

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held at the **New Council Chamber – Town Hall, Reigate** on **Thursday, 29 July 2021 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Councillors R. S. Turner (Deputy Mayor), T. Schofield (Deputy Leader), R. H. Ashford, R. Biggs, P. Chandler, J. C. S. Essex, N. D. Harrison, S. A. Kulka, V. H. Lewanski, S. Parnall and C. Stevens

Participated remotely: Councillors G. Adamson, J. Baker, M. S. Blacker, J. Booton, G. Buttironi, Z. Cooper, M. Elbourne, R. J. Feeney, P. Harp, R. Harper, J. Hudson, E. Humphreys, J. P. King, A. M. Lynch, S. McKenna, R. Michalowski, N. C. Moses, C. M. Neame, R. Ritter, K. Sachdeva, S. Sinden, M. Tary, D. Torra, S. T. Walsh and C. T. H. Whinney



15 Minutes

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

16 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Archer, N. Bramhall A. Horwood, A. King and J. Philpott.

17 Declarations of interest

There were none.

18 Urgent business

There was none.

19 Public questions

Mr Mick Hay asked a question about Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Military Veterans in Reigate and Banstead. A response was given by Councillor Mark Brunt, Leader of the Council, 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>

20 Questions by Members

Eight questions on notice were asked, and responses given, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.15.

| Question by | Response by | Subject |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Cllr Torra | Executive Member for Finance, Cllr Tony Schofield | Cutting of Hedges and Trees |
| Cllr Harrison | Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, Cllr Biggs | Build Back Better High Streets |
| Cllr Essex | The Leader of the Council, Cllr Brunt | Nuclear Non-Proliferation |
| Cllr Booton | The Leader of the Council, Cllr Brunt | Engaging with residents on Greenspaces |
| Cllr Sinden | Executive Member for Community Partnerships, Cllr Ashford | Support for Long Covid Sufferers |
| Cllr Harp | Executive Member for Finance, Cllr Tony Schofield | Mowing of Grass Verges |
| Cllr Chandler | Executive Member for Planning Policy and Place Delivery, Cllr Biggs | Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan LTP4 for Consultation |
| Cllr Ritter | The Leader of the Council, Cllr Brunt | Review of Redhill and Earlswood Common Management Plans |

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=13264>

21 Recommendations

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive, from its meeting on 24 June 2021 (Minute 6), be adopted.

There were no recommendations arising from the Executive meeting of 22 July 2021.

22 Report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances for 2021/22

The Director of Place introduced the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), which set out proposals on the Members Allowances

Scheme for 2021/22. The IRP's report contained 22 recommendations for Council to consider, as detailed on pages 3 and 4 of Annex 1 to the covering report.

The IRP recommended that adopted changes apply from 1 April 2021, with applicable elements applied retrospectively back to this date, apart from changes to the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's Allowances, which would apply from the day after Annual Council (28 May 2021).

Councillor Harrison moved and Councillor Essex seconded a motion to defer the item until the next meeting of the Council, to allow all Members to attend in person and participate in the vote, however upon a vote the motion to defer was not carried.

A Notice of Amendment to the recommendations was published in the addendum, which proposed a freeze to Members' allowances listed under recommendations 1 – 8 and 10 – 14. Councillor Brunt moved and Cllr Schofield seconded a motion to adopt the amended recommendations and it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The amended recommendations, as within the Notice of Amendment, be adopted.
2. That the Interim Head of Paid Service be authorised to make any necessary changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2021/22 (approved under Recommendation 1 above) arising from any amendment or non-adoption of the IRP's recommendations.
3. That the effective date of any changes for all allowances, except for the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's allowances, is 1 April 2021, and that the effective date of any changes relating to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's allowances is 28 May 2021.
4. That the IRP be thanked for its report.

Clerk's note: The allowance under Recommendation 1 was incorrectly reported as £5680. The correct figure for 2020/21 was £5670. As the intention of adopted recommendations under the Notice of Amendment was to freeze the basic allowance at the 2020/21 rate, the correct 2020/21 rate of £5670 will be applied for the 2021/22 municipal year.

23 Designation of Monitoring Officer

The Director of Place introduced the item. In accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council has a duty to designate one of its Officers as Monitoring Officer.

Article 4.2.10 of the Council's constitution sets designation of statutory officers as a function of the Full Council. Annex 1 to procedure rule 9 of the constitution states that designation of the existing officers is a matter for Full Council.

Members of the Employment Committee had been consulted informally on the proposed designation on 22nd July 2021. Members of the Executive were notified of the proposed designation in accordance with Procedure Rule 9.8 and no objections were made.

Councillor Brunt moved and Councillor Schofield seconded the recommendation and upon a vote it was **RESOLVED** to designate Joyce Hamilton, Head of Legal and Governance, as the Monitoring Officer.

24 Statements

There were no statements.

25 Motion: Climate change

A Notice of Alteration was published in the addendum. In accordance with Procedure Rule 2.19.18, Members agreed to the alteration to the motion.

Councillor Chandler moved the altered motion and in doing so called for greater collaboration between local and national governments to respond to the challenges of climate change and urged the Council to support the motion, citing:

- the Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2020;
- a recent resolution by the Local Government Association General Assembly in respect of climate change, which this motion was aligned with; and,
- a report by the National Audit Office which made recommendations about the role of local authorities in delivering the UK's net zero target, and the funding and collaboration required to achieve it.

Councillor Essex seconded the altered motion on behalf of Councillor Ritter, who wasn't able to attend in person (in accordance with procedure rule 2.19.2).

Members discussed the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2020 and other initiatives to drive the Council's climate change agenda, such as:

- the formation of a cross-party Environmental Sustainability Working Group;
- a joint initiative with Surrey County Council to purchase solar panels for residents living in the borough;
- tree planting workshops;
- converting the Council's transport fleet to electric vehicles; and,
- engaging with young people living in the borough to encourage their participation in the Council's climate change initiatives.

Members acknowledged the scale of the challenge, the important role of local government, the need for greater collaboration with partners, and highlighted the need for additional funding and regulation to deliver the net zero target.

RESOLVED to:

1. In this year of the COP26 climate conference, add our voice to calls by the Local Government Association, and write to Alok Sharma MP asking for national government to ensure the adequate representation of local government at COP26, in order to promote the significant contribution, leadership and efforts of local councils in reducing carbon emissions across the UK, and to champion the innovative and rapid progress being made at a local level to tackle climate change; and,
2. write to the Prime Minister, Alok Sharma MP, President for COP26, Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government and the Leadership Board of the LGA and the informing them of:
 - i. Our view that better partnership working between Government and Local Authorities is required to adequately respond to the climate challenge;

- ii. Our support for a joint Local/National Government Climate Change Partnership Taskforce, as previously advocated by the LGA and asking for one to be established as soon as possible; and
- iii. Our commitment to engaging constructively in such partnership working to deliver both national and local net zero targets and if possible increase our local ambition as a result of establishing appropriate regulations, benchmarks and targets and establishing long-term funding mechanisms.

26 Motion: Open and transparent public consultation in development management

Councillor Brunt moved a motion which asked the Council to resolve to support the role of open and transparent consultation in development management and the determination of planning applications, in light of recent proposals to reform the National Planning Policy Framework.

Councillor Schofield seconded.

Members highlighted the importance of:

- consultation in ensuring planning decisions reflect the character and needs of local communities and in shaping better developments;
- the role of the local planning authority in making decisions which consider the views of residents; and, the role of the planning inspectorate in regulating those decisions;

There was further discussion about:

- the challenges of meeting housing targets, including affordable housing, in balance with the views of the local community and the conservation of greenspaces;
- the impact of proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and the current impact of permitted development rights;
- the role of Neighbourhood Plans as a supplementary tool for reflecting the views of local communities and managing developments in the borough. In view of this, it was noted that the Council was already working with residents to progress early proposals for Neighbourhood Plans in the borough;
- The role of parish and town council planning authorities in supplementing the planning authority at the borough level.

RESOLVED that the Council believes the Development Management and planning system works best for residents when developers and the local community work together to shape the future of their local areas and deliver necessary new homes and related infrastructure; it is therefore essential that the rights of residents and their communities to be able to engage fully, transparently and easily in the planning process by: the full use of digital technology; participation in the making of neighbourhood plans; and maintaining the right to object, support and be consulted on all individual planning applications.

27 Motion: Roll-out of recycling

Councillor Essex moved a motion which called on the Council to accelerate the roll-out of the Council's recycling service to residents living in flats and communal properties.

Councillor Chandler seconded the motion on behalf of Councillor Torra, who wasn't able to attend in person (in accordance with procedure rule 2.19.2).

In accordance with Procedure Rule 2.17.3, the Motion was referred to the Executive for consideration.

28 Leader's announcements

The Leader referred to the recently announced 'County deals letter' that the Council received from the Secretary of State, concerning the Government's devolution proposals, and expressed a desire for clarification of the matters raised in that letter in a forthcoming white paper to be put to Parliament.

29 Mayor's announcements

Eschweiler flooding

The Mayor had been in contact with the Mayor of Eschweiler and the town's twinning association about the devastation caused by recent flooding in Germany. The Council's twin town Eschweiler was one of the areas that had been badly affected, and the Mayor welcomed donations to support their recovery.

Civic Service

The Mayor gave thanks to all those who attended her Civic Service; and, to Chaplain Rev Des Williamson and his staff at St Mark's Church in Tattenhams for hosting the event.

Armed Forces Day

The Mayor gave thanks to Flight Lieutenant Andrew Forrester, Sea Cadet Hannah Scoullar, trumpeter Gordon Kelly, Vic Gellett from the Reigate Naval Association and to the Banstead Royal British Legion's Standard bearer Allan Parsons for their assistance in commemorating the Armed Forces at a flag raising ceremony in Memorial Park in Redhill.

NHS, Social Care and Key workers Day

The Mayor gave thanks to the volunteers, NHS staff and key workers for their support to residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, following a recent NHS, Social Care and Key Workers Day event at the Reigate Castle grounds which was attended by doctors, nurses and NHS staff from hospitals and vaccination hubs in the borough.

Reigate & Banstead Volunteer Awards

Nominations for the Volunteer Awards had recently closed, and the winners had been shortlisted.

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To shine a light on individuals who had supported others during the COVID-19 pandemic, a new 'Crisis Response Volunteer' category had been introduced.

Nominees would be contacted over the coming weeks to invite them to a special ceremony on Tuesday 21st September at the Harlequin Theatre.

Heritage Open Day

Heritage Open Day was scheduled to take place on Saturday 11th September, when the Town Hall would be open to the public as part of a national event allowing free access to historic buildings.

Guests would be given the opportunity to pre-book tours and could see the history of the Town Hall. Further details on booking a tour were available from the Mayor's Office.

Mayor's Charities

Age Concern Banstead was running a Family Walk and Treasure Trail on Sunday 15th August 2.30 to 4.30pm. Tickets could be purchased by contacting Age Concern Banstead via email or phone.

Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor outlined the events and engagements which had taken place since she had taken office and invited councillors to attend forthcoming events, which would be circulated to them via email by the Mayor's Office.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting of Full Council was scheduled at 19:30 p.m. on Thursday 23rd September.

The meeting finished at 9.28 pm