

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held at the **Government Guidance - Meetings will take place in accordance with Government guidance.** on **Thursday, 10 February 2022 at 7.30 pm.**

**Present:** Councillors R. S. Turner (Deputy Mayor), T. Schofield (Deputy Leader), G. Adamson, T. Archer, R. H. Ashford, J. Baker, R. Biggs, M. S. Blacker, N. J. Bramhall, G. Buttironi, Z. Cooper, P. Chandler, M. Elbourne, J. C. S. Essex, R. J. Feeney, P. Harp, R. Harper, N. D. Harrison, J. Hudson, E. Humphreys, S. A. Kulka, A. King, J. P. King, V. H. Lewanski, A. M. Lynch, S. McKenna, R. Michalowski, N. C. Moses, C. M. Neame, S. Parnall, J. E. Philpott, S. Sinden, C. Stevens, M. Tary, S. T. Walsh and C. T. H. Whinney

**Attended remotely:** Councillors J. Booton, A. C. J. Horwood and D. Torra

### **Passing of former Councillors Stephen Bramhall and Maureen Gates**

The Mayor expressed sadness that two former councillors Stephen Bramhall and Maureen Gates had recently passed away.

Stephen Bramhall served the borough from 2008 until 2016; and Maureen Gates from 1998 until 2004.

### **56 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

### **57 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ritter and Sachdeva.

### **58 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

### **59 Urgent business**

There was none.

### **60 Public questions**



Joanna Barnett asked a question about ecology surveys at the Horley Business Park site. A response was given by Councillor Tim Archer, Executive Member for Investment and Companies, in accordance with Council procedure rule 2.14.

Note: For more information on responses to Council questions, please see this page on the Council's website:

<https://reigate-banstead.moderngov.co.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13260>

## **61 Questions by Members**

11 questions on notice were asked, and responses given, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.15 as follows:

<b>Question by</b>	<b>To be answered by</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Cllr Torra, on behalf of Cllr Ritter	Cllr Ashford, Executive Member for Community Partnerships	Community Development Support
Cllr Booton	Cllr Lewanski, Executive Member for Corporate Policy and Resources	Benchmarking to support the Council's Sustainability Strategy
Cllr Chandler	Cllr Neame, Executive Member for Housing and Support	Update on the Afghan resettlement programme
Cllr Essex	Cllr Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Energy efficiency ratings and penalties
Cllr Cooper	Cllr Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Publication of grass-cutting schedules
Cllr Sinden	Cllr Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Electric taxis and private hire vehicles and provision of charging points
Cllr Philpott	Cllr Bramhall, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Recycling pizza boxes
Cllr Ashford	Cllr Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Flooding management in planning applications

Cllr McKenna	Cllr Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Affordable housing in planning policy
Cllr Torra	Cllr Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Affordable housing targets
Cllr Turner	Cllr Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy & Place Delivery	Water run-off from properties with impermeable driveways

**Note:** For more information on responses to Council questions, please see this page on the Council's website:

<https://reigatebanstead.moderngov.co.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13264>.

## **62 Recommendations**

The Council received recommendations arising from the Executive meetings held on 16 December 2021 and 27 January 2022, relating to:

- (i) Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021/22 (Minute ref. 52);
- (ii) Budget and Capital Programme 2022/23 (Minute ref. 61);
- (iii) Council Tax setting 2022/23 (Minute ref. 62); and,
- (iv) Calendar of Meetings for 2022/23 (Minute ref. 63).

The Mayor advised that debate would be guided by the procedure note circulated in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.8.4.

### **Minute 61, Budget and Capital Programme 2022/23**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Brunt, moved the recommendations and in doing so commended the work of the officers and Members who contributed to it, including the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget Scrutiny Panel.

The Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Finance and Governance, Councillor Schofield, seconded the original recommendations, and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Chandler proposed, and Councillor Essex seconded, an amendment to recommendations 2, 4 and 5. The amendments sought growth in the revenue budget to deliver:

- The Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy;
- Enhanced Community Development support;
- Accelerate the roll-out of recycling services to all properties;
- Initiatives on empty homes and fuel poverty;
- Enhanced green spaces and town centre management;
- Increased budget allowance for vacant posts across the Council.

Members' discussion of the amendment included the following considerations:

- Funding from the Corporate Plan Delivery Fund (CPDF) was not considered to be financially sustainable after 3 years. In addition, the purpose of the CPDF was to fund current projects rather than growth.
- The ambitions of the amendment were to deliver improved support and services for businesses and residents in the context of rising fuel prices and inflation, climate change, and a reduction in community development support.
- The use of the Council's reserves would not be financially sustainable, as a significant proportion was already allotted for delivering affordable housing and as a contingency for responding to crises such as the COVID pandemic.
- Funding salary budget growth would therefore eventually lead to cuts in other services, in view of a significant reduction in income streams such as parking income.

The Mayor called upon the Head of Paid Service to conduct a recorded vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.21.3. On the **amendment** to the recommendations of Minute 61 (Budget and Capital Programme 2022/23) as within the addendum voting was recorded as follows:

For: Councillors Chandler, Essex, McKenna and Sinden.

Against: Councillors Absalom, Adamson, Archer, Ashford, Baker, Biggs, Blacker, Bramhall, Brunt, Buttironi, Cooper, Feeney, Harp, Harper, Harrison, Hudson, Humphreys, Kelly, A. King, J. King, Lewanski, Lynch, Michalowski, Moses, Neame, Parnall, Schofield, Stevens, Tary, Turner, Walsh, and Whinney.

Abstain: Councillors Bray, Elbourne, Kulka, and Philpott.

The Mayor declared the **amendment lost**. Accordingly, **the original recommendations**, as moved, were discussed, and remarks thereon included:

- The budget was considered to be financially credible, however whilst the Council had been prudent in maintaining strong reserves to date, the budget recommendations would eat away at those reserves to the extent of 1.8m and the budget gap was expected to increase in the coming years.
- Some Members considered that the budget recommendations were not ambitious enough and called for growth in services to deliver the Council's vision for 2025. In response, Executive Members gave assurances that the Council's existing commitments were on track.
- The budget would result in a marginal increase in Council Tax to the extent of £5 for the average Band D property. It was felt this was an acceptable increase for residents in the context of increased fuel costs and rising inflation, whilst delivering value for money.

The Mayor called upon the Head of Paid Service to conduct a recorded vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.21.3. For the original recommendations set out at Minute 61 (Budget and Capital Programme 2022/23) voting was recorded as follows:

For: Councillors Absalom, Adamson, Archer, Ashford, Baker, Biggs, Blacker, Bramhall, Brunt, Buttironi, Cooper, Elbourne, Feeney, Harp, Harper, Harrison, Hudson, Humphreys, Kelly, A. King, J. King, Kulka, Lewanski, Lynch, Michalowski, Moses, Neame, Parnall, Philpott, Schofield, Stevens, Tary, Turner, Walsh, and Whinney.

Against: Councillors Chandler, Essex, McKenna and Sinden.

Abstain: Councillor Bray.

The Mayor declared the **original recommendations carried**.

### **Minute 62 (Council Tax Setting 2022/23)**

The Mayor called upon the Head of Paid Service to conduct a recorded vote in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.21.3. Voting was recorded as follows:

Voting was recorded in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.21.3 as follows:

For: Councillors Absalom, Adamson, Archer, Ashford, Baker, Biggs, Blacker, Bramhall, Brunt, Buttironi, Chandler, Cooper, Essex, Feeney, Harp, Harper, Harrison, Hudson, Humphreys, Kelly, A. King, J. King, Lewanski, Lynch, McKenna, Michalowski, Moses, Neame, Parnall, Schofield, Sinden, Stevens, Tary, Turner, Walsh, and Whinney.

Against: None

Abstain: Councillor Bray.

**RESOLVED** that the recommendations of the Executive, from its meetings on 16 December 2021, and 27 January 2022, be adopted as follows:

1. Minute 52 (Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021/22); and,
2. Minute 63 (Calendar of Meetings 2022/23).

### **63 Pay Policy Statement 2022/23**

The Head of Paid Service presented the report on the adoption of the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

The report set out the relevant statutory powers, the issues for the Council to consider, and the associated legal and financial implications.

The Employment Committee considered the report at its meeting on 25 January 2022 and made observations under Minute 34. In doing so, the Employment Committee endorsed the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23.

The recommendation set out in the report was moved by Councillor Lewanski, as Chair of the Employment Committee, and seconded by Councillor Brunt, who endorsed the Council's commitment to supporting the real living wage.

**RESOLVED** that the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 be approved.

### **64 Statements**

The Council received two statements from Executive Members about the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding.

### **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**

Councillor Biggs, Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, made a statement about the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Encouraging communities to adopt more active lifestyles had become a major public health initiative in recent years to help tackle both physical and mental health issues, reducing short car journeys and the associated carbon emissions.

Development of improved cycling and walking infrastructure was considered key to delivering those ambitions. New guidance from the Department for Transport sought lane separation on safety grounds and user attractiveness.

The purpose of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) was to identify routes for future investment. Once the routes had been identified in the LCWIP, individual schemes would then be moved into stage 2 where detailed designs were prepared in collaboration with local communities and other transport users. The designs would then form part of future funding submissions with implementation taking place in stage 3.

Since autumn 2020 the Council had been working with Surrey County Council and Sustrans, a walking and cycling charity, on a new generation of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. The LCWIP for Reigate and Banstead was the first in the programme.

The project followed national guidance and included 2 periods of stakeholder engagement. The engagement sessions had been informed by local communities, representatives from the cycling and walking communities, transport operators, borough and county members and officers from both authorities.

Using a combination of national cycling and walking tools and local knowledge, a long list of walking and cycling routes was identified. From this a short list of 5 cycling routes and 3 walking routes were prioritised where the most additional benefits were identified. This work was scrutinised by Sustrans to ensure deliverability. Routes not prioritised could still be delivered in the longer term.

Matthew Furniss, the Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, was expected to sign off the plan and be countersigned by the Council. Cllr Biggs formally endorsed the LCWIP on behalf of the Executive and thanked everybody who had contributed to it.

### **Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding**

Councillor Brunt, Leader of the Council, made a statement about Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding.

The Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy had recently offered the Council £1.7m of social housing decarbonisation funding, as a result of a consortium bid with its partners Raven Housing Trust and Surrey Heath Borough Council.

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The funding would enable Raven Housing Trust to improve the efficiencies of 94 affordable homes across the borough, leading to reduced fuel bills for some of our most vulnerable residents whilst reducing their overall carbon emissions.

This demonstrated how the Council was proactively working with partners to secure external funding to meet the challenges of both climate change and fuel poverty.

### **65 Leader's announcements**

The Leader of the Council confirmed that Councillor Absalom would be the Deputy Mayor-elect for the 2022/23 municipal year and in doing so commended her work as the Mayor during the 2020/21 municipal year.

### **66 Mayor's announcements**

#### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

To commemorate 2022 Holocaust Memorial Day, the Mayor's Chaplain, Des Williamson led a small service in Reigate Castle Grounds, where candles were lit in remembrance of those murdered in the Holocaust and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

#### **Fairtrade Event**

As part of the national Fairtrade Fortnight campaign, the Fairtrade Trail was planned to take place in Reigate Town Centre on Saturday 26th February from 10am to 12 noon.

#### **Thank You events**

The Mayor had hosted a number of thank you events, including two events for litter picking groups, an event for 'Level Up Redhill Reigate Banstead', a voluntary organisation which refurbished donated laptops for disadvantaged children.

The Mayor gave an update on upcoming thank you events for the St John's Ambulance, The Allegra Band, Walton & Tadworth Residents Association, Harlequin Volunteers, the Run Reigate team, Furnistore, Reigate & Redhill Covid19 Mutual Aid and the RBBC Volunteer Befrienders team.

#### **High Sheriff visit**

The Surrey High Sheriff, Dr Julie Llewelyn, was expected to visit the borough on Monday 7th March for a tour of the Merstham Hub, the YMCA's pre-school, the Beacon School, Epsom Primary school, and meeting volunteers from the MYTI sports club.

#### **Commonwealth Day**

To mark this year's Commonwealth Day the Commonwealth flag would fly at the town hall on Monday 14th March.

#### **Arthur Edwards Talk**

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To celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, Arthur Edwards, royal photographer at The Sun newspaper since 1977 was scheduled to speak at the Harlequin Theatre, about his career on Friday 11th March.

#### **YMCA Sleep Easy**

On the 11th March a YMCA Sleep Easy event at the Town Hall car park was planned to support young people facing homelessness.

#### **Age Concern Quiz Night**

A quiz night in aid of Age Concern Banstead was planned for Saturday 23rd April.

#### **Queen's Jubilee Beacon Lighting**

The Council was planning to commemorate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee by taking part in a National Beacon Lighting event with a beacon lighting service in Reigate's Priory Park on Thursday 2nd June.

The meeting finished at 22:07 pm.