

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2026

Councillors Present: Tony Vickers (Chairman), Stephanie Steevenson (Vice-Chairman), Adrian Abbs, Antony Amirtharaj, Phil Barnett, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Jeff Brooks, Billy Drummond, Nick Carter, Patrick Clark, Heather Codling, Iain Cottingham, Carlyne Culver, Paul Dick, Nigel Foot, Denise Gaines, Stuart Gourley, Clive Hooker, Owen Jeffery, Paul Kander, Janine Lewis, Ross Mackinnon, Alan Macro, David Marsh, Tom McCann, Erik Pattenden, Justin Pemberton, Vicky Poole, Christopher Read, Richard Somner, Joanne Stewart, Louise Sturgess, Clive Taylor, and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Joseph Holmes (Chief Executive), Sarah Clarke (Executive Director – Resources), Paul Coe (Executive Director – Adult Social Care), Clare Lawrence (Executive Director – Place), AnnMarie Dodds (Executive Director – Children and Family Services), Melanie Booth (Group Executive – Liberal Democrats), Jake Carpenter (Group Executive – Conservatives), Martyn Sargeant (Service Director for Strategy & Governance), Nicola Thomas (Deputy Monitoring Officer and Service Lead for Legal and Democratic Services), Honorary Alderman Adrian Edwards, and Honorary Alderman Tony Linden

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Jane Langford, Councillor Biyi Oloko, Councillor Jeremy Cottam, Councillor Matt Shakespeare, Councillor Laura Coyle (attending online), Councillor Martin Colston, Councillor Martha Vickers, Councillor Geoff Mayes (attending online), Honorary Alderman Hilary Cole, Honorary Alderman Andrew Rowles, Honorary Alderman Mollie Lock, Honorary Alderman Rick Jones, Honorary Alderman Keith Chopping, and Honorary Alderman Graham Bridgman

PART I

1. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Erik Pattenden and Patrick Clark declared an interest in Agenda Item 3. As they had close family members who were employed by West Berkshire Council, they declared that this item would have a direct financial effect on these family members and so would constitute a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. For this reason, they determined to leave the meeting while the consideration of this item took place.

2. **Statutory Pay Policy 2026/27**

A point of order was raised that, as this was an Extraordinary meeting convened with less than five clear days' notice, it might not be legally convened. Taking advice from the Deputy Monitoring Officer, the Chairman was satisfied that, as the deadline for approving the report was before the 1 April 2026 and that there were provisions for this in the Local Government Act 1972, he agreed that the meeting was required and should proceed.

Council considered a report (Agenda Item 3) concerning the Statutory Pay Policy for 2026/27.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Vicky Poole and seconded by Councillor Jeff Brooks:

“That Council adopt and approve the Statutory Pay Policy Statement for publication. It is further recommended that the Council delegate authority.”

COUNCIL - 26 MARCH 2026 - MINUTES

Councillor Poole introduced the report and highlighted that it was an annual report needing to be approved by the end of March. It had been taken through the Personnel Committee and showed a reduction in the pay ratio between the highest and lowest paid staff, and the total Council pay scales. Overall, she recommended that it be approved by Council.

Some Members questioned the increase in staff considered to be Chief Officers, with one suggesting that it had risen from around 18 in 2019 to potentially 43 in 2026. However, the Administration did not recognise that figure, highlighting that it was around 23. In addition to this, more detail about the amount and salary of Chief Officers was requested.

In response to a point about the lack of notice and reason why the meeting was an Extraordinary meeting, it was clarified that the report had been through the Personnel Committee, which was in public, so Members and the public had been given plenty of time to review it. The role of Council in the process was simply for final approval.

Overall, Council agreed to approve the recommendation in the report, and approve the Statutory Pay Policy.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

(The meeting commenced at 8.03 pm and closed at 8.15 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature