GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of Guildford Borough Council held at Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford on Thursday 12 December 2013.

*The Mayor, Councillor Diana Lockyer-Nibbs
*The Deputy Mayor, David Elms

*Councillor Richard Billington
*Councillor Melanie Bright
*Councillor David Carpenter
*Councillor Adrian Chandler
*Councillor Mark Chapman
*Councillor Sarah Creedy
*Councillor Graham Ellwood
*Councillor Zöe Franklin
*Councillor Steve Freeman
*Councillor Andrew French
*Councillor Matt Furniss
*Councillor John Garrett
*Councillor Christian Gilliam
*Councillor David Goodwin
*Councillor Lizzie Griffiths
*Councillor Murray Grubb Jnr.
*Councillor Angela Gunning
*Councillor Gillian Harwood
*Councillor Jayne Hewlett
*Councillor Liz Hogger
*Councillor Christian Holliday
*Councillor Philip Hooper
*Councillor Gordon Jackson

*Councillor Jennifer Jordan
*Councillor Monika Juneja
*Councillor Julia McShane
*Councillor Bob McShee
*Councillor Nigel Manning
*Councillor Stephen Mansbridge
*Councillor Anne Meredith
*Councillor Mrs Marsha Moseley
*Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith
*Councillor James Palmer
*Councillor Terence Patrick
*Councillor Tony Phillips
*Councillor Mrs Jennifer E Powell
*Councillor Caroline Reeves
*Councillor Iseult Roche
*Councillor Tony Rooth
*Councillor Pauline Searle
*Councillor Paul Spooner
*Councillor Nick Sutcliffe
*Councillor Keith Taylor
*Councillor Neil Ward
*Councillor Jenny Wicks
*Councillor David Wright

*Present

CO65 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors David Carpenter, Sarah Creedy, Steve Freeman, David Goodwin, Murray Grubb Jnr., Jayne Hewlett, Christian Holliday, Gordon Jackson and Julia McShane.

CO66 – LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST
There were no disclosures of interest.

CO67 – MINUTES
The Council confirmed the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10 October 2013 as a correct record. The Mayor signed the minutes.

CO68 – MAYOR’S COMMUNICATIONS
The Mayor had no communications to lay before the Council.

CO69 – SOUTH EAST EMPLOYERS CHARTER FOR ELECTED MEMBER DEVELOPMENT
The Mayor reminded councillors that, on 30 September 2013, the Council achieved accreditation under the South East Employers Charter for Elected Member Development.
The Mayor welcomed to the meeting, the Chairman of South East Employers, Councillor Rory Love, who had been invited to the meeting to present the Council formally with its certificate of accreditation.

After commenting briefly on the Council’s achievement, Councillor Love presented the Mayor with the certificate.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed here, timed at 00:38:32)

CO70 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
No questions or requests to make statements had been received from the public.

CO71 – E-PETITION – PROTECTING THE BOROUGH’S DESIGNATED GREEN BELT
In accordance with Public Speaking Procedure Rule 1 (d) and the Council’s petition scheme, Miss Alice Jefferies made a statement to the Council on behalf of the e-petition organiser (Mrs Helen Jefferies) in support of the e-petition. As at 10 December 2013, when the e-petition was closed at the request of the e-petition organiser, the e-petition contained 1,111 e-signatures calling on the Council to “protect the Borough’s designated Green Belt and remove inappropriate large scale housing development from the Local Plan consultation”.

The e-petition organiser's supporting statement read as follows:

“This petition supports the protection of the Borough’s designated Green Belt land and deletion of proposals for inappropriate housing development outlined in the Local Plan Strategy & Sites Issues and Options Documents with specific reference to plans for a ‘New Town’ on the site of the former Wisley airfield”

Before commencement of the formal debate on the e-petition, the Council

RESOLVED: That Council Procedure Rules be suspended to allow the Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance, Councillor Monika Juneja, to speak for up to ten minutes in moving the motion described below.

Councillor Monika Juneja proposed and Councillor Stephen Mansbridge seconded the following motion for the purpose of the Council's response to the e-petition:

“The Council RESOLVES:

That its formal response to the e-petition is as follows:

1. The Council welcomes the e-petition and thanks the petitioners for their time in collecting, collating and presenting the e-petition. We note and understand the genuine concern and strength of feeling of residents and communities in respect of the protection of the Green Belt and AONB.

2. The Council would reassure the petitioners that we have not, as yet, made any decisions on our future housing numbers, development strategy or strategic sites.

3. The Council will reappraise, correct as appropriate, and update the evidence base, in the light of comments made in response to the Issues and Options Consultation.

4. It will consider this (and other) petitions alongside all other representations and evidence as part of the new Local Plan process. However, at this early stage in the Local Plan process, it would be premature and prejudicial to a sound Local Plan for the Council to remove from consideration, land which is covered by Green Belt and AONB land use designations.
5. The Council notes paragraph 86 of the NPPF and will carefully consider the treatment of villages in the draft Local Plan, due to be published for further consultation next May. The Council also notes the essential characteristics of the Green Belt as being its openness and permanence, and that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances.

6. The Council will ensure that once the Local Plan has been approved as sound and adopted, it will heed Government policies, which state that inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt, and should only be approved in very special circumstances”.

Following the debate on the motion and before the vote was taken, Mrs Helen Jefferies exercised her right of reply on the debate.

The Council then

RESOLVED: That the proposed formal response to the e-petition, as described in paragraphs 1 to 6 above, be approved.

Reason for decision:
To provide the Council’s formal response to the e-petition in accordance with the Petition Scheme.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed [here](#), timed at 00:47:49)

CO72 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS
In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9,

(1) Councillor Andrew French asked the Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance (Councillor Monika Juneja) the following question:

In the response to the Issues and Options consultation, local residents have expressed considerable concern about, and opposition to, the proposed removal of Green Belt protection from a significant number of villages in the Borough, including three in my ward.

- Can the Lead Councillor please explain the justification for this proposal under the National Planning Policy Framework and the implications for the affected villages if this change is agreed?
- Can the Lead Councillor highlight any other local authorities that are proposing such a drastic change in their Green Belt status as part of the development of their new Local Plans?

The Lead Councillor’s response to this question was as follows:

“The justification for considering the insetting of villages from the Green Belt relates to the need to prepare a plan that is in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Currently all of our villages, with the exception of Ash Green, are located within the Green Belt.

Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states:

“If it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt.”
however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt."

In summary - if the village does not make a contribution to the openness of the Green Belt then it should not be within the Green Belt. However, it is more than likely that they would remain surrounded by the existing Green Belt. We are, through the Local Plan, also considering the designation of new Green Belt.

In practical terms the insetting of villages means that any applications for development within the village would not then be subject to Green Belt tests – the main ones being the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt and whether an extension is proportionate. This would also apply to any land included by reviewing the boundaries of the Green Belt surrounding the village although I must stress that no decisions have been made about whether any land included as a result of boundary changes would be suitable for development.

To continue to protect those villages inset into the Green Belt, we would look to see if we needed to declare any new Conservation Areas, or whether we should impose some Article 4 Directions that would restrict permitted development rights, or indeed whether we should have some specific village policies in our new Local Plan that aims to enhance their special nature.

There are a number of other authorities that have changed the boundaries of the Green Belt in their local plans including ourselves where the Green Belt boundary was rolled back in the 2003 Local Plan. Vale of White Horse, Central Bedfordshire, Halton Borough Council, and Chiltern District Council have all reviewed the treatment of villages in the Green Belt or are currently in the process of doing so. This is not an exhaustive list but serves to illustrate that we are not alone in looking at this difficult subject. We will continue to assess other local councils to see if we can learn lessons from how they approach matters.”

Councillor Monika Juneja
Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance

(2) Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith asked the Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance (Councillor Monika Juneja) the following question:

“Feedback from residents seems to suggest that there are many opportunities for residential development within the town. At present, there is no overarching spatial plan for Guildford. Can the Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance explain her view on the future planning of our town?”

The Lead Councillor’s response to this question was as follows:

“It is the Local Plan - the overarching spatial plan – that will determine the future coordinated development strategy for the town centre and indeed the whole of the borough.

We have received a significant number of comments from our communities following our recent Local Plan issues and options consultation. Officers are currently in the processes of assessing them and have not, as yet, formed any view on the direction of the Local Plan in respect of the town centre or indeed the borough as a whole. I have no doubt that Councillor Nelson-Smith is correct about comments from residents regarding homes in the town centre but there may also be comments regarding the provision of shops and offices etc. We will need to consider and balance all comments made. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for me to speculate on the future direction of the town centre without fully considering all the comments along with all the material planning factors.”
(3) Councillor Terence Patrick asked the Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance (Councillor Monika Juneja) the following question:

“The Business Community in Guildford needs employment land to expand, if it is to remain sustainable and competitive.

What is the Lead Councillor's approach to the provision of employment land as part of the Local Plan?”

The Lead Councillor's response to this question was as follows:
“I thank Councillor Patrick for his question as this gives me the opportunity to reiterate that the Local Plan is about more than housing.

As the Council has clearly stated in the Economic Strategy approved by the Executive earlier this year, the provision of employment land is a very important part of the Local Plan, as we need to balance the need for homes with the need to provide appropriate jobs in the right locations for our community. As part of the Local Plan, it is our clear intention to allocate land for employment use alongside other strategic land allocations.

We need to ensure that we provide a mixture of employment opportunities when allocating this land. For example, we will want to continue to retain and attract more headquarter office type uses and equally to opportunities for start ups for small businesses and provide for other forms of employment use such as research and development, offices and light industrial premises.

It is important in selecting sites that we meet the needs of our existing businesses and that we remain attractive to new forms of employment. It is also necessary that the provision of employment land is in sync with the wider trends in employment generating development and that there is a direct, clear and transparent relationship between the availability of a skilled workforce and appropriate accommodation for them regardless of tenure.”

(4) Councillor Paul Spooner asked the Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance (Councillor Monika Juneja) the following question:

“In the past I am aware that there have been complaints as to how this Council has undertaken consultation processes. Can the Lead Councillor describe the extent and depth of the recent consultation on the Local Plan and is the shop at 25 Swan Lane, Guildford, a justified expense to the tax payer?”

The Lead Councillor’s response to this question was as follows:
“The recent consultation on the issues and options for the development of the new Local Plan is the most wide and in-depth consultation this Council has ever undertaken. Swan Lane was a step change in the commitment of this Council to reaching out to the community on the sometimes complex issue of the Local Plan. Number 25 was open for seven weeks, seven days a week including late nights on Thursdays. Nearly 3,000 people made direct contact with the Council through Number 25. If we had relied on the more traditional methods of consultation, these people may not have had the opportunity to find out about the Local Plan. Trained planning officers were always available to help people...
with their understanding of the sometimes complex evidence base and to guide them to where they could find further information.

Number 25 was served by officers not just from Planning Policy but also from housing, economic development, climate change and sustainability and development control and indeed Members of the Executive also carried out shifts including myself. I am confident that the use of Swan Lane was entirely justified in terms of the community engagement it encouraged. Councillors should also note that Swan Lane is now used by others to support Council initiatives and projects such as the corporate plan.

The production of local plans is a proper role for all councils. It is right for councils like ours to set strategic direction and provide certainty for residents and businesses alike. In order to produce the best possible local plan for Guildford we have invested in an extensive consultation programme. To date we have received 16,500 plus representations, which is exceptional and more than justifies the expense of reaching out deeply into the community."

Councillor Monika Juneja
Lead Councillor for Planning and Governance

(5) Councillor Paul Spooner asked the Lead Councillor for Environment (Councillor Matt Furniss) the following question:

"Could the Lead Councillor update the Council on the success of the new Garden Waste Scheme, including the level of customers now supported and any tonnage figures available?"

The Lead Councillor’s response to this question was as follows:

“We introduced a wheeled bin based garden waste service in April 2013. This replaced the previous sack based service.

The old service, which offered two large sacks for £15, three sacks for £30 or four sacks for £45, was well used by residents with a customer base of 17,500 residents. We anticipated the change to bins and increased charges would discourage some residents from using the service and expected a new lower customer base of 16,000. Our reasons for implementation, however, were to provide a service that was easier to use with better containment, safer handling for our public and staff and better use of our fleet with improved compatibility and resilience.

Currently, the number of residents subscribing to the service has increased to 20,864. This is a customer increase of 19.22% on 2012-13. These customers have 24,400 bins in use with a further 350 residents using smaller sacks (these are for properties unsuitable for bins).

The garden waste tonnages have increased significantly from 4,018.64 tonnes between April and November 2012 to 6,289.44 tonnes between April and November 2013. This is an increase of 56.5% on the same period."

Councillor Matt Furniss
Lead Councillor for Environment

(6) Councillor Philip Hooper asked the Lead Councillor for Environment (Councillor Matt Furniss) the following question:
"The Council has introduced both hydro power and photovoltaics on its buildings. What impact are they having on CO₂ emissions and what income is being generated?"

The Lead Councillor’s response to this question was as follows:

"In 2012-13, the Hydro plant at Millmead generated over 162 megawatt hours of electricity, producing an income of £22,843 and saving 80 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Installation of our solar photovoltaics began in August 2012 and, by the end of the financial year, they had produced an income of £1,639 in addition to £827 of avoided electricity costs saving nine tonnes of CO₂. There are now 332 panels, with a total capacity of 83 kilowatt peak at six locations: Spectrum, Millmead House, Dray Court, Japonica Court, St Martin’s Court and Farnham Road Car Park.

In the current year, the hydro is projected to generate an income of £26,934 and the solar photovoltaics £9,564 in addition to £7,098 of avoided electricity costs. Together they should save 131 tonnes of CO₂ in the year 2013-14. All the hydro power is exported to the grid, so there are no avoided electricity costs from this power generation source.

We continue to look for opportunities to install renewables to reduce our energy costs and CO₂ emissions and for the energy security benefits that follow. This will include the use of new technologies as they are developed, which we continue to monitor. The income generated makes an important contribution to our budgets in addition to our corporate drive towards greater sustainability."

Councillor Matt Furniss
Lead Councillor for Environment

The Council considered a report on the review of the first year of operation of the local council tax support scheme (LCTSS), which had been introduced from 1 April 2013 and was one of the component parts of the Government’s reform of the welfare system.

The report asked the Council to approve the LCTSS, which proposed financial savings following the Government’s decision to reduce the amount of money made available to support those with a liability for council tax. The savings totalled approximately £170,000 and affected 400 claimants.

The Executive had considered the report at its meeting on 5 December 2013, and had recommended its approval by the Council.

Upon the motion of Councillor Nigel Manning and seconded by Councillor Stephen Mansbridge the Council

RESOLVED: That the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS), as attached at Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, be approved and implemented from 1 April 2014.

Reason for decision:
To ensure that the Council complies with Government legislation to implement a local council tax support scheme from 1 April 2014.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed here, timed at 01:41:13)
The Council considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Statement of Principles setting out the Council’s general approach to regulation and enforcement activities under the Gambling Act 2005. The Council, as licensing authority, was required to prepare and approve a Statement of Principles to cover each successive period of three years.

The report provided details of how the consultation, which ran from 14 June to 12 September 2013, was conducted, the results of the consultation and details of the consequent amendments to the Statement which had been agreed by the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 6 November 2013.

The Executive had also considered the report at its meeting on 5 December 2013, and recommended the adoption of the Statement of Principles, subject to the inclusion of definitions of the various types of gambling premises.

Councillor Richard Billington proposed and Councillor Monika Juneja seconded the motion to adopt the recommendations in the report, together with the following amendment:

Substitute the following in place of paragraph (2) of the recommendation:

“(2) To adopt the Statement of Principles 2013-2016, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, as amended as follows:

(a) In section 10 of the Statement of Principles (Adult Gaming Centres), add the following new paragraph and re-number the subsequent paragraph:

“10.1 An Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) is one of the three types of amusement arcade. This type of arcade can provide higher payout gaming machines (Category B3 and B4) and access is restricted to persons who are aged 18 years or over.”

(b) In section 11 of the Statement of Principles (Licensed Family Entertainment Centres), add the following new paragraph and re-number subsequent paragraphs:

“11.1 A Licensed family entertainment centre (LFEC) is the second type of amusement arcade. This type of arcade can provide the lowest two categories of gaming machine (category C and D). Children can enter an LFEC but they can only gamble on category D machines. All category C machines must be located in a separate area, which can only be accessed by persons who are aged 18 years or over.”

(c) In section 13 of the Statement of Principles (Bingo premises), add the following new paragraph and re-number subsequent paragraphs:

“13.1 A Bingo Hall is a place in which Bingo is played. There is no legal definition of Bingo but it is a game in which players mark off numbers on cards as the numbers are drawn randomly by a caller, the winner being the first person to mark off all the numbers on their card.”

(d) In section 14 of the Statement of Principles (Betting premises), add the following new paragraph and re-number the subsequent paragraph:

“14.1 Betting premises can offer facilities for betting on the outcome of a particular event. General betting premises licence holders can offer those facilities at a premises based bookmakers (off-course), or at a racecourse (on-course).”
This type of premises can provide a total of four gaming machines for gambling on the premises.

(e) In section 19 of the Statement of Principles (Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre gaming machine permits), add the following new paragraph and re-number subsequent paragraphs:

“19.1 An unlicensed family entertainment centre (UFEC) is the third type of amusement arcade. The category of machine in this type of arcade is restricted to the lowest category D and children can enter and gamble.”

The Council

RESOLVED:

(1) To note the results of the public consultation on the Council’s draft Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2013-2016.

(2) To adopt the Statement of Principles 2013-2016, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Council, as amended as follows:

(a) In section 10 of the Statement of Principles (Adult Gaming Centres), add the following new paragraph and re-number the subsequent paragraph:

“10.1 An Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) is one of the three types of amusement arcade. This type of arcade can provide higher payout gaming machines (Category B3 and B4) and access is restricted to persons who are aged 18 years or over.”

(b) In section 11 of the Statement of Principles (Licensed Family Entertainment Centres), add the following new paragraph and re-number subsequent paragraphs:

“11.1 A Licensed family entertainment centre (LFEC) is the second type of amusement arcade. This type of arcade can provide the lowest two categories of gaming machine (category C and D). Children can enter an LFEC but they can only gamble on category D machines. All category C machines must be located in a separate area, which can only be accessed by persons who are aged 18 years or over.”

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(e) In section 19 of the Statement of Principles (Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre gaming machine permits), add the following new paragraph and re-number subsequent paragraphs:

“19.1 An unlicensed family entertainment centre (UFEC) is the third type of amusement arcade. The category of machine in this type of arcade is restricted to the lowest category D and children can enter and gamble.”

(3) To authorise the Head of Health and Community Care Services to publish and advertise the adopted Statement of Principles.

Reasons for decision:
(1) To comply with Section 349(1) of the Gambling Act 2005.


(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed [here](#), timed at 02:08:15)

CO75 – TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE FEES AND CHARGES – AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Upon the motion of Councillor Richard Billington, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor David Elms, the Council

RESOLVED: To delegate authority to the Licensing Committee:

(1) to determine any changes to taxi and private hire licence fees and charges on an annual basis, and to authorise statutory publication of the fees and charges; and

(2) to consider objections following the statutory publication of any future fees and charges and to approve the final fees and charges.

Reason for decision:
To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of decision-making and the efficient delivery of this licensing function.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed [here](#), timed at 02:09:42)

CO76 – SELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR 2014-15

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor David Elms and Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith both left the chamber whilst the Council discussed this item.

The Council considered a report on nominations received for election of Mayor and appointment of Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2014-15. The Executive had also considered the report at its meeting on 5 December 2013, and had recommended the nominations of Councillors Elms and Nelson-Smith respectively for Mayor and Deputy Mayor in 2014-15.

Upon the motion of Councillor Stephen Mansbridge, seconded by Councillor Zöe Franklin, the Council

RESOLVED:

(1) That the nomination of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor David Elms for the Mayoralty of the Borough for the municipal year 2014-15, be approved.
(2) That the nomination of Councillor Nikki Nelson-Smith for the Deputy Mayoralty of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2014-15, be approved.

Reason for decision:
To make early preparations for the selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2014-15.

The Council considered a report on the proposed timetable of Council and Committee meetings for the 2014-15 municipal year. The Executive had also considered the report at its meeting on 5 December 2013, and had recommended approval of the timetable as drafted, subject to the identification of an alternative date for the proposed meeting of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee in November 2014 in order to avoid a clash with the switch-on of the Christmas lights in the town centre.

Councillor Monika Juneja proposed and Councillor seconded the motion to adopt the recommendation in the report, together with the following amendment:

Add the following to the end of the recommendation:

“subject to the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 November 2014 rather than 20 November 2014.”

The Council

RESOLVED: That the proposed timetable of Council and Committee meetings for the 2014-15 municipal year, as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes, be approved subject to the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 November 2014 rather than 20 November 2014.

Reason for decision:
To assist with the preparation of individual committee work programmes.

(CO78 – REVIEW COUNCILLORS’ ALLOWANCES: REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL IN RELATION TO ASPECTS OF THE SCHEME)
The Council considered the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on its interim review of aspects of the scheme of councillors’ allowances, conducted between September and November 2013. The terms of reference for this review were limited to the following specific aspects of the scheme:

(a) possible special responsibility allowances (SRAs) for the chairmen of the Standards Committee and the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee. When both committees were established in May 2012, the Council had agreed to request the IRP to investigate such SRAs in 2013;

(b) whether an element of the SRA for the chairman of the Licensing Committee should be allocated to the five Licensing Sub-Committee chairmen to reflect the responsibility they share in conducting licensing hearings or, alternatively, whether an SRA should be assigned to the Licensing Sub-Committee chairmen in addition to the SRA for the Licensing Committee chairman;
The Local Government Act 2000 required local authorities to have regard to the recommendations made to them by their IRP before they make or amend a scheme of allowances.

Relevant statistical information arising from the most recent South East Employers Members’ Allowances Survey for 2013-14 had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting.

The Executive had also considered the report at its meeting on 5 December 2013, and had recommended the adoption of a number of recommendations as set out on the Order Paper.

Upon the motion of Councillor Monika Juneja, seconded by Councillor Nigel Manning, the Council

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for their report and for the work they have undertaken during their review of the Council’s scheme of councillors’ allowances.

(2) That a special responsibility allowance of £1,045.75 per annum (calculated as 0.25 times the ‘compensation for time and responsibility’ element of the basic allowance) be introduced for the chairman of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, backdated to 1 April 2013.

(3) That no special responsibility allowance be allocated to the role of Chairman of the Standards Committee.

(4) That no element of the current special responsibility allowance for the chairman of the Licensing Committee be transferred to the Licensing Sub-Committee chairmen and, furthermore, that no such allowance be introduced for the designated Licensing Sub-Committee chairmen at this time.

(5) That the scheme of allowances be amended by the formal removal of:

(a) reference to the Standards and Audit Committee chairman and the accompanying co-optees’ allowance;

(b) paragraph 20 entitled ‘Suspension of Allowances’; and

(c) sub paragraph (i) of paragraph 21

(6) That no allowance under the category of co-optees’ allowance be paid to current co-opted members of committees.

(7) That the basic allowance, special responsibility allowances and dependants’ carers’ allowance continue to be adjusted annually in line with the percentage change in staff salaries and that any adjustment in allowances be implemented on 1 April each year.
(rather than 1 July) until 2015, at which time the scheme shall be reviewed again by an independent remuneration panel.

(8) That, for 2013-14, the annual adjustment of the allowances referred to in paragraph (7) above be backdated to 1 April 2013.

(9) That the amended scheme of councillors’ allowances, as set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes, be adopted.

Reasons for decision:
(1) In order to comply with the requirements of The Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).
(2) In order to reflect the current statutory provisions relating to the suspension of councillors.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed [here](#), timed at 02:16:13)

**CO79 – NOTICE OF MOTION DATED 28 NOVEMBER 2013**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 7, Councillor Angela Gunning proposed and Councillor Christian Gilliam seconded the following motion:

“This Council notes that:

1. Church attendance in UK is now at around 6% of the population
2. 2011 census result showed that 59% of the population identified themselves as Christian; thus 41% were other religions or none
3. Just 22% of Councils in the UK start their meeting with Bible reading or prayers.
4. The Council’s own Equality & Diversity policy states...’we recognise that people need to be protected from unfair discrimination, in particular, on grounds of...[inter alia] religion or belief....’
5. The Council's own most recent staff survey showed that just 35% considered themselves ‘Christian’, whereas 59% either had no religion, or would not specify
6. It is unheard of for business meetings and other public gatherings to begin proceedings with prayer

The Council accepts that council meetings should provide a secular space for discussion and debate, and in which decisions are made, and worship of any sort does not play part in proceedings.

This Council therefore resolves to set up a working group to consider the matter and to include at least:

- whether prayers should any longer be held at the start of Council meetings
- whether, as a possible alternative, a brief reading of philosophic writings is more appropriate”.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7(g), the Council agreed that the motion should be dealt with at the meeting.

Councillor Monika Juneja proposed, and Councillor Anne Meredith seconded, the following amendment:

After “This Council therefore resolves” substitute the following in place of the existing text:

“to include consideration of whether prayers continue to be said before the start of Council meetings in the forthcoming review of the civic function.”
The motion, as amended, would read as follows:

“This Council notes that:

1. Church attendance in UK is now at around 6% of the population
2. 2011 census result showed that 59% of the population identified themselves as Christian; thus 41% were other religions or none
3. Just 22% of Councils in the UK start their meeting with Bible reading or prayers.
4. The Council’s own Equality & Diversity policy states…’we recognise that people need to be protected from unfair discrimination, in particular, on grounds of…[inter alia] religion or belief….’
5. The Council’s own most recent staff survey showed that just 35% considered themselves ‘Christian’, whereas 59% either had no religion, or would not specify
6. It is unheard of for business meetings and other public gatherings to begin proceedings with prayer

The Council accepts that council meetings should provide a secular space for discussion and debate, and in which decisions are made, and worship of any sort does not play part in proceedings.

This Council therefore resolves to include consideration of whether prayers continue to be said before the start of Council meetings in the forthcoming review of the civic function.”

The proposer and seconder of the original motion had indicated that they were happy to accept the amendment. The Council agreed to accept formally the amendment and, following a debate on the substantive motion,

RESOLVED: That the motion, as amended above, be supported.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed here, timed at 02:30:16)

**CO80 – NOTICE OF MOTION DATED 2 DECEMBER 2013**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 7, Councillor Christian Gilliam proposed and Councillor Angela Gunning seconded the following motion:

“This Council notes:

(a) The Bedroom Tax is an unfair and ill-conceived policy;

(b) That, as noted at the previous Council meeting, though the tax is allegedly designed to push Council tenants out of ‘under-occupied’ properties, there is an insufficient amount of small properties available, which makes transfers difficult. Even where possible, and despite recent successes, transfers between current tenants will effectively make waiting times for those on the housing needs register, considerably longer. (Indeed, as of March of last year – before the existence of the bedroom tax - there were already 3,559 households on the housing needs register, a 61% increase compared to 2011, in statutory homeless applications);

(c) That, given recent reports by the Council’s Housing team, it is irrefutable the tax is having, and will continue to have, a negative impact on homelessness in the borough, putting more pressure on our public services, charities, food banks and the community as a whole, as well as unduly blighting the lives of a great many of our citizens;

(d) That, under current legislation and government guidelines, the Council, as landlord, does in fact have the legal right to commit to a non-eviction policy, and re-classify rooms; and
(e) That the Council is a fair, just and humane representative institution, designed not only to provide cost effective and efficient public services but also to protect the very people it serves.

This Council therefore resolves:

(1) To make a commitment to a “no-eviction” policy for those who have taken reasonable and responsible steps in mitigating rent arrears and loss of income, but yet still face significant rent arrears due to the Bedroom Tax and other loss of income due to the Welfare Reform Act 2012;

(2) To request a review of both the definition of a “bedroom,” and the feasibility of re-classifying small rooms as “box rooms” or non-bedrooms, with a view to lifting as many tenants as possible out of the Bedroom Tax;

(3) To call to re-classify second rooms on ground floors as non-bedrooms;

(4) To rigorously campaign to lift government borrowing restrictions on Housing Revenue Accounts to provide more money for the building of affordable homes.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7(g), the Council agreed that the motion should be dealt with at the meeting.

Having debated the motion, the Council

RESOLVED: That the motion be not supported.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed [here](#), timed at 02:48:32)

**CO81 – MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Council

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 7 November and 5 December 2013.

(The webcast debate on this item may be viewed [here](#), timed at 03:09:20)

**CO82 - COMMON SEAL**

The Council

RESOLVED: To affix the Common Seal of the Council, or the Executive Head of Governance or in his absence the Managing Director, to sign on behalf of the Council any documents to give effect to any decisions taken by the Council at this meeting on 12 December 2013.