

MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 AUGUST 2025

* Councillor Follows – Chair
* Councillor Weightman – Vice Chair

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

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

195. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2025, having been previously circulated were signed by the Chair as a true record.

196. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

197. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS

Councillor Martin declared an other registerable interest in Agenda Item 7 - Community Asset Transfers – Expressions of Interest, on the grounds that his daughter-in-law is on the management committee of the Godalming Band and the Ockford Ridge Scout & Guide HQ and that his son is a member of Godalming Band and his granddaughter is a member of the Ockford Ridge Guides.

198. 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.

199. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

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

200. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION – UPDATE

Members noted that GTC's response to the Government's Consultation agreed on 17 July was submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 18 July and that the leaflets produced by GTC informing residents of the LGR consultation and GTC's agreed position were delivered to all residential addresses within the parish of Godalming during the week commencing 21 July.

Members also noted a letter from Surrey Association of Local Councils (SALC) setting out their response to the government's LGR in Surrey consultation and considered a request by SALC for extraneous funding of £480, to assist with the cost of developing a short, impactful, visual document that sets out the range of services that town and parish councils offer,

whether that be place management, parks, open spaces, community safety, flood mitigation, environmental enhancements or community support, along with best practice studies from Surrey and other parts of the country.

The purpose of the campaign being to educate and inform the new unitary authority and raise awareness of the local council sector amongst potential shadow authority councillors, especially those from non-parished areas.

Members unanimously agreed to support SALC in this initiative, noting that the cost is being met by the five largest town and parish councils in Surrey and SALC.

The Committee Chair provided Members with an update on the progress of LGR in Waverley and Surrey, noting that the county and boroughs have been informed that the detailed outcomes of the government consultation will not be made public. This is on the basis that the consultation was an advisory consultation and is but one of the factors that Ministers will take into account when reaching any decision on the proposed unitary options.

The Chair of the LGR Working Group reminded Members of the SALC online event relating to the creation of Neighbourhood Area Committees and encouraged Members to sign up.

201. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFERS (CAT) – EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Members were informed that the CEO was awaiting confirmation that the submitted Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for tranche 2 assets have met the CAT criteria. Members agreed that the CEO should proceed at risk to produce the business cases for the tranche 2 assets.

Following approval by Members on 17 July 2025 (Min No 149-25 refers), EOIs relating to tranche 2 community assets were submitted to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) co-ordinator at Waverley Borough Council (WBC) on 18 July 2025. Members were informed that the CEO was awaiting confirmation that the submitted EOIs for tranche 2 assets have met the CAT criteria. Members agreed that the CEO should proceed at risk to produce the business cases for the tranche 2 assets.

Members considered the draft EOIs for the following three tranche 3 assets:

- The Bury's Scout & Guide HQ
- Ockford Ridge Scout & Guide HQ
- The Bandstand and Rangers' Station

In doing so, Members noted that the CEO and Committee Chair had met with the respective management groups of both Scout & Guide HQs on 9 July, and that the CEO had met with representatives of the Godalming Band committee on 15 July. All groups expressed strong support for GTC pursuing freehold tenure of the respective properties.

Members were informed that as part of the discussions with the band committee, a request was made to widen the scope of the EOI to include the area currently occupied by the Rangers. This request was made to ensure future community use of the site should the Rangers' occupation cease following LGR. Members noted that this amendment had been included into the draft EOI and unanimously agreed to support this approach.

Bus Shelters and Street Furniture:

Members noted that these tranche 3 assets are not subject to the formal CAT process but are covered by a separate WBC internal process, initiated by WBC in April 2024. The CEO informed Members that he has contacted WBC for clarification on next steps and is awaiting a response.

Tranche 4 Assets:

The Chair of the LGR Working Group stated that the process to prioritise options for tranche 4 assets will begin at its next meeting, scheduled for 11 August 2025.

In Conclusion

Members:

- i. **Noted** the submission and current status of tranche 2 EOIs.
- ii. **Agreed** to support the inclusion of the Ranger-occupied area within the Band Room EOI scope.
- iii. **Approved** the submission of EOIs for the following tranche 3 assets:
 - o The Bury's Scout & Guide HQ
 - o Ockford Ridge Scout & Guide HQ
 - o The Band Room and, if agreed, the area currently used by the Rangers)
- iv. **Noted** the updated CAT list.
- v. **Noted** the current position regarding bus shelters and street furniture and that tranche 4 priorities will be considered at the next LGR Working Group meeting.

202. NJC PAY AWARD 2025/26 – BUDGETARY IMPACT AND IMPLEMENTATION

For the avoidance of delay, and with the agreement of the Chair of the Staffing Committee, the Chief Executive Officer referred this matter directly to the Policy & Management Committee.

The Committee considered a report advising that the National Joint Council (NJC) has agreed a 3.2% pay award for employees on Local Government Services ("Green Book") terms and conditions, effective from 1 April 2025. Members noted that the uplift exceeds the 2.5% provision included within the Council's 2025/26 staffing budget by 0.7%, which will be addressed through the Revised Estimates process later in the financial year.

Members further noted that, to ensure timely implementation and payment of backdated arrears to 1 April 2025, officers are working with the Council's payroll provider to process the change in the August 2025 payroll.

It was also noted that Youth and Community Workers employed under the JNC "Pink Book" are subject to separate pay negotiations with a pay year running 1 September to 31 August; accordingly, the NJC Green Book award does not apply to this group. Officers will report separately on the Pink Book outcome in due course for implementation from 1 September 2025.

Members resolved to agree to approve the NJC 2025/26 pay award of 3.2% for Green Book employees, effective from 1 April 2025.

Additionally, Members noted that:

- i. the variance of 0.7% above the budgeted provision is to be addressed as part of the Revised Estimates process;
- ii. Officers are working with the payroll provider to implement the revised pay rates and backdated arrears in the August 2025 payroll; and
- iii. that Youth & Community Workers (Pink Book employees) are subject to separate negotiations, with outcomes to be reported for implementation from 1 September 2025.

203. ST JOHNS STREET BUS SHELTER – DAMAGE AND RECOVERY ACTION

Members received an update on the recent damage sustained to the bus shelter on St John's Street and were informed of the actions taken by the Operations & Compliance Officer to ensure public safety, seek restitution, and arrange for repair and reinstatement of the shelter.

Members thanked the Operations & Compliance Officer for his determination in seeking redress and for his success in achieving a 100% settlement for the repair of the bus shelter.

204. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	£
Godalming Town Council	
Accounts paid from 15:00 14 July 2025 to 4 August 2025	182,032.83
Receipts received from 15:00 14 July 2025 to 4 August 2025	175,678.90
Balance held in HSBC Current Account	
Balance at 4 August 2025	68,893.96
Balance held in the HSBC Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 4 August 2025	609,432.88
CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 4 August 2025	1,050,000.00

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.

205. PEPPERPOT UPDATE – STRUCTURAL REPAIR UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the progress of restoration and repair works at The Pepperpot, with particular reference to the recent inspection of the stair tourelle and emerging structural concerns.

Members were reminded that as part of the ongoing conservation and maintenance programme, concerns had previously been raised regarding the structural condition of the stair tourelle. A specialist inspection took place on 28 July 2025, with the resulting visuals—tabled at the meeting—providing clear evidence of deterioration and confirming that remedial works are required to safeguard the integrity of the structure.

Officers advised that they are engaging with structural engineers and conservation specialists to determine the most appropriate and sensitive approach to repair, consistent with the heritage significance of the Grade II* listed building. It is hoped the necessary works can be delivered within the budget and contingency previously approved by Members. The financial position will be closely monitored, and Members will be kept fully informed should any risk to budget containment arise.

The Committee noted the importance of regular Member oversight and timely reporting to enable informed and appropriate decision-making as works progress and issues emerge. Members also recognised the need for a clear and transparent public record of issues and decisions to support continuity, accountability, and institutional memory, ensuring that future councils and Officers can fully understand the history, risks, and rationale behind decisions.

Members resolved to:

- i. Note the outcome of the stair tourelle inspection and the visual evidence provided.
- ii. Support Officers continuing to work with specialists to identify and scope appropriate repairs.
- iii. Note that it is hoped the works will be deliverable within the existing approved budget and contingency, but that Members will be kept informed of any variance.
- iv. Agree that regular updates be provided to ensure Members are equipped to make timely and informed decisions.
- v. Recognise the importance of maintaining a detailed public record of issues and decisions, both to ensure transparency and to inform future councils and Officers responsible for the care of this heritage asset.

206. MOTION ON NOTICE

Proposer: Councillor PMA Rivers. Seconded: Councillor Paul Follows

Members considered the Motion set out below and resolved to accept the Motion and agreed that Godalming Town Council (GTC):

- a. **Publicly express its continued support** for Pride in Surrey and for the LGBTQ+ community, recognising the challenges such organisations face, particularly in the current climate of increased hostility towards LGBTQ+ individuals.
- b. **Dissociate itself from the position adopted by Surrey County Council** in relation to Pride in Surrey, making clear that GTC does not share SCC's reasoning or its withdrawal of support.
- c. **Award a grant of £1,500** from the Emerging Projects Fund to Pride in Surrey in support of the 2025 event in Guildford, to be held on 6 September 2025, to help mitigate the impact of SCC's withdrawal and ensure continued access to the event for Godalming residents.
- d. **Encourage all Members and residents** to support and attend the event as a visible demonstration of Godalming's inclusive community spirit.
- e. **Invite the organisers of Pride in Surrey to return to Godalming in 2026** and commit to exploring suitable venues, in partnership with community groups and local businesses, to host the parade and park-event here once more.

Motion:

Godalming Town Council reaffirms its commitment to equality, diversity, inclusivity and support for all members of the community, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and others (LGBTQ+). The Council acknowledges the vital role LGBTQ+ organisations play in fostering community cohesion, providing advocacy, and supporting individuals—particularly at a time when such groups face increasing hostility and political marginalisation.

GTC has previously demonstrated its support for the wider LGBTQ+ community by proudly hosting *Pride in Surrey 2021*. The success of that event not only showcased the strength and inclusivity of our local community but also underlined the town's standing as a welcoming and diverse place for all. Our support extended beyond symbolic gestures, with local County Councillors having used their Member Allocations to help keep the annual event viable and accessible to all.

This Council regrets the decision by Surrey County Council (SCC) to withdraw its support for *Pride in Surrey 2025*, citing concerns about representation. This position does not reflect the values or experiences of this Council, nor the Godalming community. Pride in Surrey has clearly stated its commitment to inclusivity and the representation of all LGBTQ+ identities and continues to organise events that are welcoming, safe, and supportive for the entire community.

GTC recognises the significant impact of SCC's withdrawal, both symbolically and financially. The lack of County-level support risks undermining the continuation of an event which provides direct support to LGBTQ+ individuals on the day and throughout the year. Events like Pride in Surrey are not only cultural celebrations but also essential support networks, especially for young people, trans individuals, and those who may otherwise feel isolated.

207. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Members identified the following items from this meeting to be publicised: Support for Pride in Surrey.

208. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 28 August 2025 at 7.00pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Environment & Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later.

209. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were informed of the following events:

Godalming Duck Race	6 September
Pride in Surrey – Guildford	6 September
Antiques and Vintage Fair, High Street	9 August
LGR Online Event	9 September