

Agenda Item 7

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 31 OCTOBER 2019

Questions by Members

No.	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
1.	Cllr S. Fenton	Cllr M. Brunt, Leader of the Council	Women's State Pension Changes
2.	Cllr J. Philpott	Cllr M. Brunt, Leader of the Council	Women's State Pension Changes
3.	Cllr S. Fenton	Cllr T. Schofield, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance	Brexit Written Response
4.	Cllr J. Essex	Cllr R. Ashford, Executive Member for Community Partnerships	Index of Multiple Deprivation
5.	Cllr K. Sachdeva	Cllr N. Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Recycling
6.	Cllr M. Blacker	Cllr N. Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Air Quality
7.	Cllr S. McKenna	Cllr R. Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy	Zero Carbon New Homes
8.	Cllr H. Brown	Cllr T. Archer, Executive Member for Investment and Companies	Common Land
9.	Cllr S. Kulka	Cllr G. Knight, Executive Member for Housing and Benefits	Affordable Housing Progress

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Councillor S. Fenton and Councillor J. Philpott will ask the **Leader of the Council, Councillor M. Brunt** the following question:

Question: Women's State Pension Changes

In light of a request from a group of female residents of several wards, born in the 1950s, whose pensions have been severely affected by both the 1995 and 2011 Pensions Acts, would the Leader of the Council send the government a strong request to make fair transitional State Pension arrangements for all women born in the 1950s who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the state pension age with lack of appropriate notification?

Many women born in the 1950s are living in hardship as the rise of women's state pension age has been too rapid, and made without sufficient notice so that these women have not had time to make alternative pension arrangements.

More than 150 councils have already passed a motion - written by campaign group Women against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) - in support of transitional arrangements.

Background to this question <https://www.waspi.co.uk/background-information/>

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Councillor S. Fenton will ask the **Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Finance, Councillor T. Schofield** the following question:

Question: Brexit

This council has been allocated £34,968 to spend on planning for Brexit. I understand that none of this has yet been spent. Given that the borough is home to almost 5,700 businesses (not to mention the many charitable and social/not-for-profit organisations) what does the council consider to be the best use of this money in terms of helping to mitigate the economic impact locally of Brexit (bearing in mind that divided equally between all the businesses this would mean about £6 per business)? How, specifically, will the money be spent?

➤ **Written Response**

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Councillor J. Essex will ask the **Executive Member for Community Partnerships, Councillor R. Ashford** the following question:

Question: Index of Multiple Deprivation

The index of multiple deprivation survey for 2019 was recently published (see <https://www.surreyi.gov.uk/dataset/index-of-multiple-deprivation-2019>). This showed that the most relatively deprived areas in Surrey is now in Reigate and Banstead, in Merstham, and this is far more deprived in relative terms than it was four years ago (ranking from 6373 highest deprivation nationwide in 2015 to 4800 nationwide in 2019). In the last four years Reigate and Banstead has gone from being the 282nd to 275th most deprived local council area in the country, and Surrey is now also ranked slightly lower than four years ago. Please can the council confirm it has looked at this data, how is this being used, and confirm what actions are being taken in response.

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Councillor K. Sachdeva will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor N. Bramhall** the following question:

Question: Recycling

I understand that Reigate & Banstead's recycling rate has now increased to 54.9% which places this Council in the top 10 of Councils for recycling in the Country. Can Cllr Bramhall let the Council know how you intend to increase recycling to hit the target of 60%?

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Councillor M. Blacker will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor N. Bramhall** the following question:

Question: Air Quality

Residents, particularly parents with young children, are concerned about the air quality in the area of Holmesdale School. There was an air quality investigation carried out in 2018. What were the findings of this report and when will it be published?

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Councillor S. McKenna will ask the **Executive Member for Planning Policy**, **Councillor R. Biggs** the following question:

Question: Zero Carbon New Homes

The government is currently consulting on the Future Homes Standard (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings>) up until 10th January 2020. This includes consideration of whether to commence the amendment to the Planning and Energy Act 2008, which would restrict local planning authorities from setting higher energy efficiency standards for new homes. The proposals being consulted upon include stronger building regulation standards either by increasing building fabric (insulation) standards by 20% (similar to the 19% uplift in our adopted local plan) or higher, including on-site renewables (which the government's planning inspector rejected from our local plan).

Please confirm that the council will respond to this consultation and request that the newer standards should be at least for Zero Carbon new homes, including both higher standards of building fabric (such as the Passiv Haus standard) and a requirement for renewable energy to included rather than excluded as standard in all new developments.

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Councillor H. Brown will ask the **Executive Member for Investment and Companies, Councillor T. Archer** the following question:

Question: Common Land

Recently, the council applied to de-register a section of land in Salfords from its common land status, in order for the land to be tarmacked over.

Such applications could lead to a worrying precedent of council-owned common land – which should be for the benefit of residents not private business – being de-registered from common land status.

Could the council explain its policy regarding common land and when it deems it appropriate to de-register land for other uses?

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Councillor S. Kulka will ask the **Executive Member for Housing and Benefits**, **Councillor G. Knight** the following question:

Question: Affordable Housing Progress

Residents quite frequently ask me to explain their council's progress against the commitment to provide affordable housing in the borough. They see articles in the local press from time to time concerning proposals, but no significant evidence of increased appropriate provision.

Some large developments are often allowed to go ahead on the site, without providing affordable dwellings, on the condition that they contribute to a levy, which the council can use elsewhere.

For the purposes of clarification, would the executive member please use this opportunity to explain, in simple terms, how much money the council has effectively committed to current affordable housing projects, how many dwellings have been completed over the last year, the split of those between Social Rent, Shared Equity and Market Rent, and how much currently exists in the pot, waiting for projects to be proposed?

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