

MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2025

- * Councillor Follows – Chair
- * Councillor Weightman – Vice Chair

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

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

327. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2025, having been previously circulated were signed by the Chair as a true record.

328. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

329. 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.

330. 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.

331. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

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

332. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	£
Godalming Town Council	
Accounts paid since the 16 September to 27 October 2025	971,542.89
Receipts received since the 16 September to 27 October 2025	959,736.97
Balance held in HSBC Current Account	
Balance at 27 October 2025	67,321.30
Balance held in the HSBC Business Deposit Account	
Balance at 27 October 2025	742,866.03
CCLA Deposit Account	
Balance at 27 October 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.

333. BUDGET MONITORING

Members noted a budget monitoring report to 30 September 2025 (detailed report attached to record minutes).

334. OCKFORD & AARONS HILL HUB – BUSINESS RATES

Members received a report on the outcome of the Valuation Office Agency's (VOA) review of the rateable value assigned to the Ockford & Aarons Hill Hub.

Council was reminded that, upon taking over the facility, a rateable value of £32,000 had been set by the VOA, resulting in a business rates demand from Waverley Borough Council of £15,968. As recorded at Min No. 151-25, this valuation was considered excessive for a community facility and notably higher than comparable venues such as Haslemere Hall and Farnham Memorial Hall.

Following the Chief Executive Officer's initiation of the Check & Challenge process with the VOA, Members were informed that the submission had been upheld. On 9 October, the VOA confirmed a revised rateable value of £1,775, representing a 94.5% reduction. This adjustment reduces the rates payable to approximately £1,000.

Members noted that the current budget monitoring report still reflects the original charge of £15,968 against Business Rates (Cost Centre 109) and will remain so until Waverley Borough Council reissues the amended bill and processes the refund due to Godalming Town Council.

335. PURCHASE OF SECOND ABTE TRANSPORTER VEHICLE – FACILITIES OPERATIONS

Members considered the amended report circulated as a supplement to the agenda. The amendment replaced the original proposal to purchase a second-hand ABTe Transporter following further technical investigation which identified significant maintenance and diagnostic limitations with that model.

Members noted the revised recommendations and, on the proposal of Cllr Follows, seconded by Cllr Weightman, agreed that the previous recommendation to purchase a second ABTe vehicle be withdrawn; that diagnostic and repair work on the existing vehicle be authorised up to a maximum of £4,500; and that Officers be authorised to identify and procure a suitable alternative electric vehicle within the approved 2025/26 budget for Cost Centre 301 – Vehicle Costs (4205) and Equipment (4301), total expenditure not to exceed £15,000.

336. COMMUNITY & CIVIC SUPPORT – TWINNING ACTIVITIES

Members considered a report regarding support for the Joigny and Mayen Twinning Associations and noted the joint request from the Godalming–Joigny Friendship Association and the Godalming–Mayen Friendship Association for Council support towards civic and community events during the official twinning visits to Godalming in 2026.

Members noted that the proposed funding would also assist in increasing community participation and engagement in twinning activities through improved communications and promotional work.

On the proposal of Cllr Follows, seconded by Cllr PMA Rivers, Members agreed the recommendations as set out in the report and **resolved** to support, in principle, a budget provision of £2,000 within Cost Centre 102 – Civic Expenses (Miscellaneous Expenses) for 2026/27 to support twinning activities with Joigny and Mayen, subject to final approval of the 2026/27 budget by Full Council.

337. PEPPERPOT UPDATE

Members received an update on the ongoing restoration works to The Pepperpot and noted the significant progress made in addressing both cosmetic and structural issues identified during the course of the project.

It was reported that major elements of the work have now been completed, including structural timber repairs to the Clock Box, replacement of copper cladding, restoration of specialist joinery and the historic clock, and completion of main render and undercroft repairs. The main scaffolding is expected to be removed by mid-November, with a smaller scaffold retained around the stair tourelle to enable the remaining structural works.

Members noted that investigations of the stair tourelle had revealed extensive dry rot and unsound historic repairs, necessitating the complete replacement of the timber frame and associated structural works. The total project cost is now estimated at approximately £418,299, requiring an additional funding provision of £100,000 from the Land & Property Reserve to complete the restoration.

On the proposal of Cllr Follows, seconded by Cllr Weightman, Members agreed the recommendations as set out in the report and

Members **resolved** to recommend to Full Council that an additional funding provision of £100,000 from the Land & Property Reserve be allocated to *The Pepperpot Restoration Project* to meet the cost of the works to the stair tourelle and associated professional fees.

338. LGR & COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFERS – UPDATE

Members were reminded that, at the meeting held on 18 September 2025 (Min No. 298-25 refers), it had been agreed that the Chief Executive Officer make enquiries of Surrey County Council (SCC) regarding any Godalming-based community organisations receiving discretionary funding. The information received confirmed that, apart from Citizens Advice, SCC currently has no funding arrangements with community groups in Godalming.

In relation to Waverley Borough Council (WBC), Members noted that a number of organisations operating across the borough receive funding through the Thriving Community Fund, with those primarily serving the Godalming area being The Cellar Camino Café (£3,600 p.a.), Skillway (£5,060 p.a.), Farncombe Day Centre (£35,000 p.a.), and Joyfull Greens (£9,000 p.a.) for the period 2025–2028.

Cllr Heagin, as Chair of the LGR Working Group, reported that the Government's decision to proceed with a two-unitary authority model, placing Godalming Town Council within the proposed *West Surrey* unitary incorporating six local authority areas, was not the outcome GTC supported but that the Council would now work to make the new arrangements effective.

Members were informed that consideration of GTC's Tranche 1 and 2 CAT requests by the WBC Executive, originally expected on 4 November, had been deferred to a later meeting. The Council continues to await responses regarding meetings to discuss the Borough Hall and the transfer of bus shelters requested by WBC in April 2024.

On a positive note, Members noted that Cllr Heagin and the CEO had held a productive meeting with WBC officers concerning the complex tenancy arrangements at Holloway Hill

Recreation Ground. WBC expressed willingness to work in partnership with GTC to identify funding opportunities, including use of the existing £67,000 Section 106 allocation, towards approximately £200,000 of public realm improvements identified for the recreation ground. The Working Group recommended that the CEO work with WBC to determine whether Strategic CIL funding could be applied to deliver these improvements.

Regarding the Farncombe Day Centre, Members were advised that the feasibility study funded by Neighbourhood CIL has been completed and will inform a forthcoming Strategic CIL bid. Negotiations are also underway for a new lease to provide security of tenure prior to vesting day on 1 April 2027, although the future of discretionary funding post-2028 remains uncertain.

The Working Group further recommended that GTC undertake a mail drop to residents early in the new year to update them on progress with existing tranche 1-3 CAT transfers—which are those that do not add any requirement to the precept—and to seek public support for future (Tranche 4) transfers that may require additional precept funding.

Members noted the update and thanked the Chair of the LGR Working Group for the detailed report.

The Committee Chair, Cllr Follows, informed Members that elections to the 'shadow' West Surrey Unitary Council are expected to take place on 7 May 2026, with the vesting day for the new authority on 1 April 2027, subject to the enabling statutory instrument, anticipated in January 2026, being brought forward. Joint committees comprising the six district and borough councils and SCC will be established to oversee transition planning ahead of the shadow authority's formation.

Members noted the update on Local Government Reorganisation and the current status of Community Asset Transfer requests and **resolved** to endorse the recommendations of the LGR Working Group.

339. UPCOMING EVENTS

Members noted the following upcoming event(s):

Date	Event
Saturday, 1 November	Godalming Street Market
Friday, 7 November	Town Fireworks
Sunday, 9 November	Remembrance in Godalming
Sunday, 23 November	Godalming Christmas Lights Switch-on
Saturday, 29 November	Godalming Christmas Festival Market

340. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES

Members noted the update provided by Cllr Holliday and Cllr Follows, who attended the AGM of the Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce held on 29 September 2025

341. COMMUNICATIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

Members identified the following items from this meeting to be publicised and the type of publicity required:

342. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the date of the next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee has been amended to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 27 November 2025 at 7.00pm or at the conclusion of the preceding Environment & Planning Committee meeting, whichever is later. Members noted the change is to enable council business to be conducted without the constraints imposed during an election period.

343. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

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) 18 BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED I.E STAFFING MATTERS

344. STAFFING MATTERS

Members received a report from the Chair of the Staffing Committee providing an update on staffing matters.

Members noted the commencement of the new Finance Manager on 20 October 2025 and the forthcoming appointment of the Deputy Chief Officer, who is due to start on 1 December 2025. It was further noted that the LGRC finance locum will continue to be retained until 28 November 2025 to support the new Finance Manager in familiarising themselves with local council and public sector finance procedures.

Council was informed that arrangements are being made for the return from maternity leave of one member of staff and for cover to be provided in preparation for another member of staff commencing maternity leave.

Council also noted the outcome of recent disciplinary investigations, which concluded with no further action required.