

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2025**

\* Councillor Follows – Chair  
0 Councillor Weightman – Vice Chair

0 Councillor Adam	* Councillor Holliday
0 Councillor Clayton	* Councillor Kiehl
* Councillor Crooks	* Councillor Martin
* Councillor Crowe	* Councillor PMA Rivers
0 Councillor C Downey	0 Councillor Steel
* Councillor S Downey	* Councillor Thomson
* Councillor Duce	* Councillor Williams
* Councillor Heagin	

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

508. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2025, having been previously circulated were signed by the Chair as a true record.

509. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above. In the absence of Cllr Weightman, on the proposal of Cllr Follows, seconded by Cllr Rivers, Cllr Heagin was elected as Vice Chair for this meeting.

510. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS

Members made no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting, which is required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

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

No petitions/statements/questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order No 4.

512. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions from Councillors were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 6.

513. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	£
Godalming Town Council	
Accounts paid from 29 January to 19 February 2025	90,885.84
Receipts received from 30 January to 19 February 2025	30,167.70
Balance held in HSBC Current Account	
Balance at 19 February 2025	154,033.62
Balance held in the HSBC Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 19 February 2025	747,051.80
CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 19 February 2025	1,050,000.00

All payments made were in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members noted the transfer of funds between deposit accounts in order to obtain a higher return on the Council's reserves.

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

#### 514. BUDGET MONITORING

Members considered a budget monitoring report to 31 January 2025 (detailed report attached to record minutes) and noted its contents.

#### 515. ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER

Members received an update from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Follows, on the actions and outcomes known to date relating to the English Devolution White Paper in the creation of Unitary and/or a Strategic Authority within the exiting Borough & County areas affecting the residents of Godalming.

Members noted that a statement had been issued from the County Leaders Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) group that an agreement had been reached that Surrey would not become a single unitary authority. However, debate and negotiations were ongoing relating to the division of the County into either two or three unitary areas.

The Town Clerk reported to Members on the potential implications for the Parish of Godalming and Godalming Town Council, including issues of double taxation, loss of services, transfer of services from existing local authorities to either a new unitary authority or to Godalming Town Council.

The Town Clerk also highlighted existing facilities which might be considered 'at risk' or a low priority to a new unitary authority. Community assets which are currently 'owned and managed by WBC but had been acquired for the community by the predecessor council, Godalming Borough Council, which residents might believe 'belong to Godalming' were also discussed.

Members unanimously agreed that the reorganisation of local government, which last happened 50 years ago, will inevitably alter the way some local services are delivered and that the sense of importance of some 'treasured' community assets may not be as strong within a unitary authority as within the existing borough council arrangement. Members agreed that where feasible, such assets should be held at the most local level possible, which includes ownership and/or management of some assets being vested to the Town Council.

Members resolved to agree that a working group of 'single hatted' councillors, i.e. those who only sit as members of Godalming Town Council, and therefore are not conflicted by the interests of either WBC or SCC, should be formed to consider the challenges and opportunities presented by the reorganisation of local government arrangements in Waverley and Surrey. This working group should bring forward proposals and options to this committee for further consideration.

Members elected the following councillors to the Devolution Task & Finish Group:

Cllr Heagin, Cllr Thompson, Cllr Holliday, Cllr Weightman, Cllr S Downey (TBC)

Additionally, it was agreed that Cllr Heagin be the Elected Lead Member for Godalming Town Council within any forum related to the reorganisation of local government in Waverley and

Surrey where GTC is required to be represented independently of Waverley Borough or Surrey County Councils.

516. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

Information:	£
<b>24/2025 Grants Budget</b>	64,700.00
Allocations this year to date	60,176.00
Balance available for allocation	4,524.00
<hr/>	
<b>24/2025 SLA Fund Allocation</b>	45,500.00
Allocations this year to date	45,500.00
<hr/>	
<b>24/2025 Council Community Fund Allocation</b>	19,200.00
Allocations this year prior to this meeting	14,676
Council Community Fund applications approved at this meeting (including Grant Aid in Kind)	4,346.00
Balance unallocated	178.00

Members considered the following applications for grant aid – the summary of the application is given below.

**Applications for Council Community Funding**

St Marks & All Saints Primary School

Sponsors: Cllr Follows, Cllr Kiehl

£308 was awarded as financial support for 28 Year 6 pupils from St Marks & All Saints Primary School to be able to attend a 'Junior Citizen Course' at Guildford Spectrum.

The 'Junior Citizen Course' teaches children about the importance of behaviour, following the rules and laws whilst out and about, potential dangers and what to do in an emergency etc.

1254 (Godalming) Air Cadet Squadron

Sponsors: Cllr PMS Rivers, Cllr Crooks

£1,500 was awarded as financial support for the purchase of expedition equipment: tents, camping stoves, rucksacks, and water canisters to support DofE award scheme and Air Cadet expeditions which includes leadership training for the more advanced cadets.

Cycle & Scooter Storage Facilities in Godalming Schools

In December 2024, Godalming Town Council was informed that the WBC Environmental Health team has been looking at ways to support schools with the provision of sufficient cycle and scooter facilities, to encourage more active travel and had identified two Godalming schools, **Farncombe Infants** and **St Marks & All Saints Primary**, who were keen to improve their cycle and scooter storage facilities but did not have the funds to do so.

Farncombe Infants School

Sponsors: Cllr PMS Rivers, Cllr Weightman

£1,085 was awarded to provide a 3-Bike Shelter and 10-Scooter Facility.

St Marks & All Saints  
Cllr PMS Rivers, Cllr Weightman

£1,453 was awarded to provide a 6-Bike & 10-Scooter Rack Facility.

517. BROADWATER DECARBONISATION

Members of the Policy & Management Committee considered a recommendation from the Audit Committee that P&M suspends the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) at Broadwater Youth & Community Centre whilst investigations are undertaken to determine whether there are suitable alternative options to lower the carbon footprint of the centre.

The Chair thanked the Audit Committee for its diligence in reviewing the financial risk associated with the decarbonisation project and was pleased to note the success of the installation of the solar panels at the centre. In particular, Members noted the percentage of self-consumed energy during the first full year of operation is higher than initially predicted, meaning the Return-on-Investment (ROI) is ahead of the anticipated 7-year timeframe.

However, Members also noted the Audit Committee's concerns relating to the increased costs associated with the installation of ASHPs caused by factors that were unknown when the scheme was initially proposed. Members noted the Audit Committee's reported anticipated costs had increased from £24,000 to approximately £44,000, meaning the anticipated ROI had also increased, from 6.3 years to 15.3 years.

Members noted that the costs of installing ASHP at Broadwater Youth & Community Centre had exceeded the Carbon Cost Threshold (CCT) for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3c is £325. This is the maximum amount of funding that the scheme will allow to be used per one tonne of direct carbon (tCO<sup>2</sup>e) saved over the project's lifetime and which provides a benchmark for the affordability/cost benefit of a decarbonisation scheme.

In noting that the additional expense is primarily due to the cost of installing a three-phase electrical power system at Broadwater Youth & Community Centre to enable the operation of the ASHPs, Members agreed that the Town Clerk should write to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero to highlight the prohibitive costs experienced by GTC in upgrading the required electricity infrastructure.

In agreeing with the Audit Committee's recommendation, Members expressed disappointment that the decarbonisation of Broadwater Youth & Community Centre as originally envisioned should be suspended whilst alternative options are explored. Members agreed that alternative options should be brought back to the appropriate committee before 20 February 2026.

518. GODALMING WAR MEMORIAL BENCH

Members resolved to approve that the Town Clerk should arrange for the installation of a suitable bench to replace the existing damaged bench located by the War Memorial. The cost of the bench and installation to be funded from existing revenue.

519. FIRE CABINET

Members approved expenditure of up to £2,000 for a suitable fireproof cabinet for the council offices to house the manuscript burial records. Expenditure to be funded from existing revenue.

520. EVENTS' GROUP – UPDATE

Members received an update from Cllr Kiehl on the work of the Events' Task & Finish Group, specifically on the postponement of Staycation Live for 2025 and support for ChoirBLAST 2025.

Members resolved to agree that the expenditure earmarked within the 2025/26 budget to support Staycation Live 2025, be reallocated to Support ChoirBLAST 2025.

521. UPCOMING EVENTS

Members noted the following upcoming event(s):

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
Saturday 1 March	Godalming Street Market
Saturday, 5 April	Spring Festival

522. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

Councillor Follows informed Members that the Sport Godalming AGM is to be held at Broadwater Pavilion on Thursday, 13 March at 7.30pm.

523. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Members identified that Grants awarded and once installed, the replacement public bench should be publicised on the Council's social media.

524. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 13 March 2025 at 7.00pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Environment & Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later.

525. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were informed that there would be a short vigil held at the Pepperpot at 11am on Monday, 24 March to commemorate the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

IN PURSUANCE OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 S.1(2), THE COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM(S) 19 & 20 BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED I.E LEGALLY PRIVILEGED INFORMATION & STAFFING MATTERS.

526. SKILLWAY LEASE RENEWAL

Members considered a report from the Town Clerk relating to the renewal of the lease between Godalming Town Council and the Warehouse Christian Trust Skillway. Members noted the proposed Heads of Terms and agreed the Town Clerk should engage with Skillway and the Council's solicitor to prepare a new 10-year tenancy agreement for approval by Full Council.

In recognising the social benefit provided by Skillway, in not only supporting the young people who attend the Skillway workshops, but also the improvements made to the Nightingale Cemetery Chapel buildings during Skillway's tenure, Members resolved to agree that the

legal fees associated with establishing a new tenancy will be met by the Council and that the Council will offer a 6-month rent free period.

527. OUTSTANDING LEAVE

Members received a report from the Chair of the Staffing Committee regarding untaken annual leave and resolved to agree on actions to be taken.

- i. Members approved the recommendation from the Staffing Committee for the buy back of nine days of leave which could not be taken during 2024/25 because of the exceptional circumstances arising from the resignation of the RFO and the decision to only arrange part time locum cover.
- ii. Additionally, Members requested that Staffing Committee review the need for additional senior management resource to meet current demands and the potential impact of expansion resulting from devolution. This should include consideration of regrading of senior management rolls, recruitment of a deputy town clerk, succession planning and revision of standing orders to address issues such as the archaic town clerk title.