

Addendum

Council

Dear Councillor,

Council - Thursday, 28 July 2022, 7.30 pm

I enclose, for consideration at the meeting of the Council to be held on Thursday, 28 July 2022 at 7.30 pm, the following reports which were unavailable when the agenda was published.

Mari Roberts-Wood
Interim Head of Paid Service

5. Public questions(Pages 3 - 4)

To consider any questions received from members of the public under Council Procedure Rule 2.14.

7. Questions by Members(Pages 5 - 22)

To consider any questions received from Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 2.15.

8. Recommendations for decision(Pages 23 - 26)

To receive and consider the recommendations of the Council's Executive, committees and sub-committees for decision, including:

Employment Committee meeting held on 19 July 2022 (reconvened)

- Minute 11 – Senior Management scoping/benchmarking and recommendations to Council (including 151 Officer appointment)

For enquiries regarding this addendum;

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Published 27 July 2022



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Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

Meeting of Council 28 July 2022

Public Questions

Number	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
1	Mr Christopher Whinney	Councillor Lewanski, the Executive Member for Corporate Policy & Resources	Electric vehicle charging points

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Council Meeting: 28 July 2022

Mr Christopher Whinney asked the **Executive Member for Corporate Policy & Resources, Councillor Lewanski** the following question:

Question: Electric vehicle charging points

The cost of petrol and diesel is so high and the prime challenge of climate change and the aim to achieve zero emissions by 2050 or sooner will encourage drivers and organisations to change to electric vehicles. However, drivers etc will wish to be satisfied that there are sufficient chargers available locally.

The Council has a policy and procedure to arrange installation of electric vehicle charging points on its own buildings. It is also a planning requirement for any organisation and resident submitting for a new dwelling to install a charger.

Will the Council be increasing the number of chargers on its premises in the next full two calendar years? Will it given an indication of numbers and whether it will amend the planning requirement to include a charger for any addition to properties?

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Meeting of Council 28 July 2022

Questions by Members

Verbal responses to be given at the meeting			
	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
1.	Councillor Walsh	Councillor Schofield, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance & Governance	Council reserves
2.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Schofield, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance & Governance	Charities paying business rates
3.	Councillor McKenna	Councillor Lewanski, The Executive Member for Corporate Policy & Resources	Support for fuel bill costs
4.	Councillor Ritter	Councillor Sachdeva, on behalf of Councillor Mrs Bramhall, the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Children's play areas
5.	Councillor Sinden	Councillor Humphreys, on behalf of Councillor Mrs Bramhall, the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Allotments
6.	Councillor Booton	Councillor Schofield, on behalf of Councillor Mrs Bramhall, the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Recycling
7.	Councillor Chandler	Councillor Biggs, the Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Green Belt protection
8.	Councillor Torra	Councillor Biggs, the Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Demolition of affordable homes

Agenda Item 7

9.	Councillor Chester	Councillor Biggs, the Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Gatwick consultation
10.	Councillor Proudfoot	Councillor Archer, the Executive Member for Investment & Companies	Commercial venture funding
11.	Councillor Baker	Councillor Sachdeva, the Executive Member for Leisure & Culture	Swimming at Horley Leisure Centre
12.	Councillor Stevens	Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing & Support	Safeguarding
13.	Councillor Buttironi	Councillor Schofield, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance & Governance	Horley Network Rail car park income
Written responses to be given after the meeting			
14.	Councillor Sinden	Councillor Ashford, the Executive Member for Community Partnerships	Cost of Living Officer
15.	Councillor Baker	Councillor Sachdeva, the Executive Member for Leisure & Culture	Christmas lights working group

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Walsh will ask the **Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance & Governance, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

Question 1: Council reserves

Over the course of this year comments have been made, from various quarters, about the healthy level of reserves that this Council has maintained through careful stewardship of its finances. Suggestions have recently been made that substantial, unbudgeted, sums should be given to private landlords and property owners to improve their properties for such purposes as improved recycling facilities or increased insulation. Could the Executive Member for Finance & Governance confirm the current levels of reserves held by the Council and what they are intended to be used for?

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Councillor Essex will ask the **Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance & Governance, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

Question 2: Charities paying business rates

In around 2018, the Council changed the way it funds local charities with a small core of charities retaining core funding and the remaining charities instead invited to bid for small or medium sized grants (which have been suspended for this year).

However, those charities that are no longer receiving core funding from the Council are subject to pay up to 20% business rates. This includes Furnistore, for which I am a trustee.

Please can you confirm how many charities are now paying business rates that were not paying them before and what the total cost is this year for those charities as a result.

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Councillor McKenna will ask the **Executive Member for Corporate Policy & Resources, Councillor Lewanski**, the following question:

Question 3: Support for fuel bill costs

With the huge increases in prices of energy and foods, many of our local residents are struggling to pay their bills and this situation is likely to be significantly worse as the colder weather approaches and the energy cap is removed, allowing energy costs to rise even more sharply.

There is an opportunity for our Council to lead the work on helping residents just as was done during the pandemic. Whilst it is known that there will be more availability of grants to enable people to secure improvements that will save money on their bills, residents will need advice on an impartial basis. Unfortunately, there will be ceilings on available funding as with many grant-aided initiatives. Furthermore, there will potentially be an increase in scams, such as dodgy installations or overcharging so our residents will need to be supported here.

It is therefore hoped that our Council will not only liaise with Surrey County Council's Fuel Poverty Team but will undertake its own direct measures. Could the Council advise on the sort of measures being considered, in particular;

- Setting up a Retrofit Unit to aid with advice for residents on what are the best solutions to reduce fuel poverty. For instance, PV panels and double glazing are not always the optimal way ahead because there is heat loss through walls and roofs.
- Adopting procurement best practice, advice notes and guides to protect residents from scams and other bad practices.
- Bulk buying and reducing unit costs do that savings can be passed onto residents.
- Increasing training for local fitters in liaison with East Surrey College.

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Councillor Ritter will ask **Councillor Sachdeva** on behalf of the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Mrs Bramhall**, the following question:

Question 4: Children's play areas

Please can the Executive Member give an outline of the rolling plan for children's play area refurbishments, the expected length of time between planned upgrades within the current budget envelope and how residents and playground users are consulted as part of the process of play area upgrades?

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Sinden will ask **Councillor Humphreys** on behalf of the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Mrs Bramhall**, the following question:

Question 5: Allotments

I have just completed the Council's Carbon Literacy training for Councillors. This highlighted the value of allotments in allowing residents to be more self-sufficient, to have more fresh fruit and vegetables, and reduce food and packaging waste for the Council to collect.

Please can you list the waiting time for an allotment for the different sites across the borough and how the cost for an allotment now compares to five years ago.

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Booton will ask **Councillor Schofield** on behalf of the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Mrs Bramhall**, the following question:

Question 6: Recycling

Noting the excellent work that our recycling teams do, what is the Council doing to increase the types of items that can be recycled from our kerbsides, including, amongst other things, items that are currently recyclable at supermarkets and through the national Terracycle scheme?

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Chandler will ask the **Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery, Councillor Biggs**, the following question:

Question 7: Green Belt protection

Please can the portfolio holder indicate what is being done to protect the Green Belt where the Sustainable Urban Extensions in the Development Management Plan have been located. This extract from the Housing Monitor Report: "In accordance with DMP Policy MLS1, the allocated sustainable urban extensions are not required to be released for development at this time. The Council however remains committed to maintaining an on-going dialogue with those involved in promoting and delivering the allocated sustainable urban extension sites and will actively support and encourage planning performance agreements and/or the preparation of joint development briefs (where appropriate) for the sites in order to facilitate their timely delivery upon release."

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Councillor Torra will ask the **Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery, Councillor Biggs**, the following question:

Question 8: Demolition of affordable homes

Please can you confirm how many affordable homes have been demolished in Reigate and Banstead since 2012, including homes lost in the redevelopment of sites, such as in Merstham?

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Chester will ask the **Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery, Councillor Biggs**, the following question:

Question 9: Gatwick consultation

Please will the Council make publicly available its response to the latest Gatwick consultation, in light of the greater impact these latest changes to the proposed development would have on Horley residents, with particular reference to the partial destruction of the widely used Riverside Garden Park.

Please can the Council also confirm that its response has ensured that we as a Council are able to meet our sustainability and carbon reduction targets, and is line with progress towards similar targets nationally, with particular reference to elements such as widening roads to allow for greater traffic flow rather than focusing on public transport improvements.

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Proudfoot will ask the **Executive Member for Investment & Companies, Councillor Archer**, the following question:

Question 10: Commercial venture funding

Please can the Council confirm the amount of money it has spent to date on in its business venture for a Crematorium (previously referred to as Project Baseball) and the amount of money lost so far in its business venture called Pathway to Care.

Agenda Item 7

Councillor Baker will ask the **Executive Member for Leisure & Culture, Councillor Sachdeva**, the following question:

Question 11: Swimming at Horley Leisure Centre

I have been contacted by several residents regarding swimming at Horley Leisure Centre. Prior to Covid, pool users could simply turn up and use the facilities as required. During Covid a booking system came into force, limiting the number of swimmers and generally reducing accessibility for residents. At the time this was understandable, however, the system is still in force, the pool is regularly understaffed and is being operated well below capacity. What checks and measures are in place to ensure that 'Better' are fulfilling their contractual obligations to our residents.

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Councillor Stevens will ask the **Executive Member for Housing & Support, Councillor Neame**, the following question:

Question 12: Safeguarding

Recently, we have seen an investigation conclude that many young children and vulnerable individuals were targeted and abused over a long period. Although local authorities had various opportunities to act against the many perpetrators, the local Police, Social Services and relevant Councils failed to do so. This follows a disturbing trend as concluded in similar reports from Rochdale and Rotherham in recent years.

Whilst these examples are found in towns hundreds of miles away from Reigate and Banstead, as a Councillor it is shocking to see the many failures of these local authorities to act to safeguard youngsters and ensure perpetrators were brought to justice for their actions. Please could I ask the Executive Member what safeguarding policies we have in place for those children and vulnerable adults who may be at risk. Additionally, if any concerns of a similar nature were brought to this Council, what course of action would we undertake?

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Councillor Buttironi will ask the **Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance & Governance, Councillor Schofield**, the following question:

Question 13: Horley Network Rail car park income

Please can the Executive Member advise whether there is a proposal for income from the Network Rail car park in Horley to be used for the benefit of the Borough and its residents? Please provide details of this proposal and any agreed actions or activity in this regard.

Agenda Item 7

WRITTEN RESPONSES TO BE PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING

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

Question 14: Cost of Living Officer

The rising cost of living is already impacting the lives of many residents. Some have said to me that the Council Tax is too high and is causing hardship to many.

Raven Housing Trust is supporting their tenants to monitor electricity use and have provided a cost-of-living payment. In addition, there are an increasing number of food banks and food hubs used across the borough. I have heard that the London Borough of Wandsworth has a cost-of-living support package to help with the cost-of-living crisis. This includes providing an advice hub in partnership with its Citizens Advice Bureau, requiring all Council contracts to pay at least a local living wage and providing a cost-of-living payment to all pensioners on their Council Tax support scheme.

Does the Council have, or have plans to employ, a cost-of-living officer who works with residents, not just to deal with fuel poverty but also rising food costs, which are already being seen on a weekly basis when shopping?

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Councillor Baker will ask the **Executive Member for Leisure & Culture, Councillor Sachdeva**, the following question:

Question 15: Christmas lights working group

In cities, towns and villages across the UK, Christmas lights are a common sight, popular with residents and an important part of our national identity. I am part of a group of volunteers in Horley which has been decorating our town centre for many years, including fundraising, repairing lights, organising insurance and everything else that goes along with it.

New regulations and required certifications are making it very difficult for us to continue with this tradition. Costs are prohibitive to the point where this may be the last year we put the lights up.

Though streetlighting is dealt with by Surrey County Council and Skanska, would Reigate and Banstead Council be prepared to set up a working group to look into ways in which we could make the festive lighting process easier and encourage residents to get involved.

This is a pattern being repeated up and down the country. It would be great to see our Council taking a lead on this emotive issue.

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Recommendations from the Employment Committee – 19 July 2022

Minute
reference
11

**EXEMPT: SENIOR MANAGEMENT
SCOPING/BENCHMARKING AND RECOMMENDATIONS
TO COUNCIL (INCLUDING 151 OFFICER
APPOINTMENT)**

RESOLVED to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for this item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that:

- 1. It involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; and**
- 2. the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.**

Senior management scoping and benchmarking

Those officers for whom the senior management scoping and benchmarking was directly relevant to their terms of employment left the meeting (the Interim Strategic Head of Corporate Resources, the Head of Finance and Assets, the Head of Legal and Governance, and the Director of Place) having previously declared their interest in this aspect of the item.

The Employment Committee received and considered an update on the senior management scoping and benchmarking from the Head of Paid Service. It was explained that an external benchmarking had been undertaken of senior management roles to achieve transparency following the adoption of a new management structure and redistribution of responsibilities in November 2021. The context for this work was a high level of movement amongst the senior management of authorities in London and a desire for Reigate and Banstead to attract and retain a high quality of senior managers, especially to statutory roles.

Committee Members questioned the Head of Paid Service on the details of the senior management scoping and benchmarking exercise and the resulting changes to senior management roles. It was noted by the Committee that those changes were for approval by the Head of Paid Service under delegated decision-making authority.

Agenda Item 8

Appointment of permanent Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer

The Head of Paid Service reminded the Employment Committee of the previous unsuccessful attempts to appoint a Section 151 Officer in 2019 since when the post had been filled by Pat Main in an interim capacity. It was proposed that the Employment Committee recommend to Council that Pat Main take on the role in a permanent capacity. All Members of the Committee endorsed the proposal, individually expressing their appreciation for the qualities Pat Main had brought to the role of Section 151 Officer.

Head of Paid Service terms and conditions

The Head of Paid Service left the meeting having already declared an interest in this aspect of the item.

The Interim Strategic Head of Corporate Resources and the Head of Legal and Governance returned to the meeting.

The Employment Committee received and considered the recommended changes to the terms and conditions of the Head of Paid Service. The Head of Organisational Development and Interim Strategic Head of Corporate Resources explained that the Head of Paid Service post had been subject to the same scoping and benchmarking exercise as other senior management posts. As a result, it was proposed that the Employment Committee recommend to Council that:

- the job title of the Head of Paid Service be changed to Managing Director. This was to enable the role to be clearly differentiated from those of other directors and to provide clarity on overall leadership and responsibility. It was noted that 'Head of Paid Service' was not clearly understood as a job title by Members and officers.
- the salary of the Head of Paid Service be changed to reflect the scope and breath of the revised role of Managing Director after concluding an external benchmarking and grading exercise of other comparable local authorities.

The Head of Organisational Development and Interim Strategic Head of Corporate Resources were questioned by the Employment Committee on how the scoping and benchmarking exercise was conducted in relation to the Head of Paid Service role including the calculation of the recommended salary.

The Chair returned the meeting to public session.

RESOLVED to:

- **Note the approach and outcome of the scoping and benchmarking exercise for the six senior management roles within the newly approved structure.**
- **Note the changes to the relevant senior management roles as approved by the Head of Paid Service under delegated decision-making authority.**
- **To recommend to Full Council:**
 - **To adopt the changes to the Head of Paid Service terms and conditions; and**
 - **That Pat Main be appointed to the Section 151 statutory role on a permanent basis.**

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