillor Crooks	*
* Councillor Faraday	*
* Councillor Hullah	0
0 Councillor Neill	0
* Councillor PMA Rivers	*
0 Councillor Rosoman	*
0 Councillor Welland	

Councillor Ashworth
Councillor Cosser
Councillor Duce
Councillor Heagin
Councillor Martin
Councillor PS Rivers
Councillor Stubbs

\* Present            # Absent & No Apology Received            0 Apology for Absence            L Late

318. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021, having been previously circulated were signed by the Chair as a true record.

319. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

320. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Follows declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9 on the grounds that he is the Waverley Borough Councillor responsible for the boundary review process and stayed in the Chamber whilst the item was debated.

321. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Ms Annie Barker, a Community Store volunteer, asked whether, in light of the questions asked under Standing Order 6, the Council’s position regarding its support for the Community Store had changed.

The Committee Chair explained that Standing Order 6 provides Members with an opportunity to ask questions or seek information they wish to be informed about, or that they feel would benefit members of the committee to be aware of. The Chair stressed this was a proper function of Members’ scrutiny of Council business, but in no way alters the agreed position or decisions of the Council. The Chair went on to thank Ms Barker for her dedication and work in supporting the Community Store and asked her to pass on the Council’s thanks and assurances to the volunteers who have made the Community Store the success it so obviously is.

322. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

**The following questions were received from Councillor Cosser for the Town Clerk:**

As no report has been considered publicly for some time on the use of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre and as I have been informed that no further report to Committee is planned this year can I please be informed:-

1. The number of families using the Community Store at the WNC on a weekly basis during the months of July, August and September.
2. The number of requests from community groups and others for bookings at the WNC it has been necessary to refuse during this same period as a consequence of the space required by the potential hirer being used by the Community Store and the estimated total loss of income to the Council to date as a consequence.
3. How many of those refused use of the WNC has it been possible to assist in finding other venues?
4. The current state of discussions/negotiations on finding an alternative venue for the Community Store and when it is expected that a move will take place.

The Town Clerk provided a written response to Councillor Cosser and tabled the response for the information of Members:

**Response from Town Clerk to questions submitted by Councillor Cosser under Standing Order 6**

**Q1.** The number of families using the Community Store at the WNC on a weekly basis during the months of July, August and September.

**A1.** The Community Store records users in terms of households, which can range from a grouping of related people to those cohabiting or houses of multi-occupancy. The make-up of a household is recorded in terms of the number of adults and children being supported, which is why in previous reports to Members the usage of the store is shown as days-worth of support. For comparison this method of reporting is shown below along with the weekly record of numbers of adults and children supported.

During the period 5 July to 1 Oct 2021, 4,067 days-worth of support was provided. When added to the support provided 20 April 2020 to 2 July 2021 a total of 44,544 days-worth of support has been provided by the Community Store since it opened.

Weekly figures for period 5 July are:

Week Commencing	Days-Worth of Support	Households	Adults	Children
05 Jul	389	23	35	12
12 Jul	252	15	24	12
19 Jul	287	16	23	18
26 Jul	245	15	24	11
02 Aug	357	22	31	20
09 Aug	287	19	29	12
16 Aug	420	25	40	20
23 Aug	413	24	38	21
30 Aug	357	24	35	16
06 Sept	315	19	31	14
13 Sept	287	19	27	14
20 Sept	266	18	25	13
27 Sept	252	18	22	14

**Q2.** The number of requests from community groups and others for bookings at the WNC it has been necessary to refuse during this same period as a consequence of the space required by the potential hirer being used by the Community Store and the estimated total loss of income to the Council to date as a consequence.

**A2.** During July and August when neither the Wyatt or Oglethorpe were available seven potential casual hirers were unable to be accommodated, with an estimated potential loss of £315. It is stated as a potential loss as experience shows that not all telephone or email enquiries for use of a space culminates with a confirmed hire. In September three enquiries were made for casual use of the Oglethorpe, on each occasion the Wyatt Room was available and offered as an alternative.

During the same period two viable enquiries for regular use of the Oglethorpe totaling five hours per week were unable to be met. For both groups the Wyatt Room was available and offered. This is a potential loss of £55 per week.

During September, post easing of lockdown restrictions and end of school holidays, the use of both the Wyatt Room and the Caudle Hall has increased and currently stands at a higher percentage of occupancy than for the same period in 2019 (pre-pandemic)

<b>Location</b>	<b>September 2019</b>	<b>September 2021</b>
Wyatt Room	32%	38%
Caudle Hall	54%	62%

However, percentage of occupancy does not necessarily equate to increased income. Income levels depend upon the type of users, with community groups paying the least and commercial events the most. Total income for hall hire at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre in September 2019 was £5,145.96 compared with £4,638.66 for the same period in 2021. Considering the difficulties and changes that have occurred as a result of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, the Facilities Supervisor and Support Services at GTC have worked extremely hard to recover the use of the WNC so quickly.

**Q3.** How many of those refused use of the WNC has it been possible to assist in finding other venues?

**A3.** If premises are not available due to existing bookings or are unavailable due to other reasons, staff are unable to accept the booking. If a booking cannot be accommodated, irrespective of which hall or room the enquiry pertains to, those who enquire are provided with information of other venues within the Godalming area. The advice provided being determined by the nature of the enquiry and the local knowledge of GTC staff. If an enquiry is made via the GTC website contact form or via email, which GTC is unable to assist with, the Facilities Supervisor provides a list of alternative venues in the reply.

Where an enquiry for use of a GTC facility, cannot be met, unless the enquirer gets back in touch, it remains unknown whether they have been able to find a venue or not. The one exception being the Farncombe Scout Group, who were unable to restart after the summer break due to a ceiling collapse in the Baden Hall. The WNC was not available on a Thursday evening and GTC staff sought alternative venues for the Scout Group, who are temporarily located at Godalming Football Club and St Peter & St Paul's Scout Group

**Q4.** The current state of discussions/negotiations on finding an alternative venue for the Community Store and when it is expected that a move will take place.

**A4.** Following negotiations with Waverley Borough Council, a licence to occupy the building at Broadwater Park was agreed in July 2021. Subsequent to that, the building has undergone a full survey as part of the CIL bid agreed by the Council and plans for the scoping works to allow the Community Store to utilise the space were submitted to WBC for approval, as required by the occupancy licence.

Approval to undertake the works was received mid-September. It is hoped works will begin over the autumn and winter period with the aim of moving the Community Store by Easter 2022. Whilst this is later than expected, works could not begin before approvals were in place.

**The following question was received from Councillor Adam for the Chair of P&M:**

Is the Chair of P&M able to provide Members with an update on the situation with Broadwater Golf Club and specifically when it is expected that ongoing legal discussions will be resolved?

The Chair informed Members he would provide them with a written confidential update.

**323. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

	£
Godalming Town Council	
Accounts paid since the 10 of September 2021	57,528.44
Receipts received since the 10 of September 2021	418,862.01
Balance held in HSBC Current Account	
Balance at 14 October 2021	36,157.88
Balance held in the HSBC Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 14 October 2021	925,364.92
CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 14 October 2021	150,000.00

A schedule of the accounts paid was tabled for the information of Members and a copy is attached to record minutes. The vouchers relating to these payments were also tabled at the meeting for inspection. All payments made were in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members agreed that the Chair should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

**324. BUDGET MONITORING**

Members considered a budget monitoring report to 30 September 2021 which shows a current variance of £15,385 underspend against budget. Items noted in the forecast:

- Head Office – Equipment budget overspent due to purchase of a new computer for the Receptionist and two new laptops to enable hybrid meetings based at WBC Council Chamber. Salaries overspend due to part-time Receptionist and part-time Grounds Maintenance Assistant as agreed per Min No 403-20. Surveyors Fees include costs of feasibility study for Broadwater pavilion changing rooms' renovation per Min No 110-21
- Civic Expenses – £2k over budget due to non-budgeted Professional Fees to produce videos for Annual Town Meeting.
- Town Promotion – £3.3k budgeted for Sponsorship of Floral Godalming but given current environment, this has not been sought.
- Christmas Lights – deposit has not yet been paid.
- The Square – Based upon advice given by the Leaseholder, we did not budget for any income in 2021/22 but they have managed to get some monies from the Sub-Leaseholder. The level of income going forward will be at a reduced rate to that previously achieved, but more than the £3,000 minimum the lease allows for.
- Allotments – Tree works on all allotment sites has been carried out resulting in significant costs. This work is required for public safety.

- Wilfrid Noyce Centre – The centre has been given some rates relief which has resulted in the current underspend. WBC has indicated this relief will expire shortly and we will then be invoiced for remaining year's rates. The Wyatt Room has been repainted now that the Community Store has vacated the hall. Whilst regular hirers are returning, income levels are still well below pre-COVID levels and below budget.
- Bandstand – Music in the Park has not been invoiced for its use of the Bandstand.
- Museum – A replacement computer has been purchased for the Curator. This is offset by savings on renegotiated insurance. Salaries over budget due to increase in Museum Volunteer Co-ordinator's hours per Min No 403-20, and resource required to cover Curator leave.

### 325. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the draft work programme and noted the progress within.

### 326. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW

On 5 October the Local Government Boundary Commission issued draft recommendations for the restructure of Waverley Borough Council wards. The Commission's recommendations are now subject to consultation between 5 October and 13 December 2021.

Commission's draft recommendations summary – **WBC**

- Waverley to be represented by 50 Councillors, seven fewer than present;
- Waverley to have 22 wards, seven fewer than present; and
- the boundaries for most wards, excepting Farnham Castle will change.

Commission's draft recommendations summary – **Godalming – WBC Wards**

- WBC Councillors reduce from ten to nine;
- Godalming wards reduce from five to four;
- Binscombe and Charterhouse wards combine to form a new ward of three councillors;
- remaining wards are each represented by 2 councillors; and
- each ward identified by the prefix "Godalming".

In relation to the use of the prefix, the Commission is seeking comments on whether it would be appropriate to remove the word 'Godalming' from the ward names.

Members noted that the use of the word 'Godalming' provides a geographic identity and whilst the ward names are long, they are no longer than others within the borough and in some instances are shorter – Alfold, Dunsfold & Chiddingfold, Ewhurst & Ellens Green, Farnham Wrecclesham & Rowledge for example are no shorter than Godalming Holloway, Godalming Central & Ockford. The removal of the Godalming prefix would mean that only those Waverley wards in Godalming would have no clear parish locality identifier.

Commission's draft recommendations summary – **Godalming – GTC Wards**

- GTC Councillors remain at present number of 20;
- Godalming wards increased from five to six;
- Binscombe and Charterhouse wards combine to form a new ward of seven councillors;
- Central & Ockford are separated to form two wards, each represented by two councillors; and
- a new ward 'Croft' is formed represented by one councillor.

At the request of the Committee Chair, Officers reviewed the Commission's report with a view of forming a proposal for consideration by Members that would remove the extremes proposed by the Commission ie. wards ranging from 1 Member to 7 Members and provide close equity of representation per elected Member.

Members considered the Officer's report as well as a supplemental report based on feedback from Members.

Members considered that the Commission's recommendation for GTC electoral wards of Godalming Binscombe & Charterhouse, Farncombe & Catteshall and Holloway to remain cognate with the proposed WBC electoral wards, whilst dividing Central & Ockford into two parish wards and also creating the new parish ward of 'Croft', would diminish the clarity of locality identity and the benefits of partnership working between WBC & GTC ward councillors could be weakened by use of significantly different borough and parish ward boundaries. It could be argued that local government is complicated enough for residents without introducing yet more complexity by utilising different wards for town and borough within the same geographical localities.

Members note that the aim of the review is to seek equity of representation. From the total number of electors predicted for 2027, the average per councillor electorate representation at Borough level for the Godalming area would be 1 Councillor per 2,042 electorate. The current Godalming 20 councillor Town Council equates to an average ratio 1:919 based on the 2027 electorate figures.

The Commission's proposal of retaining a 20 member council would continue to see Godalming with more town councillors than Farnham at 18 councillors, although the predicted 2027 electorate of Farnham at 33,954 would be 84.5% greater than that of Godalming's 18,380. That said, Members' main consideration was the importance of locality identity in determining local representation and the number of councillors within a local council must reflect fair representation across the parish area.

Members were opposed to the idea of the creation of a new single Member ward called Croft and felt that this has no meaningful local identity and would create unnecessary complexities by having residents in that area identified by three different ward names; Godalming South, Milford & Witley for County elections, Godalming Holloway for Borough and Croft for Town Council elections.

Members were also opposed to the creation of single 'super ward' for Town Council elections which would result in a third of the Council representing one locality. Additionally, Members considered the geographic nature of the proposed ward Binscombe & Charterhouse to be unsuitable. Binscombe and Charterhouse localities are distinctly different and are only meaningfully connected at a very narrow point at the bottom of Farncombe Hill. As such Members considered the option of retaining separate Town Council wards for the Binscombe and Charterhouse area to be a better option.

When considering the existing Binscombe ward and Charterhouse ward as single entities, distribution of electorate is in the region of 47% Charterhouse and 53% Binscombe. Which based upon the Commission's 2027 electorate figures of 6,394 gives an approximate breakdown of 3,005 for Charterhouse and 3,389 for Binscombe.

In relation to the borough warding arrangements, when considered against the Commission's representative level of one WBC councillor to 2,042 electorate in the Godalming area, the separation of the proposed 3 borough councillors for this area does not easily fit a two ward model. By splitting the proposed Binscombe & Charterhouse ward, one ward will be under represented by having just one councillor and the other with two councillors would be over represented. That said, Godalming Town Council would wish, for the same reasons set out

below for Town Council wards, that the Commission considers ways of retaining the separation of these areas as separate borough wards.

However, when considering the amalgamation of the areas in connection with the warding for the Town Council, a different arrangement could be accommodated.

Although the boundaries between the existing Charterhouse and Binscombe wards are slightly untidy around the area of Elizabeth Road, and the lower end of Farncombe Hill, they do delineate areas of differing characteristics. The majority of Charterhouse ward is established upon Farncombe Hill, Charterhouse Hill and Frith Hill and their approaches, whereas Binscombe is predominantly based around the area of the 1930's onwards northern expansion of Farncombe. These two distinctive area's clearly have a differing majority of housing stock and characteristics. For these reasons Godalming Town Council considers that a case can be made for maintaining a five ward model for the Town Council elections. This model being based upon the proposed WBC Godalming Ockford & Central, Godalming Holloway and Godalming Farncombe & Catteshall wards with the addition two wards based on the existing Binscombe ward and Charterhouse ward.

Members agreed that in splitting the Godalming Binscombe & Charterhouse ward for Local Council elections, the rationale for the ratio of elected representatives to electorate should be to achieve equity of representation across the Town Council area. The electorate of the separate wards being 3,005 and 3,389 respectively at a ratio of 1,021 per councillor works out at 2.94 and 3.32 councillors, which is three Town Councillors for each of the separate ward areas.

This maintains the position of reducing the size of Godalming Town Council from 20 to 18 Councillors. By doing so the ratio of approx 1 councillor to 1,021 of the electorate and a ratio of 2:1 Town Councillors to Borough Councillors is retained. To retain 20 councillors, whilst also retaining equity of representation, reduces the ratio from 1:1021 to 1:919, which in turn brings the debate back to the Commission's recommendation of the six ward 7,4,4,2,2,1 model that includes the creation of an entirely new ward call 'Croft' and the splitting of Ockford & Central into two.

The Table below provides the ward comparison for a five ward Town Council model.

Ward	2027 Electorate	18 Councillors @ average of 1,021 Electors/Councillor		Percentage From Average %
		Councillors Per Ward		
		2 Decimal Points	Rounded	
Binscombe	3389	3.32	3 (1,130)	+10.65%
Charterhouse	3005	2.94	3 (1,002)	-1.9%
Farncombe & Catteshall	3932	3.85	4 (983)	-3.7%
Holloway	4028	3.95	4 (1,007)	-1.4%
Central & Ockford	4026	3.94	4 (,1007)	-1.4%

**In concluding the debate, Members resolved to agree that the Town Clerk should make the following representations to the Local Government Boundary Commission. The Town Clerk's draft submission to the Commission to be presented to the Group Leaders forum for consideration prior to being submitted.**

1. For the boundaries of both Waverley Borough and Godalming Town Councils' electoral wards to remain coterminous for Farncombe & Catteshall, Holloway and Central & Ockford with the proposed Godalming Binscombe & Charterhouse Ward remaining as two separate wards primarily based on the existing Town Council ward boundaries.
2. For the number of Godalming Town Councillors to be reduced from 20 to 18 distributed as indicated in the table above.
3. Godalming prefix to be retained for the names of the proposed new Waverley Borough Council electoral wards within the parish of Godalming.
4. The word "Parish" to be removed from the names of the proposed Town Council Wards.
5. At Borough level GTC would wish to see the Godalming Binscombe and Charterhouse ward split on the same line as proposed for the Town Council.

327. SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

Members noted that there have been no safeguarding incidents to report during this period.

328. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES – REPORT ON GODALMING & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Members noted a report from Councillor Stubbs on the Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce, an organisation upon which Councillor Stubbs represents the Town Council.

329. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES – REPORT ON SPORT GODALMING

Members noted a report from Councillor Adam on the Sport Godalming, an organisation upon which Councillor Adam represents the Town Council.

330. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 25 November 2021 at 7.15pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Environment & Planning Committee, whichever is later.

331. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were informed that in the lead up to COP26 a number of climate change information events will be held in Godalming and that they should check their inbox for further information.

Members were also requested to let the office know regarding attendance at the Remembrance Day events.