

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held at the **New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate** on **Thursday, 28 March 2024 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Councillors E. Humphreys (Mayor) and R. Biggs (Leader); J. Baker (Deputy Mayor), V. H. Lewanski (Deputy Leader), H. Avery, M. S. Blacker, J. Booton, G. Buttironi, P. Chandler, V. Chester, J. Dwight, M. Elbourne, J. C. S. Essex, K. Fairhurst, P. Harp, G. Hinton, J. Hudson, F. Kelly, S. Khan, A. King, J. P. King, S. A. Kulka, S. McKenna, R. Michalowski, N. C. Moses, C. M. Neame, S. Parnall, A. Proudfoot, R. Ritter, K. Sachdeva, S. Sinden, M. Smith, C. Stevens, M. Tary, J. Thorne, S. T. Walsh and Vacancy



1 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 20 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

2 Apologies for absence

3 Declarations of interest

There were none.

4 Urgent business

There was none.

5 Public questions

Two public questions were received by Council. The first from Ms Sujata Das concerned playgrounds in Horley West with a response provided by Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability. The other was from Mr Ian Vernon and was on the subject of The Local Government Declaration on Tobacco. The response was provided by Councillor Biggs, the Leader of the Council.

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=13798>

6 Questions by Members

Eight questions with notice were received from Members of Council.

| Verbal responses given at the meeting | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| | Question by | Answered by | Subject |
| 1. | Councillor Smith | Councillor (Andrew) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets | Commercial property occupancy |
| 2. | Councillor Essex | Councillor (Andrew) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets | The Harlequin & RAAC |
| 3. | Councillor Chandler | Councillor Lewanski, the Executive Member for Finance, Governance & Organisation | Net Zero Asset Managers Initiative |
| 4. | Councillor Ritter | Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing & Support | Homeless accommodation |
| 5. | Councillor Khan | Councillor Biggs, the Leader of the Council | Safer Streets Funding |
| 6. | Councillor Booton | Councillor Biggs, the Leader of the Council | Animal Welfare |
| 7. | Councillor Fairhurst | Councillor Michalowski, the Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services | Reigate Priory Junior School |
| 8. | Councillor Proudfoot | Councillor Michalowski, the Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services | Biodiversity Net Gain Habit Banks |

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

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

7 Recommendations

7a Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25

RESOLVED to approve the:

- i. Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25;
- ii. Investment Strategy 2024/25; and
- iii. Capital Strategy 2024/25.

7b Local Plan (Core Strategy) Review and Statement of Community Involvement

Councillor Essex requested to speak to the recommendation. Mister Mayor agreed in accordance with Procedure Rule 2.13.4(i). Councillor Essex made the following remarks:

- Formal thanks were given to planning officers for their hard work in undertaking the review.
- The desire was expressed that when the Development Management Plan review came forward later in the year, Council would commit to a cross-party approach to addressing the detail on climate targets and affordable housing.
- Enquired what could be done to mandate delivery of the 438 affordable homes detailed in the 2019 needs assessment.

RESOLVED to approve and adopt:

- i. the review of the Reigate & Banstead local plan: Core Strategy policies (Annex 1), which concluded that the Core Strategy policies remain “up to date” and effective for the purposes of planning decisions, and that it be published; and
- ii. an indicative timetable for a new local plan (Annex 4).

8 Audit Committee Annual Report 2023/24 and Forward Work Programme 2024/25

Councillor Kelly spoke in this capacity as the Chair of the Audit Committee. Thanks were given to Committee members, Council officers, representatives of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) and Tommy Hyun, the Independent Member. The Committee’s work was highlighted including consideration of SIAP’s opinion for 2022/23, requests for further information on audit reports, a focus on reasons for outstanding management actions, quarterly updates on Risk Management, a review of the Code of Corporate Governance and preparation of a statement on internal control and governance arrangements as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts. The delayed audit of the Statements of Accounts for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 was noted as a concern and explained as due to a combination of local and national challenges. Additional Committee meetings would be organised to address these as soon as the audits were concluded.

RESOLVED to note the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2023/24 and Forward Work Programme for 2024/25.

9 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

Councillor Buttironi, in his capacity as the Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24 and the Proposed Annual Work Programme for 2024/25. The work of the Committee was detailed including its consideration of the Council’s finances and the Marketfield Way Project. The Committee’s Proposed Annual Work Programme for 2024/25 had been prepared and agreed by the Committee and the Leader consulted on its contents. It was being presented to Council for approval. This included the commitment to establish a Local Plan Scrutiny Panel as well as plans to review revisions to the recycling service as a consequence of the Government’s new Resources and Waste Strategy. Other planned areas of scrutiny included the Leisure & Culture Strategy as well as wastewater arrangements.

RESOLVED to note the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2023/24 and approve the Overview and Scrutiny Proposed Annual Work Programme for 2024/25.

10 Overview and Scrutiny Proposed Annual Work Programme 2024/25

With the agreement of the Mayor, this item was addressed under agenda item (9).

11 Statements

At what was her last meeting, Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing and Support, made a statement to Council to recognise the work that had been achieved by her Portfolio. Camelia Close had provided 25 family homes and apartments of which 40% were affordable. Lease Street had provided four bungalows for the most vulnerable residents. This had been supported by a Homes England sustainable grant. Cromwell Road had been transformed into Wheatly Court which was the first fully owned Council social housing project. It offered 32 family homes and had won the best large social housing development award. This was a big achievement for the Council's first major build which was achieved against a backdrop of Covid with a resulting significant increase in costs. As a result, a housing development had been put on hold but it was hoped to return to this as the economy settled. Despite the successes, it needed to be recognised that the provision of homes remained one of the Council's biggest challenges.

12 Changes to Committee Appointments

RESOLVED to approve the members of Committees as set out in the schedule of nominations by Group Leaders within Annex 1.

13 Leader's announcements

The Leader gave thanks to five Councillors who had made a significant contribution to the Borough but who had decided not to stand again and to step down as Councillors. Former Councillor Jill Bray was noted for her role as Mayor as well as having advocated for her ward and the Borough. Councillor Harper was highlighted for his invaluable work on Committees. Two members of the Executive were also not standing again. Councillor Neame's work on housing was highlighted as exceptional. Councillor Andrew King had taken on a difficult portfolio which had been turned around so that commercial opportunities were being explored. Councillor Sachdeva had previously been a member of the Executive and was thanked for her extensive work around Holy Festivals.

It was noted that the Council would celebrate its 50th birthday on 1 April 2024.

14 Mayor's announcements

The scroll to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III had been made by East Surrey College and was now awaiting despatch to Buckingham Palace. A full-sized copy would be on display in the Town Hall. A charity lunch hosted by the Mayoress

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had raised £5,500 for the Mayor's charities (the Lucy Rayner Foundation and the Royal British Legion). Thanks were given to Ciao Italia restaurant and guest speaker, Mariella Wyse. The 30th anniversary of the Town Twining with Brunoy was forthcoming. This would include an exhibition from 25 to 28 April in the Town Hall and provide further fundraising opportunities. The ceremony to install Honorary Freeman Colin Sutherland and Honorary Freewoman Millie Bright would take place in due course. Installing Roger Newstead and David Pay as Honorary Aldermen would take place on 15 May 2024. Two events were to be held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal British Legion Banstead & District branch. One was a service at All Saints Church in Banstead on 28 May 2024. This would be followed by a lunch at Ciao Italia. A concert would take place on 31 May 2024 at Banstead Community Hall. The Mayor's Civic Service would take place from 10:30am on Sunday 16 June 2024 at Banstead Methodist Church.

The meeting finished at 8.39 pm