

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at the New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate on 16 September 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors M. A. Brunt (Leader), T. Schofield (Deputy Leader), T. Archer, R. H. Ashford, R. Biggs, E. Humphreys, V. H. Lewanski and K. Sachdeva.

Also present: Councillor Harrison.

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bramhall and Councillor Neame.

25. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 22 July 2021 be approved.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

27. ADOPTION OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, Councillor Biggs, introduced the report which recommended adoption of the draft Climate Change and Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD had been prepared to demonstrate how developments could meet policy requirements in the Council's Development Management Plan and what the Council expected from developers with regards to such measures.

The SPD would:

- Provide useful guidance to developers
- Result in a more uniform and standardised approach to sustainable development
- Assist Planning Officers in assessing the acceptability of sustainability measures proposed and monitoring the effectiveness of the policy requirements
- Help the Council to meet the sustainability objectives of the Corporate Plan Reigate and Banstead 2025 and the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2020.

Councillor Biggs explained that the draft SPD had been prepared with input from the Council's Sustainability Project Officer and Surrey County Council's Climate Change Project Manager. It had also been reviewed by the Development Management Advisory Group, the cross-party Sustainability Group and all members of the Council electronically. Comments were incorporated into the consultation version of the SPD.

Councillor Biggs explained that following public consultation, the SPD had been amended and then considered by the LDF Scrutiny Panel on 25 August 2021 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 September 2021. Minor updates from the Scrutiny Panel had been incorporated and the recommendation to allow minor amendments to be made by the Head of Planning in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery would allow for outcomes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Following adoption, the Adoption Statement would be published, along with the SPD and associate documents. A press release would also be published, and training offered to Members and Officers to assist its implementation.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, explained that the points raised by the Scrutiny Panel had been incorporated, he had received detailed points of explanation on request and was satisfied with the draft SPD. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Brunt, thanked Councillor Harrison and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their input.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Executive adopt the draft Climate Change and Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
2. That the Executive authorise the Head of Planning in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Policy to make any necessary minor amendments to the draft Supplementary Planning document prior to implementation.

28. HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Brunt, introduced the report. The Housing Enforcement Policy, which covered the options available for enforcement of housing standards primarily in the private rented sector, but also in the owner occupied and socially rented sectors, was approved by the Executive in 2018.

The report recommended a policy change to introduce charges for the service of specified formal enforcement notices. The policy had also been updated to include new powers to be used when regulating mobile home sites and electrical safety standards in the private rented sector.

Councillor Brunt explained that the report recommended an addition to the Scheme of Delegation to enable the provisions relating to electrical safety standards in the Private Rented Sector Regulations 2020 to be utilised effectively.

In response to a question from an Executive Member, the Environmental Health Manager confirmed that in respect of circumstances where no enforcement action was possible or it was determined that no action should be taken, advice for customers would typically involve signposting possible routes to resolution.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Housing Enforcement Policy provided as Annex 1 to the report be approved.
2. That additions to the Officer Scheme of Delegation contained within the Council's Constitution be approved, as set out in Annex 2 to the report in relation to Section 5 (Housing and other Residential Accommodation).

29. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

The Executive Member for Corporate Policy and Resources, Councillor Lewanski, explained that the report outlined the Council's performance up to the end of Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

Councillor Lewanski introduced the Key Performance Indicator report by noting that, out of the 10 KPIs, 2 were red rated. KPI2, which related to business rates collection, was red rated as a business rates relief recalculation led to a number of Q1 instalments being set back to 1 August. Rate collection had been recalculated for the remainder of the year and it was expected that collection would improve in future quarters. In addition, £166k had been held in suspense and, if factored into the Q1 total, the KPI would be within tolerance.

Councillor Lewanski explained that KPI10, which related to recycling, did not meet the target but noted that Q4 of 2020/21 was the best Q4 result recorded by the Council. Councillor Lewanski explained that an increase of 2,500 in net tonnage in paper and card was not enough to offset an increase in refuse and fly tipping, and the loss of garden waste tonnage due to the suspended service in Q1 of 2020/21. The Council remained committed to increasing the recycling performance and 500 additional flats had been added to the kerbside recycling service since April 2021. In June 2021, the monthly recycling rate exceeded 60% for the first time.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, explained that the report had been considered by the Committee at its meeting on 9 September 2021. The Committee had been pleased to note that the 60% recycling target had been reached for the first time in June. The Leader of the Council noted that the highest performing authority achieved a recycling rate of 64%, and that the future target of 65% by 2025 was in the right realm.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Governance, Councillor Schofield, outlined the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme performance for Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

The projected full year outturn for the Revenue Budget was £17.67m against a management budget of £17.696m. The Council was confident that income streams had started to be restored following the pandemic, but the main area of concern remained parking income. A very cautious approach had been taken in the forecasts, and therefore the predicted parking income loss was £1.7m against an income budget of £2.7m. Councillor Schofield explained that this shortfall could be funded on a one-off basis through drawing on £2m earmarked reserve that had been set aside last year in anticipation of the challenges.

Ongoing impacts of the pandemic on income streams would be accommodated within future budget-setting decisions. This would be addressed as a priority during budget-setting for 2022/23.

Councillor Schofield noted that while some expenditure was still being incurred to deliver the Council's continued pandemic response, it was forecast to be funded within the grants made by Government. In 2020/21 the Council received 43 separate grants totalling over £52m, 80% of which had been distributed to the appropriate businesses and residents and the rest was carried forward into this year. In addition, the Council had received 13 separate grants in 2021/22.

In terms of the Capital Programme, Councillor Schofield explained that the forecast was £56.29m which was 60% below the approved Programme. This was due to forecast slippage of budgets as the related business cases had yet to be developed, and a small net underspend. Business cases would be developed in due course as the Council implemented strategies in those areas.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meeting on 9 September 2021. The Committee had:

- Expressed concern about income loss as a result of the pandemic and noted the challenge that would be for the budget next year
- Noted that a management fee proposition had been received from the Council's leisure contractor
- Noted that loss of commercial income and rent had been much smaller than other authorities
- Noted that commercial investment should result in savings

Councillor Harrison thanked the Executive Member and stated that the Committee look forward to working with the Executive during budget-setting for 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

1. To note Key performance Indicator performance for Q1 2021/22 as detailed in the report and at annex 1.
2. To note the Budget Monitoring forecasts for Q1 2021/22 as detailed in the report and at annex 2.

30. RISK MANAGEMENT - QUARTER 1 2021/22

The Executive Member for Corporate Policy and Resources, Councillor Lewanski, introduced the report which provided an update on risk management in Quarter 1 of 2021/22. Annex 1 of the report provided an update on strategic risks.

Councillor Lewanski explained that SR11 – Reform of the Planning System was recommended for closure as the Government's plan to reduce the threshold for the provision of affordable homes had been dropped. Further detail was included in annex 4 of the report.

However, a new risk, Planning System Reform, was proposed to reflect the latest implications of the Government's proposed reforms to the planning system, the details of which were included in annex 5 of the report.

It was identified that at the end of Quarter 1, there were two red rated operational risks, and details of those were included in the exempt annex 2 and in annex 3.

Councillor Lewanski explained that the report would be considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 28 September, with any observations made to be reported to the relevant Executive member.

The Leader of the Council explained that there was exempt information relating to this item. Item 7 was adjourned so that the exempt information could be considered under item 11.

During the exempt discussion, there was consideration of a further proposed strategic risk.

Following the exempt discussion, the Executive returned to the recommendations in item 7 and;

RESOLVED:

1. To note the Q1 update on risk management provided by the report and associated annexes.
2. To approve the closure of the strategic risk on 'Reform of the planning system' (SR11) as detailed in the report and in Annex 4.
3. To approve the opening of a new strategic risk on 'Planning system reform' as detailed in Annex 5 to the report.

31. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2020/21

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and Governance, Councillor Schofield, introduced the report which provided an update on the performance of the Council's treasury management activities for the last financial year.

Apart from one exception, the Council had complied with legislative and regulatory requirements. The exception related to periods of time when the Government paid significant emergency funding to the Council at short notice as part of the pandemic response. It had not been possible to spread those funds across a range of banks and financial institutions as was required to ensure compliance with the limits set in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. This had been resolved through opening additional accounts at other institutions.

Councillor Schofield explained that the report, which showed the Council's treasury management activity was on track and complied with the limits previously approved by members, would be submitted to the Audit Committee on 28 September.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Brunt, thanked the Interim Head of Finance and her team for responding rapidly to the unusual challenge that had presented itself as a result of the Government grants throughout the pandemic.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

1. To note the Treasury Management Performance for 2020/21.

2. **To approve the outturn against the 2020/21 Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators and the Annual Treasury Management Report (Annex 1 to the Executive report).**

32. STATEMENTS

There were none.

33. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

34. EXEMPT BUSINESS

RESOLVED that exempt information relating to item 7 be noted.

The Meeting closed at 8.03 pm