

## **BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD**

### **EXECUTIVE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at the New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate on 21 March 2024 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors R. Biggs (Leader), V. H. Lewanski (Deputy Leader), H. Avery, A. King, J. P. King, N. C. Moses and C. M. Neame.

Also present: Councillors J. C. S. Essex, M. S. Blacker, N. D. Harrison, S. A. Kulka, M. Smith, M. Tary and S. T. Walsh.

#### **67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michalowski.

#### **68. MINUTES**

The Minutes for the previous meeting on 1 February 2024 were agreed.

#### **69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

#### **70. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Councillor Moses, gave an overview of the Review of the Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy report, Action Plan and annexes.

The report explained how the review was undertaken and summarised the main changes that have resulted from the review. The proposed Strategy and Action Plan had been discussed by Members at the ES Strategy Scrutiny Review Panel (changes summarised in Annex 3), and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 March 2024 (draft Minute published as an Executive Addendum earlier in the week).

The Portfolio Holder stressed that the Council always needed to balance its environmental sustainability work with the need to be financially sustainable which was reflected in the Strategy and Action Plan. The updated documents will ensure that the Council continues to make good progress on its carbon reduction targets.

Annual reports will continue so Members can review and comment on progress and the Cross Party Member Sustainability Group would continue. Councillor Moses thanked all Members who have had an input into the review process either formally or informally.

There were no further comments from Executive Members.

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, noted the changes that had been accepted as a result of the Panel's reviewing comments. However, a

number of suggested changes were not accepted. For example, some O&S/Panel Members felt that there should be more specific targets such as putting Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers in the Council's own car parks. Other Members wanted to gather more data and evidence or felt that a specific Scope 3 net zero target should be included in the Strategy.

Visiting Members asked questions and made comments in the following areas:

- **Electric Vehicle (EV) charging in Council car parks** – Members considered that residents needed to see clear targets for this work to be completed in every car park.
- **Net Zero target for scope 3 carbon emissions** – some Members had suggested setting a Net Zero target for Council Scope 3 emissions for 2050 in the Strategy to hold the Council to the same standards as those expected of the borough's businesses and residents. Members asked the Leader to defer this item while this issue was addressed in the public-facing version of the Strategy and Action Plan.

The Leader, Councillor Biggs, noted that these points had been raised by Members at Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 March and also at the ES Strategy Review Panel. It was difficult to base figures on data during the pandemic. The Action Plan could be amended and adapted in the future, but the Executive did not want to halt the work underway while this was debated. He noted the call to defer the item but said it should not be deferred as it was important to carry on with the work. The appropriateness of a specific Scope 3 target could be reviewed again in the future.

Visiting Members said that Members had been told to wait for the three-year review, but this issue was still not being addressed. They felt that in some instances pandemic data was irrelevant as the numbers of EV chargers had not changed in the last three years. They urged the Executive to be flexible going forward and look at this again.

- **Review of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy** – it was noted that this would not take place again for another three years. Can changes be incorporated before this during the year. Also how much would this cost as residents would want to know.

The Leader said that the Strategy and Action Plan needed to be financially sustainable. The Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Performance, noted that the Council had committed to producing an annual report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on delivering progress. It was also referenced in the O&S Annual Forward Plan for next year. There would be a full review after three years. Work was continuing and Members will be given more information about specific actions (such as preparing an Electric Vehicle Strategy and where the EV charging points would go) when this was available. Budget reporting would set out the spending proposals based on business cases.

- **Mechanism for suggesting changes** – Members asked how Members could make suggestions to change the Strategy and Action Plan going

forward as they still had concerns about some of the actions and wanted to feed in proposals now rather than wait for another review. It was felt that targets were not ambitious enough and the review period meant that this issue was being pushed into the future rather than present.

The Leader referred to the recent O&S ES Strategy Review working group and member engagement throughout the recent review. Technologies would change in a year, and these are under review, including if they are financially viable. He said that the Portfolio Holder was happy to have individual discussions with Members and to receive email suggestions during the year. The Council was doing the best for residents while working within the current financial constraints.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Moses, said she was happy to receive Members' suggestions and ideas via email during the year. She noted that there were already 91 actions in the Action Plan.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive:**

- (i) Approves the revised Environmental Sustainability Strategy at Annex 1 and Action Plan at Annex 2.**
- (ii) Authorises the Head of Service for Corporate Policy, Projects & Performance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Sustainability to make minor typographical or factual amendments prior to publication of the Strategy on the Council's website.**

**71. LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY REVIEW AND STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT UPDATE**

The Leader, Councillor Biggs, introduced this item as the Portfolio Holder for Place, Planning and Regulatory, Councillor Michalowski had sent his apologies.

The Executive were asked to approve and adopt the updated Reigate & Banstead Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in Planning (Annex 5) and approve a consultation on the review of the SCI's requirements on publication of names and postal addresses from comments on planning and related applications.

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a statutory document which sets out how the Council will engage with residents on various aspects of planning. Since 2018, Councils have to complete a review of this document every 5 years. The current SCI was adopted in April 2019.

The review has refreshed the SCI to reflect changes in digitisation and engagement tools as well as improving formatting and accessibility. The report also recommends a review be undertaken into the approach of publishing responders' names and postal addresses.

Two matters will be put to Full Council for a decision on 28 March 2024. These are to review and publish the Reigate & Banstead Local Plan: Core Strategy policies and an indicative timetable for a new Local Plan to be approved. Local Plan policies have to be reviewed every 5 years and as the last review was July 2019, this

needed to be completed. There have been no changes in legislation or regulations, but new guidance was published in 2019 for Local Plan reviews to be subject to Duty to Co-operate discussions with neighbouring authorities. This has been undertaken.

There are also implications for decision making on planning applications as policies older than 5 years from the date of adoption or review can be deemed out of date, so attract less weight. The Core Strategy also contains the Council's housing numbers that it must provide over the plan period (2012-2027) or 6,900 or 460 per annum.

The latest LDS/indicative timetable reflects the latest position on preparation of the new Local Plan as presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2023. An update was given to Overview and Scrutiny at its meeting on 14 March 2024. There were no further comments from the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison.

A Visiting Member felt that the item had not been fully reviewed at the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee as there was a six page Addendum but not the full report to scrutinise. The Member asked for clarification as it was noted in the report that it was not proposed to amend any details in the Core Strategy but in the Duty to Cooperate feedback, against Surrey County Council's response, it states that this will be amended. It was unclear whether changes are being made to the Core Strategy or not.

Tanya Mankoo-Flatt, the report author and Principal Planning Development Officer, said it was the draft Local Plan review that went to our Duty to Cooperate partners for comment and that the draft Local Plan Review was amended as a result of the comment from Surrey County Council. It was not a comment to amend the Core Strategy so there were no changes to be made to the Core Strategy.

A Visiting Member also asked for an update on when the updated A23 Great Street Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was due to be published. The Head of Planning said the current report and recommendations were an entirely separate item from the Local Plan. The SPD went out for consultation in the New Year; comments were back, and the Council was working with respondents and with consultants on responses. It was hoped that the SPD would come forward for adoption at a future meeting.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive approve:**

- (i) And adopt the updated Reigate & Banstead Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in Planning (Annex 5); and**
- (ii) A review of the Statement of Community Involvement's (SCI's) requirements on publication of names and postal addresses from comments on planning and related applications.**

**Also Council was asked to approve and adopt at its next meeting:**

- (iii) The review of the Reigate & Banstead local plan: Core Strategy policies (Annex 1), which concludes that the Core Strategy policies remain "up to 101**

**Agenda Item 5 date” and effective for the purposes of planning decisions, and that it be published; and  
(iv) That, subject to the approval of Recommendation (iii),  
an indicative timetable for a new local plan (Annex 4) be approved.**

## **72. RISK MANAGEMENT - Q3 2023/24**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Policy and Resources, Councillor James King, introduced the Risk management – quarter 3 2023/24 report (from the period from October to December 2023).

In this quarter, no new strategic risks have been identified and no strategic risks are recommended for closure. Updates on controls and mitigations for each risk are recorded in annex 1 of the report.

On the operational risks update, the previously reported red-rated operational risk was no longer red-rated. An update on Operational Risk 3 was provided in exempt Annex 2. It was clarified that the scoring of SR2 since Q1 2022/23 should be 9 and not 6 as in the report. The score was accurately reflected on p293.

The report was considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 13 March 2024. The Committee made one observation to be considered by the Executive on SR2 – Commercial Investment. In summary, a member of the Committee felt that it should have a higher score rating. The risk scoring was reviewed by officers and felt to be appropriate at this time. However, this risk – as with all strategic risks – will continue to be kept under review and any changes reported quarterly.

Councillor Harrison confirmed that he was a substitute at the Audit Committee meeting and had raised the point on SR2 – Commercial Investment. He felt that this needed to be higher rated. The SR3 on Challenging economic conditions for businesses and residents was 16 which was fair but in proportion, to keep SR2 at 9, he felt was too low.

The Leader responded that the Council would keep SR2 – Commercial Investment under review.

Officers confirmed that the written response will be shared with O&S Committee Members in relation to a Member’s question on the Operational Risk 3 in the exempt annex. There was no further discussion on the exempt item.

### **RESOLVED – that the Executive:**

**(i) Notes the Q3 2023/24 update on risk management provided by the report and associated annexes.**

## **73. RISK MANAGEMENT - 2024/25**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Policy and Resources, Councillor James King, gave an overview of the Risk Management 2024/25 report which introduced the proposed strategic risks for 2024/25 and presented the 2024/25 assurance framework to Members.

The strategic risks for the year ahead – in this case 2024/25 – are set as part of Quarter 3 reporting each year so there is a live risk register from 1 April 2024. The strategic risk register from this year (2023/24) will not, however, be formally 'closed down' until Quarter 4 reporting, which will come to the Executive in July. The report set out several changes to the strategic risks for the coming year and introduced a new document as part of the updated risk management strategy – the Assurance Framework for 2024/25. This aims to capture the wide range of risks the Council faces and manages on a day-to-day basis. It records controls and mitigations relating to each area of risk and provides an assessment of whether these are sufficient.

The Audit Committee considered this report at its meeting on 13 March 2024. Members of the Audit Committee welcomed the Assurance Framework as a useful tool to understand risk management at the Council. Members discussed reference in the report to the potential closure of risk SR5 (Cost pressures affecting the viability of Council developments) in Quarter 4. Some Audit Committee Members raised concerns about this. There was no suggestion that this risk be closed as part of the report to Executive. If the Executive does not endorse its closure next quarter, then the risk will transfer into 2024/25.

The Committee's feedback had been discussed with officers – it was considered that the best opportunity to discuss whether this specific risk should be closed is via the Quarter 4 report.

It was noted that in agreeing Recommendation (i) that Executive Members be aware that SR5, SR6 and SR8 from 2023/24 will also carry forward if they are not closed in Quarter 4.

The Leader, Councillor Biggs, noted that he felt that the Strategic Risk should not be closed until a lessons learned exercise has been completed and any changes recommended be made. The Executive can reinstate any Strategic Risks for 2024/25 at the next meeting. The Audit Committee can discuss them as well. Lessons learned were ongoing.

Visiting Member, Councillor Harrison, who had been a substitute at the Audit Committee meeting on 13 March felt strongly that the Strategic Risk 5 should not be closed down. He appreciated the assurances given by the Leader, but he preferred if this Strategic Risk was carried forward into April 2024/25.

Other Visiting Members asked about references to the current closure of the Harlequin theatre and the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) issue. There was a risk of loss of culture to residents while it was closed. Members asked how long it would be closed.

The Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Performance said the current closure of the Harlequin was a live issue that the Council was actively dealing with. It was also an operational risk and there were associated risks captured in the assurance framework relating to the building and estate.

Members asked for the forward plan for this asset to be communicated to residents when this was agreed.

Members also asked about Earlswood lake and repairs and whether this was a specific risk that should be in the Risk Management framework. Officers confirmed that Earlswood lakes repairs was an operational risk. The register was not part of this report to Members. The register is available to Members on the Modern.Gov website. Any questions could be taken outside the meeting.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive:**

- (i) **Approves the strategic risks for 2024/25 as detailed in annex 1.**
- (ii) **Notes the 2024/25 assurance framework (available at annex 2) and makes any comments to the Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Performance.**

**74. QUARTER 3 2023/24 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Policy and Resources, Councillor James King, introduced the quarterly performance report up to the end of quarter 3 2023/24. Of the 10 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) reported on in quarter 3, eight were on target or within the agreed tolerance. Two indicators were off-target and outside the agreed tolerance.

The red-rated indicators were:

- KPI 1 – Council Tax collection, and
- KPI 7 – affordable housing completions.

Additional detail was set out in Annex 1.

Annex 1.1 set out the proposed KPIs to be reported on in 2024/25. These are consistent with those reported on this year and continue to reflect the Council's corporate objectives as set out in the current Corporate Plan.

An updated set of KPIs will be developed for reporting from 2025/26 onwards. A Member task and finish group will be set up to inform this review process which will take place later this year.

The report was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 March 2024. They made no formal observations to the Executive but some comments on the content were captured in the draft Minute of the meeting which was published as an Addendum to the Executive agenda earlier in the week.

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, noted that the Council tax collection KPI was red-rated which was potentially worrying but the economic climate was picking up, so this should improve. He referred to the new Annex 6 – Housing Focus on Homelessness 2023/24 which set out the rise in the number of homelessness cases. This was a risk that Members should continue to monitor. O&S Members also discussed affordable housing.

Managing Director, Mari Roberts-Wood, commented that the homelessness issue was one of the most significant challenges that the Council and residents face. The new annex accompanied the performance reports set out these challenges and highlighted the increase in the number of cases. This was due to a reduction of private rental sector accommodation, alongside the cost of living and general

housing challenges. This was to be considered at both Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive meetings. Reigate and Banstead Borough Council was not alone in facing these challenges. It was an important issue and important that Members and officers gave it due attention.

There were no further comments from Executive Members.

Visiting Members made the following observations:

- **KPI 7 Affordable housing completions** – Members noted that the Council had delivered affordable housing in the planned period, and it was on track. However, delivery was low this current year with a lower percentage of affordable homes as a proportion of all homes than in previous years.

The Leader, Councillor Biggs, highlighted the slowdown in building generally which was happening nationally. There were fewer larger sites as Westvale Park and other sites in Redhill were nearly completed. It was important to note that the Council was still on target, overdelivering on the 15-year target while retaining the borough's open spaces that were important to residents, businesses and visitors. He was proud of the Council's record and delivery of affordable homes with 500 delivered last year.

Managing Director, Mari Roberts-Wood, noted that the Council spent a lot of time and effort discussing viability of schemes with developers to produce affordable homes. Nationally, registered providers were also slowing down building programmes as they concentrated on upgrading existing stock rather than building new homes.

Members noted that the KPI measured something that the Council could not influence. Developers were affected by high interest rates. A Member also suggested that the target affordable housing figure should be 20 per cent of homes on larger developments being affordable rather than 30 per cent.

Portfolio Holder, Councillor James King, agreed the Council could not control these national measures. They would be reviewing KPIs in the next year to take account of this issue. The Leader, Councillor Biggs, commented that the Planning team and Planning Committee Chairman scrutinise the viability studies in this area and try and negotiate as high a number of affordable housing as they can. Developers then must justify why they cannot meet the target. Councillor Biggs said he would not want to reduce the target from 30 per cent as then developers could negotiate on a lower target.

- **KPI 1 – Council Tax collection** – a Visiting Member noted that the Council had had a fantastic record of collecting Council Tax and were now less than 1 per cent below target.

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Organisation, Councillor Lewanski, then gave an overview of the Council's Revenue and Capital Budget position and report for Quarter 3 to 31 December 2023. This included an update on the quarter's treasury management activities.



**Revenue Budget** – at Quarter 3, the projected full year outturn is £21.847m against a management budget of £23.194m, resulting in a forecast underspend for the year of £1.347m (or 5.8%). Details of the more significant budget variants were set out in Annex 2. Services are forecast to be underspent at year end by £0.050m and Central Services are forecast to be underspend by £1.247m, with the main element in Treasury Management budgets of £1.297m under due to positive cash flow and favourable interest rates.

Annex 2 also includes the latest forecast for funding and spending to support Ukrainian refugees. A significant balance of forward-funding received from Surrey County Council was shown which anticipated ongoing demand for support over the coming 18 months following the recent announcement of the extension of the existing funding schemes.

It was noted that the new Annex 6 (as discussed earlier) had been included which showed the homelessness caseload information and the forecast impact on the budget should numbers increase.

**Capital Programme** – the forecast of £18.470m is 49% below the approved Capital Programme for the year of £36.033m. This variance is predominantly a result of £17.5m of capital slippage with details set out in Annex 3. This annex also includes forecasts for this year's expenditure on The Rise development at Marketfield Way, Redhill, which follows approval of the final capital programme allocation to complete the development by Council in February. Annex 3 also highlights the contribution of Strategic CIL Funding to delivery of the capital programme.

**Treasury Management** – Annex 5.1 confirms that treasury activities are in line with the Strategy that Council approved in June last year. The return on the Council's investments and treasury activities continues to outperform similar authorities and this is a key factor contributing to the favourable revenue budget outturn forecasts.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee had submitted Advance Questions before this item was discussed at the meeting on 14 March 2024. The draft O&S Minute of the item had been published as an Addendum to the Executive agenda earlier in the week.

There were no further comments from Executive Members.

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, noted that the quarter 3 performance as noted on the Revenue Budget was very satisfactory with favourable treasury rates and funding. The Committee had spent more time looking at the Capital Programme. There had been questions about the Marketfield Way development, property and facilities budgets, Horley Business Park, Horley underpass refurbishment and Merstham recreation ground. He had discussed the presentation of the monthly dashboards with the Chief Finance Officer.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive:**

- i) **Notes the Key Performance Indicators for Q3 2023/24 as detailed in the report and Annex 1.**
- ii) **Approves the Key Performance Indicators to be reported on in 2024/25 as detailed in Annex 1.1.**

- iii) **Notes the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme forecasts for Q3 2023/24 as detailed in the report and Annexes 2, 3 and 4;**
- iv) **Notes the Q3 Treasury Management Performance and Prudential Indicator Updates for 2023/24 at Annex 5; and**
- v) **Notes the update on risks relating to Homelessness at Annex 6.**

## **75. DEBT WRITE OFF 2023/24**

The Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Organisation, Councillor Lewanski, introduced the Debt Write Off & Recovery 2023/24 report which recommended the write-off of 9 debts valued at £206,919.56.

The circumstances surrounding each debt were set out in the report and Councillor Lewanski reassured Members that all possible recovery action had been taken in each of these cases. The Council takes debt recovery very seriously and works with a company or individual if they get into difficulty to make every effort to conclude the matter. The Council will always use all tools that the law allows to recover a debt until it becomes impossible, unlawful or uneconomic to do so.

The Council Tax or Business Rates debts are only a fraction of the total amount as the Council only retains less than one-twelfth of the income from each Council Tax bill. Of the £51.7m of Business Rates collected each year, the Council only keeps around £2.5m.

The write-off is essentially an accounting process to protect the Council against misstatement of the accounts. In all cases – and in line with Council policy – write-off is recommended only when all possible avenues have been exhausted. If further information is received or if the circumstances surrounding a debt change, then it will be pursued again.

The write-off represent less than one per cent of the Council's annual budget and the local authority remains a high performing Council when it comes to debt recovery, with a record that makes Reigate and Banstead Borough Council one of the best in the country.

The Leader and Members passed on their thanks to the Head of Revenue, Benefits and Fraud, Simon Rosser, and his team who were held in very high regard for the efficiency with which Council Tax is collected. This collection rate was much higher than other local authorities and it was one of the best teams in the country.

A Visiting Member asked for clarification of the circumstances whereby the Council is owed money on business rates from a firm that was based in Hong Kong. Officers confirmed that the company was operating in the borough at the time when the debt arose.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive approves:**

**(i) That nine irrecoverable debts totalling £206,919.56 (Annex 1) be written out of the Council's accounts.**

## 76. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25

The Executive Member for Finance, Governance and Organisation, Councillor Lewanski, introduced the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 for the coming year. The Strategy comprises of three sections:

- (i) The **Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS)** – this sets out details of the Council’s ‘traditional’ treasury management activities such as sources of borrowing and investment counterparties and limits.

In response to an Advance Question raised by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, he confirmed that the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) that is reported in the Quarter 3 monitoring report that Members considered at Agenda Item 8, was originally prepared in March last year when the 2023/24 Treasury Strategy was drafted. These CFR forecasts were recently updated when preparing the Strategy to reflect the capital programme outturn position for 2022/23 and 2023/24 and updated forecasts for capital expenditure and financing over the medium term.

The two separate snapshots were therefore the 2022/23 balances and forecasts in the quarterly performance report to monitor the current year’s treasury position and the updated 2024/25 forecasts in the Strategy report which will be used to monitor next year’s treasury activity.

Another factor to note was the £40m capital receipt last summer from sale of accommodation units at The Rise which has a beneficial impact on the Council’s underlying investment balances and borrowing requirement.

- (ii) The **Investment Strategy** – this covers the Council’s investments and a summary of those made for service or commercial reasons. It confirms that provision has already been made, funded through a call on the Commercial Risks Reserve in previous years, for expected credit losses, relating to company loans and shareholdings.
- (iii) The **Capital Strategy** – this outlines the Council’s capital expenditure plans and core borrowing (internal or external) and investing activities. It includes the Prudential Indicators that the Council is required to report under CIPFA’s Code of Practice.

One ongoing area of uncertainty related to the outcome of the latest consultation on changes to how the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is calculated and accounted for. If there are changes, this will need to be reflected through updates to the MRP Policy which was attached as an annex to the Strategy.

There were no further comments from Executive Members.

Councillor Harrison, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, thanked the Committee Members who attended the briefing session with the Council’s Treasury Advisors (Arlingclose) and the Chief Finance Officer on 5 March 2024 which covered background to treasury management in local government and the

underlying drivers for the 2024/25 Strategy. Councillor Harrison observed that he was heartened by the very pertinent questions from Members.

The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that written answers would be provided.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive RECOMMEND to Council to approve the following:**

- **Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25;**
- **Investment Strategy 2024/25; and**
- **Capital Strategy 2024/25.**

**77. APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF BANSTEAD COMMONS CONSERVATORS (2024)**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Councillor Moses, introduced the report into the appointments to the Board of Banstead Commons Conservators. The Conservators maintain and protect the integrity of the Banstead Commons, a strategic part of the green belt in Reigate and Banstead.

The terms of two Conservators, Mr V W Broad and Mr J C Mill conclude in May this year. The Portfolio Holder thanked both for their service. Both candidates have renominated themselves to the vacant positions. Ms K Farmer also nominated herself to one of the conservator positions which are for a period of 3 years.

Banstead Commons Conservators have recommended that Mr V W Broad and Mr J C Mill be reappointed due to their wealth of knowledge on Banstead Commons and common land legislation and to ensure continuity.

The Executive went into exempt Part 2 session to consider the CVs of the three candidates which were published as an exempt annex.

Following a return to the public session, it was agreed that:

**RESOLVED – that the Executive:**

- (i) **Considers each of the nominations to the Banstead Commons Conservators and elects two Conservators for the period April 2024 to March 2027 – Mr V W Broad and Mr J C Mill until March 2028.**

**78. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROPOSED ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

The Leader, Councillor Biggs, introduced the draft Overview and Scrutiny Proposed Annual Work Programme 2024/25 report and Annex 1.

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison, told the Executive that much of the business carries on from year to year. There were three items which had been carried forward from previous years which the Committee hoped would be discussed this coming year. There had been a suggestion from Committee Members to scrutinise wastewater. He would work with the Managing Director as to how to go about this as a topic of interest. It was noted that the scope of the reviews would need to be set which the Committee would do.

The Leader, Councillor Biggs, thanked the Chair, Councillor Harrison, and the Committee Members for their work throughout the year. It was a busy programme, and the meetings were full, but the Committee was always insightful and useful. This was a benefit to the work of the Council. The Leader thanked the Committee for its work.

A Visiting Member commented that it was important that the Committee reviewed the carry over items and scrutinise these topics. Both leisure and greenspaces were vital issues, and it was a real benefit to residents to be able to scrutinise the work.

Councillor Harrison noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was ready and willing to review these topics, when the Executive and officers had plans which were available for scrutiny.

**RESOLVED – that the Executive RECOMMEND to Council:**

- (i) **To agree the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2024/25 as set out at Annex 1 and detailed in the report be approved.**

#### **79. STATEMENTS**

There were no Statements given by the Leader, Executive Members or the Managing Director.

#### **80. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

**RESOLVED – that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that:**

- (i) **It involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; and**
- (ii) **The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.**

The Executive Members considered the three CVs of the three candidates nominating themselves for the position of a Banstead Commons Conservator. The Executive then returned to the public session to agree and approve the two nominations.

#### **81. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business to discuss at the meeting.

The Meeting closed at 9.05 pm