

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12th July 2016 at Pippbrook, Dorking from 7.00pm to 9.49pm

Present: Councillors David Mir (Chairman), Simon Ling (Vice Chairman), Tim Ashton, Lucy Botting, John Chandler, Margaret Cooksey, Stephen Cooksey, Mary Cooper, Joe Crome, Rosemary Dickson, David Draper, Simon Edge, Paul Elderton, James Friend, Raj Haque, David Harper, David Hawksworth, Mary Huggins, Chris Hunt, Metin Huseyin, Duncan Irvine, Howard Jones, Paul Kennedy, Malcolm Ladell, Tim Loretto, Vivienne Michael, David Mir, Wayne Monkman, John Muggeridge, Paul Newman, Corinna Osborne-Patterson, Paul Potter, Sarah Seed, Michelle Watson, Clayton Wellman, Patricia Wiltshire and Charles Yarwood.

12. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lynne Brooks, Bridget Kendrick, Jatin Patel and Peter Stanyard.

14. Disclosure of Interests

Item 8: Transform Leatherhead

- Councillors Paul Kennedy, Raj Haque and Sarah Seed declared non-pecuniary interests as members of the Fetcham Residents' Association, which had made representations to the Transform Leatherhead project.

– Councillor Howard Jones declared a non pecuniary interest as a Leatherhead Councillor, invited to attend the Leatherhead Residents' Association, which had made representations to the Transform Leatherhead project.

- Councillors Simon Edge, Metin Huseyin and John Chandler declared non-pecuniary interests as members of the Bookham Residents Association, which had made representations to the Transform Leatherhead project.

- Councillor Malcolm Ladell declared a non pecuniary interest as a non-executive Director of Mole Valley Housing Association, which had made representations to the Transform Leatherhead project .

15. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman began by welcoming Councillor Joe Crome, who was successful at the by-election in the Leatherhead North Ward on 30th June 2016, to Mole Valley District Council.

The Chairman went on to say that it had been about five weeks since he became Chairman of the Council and it had already been an incredible experience. There were so many events that he could talk about, but a few of the many highlights included:-

- The Queens 90th Birthday celebrations – it had been fantastic to see the national celebrations, as well as the numerous street parties which took place throughout Mole Valley.

- Armed Forces Day – the Chairman felt privileged to have been able to meet some of the local veterans and serving personnel. The Armed Forces did a huge amount for the nation and being able to recognise and celebrate this was incredibly important.

- Volunteer Awards – these awards allowed the fantastic work taking place throughout Mole Valley by volunteers to be showcased and celebrated. It was incredible to be able to speak with these people and hear about their experiences and the incredible achievements of the various charities they support.

- Ashted Village Day – This event had been a wonderful experience for all ages, with so much going and everyone was entertained.
- Abinger medieval fayre – had got off to a wet start, but was a fantastic day as usual.
- Young Enterprise South East company Awards in Dorking Halls – This had celebrated budding entrepreneurs from Kent, Surrey, Sussex and the Channel Islands.
- Cow Parade – the Chairman referred to the number of colourful cows that had been popping up throughout Surrey and numbers were still growing. Recently, the Chairman had been lucky enough to unveil cows outside Dorking Halls, St Martins Walk and Denbies. More information was available at <http://www.cowparadesurreyhills.com>

16. Returning Officer's Return of Members Elected on 30th June 2016

The Returning Officer advised that Councillor Joe Crome was elected at the 30th June by-election for the Leatherhead North Ward, details as set out in the report to the Council on page 2 of the agenda.

17. Political Balance/Committee Memberships 2016/17

The political balance of the Council following the 30th June by-election and the consequent changes to the allocation of the number of seats allocated to each Group were noted. The proposals from the Leaders of the Liberal Democrat and informal Independent Groups in respect of amendments to the membership of the Licensing and Scrutiny Committees were circulated at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the allocation of seats to the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and informal Independent Groups be on the basis that 26 seats are allocated to the Conservative Group, 15 seats are allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group, 7 seats to the informal Independent Group.
- (2) That the Standards Committee (and Sub-Committees) be not politically balanced and that two seats be allocated to each of the three Groups.
- (3) That the proposals submitted by the Group Leaders in respect of the membership of the Council's Committee, as circulated at the meeting be approved (attached at Appendix 1).

18. Proposed Merger of Circle Housing with Affinity Sutton

The Council considered the report set out at pages 7 to 14 of the agenda in respect of proposed merger between Circle Housing and Affinity Sutton. Additional information relating to Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Frequently Asked Questions was circulated at the meeting. The Executive Member for Communities, Services and Housing introduced the report and proposed the recommendation.

With reference to the proposed response, a number of Members commented that this needed to be strengthened and the Executive Member thanked Members for their contributions.

RESOLVED

1. That subject to further strengthening, the response as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be sent to Circle Housing on the proposed merger of Circle housing with Affinity Sutton; and
2. That the Corporate Head of Service be authorised to make minor alterations to the response to the consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Communities, Services and Housing.

19. Transform Leatherhead

The Council considered the report set out at pages 15 to 28 of the agenda which requested approval for the creation of a £1m Development Reserve for the Transform Leatherhead project. The Executive Member for Transform Leatherhead introduced the report and proposed the recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the creation of a £1m Transform Leatherhead Development Reserve, in order to enable the delivery of the Mole Valley District Council property assets that form part of the Transform Leatherhead Masterplan, be approved.

(N.B. Counted vote on the decision of the Council – 34 for, 1 abstention)

20. Community Governance Review

The Council considered the report set out at pages 29 to 54 of the agenda, which detailed the results of the Community Governance Review undertaken to establish whether or not a Parish Council should be set up for Dorking.

Councillor Vivienne Michael proposed that a Parish Council should not be established for Dorking. This was seconded by Councillor Charles Yarwood.

RESOLVED: That a Parish Council should not be established for Dorking.

21. Leader's Statement

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vivienne Michael made the following statement:

“Our new Prime Minister has said very clearly “Brexit means Brexit” but it’s still far too early to say what the impact of that will be on local government and on Mole Valley. We will need to know much more about how Britain's relationship with the EU will change before we will be able to predict with any certainty how this will affect the way we operate as a Council. However, I want to assure Members this evening that, along with the CEO and other colleagues, I will be working to ensure that our voice is heard as negotiations progress at national level and I will be keeping Members up to date and fully briefed as we go forward.

“What we do know is that this will be a time of change, a time when the ability to grasp new opportunities and think innovatively will be key, not just at national but at local level. This Administration has already shown that it is more than ready to meet this challenge.

“We understand that “business as usual” simply isn’t an option and we are already demonstrating that in a number of ways. We are playing an active role in the 3SC devolution negotiations which, if successful, could give us a far greater say in road, rail and other major infrastructure projects that affect our communities.

“We have already undertaken an assessment of infrastructure needs in the District, an initiative that is set to give Mole Valley residents a stronger voice in dealings with infrastructure and service providers over coming months and years. And we are exploring options for joint working on a range of services with other East Surrey authorities.

“If we are to give young people and families a real stake in our communities we simply must increase the supply of affordable homes and this remains one of our top priorities. As the Chamber discussed earlier, the financial and other changes that are impacting on the way housing associations operate are challenging but I believe they are also creating opportunities for new partnerships that could potentially increase the supply of affordable homes. We need to continue to build on our strong relationships with Circle and other housing associations and others to explore and seize these opportunities for the benefit of young people in Mole Valley.

“The referendum result could well trigger even more significant change and we will adopt the same positive approach, working with others, seeking to influence policy and embracing new opportunities in the interests of our residents.

“One of the most disturbing after effects of the referendum result has been the increase in incidents of hate crime across the country. Thankfully, Surrey Police have confirmed that there has been no recent increase in racist or xenophobic reports in Mole Valley, but it is important we are not complacent. I have been speaking with other Group Leaders and I want to take this opportunity on behalf of all the political parties to stress that this Council will continue to work with the police and

other agencies to monitor the situation, prevent and deal with any hate crimes within the District. These sorts of criminal incidents cannot and should not be tolerated.

“The UK has a proud history as a multicultural society and we are united across this Chamber in the belief that minority groups, including EU citizens, are valued members of our communities and will remain so.

“Moving on from the referendum, I want to mention two events both of which represent significant milestones in support of our priorities - protecting the environment, promoting healthy lives and supporting the local economy.

“On 10th September we will be formally opening the Deepdene Trail to the public. This hidden treasure here on our doorstep will be of national, indeed international, interest and I am optimistic that it will attract increasing numbers of visitors to our area and give a real boost to our local economy.

“On 13th August we will celebrate the opening of the new playground in Meadowbank with a family fun day. Like the Trail, the playground will be enjoyed by residents but it will also help bring visitors into the heart of Dorking supporting our town centre shops and businesses.

“As Mole Valley’s Military Champion, I was delighted to join the Chairman and others on Armed Forces Day to honour our service personnel and veterans. I am extremely proud of all that we are doing as a Council to support our Armed Forces and I would like to encourage everyone to visit the County’s website where you will find a report on our activities on the Local Committee Pages for Mole Valley.

“It will be a sad day for the District when the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court leaves for its new location in Rushcliffe and, given the Centre’s importance to us here in Mole Valley, I want to assure you that, along with officers, I am working with the Commanding Officer to ensure that their departure is marked in an appropriate way and to celebrate their contribution both to national life and to the District.

“We are also working to ensure that the future of the site is carefully considered. Although not something we can directly influence, we want all interested parties to understand both the planning constraints and the importance of listening to the views of our communities.

“Finally, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all the parties to thank the Democratic Services Team for their excellent work over the past four months. With the Police and Crime Commissioner and District Council Elections, the Local Advisory Poll, the EU Referendum and the recent By Election the workload has been immense but they have stepped up to the mark. Thank you all.”

22. Reports of Executive Members

Councillor Corinna Osborne Patterson (Executive Member for Communities, Services and Housing)

“Our website continues to go from strength to strength and in the latest Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) review of 416 council websites, we were awarded the highest accolade of 4 stars, to put this in context, we are one of only six district councils across the country to receive this score.

“In June we launched our new monthly e-newsletter. This innovative approach reflects the growing demand from our residents for regular, up to date information about MVDC services, projects and initiatives in a format that allows them to stay in touch when it suits them.

“Don’t forget, RideLondon-Surrey returns to Mole Valley on Sunday 31st July. The detailed information leaflet is currently being delivered to residents and business along the route.”

Councillor Michelle Watson (Executive Member for Environment)

“Work continues on the Surrey Joint Waste Contract, which will give us exceptional service to our residents at a considerably lower cost. The facility will also provide us with flexibility for our residents and give us more of a voice when SCC makes decisions on waste related matters.

Councillor Charles Yarwood (Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Property, Parking & Economic Development)

“We will be putting out a press release this week to announce that we are essentially doubling the size of the Bridge Street car park in Leatherhead. It will be pay and display and will be located in areas under Clare and James Houses on a temporary basis, pending redevelopment of these two buildings. It will add 25 spaces in a much used and welcome location. As the car park is in quite a secluded area it will only be open from 8am until 9pm and signage on the site will clearly indicate the hours of use.

“Dorking Halls beat off competition from rival theatres across Surrey in a public vote as part of the prestigious Muddy Stiletto Awards 2016 to be crowned the best theatre in Surrey. In a highly competitive category, Dorking Halls amassed an impressive 34.4% of the votes. Over 20,000 people voted in 30 categories for their favourite local business. The Manager of Dorking Halls, Keith Garrow and his team were commended for their very high quality work.”

AGREED - That a letter of commendation from the Council be sent to the Dorking Halls Team in recognition of their success in the Muddy Stiletto Awards 2016 and all their hard work.

23. Questions to Members of the Executive

(1) The following question was submitted by Councillor Claire Malcomson

“What progress has been made with regard to the previous Council Leader’s aim to bring CRCs under District control, so that this Council might be able to ensure residents do not have to suffer reduced opening hours and other restrictions being imposed by Surrey County Council?”

Councillor Michelle Watson responded as follows:

“Thanks to our proactive engagement within the Surrey Waste Partnership and with Surrey County Council in particular, we are in a good position to make continual improvements to the way in which waste is managed in Mole Valley. We are at an exciting and important cross roads regarding the future of waste management in Surrey and Mole Valley. Later this year, the Executive will be asked to approve the appointment of a new waste collection contractor procured with three other Surrey authorities. This landmark decision will ensure we continue to deliver first rate waste and recycling services for our residents with the same quality of service but at less cost. Also this year, the Council will be asked to consider future waste arrangements which will further enhance and strengthen the relationship between Mole Valley District Council as the waste collection authority and Surrey County Council as the waste disposal authority. Under these new proposals, both authorities will start to make joint decisions on all of the waste facilities and services offered across the district which will give Mole Valley more of a say and influence over the waste services offered in our District and can be tailored to the needs and wishes of our residents. I am currently making arrangements with the officer team to offer all Members a seminar on this topic so we can share thoughts and ideas about these important and pivotal proposals.

“In the short term however, we are keen to ensure residents continue to have convenient and cost effective waste services which fit their needs. Our current bulky waste collection scheme is very popular with residents and enables them to have a home collection of unwanted furniture and large electrical items which are taken away for a modest fee. Given the changes at the CRCs, we will be extending the service so that we can now offer collections of waste from DIY projects. This will give residents the option of having small amounts of rubble collected from their homes which will reduce car journeys and be more convenient for some residents. This is yet another example of how we listen to our residents and continue to offer a range of waste and recycling services which are cost effective, convenient and beneficial for the environment.

Councillor Claire Malcomson asked the following supplemental question

Whilst we welcome the Waste Partnership improvements, with specific to the CRCs, we are concerned that as from April, Surrey County Council is charging at CRC's for certain waste. This leads to more fly tipping. Could you answer this question?

Councillor Michelle Watson replied as follows:

“In relation to CRCs we do offer the bulk waste service at a reasonable cost. Residents also have the option to use charity facilities to collect mattresses and bulky items which are reasonably costed within the area. MVDC has also been working with Housing Associations to try and help people who cannot afford these charges and MVDC is also working to try and deliver skips at the cost of Housing Association prices. So we are trying to assist. SCC had to introduce these costs to cover the costs of disposal of bulky items and it is reasonable for SCC to ask residents to pay towards the disposal of these items.

(2) The following question was submitted by Councillor Clayton Wellman

We are pleased with the adoption of our philosophy of encouraging wildflower meadow habitats on trunk road verges and we aim to encourage this habitat wherever possible. It has been well received by many Members and residents alike that the mowing regime has been made more intelligent in order to allow these species to flourish and bring all of their benefits. There have been problems, but these are down to the poor contractual arrangements and not to the policy itself. We have always maintained that safety and sight lines should be the primary considerations of any mowing regime. However, it was originally agreed in principle during initial discussions with officers that this Council would not only change the mowing regime, but would actively sow wild flowers along the verges. As well as propagating these species, this would have the added benefit that these species only grow to around two feet high, and therefore do not encroach on sight lines. Unfortunately, we were later told this was not possible anymore because of the extra expense. This expense is surely more than balanced out by the reduced number of cuts under the new regime. The objective at the outset was to improve the environment, not to save money. Therefore, can we now ensure that the sowing of wild flowers can begin?

Councillor Lucy Botting responded as follows:

“We need to look at this question from a cost perspective because it does increase cost and also look at wildflower biodiversity and try and come to a sensible way forward. In terms of cost, the additional cost and changes to the current Service Level Agreement is about £22,000. This is based on additional road closures for the verges, staffing costs, disposal etc. The cost of one road closure is about £1,000. I'll talk you through why we need additional cuts rather than fewer cuts.

“Thank you for your input in developing the improved cutting regimes; what you have done in supporting wildflower biodiversity is fantastic for Mole Valley and our residents. There is more work to do. We have cut less grass this year on the A24 and earlier in the year. Because of that we have been able to learn lessons about what needs to be changed and where we take it from here. Ultimately road safety and sight lines have to be our priority. In terms of the grass contract that we have been discussing for various months, we will be discussing the contract and possibly some of the issues within the contract and resolution thereof at our cross party Wellbeing Group tomorrow evening. I agree that it would be lovely to plant wildflowers all over on the verges of the A24. I don't disagree with the suggestion. However, it is not realistic for a number of reasons - finance is one. If we simply scattered seeds on the verges and hoped for the best, we would need to remove grass continuously from the verges between the wildflowers. This would result in more cost and probably more patchy wildflowers all over the place. One thing that residents have been saying is that this does not look attractive; road safety is an issue, so we have to balance the two. I think the best option for us and we should look at the Beare Green and Bocketts Farm roundabouts where we have actually sown wildflowers. These have been beneficial and welcomed, so I would like to work with you going forward to look at site specific areas where we can do this throughout Mole Valley, so that we have a compromise of road safety, cost efficiencies and wildflower biodiversity.

Councillor Clayton Wellman asked the following supplemental question:

“Will the Council be able to ensure that the contract for mowing is adjusted? Many of the current problems are because of differences in the growing seasons year on year. So can we adjust the contract to make it more discretionary in order to solve these issues?”

Councillor Lucy Botting replied:-

“This is the first year of the contract. We have had issues because a lot of the sites that were not picked up have been included in the contract; we only took about 70% of the sites. The contractors had not actually identified that other bits of site were included. It has been a difficult, slow start, but the Mole Valley team have done sterling work. We cut the grass early on the A24 and it has to go into the road closures which are difficult. We have learnt lessons; if we look at Hampshire and Kent, they have had major problems with grass growing. It has been exponential this year because of the rain and sun. So we are in a unique position – exponential growth and a contract which is only one year on. We are taking this forward and are looking at ways that we can make that cutting better, quicker and in time with the seasons.”

(3) The following question was submitted by Councillor Raj Haque

“The recent report of a death of a restaurant customer after unknowingly eating a curry containing an ingredient that was not shown on the menu has highlighted the need for more comprehensive information to be displayed on menus. In the light of this would the Council initiate an awareness programme in partnership with the Foods Standards Agency and the County Council to ensure that customers are informed of all ingredients that they may be allergic to before ordering?”

Councillor Michelle Watson responded as follows:

“Thank you Councillor Haque for raising this important issue. It is vital that businesses are aware the significance of correct allergen information being available for their customers and the potential consequences of getting it wrong. Undeclared allergens, such as peanuts, can be potentially fatal.

The Council's Environmental Health team works in partnership with Surrey County Council's Trading Standards service, who take the lead and co-ordinating role for the county. They ensure all caterers know what they need to do, in order to help their customers identify potentially harmful allergens with their products.

Prior to the new legislation requiring allergen declarations coming into force, our Environmental Health team visited the restaurants and discussed the new requirements. Our ongoing food business inspection programme also checks compliance and understanding of business responsibilities - this includes allergen information. We routinely distribute the Food Standards Agency guidance booklet for caterers and can also provide advice when asked.

We are currently finding good levels of compliance and understanding amongst Mole Valley businesses.

We continue to work in partnership with the county Trading Standards team who are planning a new county wide campaign - just as suggested by Cllr Haque. This aims to raise awareness further, both amongst food businesses and their customers. It will include using social media, and also providing an emailed advice guide to all food businesses, with the offer of specific follow up training, both online and face to face. Another element of the programme will be to sample a range of take away meals that have been specifically ordered as for example “peanut free” , and then testing to see whether that is the case or not.”

Councillor Raj Haque asked the following supplemental question:

“In view of the gravity of this important issue, how soon will something be done to get officers to hold a seminar to increase awareness amongst restaurateurs and their staff so that they know what it is that they are selling. You indicated in your answer that Environmental Health officers have been visiting restaurants to discuss the new requirements. I have not received a visit yet in my establishment. We need to action this as soon as possible

Councillor Michelle Watson replied as follows:

“This is underway.”

In accordance with Part 4, Standing Order 7 of the Council Constitution, the three questions submitted by the deadline but not asked and answered within the 15 minutes question period are recorded in Appendix 2 to these minutes with the responses of the relevant Executive Members.

24. Motions

Motion 1/2016

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Stephen Cooksey and seconded by Councillor Tim Loretto:

“This Council regrets the imposition by central government of permitted development rights which allow the conversion of office buildings to residential units without the requirement of planning permission and notes that this policy deprives the Council of any powers to:

1. influence the number of residential units or the internal design in any converted office building;
2. require an appropriate number of affordable homes to be included in the development;
3. make infrastructure charges through the Community Infrastructure Levy;
4. influence any consequence of the development including associated car parking, impact on local residential amenities or environmental changes.

This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Make an immediate Article 4 Direction which, if confirmed, would return these powers to the Council;
2. Inform the LGA and the Department of Local Government and Communities of the detrimental effect that this policy is having on Mole Valley with a view to seeking a permanent abandonment of the policy;
3. Seek to enlist the support of Mole Valley’s MPs in order to achieve this objective.”

The Council resolved to take the motion on the night.

Members debated the motion in full.

RESOLVED: That Motion 1/2016 be rejected.

(N.B. Counted vote on each proposed resolution of the motion: (1) 8 for, 21 against, (2) 11 for, 21 against, and (3) 13 for, 19 against)

25. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: That members of the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

26. Meadowbank Football Ground Development

The Council considered the report set out at pages 55 to 64 of the agenda in respect of the proposed refurbishment of the Dorking Football Ground, Meadowbank. The Executive Member for Parking, Property and Economic Development introduced the report and proposed the recommendation.

(NOTE: During the consideration of this item, Councillor Joe Crome asked who would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance costs. Councillor Charles Yarwood (Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Property, Parking & Economic Development) gave an undertaking to provide a written response and has since answered as follows:

“The operation plan developed with Surrey County Football Association (SCFA) includes regular maintenance and for a sinking fund. The costs of these form part of SCFA’s business plan and as such are the operators (SCFA) responsibility. The pitch is assessed on completion and then annually, by a contractor approved by the Football Association (FA). The FA provide guidance on the maintenance regime for 3G pitches, after taking into account the intensity of use. SCFA under the terms of their agreement are required to adhere to this guidance.”

RESOLVED: That a contract for the refurbishment of the Dorking Football Ground, Meadowbank be entered into and that the project be retained in the Capital Programme.

ALLOCATION OF COMMITTEE PLACES – 2016/2017

(a) Audit Committee (7 seats)

	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
1.	Tim Ashton	Paul Elderton	Simon Ling
2.	Simon Edge	Paul Kennedy	
3.	James Friend		
4.	Paul Newman		

(b) Development Control Committee (19 seats)

	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
1.	Rosemary Dickson	Margaret Cooksey	Simon Ling
2.	Mary Huggins	Joe Crome	Peter Stanyard
3.	Chris Hunt	Raj Haque	Patricia Wiltshire
4.	Metin Huseyin	Tim Loretto	
5.	Duncan Irvine	Claire Malcomson	
6.	Howard Jones	Clayton Wellman	
7.	Malcolm Ladell		
8.	James Friend		
9.	John Muggerridge		
10.	Jatin Patel		

Substitutes

1.	John Chandler	David Draper	Mary Cooper
2.	David Mir	Paul Elderton	David Harper
3.	Corinna Osborne-Patterson	Bridget Kendrick	David Hawksworth
4.	Charles Yarwood	Paul Kennedy	

(c) Licensing Committee (11 seats)

	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
1.	Tim Ashton	Stephen Cooksey	Patricia Wiltshire
2.	John Chandler	Paul Elderton	
3.	Metin Huseyin	Bridget Kendrick	
4.	David Mir	Wayne Monkman	
5.	Sarah Seed		
6.	Charles Yarwood		

(d) Scrutiny Committee (11 seats)

	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
1.	Tim Ashton	Stephen Cooksey	David Harper
2.	Simon Edge	David Draper	David Hawksworth
3.	Mary Huggins	Paul Potter	
4.	Malcolm Ladell		
5.	Jatin Patel		
6.	Sarah Seed		

Substitutes

1.	Rosemary Dickson	Raj Haque	Mary Cooper
2.	Paul Newman	Clayton Wellman	Peter Stanyard

(e) Standards Committee (6 Member seats)

	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent	Parish Council (non-voting representatives)
1.	Malcolm Ladell	Paul Elderton	Mary Cooper	Roger Hammond
2.	Charles Yarwood	Wayne Monkman	Patricia Wiltshire	Stuart McLachlan

Substitutes

1.	John Chandler	Margaret Cooksey	Simon Ling
2.	Rosemary Dickson	Bridget Kendrick	Peter Stanyard

Agenda Item 12 – Questions remaining to be asked**4. Submitted by Councillor Clayton Wellman**

In the light of the results of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment, which amongst other things highlighted concerns over street cleaning, what will this Council do to improve litter picking and street cleaning on main roads, in urban areas and also on country roads where excessive litter is a huge problem and where we are currently relying on volunteers to deal with the problem?

Response from Councillor Michelle Watson (Executive Member for Environment)

Two percent of the responses to the Infrastructure Need Assessment expressed the view that improvements were needed to street cleaning, particularly relating to dog waste and litter picking. To me, this highlights that to the majority of the residents of Mole Valley, we already have good arrangements in place for street cleaning. This is backed up by evidence.

In April, a survey of 300 roads in Mole Valley was undertaken to check on the levels of litter and detritus. This was undertaken by Elmbridge Borough Council as part of the procurement of the new Joint Waste Contract and was done in line with national standards for measuring street cleanliness. Of the 300 roads, 278 were judged as being of a good standard, with a further 19 being acceptable. Only two of the 300 roads were assessed as being less than acceptable.

Of course, there can always be improvements and I am working with the team to identify further ways of ensuring we have clean streets.

Members will be aware that on Saturday 2 July we launched our 2016 Keep it Clean campaign with a social media Thunderclap and the painting of a hard-hitting mural in the Swan Centre. The thunderclap reached over 250,000 social media accounts, which was a huge success. This campaign will continue throughout the summer, to encourage people to do the right thing with their litter and dog waste.

Our new joint street cleansing contract will commence in April 2019 and one of the key changes in that contract will be the way in which streets will be cleaned. The current contract is frequency based, so different types of road are cleaned on a different timescale. The new contract will be standards based and so the contractor will be required to maintain a set standard of cleanliness. Street cleaning will still be on a planned basis, although the contractor will be required to have the flexibility to ensure these standards are met.

Volunteers perform a key role in ensuring that their local environments are tidy, whether it is a householder picking up some litter outside their front door, or community groups organising litter picks. The Council will support community groups to do this in a safe way, and provides bags, litter pickers and when appropriate, signs. We will pay community groups one pound for every bag of rubbish they collect, up to a total of £30, twice a year. This is very popular with many communities and if Members have groups who do not currently benefit from this, please contact the Environmental Services team, who will provide advice and assistance.

5. Submitted by Councillor David Hawksworth:

I am aware of cases in Ashted where planning applications have failed to be considered by the Planning Officers within the statutory eight week time limit.

Some of these have excited considerable local interest because of their controversial nature, including proximity to the Green Belt, and not being in character for the area. In one case, a proposal has gone directly to the Inspectorate for appeal.

Will the Executive member tell us how many current applications in Ashted and in Mole Valley, as a whole, have exceeded the time limit. Will they explain the underlying reasons for this number, and tell us what is being done to correct the situation?

Response from Councillor Duncan Irvine (Executive Member for Planning)

The target time for processing planning applications is determined by the size of the proposal. Major applications which comprise ten or more dwellings or 1,000.sqm of business floor space should be determined within 13 weeks and applications for minor or other smaller development proposals within 8 weeks. These are nationally prescribed indicators.

We have agreed targets for determining planning applications within the time limits. We seek to process 60 % of all major applications within the 13 week period. In the period for April to May this year 100% of all major applications were determined within the target time. We processed 58% of all minor applications during this period within the eight week period which is slightly below the target of 65%. We have a target that at least 80% of other applications are processed within the time limits and so far this year we are just below the target at 75%.

Where a planning application is considered acceptable and likely to be granted planning permission but not within the target times, the legislation encourages local planning authorities to negotiate with applicants an extension of time, rather than issue a refusal within the target time. Where a proposal is likely to be refused planning permission that request is not made.

Appeals against the non determination of planning applications within target times are uncommon. There have been 5 in the last eighteen months.

There are currently 264 live planning applications currently going through the process of determination. Of these 9 are major applications. Determination of some of these will be within the target times but we are awaiting additional information before the others can be processed. Nevertheless, all of these applications are scheduled for determination within the next couple of months. Of the other applications, 34% are pending for a variety of reasons including the need for additional information from applicants.

In Ashted there are 12 current applications which have not been determined with in the target. Of these, one is subject to extension of time request and the others are scheduled to be determined during the next six weeks.

6. Submitted by Councillor Paul Kennedy

What reassurance can you give to the majority of Mole Valley residents who voted Remain in the recent referendum that the Mole Valley District Council area will continue to benefit from the high levels of inward investment and employment opportunities we currently enjoy as a result of Britain's membership of the European Union?

Response from Councillor Vivienne Michael, Leader of the Council

At this stage it is too early to say what the impact of the decision to leave the European Union will have on the local economy. Individual businesses will decide how they respond and adapt to a new trading relationship with Europe and the rest of the world.

However, the District has many economic assets to help us withstand whatever the future economic landscape looks like. We have a highly skilled workforce; very low levels of unemployment; several major international companies have their headquarters in the District; we are situated between Heathrow and Gatwick airports and have good access to London and its services and the national transport infrastructure. All of these advantages will put us in a good position to take advantage of the new trading landscape.

In the meantime the current European funding streams that are available to our businesses will generally remain in place until 2020 and we will have to wait and see whether they will be replaced in some way by the UK Government thereafter.

Our newly established Economic Development Team is acutely aware of the need to engage with businesses of all sizes and the organisations that represent them to ensure that MVDC is doing all it can to provide the support and services businesses require to maintain their presence in Mole Valley and to demonstrate to others the advantages of doing business in Mole Valley.