

# Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Meeting of Council 7 April 2022

## Questions by Members

Verbal responses to be given at the meeting			
	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
1.	Councillor Baker	Councillor Schofield, Deputy Leader of the Council	HMS Ark Royal Ensign
2.	Councillors Buttironi and J. King	Councillor Neame, Executive Member for Housing and Support	Support for Ukrainian refugees
3.	Councillor Stevens	Councillor Schofield, Deputy Leader of the Council	Council Tax relief
4.	Councillor Booton	Councillor Schofield, Deputy Leader of the Council	Heritage Open Day brochures
5.	Councillor Ritter	Councillor Ashford, Executive Member for Community Partnerships	Woodhatch and Whitebushes Community Development
6.	Councillor Sinden	Councillor Humphreys, Executive Member for Economic Prosperity	Redhill market
7.	Councillor Chandler	Councillor Sachdeva, Executive Member for Leisure & Sport	Supporting Run Reigate
8.	Councillor Torra	Councillor Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Street cleansing and littering
9.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Cost of vehicle fuel and building heating
Written responses to be given after the meeting			
10.	Councillor Ritter	Councillor Schofield, Deputy Leader of the Council	Russian and Belarussian energy contracts
11.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Humphreys, Executive Member for	Business cases for

		Economic Prosperity	purchase of diesel vehicles
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**Councillor Baker** will ask the **Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

### **Question 1: HMS Ark Royal Ensign**

At a recent armed forces breakfast I came across the following interesting story.

During the Second World War, as part of the war effort, the Borough of Reigate sponsored HMS Ark Royal. In recognition of this, the borough was presented with the ship's White Ensign ( a flag flown by a ship to indicate nationality, in this case a red St George's Cross on a white field with the union flag in the upper corner) and a large ship's plaque.

A local Sea Cadet unit, known as T.S. Beatty S.C.C at the time, was granted permission to be renamed as T.S. Ark Royal S.C.C. and happily we still have one of the original cadets with us.

For many years, the ensign was on display in the Mayor's Chambers and was removed during refurbishment and not subsequently replaced. It became lost for many years but was recently was found in the basement of the town hall.

The Reigate Branch of the Royal Naval Association have paid for a frame to be made to house this famous and important relic. Will Reigate and Banstead Council commit to finding somewhere to display this wonderful link with our past, be it at the town hall or the Harlequin Centre

The Borough's association with HMS Ark Royal goes back to 1588 when Lord Howard, (The Howard Family Home was Reigate Priory) commanded the fleet on board Ark Royal that engaged the Spanish Armada as it sailed up the English Channel. (Worth noting that Lord Howard's second in command was Sir Francis Drake.

**Councillors Buttironi and J. King** will ask the **Executive Member for Housing and Support, Councillor Neame**, the following question:

**Question 2: Support for Ukrainian refugees**

The Borough of Reigate and Banstead stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine against the unprovoked act of war unleashed on the sovereign nation of Ukraine by armed forces at the behest of the President of the Russian Federation.

The UK has a long and important tradition of offering sanctuary to those who need protection. The Jewish Kindertransport children, the Poles following the Second World War, the Vietnamese Boat People, the Asian Ugandans fleeing Idi Amin, and the people who fled the war in Kosovo. This is our proud and decent tradition and most recently, this Borough has resettled refugees from the conflict in Syria.

We are proud of the response of Reigate and Banstead residents to the war in Ukraine, with charitable donations and fund-raising, and many generously opening their homes to Ukrainian Guests

Can the leader of the council explain what the council is doing to uphold this proud tradition to welcome and support all those fleeing Ukraine and help them find safe refuge in the Borough?

**Councillor Stevens** will ask the **Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

**Question 3: Council Tax relief**

Due to the recent slight increase in Council Tax, as well as the recent National Insurance rise as well as the general cost of living increasing, some residents may find some difficulty in making their Council Tax payments. Could the executive member please remind us on what help is on offer from RBBC for those who may face difficulties in making these payments, and how residents can apply for this assistance?

**Councillor Booton** will ask the **Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

**Question 4: Heritage Open Day brochure**

The Reigate Society provides an annual Heritage Open Days brochure highlighting key events that take place across our borough to promote the heritage and character of Reigate and Banstead.

The events are suitable for all age ranges and help promote a wide range of natural and cultural amenities and landmarks that the borough offers residents. The brochure used to be funded by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council with an agreement to part-fund taking over, ultimately ending in a complete withdrawal of support.

The latest brochure features none other than our Mayor as a headline supporter. Would this council reconsider supporting this valuable cultural offering to residents?

**Councillor Ritter** will ask the **Executive Member for Community Partnerships, Councillor Ashford**, the following question:

**Question 5: Woodhatch and Whitebushes Community Development**

In answer to a question raised at the last full council meeting it was confirmed that the council is reviewing the resourcing of the community development worker team, before agreeing when and how to appoint dedicated resource to cover the Woodhatch and Whitebushes area.

Please provide an update on the progress of allocating a dedicated community development worker covering Woodhatch and Whitebushes going forward, and what the point of liaison for councillors, residents and community groups is now to ensure continuity of projects and whether any funding is being allocated to a new dedicated worker for this area going forward.

**Councillor Sinden** will ask the **Executive Member for Economic Prosperity, Councillor Humphreys**, the following question:

**Question 6: Redhill market**

Redhill Market has been a mainstay of the town centre for many years and has had a far greater variety and number of stalls in the past. In recent years it has lost its big flower stall and the main fruit and veg stall. Can you confirm how the number of market stalls in Redhill, and elsewhere in the borough, has changed since Covid, and what the Council is doing to encourage a greater variety of stallholders in our markets in the future.

**Councillor Chandler** will ask the **Executive Member for Leisure & Sport, Councillor Sachdeva**, the following question:

### **Question 7: Supporting Run Reigate**

Run Reigate is a community running event that started in 2014 and has been an asset to the borough since then. This event brings people to the town centre of Reigate and the flagship Priory Park encouraging many to improve their health by taking part and to visit our centre. It is the largest community event in East Surrey and over 30,000 households/runners between the ages of 4 and 84 have participated in the event which has won best Half Marathon in the UK twice at the National Running Awards (2017 and 2019).

The last two years have threatened its continuation due to lack of revenue and loss of sponsorship, making a significant loss in 2021. Reigate and Banstead Borough Council have supported this event financially since its inception helping to get it off the ground but this year that support has been withdrawn.

Given the local significance of this event and the impact on the health and well being of the participants preparing for and taking part in it, largely drawn from our borough residents, does it not warrant the continued support of the Council? Perhaps it should be considered as an initiative relevant to the grant of £538,000 the Council has just received from East Surrey Heartlands?

**Councillor Torra** will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Bramhall**, the following question:

**Question 8: Street cleansing and littering**

Post-Covid there are many areas of our borough with a greater prevalence of litter than pre-Covid. Whilst community volunteering to litter pick helps it cannot be the answer. What is the Council doing to reduce the culture of littering, encourage more to pick up rather walk by and how is the Council's street cleansing team changing what it does to address that.

**Councillor Essex** will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Bramhall**, the following question:

**Question 9: Cost of vehicle fuel and building heating**

Please provide the latest estimates of how much the Council's monthly cost of vehicle fuel and building heating for its own vehicles and buildings will increase this year, and what the Council is doing to reduce these cost increases.

## **WRITTEN RESPONSES TO BE PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING**

**Councillor Ritter** will ask the **Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

### **Question 10: Russian and Belarussian energy contracts**

Please can you confirm whether the Council has recently held any contracts, such as to purchase energy, with firms in Russia or Belarus, and if so whether this has now ended.

**Councillor Essex** will ask the **Executive Member for Economic Prosperity, Councillor Humphreys**, the following question:

**Question 11: Business cases for purchase of diesel vehicles**

Please can you share the business cases for the Council's recent purchase of a new £180,000 Hiab and six Ford Ranger diesel vehicles, and their level of utilisation since being purchased.