

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Meeting of Council 20 July 2023

Questions by Members

Verbal responses to be given at the meeting			
	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
1.	Councillor Dwight	Councillor Biggs, Leader of the Council	Changes to rail ticket offices
2.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Biggs, Leader of the Council	Changes to rail ticket offices
3.	Councillor Sinden	Councillor (Andrew) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets	Park pavilions and toilets
4.	Councillor Khan	Councillor Ashford, Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture	Community bus service
5.	Councillor Cooper	Councillor Ashford, Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture	Financial support for the rising cost of living
6.	Councillor Torra	Councillor Moses, Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Single use plastics
7.	Councillor Chandler	Councillor Lewanski, Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Finance, Governance & Organisation	Ethical procurement
8.	Councillor Thorne	Councillor Neame, Executive Member for Housing & Support	Asylum seekers
9.	Councillor Proudfoot	Councillor Michalowski, Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Biodiversity Net Gain
10.	Councillor Chester	Councillor Michalowski, Executive Member for	Gatwick Airport Development Consent Order

		Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	
11.	Councillor Kelly	Councillor Michalowski, Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Merstham Recreation Ground renovation
Written responses to be given after the meeting			
12.	Councillor Booton	Councillor Biggs, Leader of the Council	Climate Emergency
13.	Councillor Ritter	Councillor Avery, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Garden Waste
14.	Councillor Kelly	Councillor Avery, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Recycling bus
15.	Councillor McKenna	Councillor Michalowski, Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Permitted Development Rights
16.	Councillor Khan	Councillor Michalowski, Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Permitted Development Rights

Councillor Dwight will ask the **Leader of the Council, Councillor Biggs**, the following question:

Question 1: Changes to rail ticket offices

Please will the Leader of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council write to the Minister of State for Rail, Huw Merriman MP, to ensure proposed changes to ticket offices across our Borough do not disadvantage local rail users, particularly the young, the elderly and those with disabilities.

Councillor Essex will ask the **Leader of the Council, Councillor Biggs**, the following question:

Question 2: Changes to rail ticket offices

Please confirm whether, and if so how, the Council will challenge plans to close every ticket office in the borough.

Councillor Sinden will ask the **Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets, Councillor (Andrew) King**, the following question:

Question 3: Park pavilions and toilets

Please could the Council provide an update on the dates for reopening the pavilions and toilets in the council's three parks - Lady Neville, Memorial and Priory parks - and any refurbishments required to make this happen as these are so important to our residents. Thank you.

Councillor Khan will ask the **Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture, Councillor Ashford**, the following question:

Question 4: Community bus service

The neighbouring borough Councils of Epsom and Ewell, Tandridge and Mole Valley have a community bus service operation in place. Why doesn't Reigate and Banstead Council?

Councillor Cooper will ask the **Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture, Councillor Ashford**, the following question:

Question 5: Financial support for the rising cost of living

With the rising cost of living, I would like to ask what financial support we are putting in place, if any, to assist families who are struggling to help get them through the coming winter months.

Councillor Torra will ask the **Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability, Councillor Moses**, the following question:

Question 6: Single use plastics

The UK Government published its 25-Year Environment Plan in January 2018, which includes a target of “achieving zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042”. Similarly, DEFRA’s new waste and resources strategy 2018/9 also sets out a number of plastic waste reduction reforms to help the Government achieve its ambitious plans for a greener future. These include proposals for further financial incentives to change consumer habits and greater responsibilities for retailers and manufacturers, such as handling the cost of treatment or disposal of their products at the end of their lifecycle and eco-friendly product design. In light of this, and the Council’s existing commitment to eliminate avoidable single use plastics, what action can and will we take against the sale of single use vapes which are now being sold in various outlets around the borough including a dedicated vape stand at the front of the Belfry shopping centre in Redhill?

Councillor Chandler will ask the **Executive Member for Finance, Governance & Regulatory Services, Councillor Lewanski**, the following question:

Question 7: Ethical procurement

In light of media reports of Shell:

1. Withdrawing from renewable energy as their CEO focuses the company's investments on fossil fuels in a bid to increase shareholder returns
2. Producing biogas from livestock manure and crops like maize which is an environmentally unsustainable strategy
3. Failing on pledges to reduce natural gas contracts with Russia

We find that Shell is being used by the Council to supply electricity and gas for the next two years.

Does the Council have clear criteria on ethical procurement in order to use suppliers with the best environmental, ecological and sustainable credentials?

Councillor Thorne will ask the **Executive Member for Housing & Support, Councillor Neame**, the following question:

Question 8: Asylum seekers

Please can the Executive Member report on the number of asylum seekers currently housed in the Reigate & Banstead Borough and what the Council is doing to support these asylum seekers and the communities within which they live.

Councillor Proudfoot will ask the **Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services, Councillor Michalowski**, the following question:

Question 9: Biodiversity Net Gain

Please can the Executive Member provide an update on the Council's plans to have policies in place before the Government introduces the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain this autumn and commit to following the lead of other Councils in setting a higher minimum such as the 20% biodiversity net gain now embedded in the planning guidance elsewhere.

Councillor Chester will ask the **Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services, Councillor Michalowski**, the following question:

Question 10: Gatwick Airport Development Consent Order

On Monday 3 July, Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build a second runway in place of the emergency runway at Gatwick Airport. Will the Council now write to the Government requesting that the DCO submitted by GAL is not accepted on the following grounds: 1. recent advice (June 2023) from its own Committee on Climate Change against 'any further airport expansions in the UK until the Government has developed a capacity management framework for aviation' and 2. inadequacy of consultation following GAL's failure to provide correct data on climate costs, economic benefits and local impacts, or deliver effective public engagement, particularly with respect to Horley residents?

Councillor Kelly will ask the **Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services, Councillor Michalowski**, the following question:

Question 11: Merstham Recreation Group Renovation

With the recent excellent news that the long-awaited renovation of Merstham Rec can go ahead following it not being called-in by the Secretary of State, can I get an update as a ward councillor and a local resident on where we are at present and the timeline going forward. Also, what are the issues that have delayed the works commencing, and how are we involving local residents and groups at all stages of the process.

WRITTEN RESPONSES TO BE PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING

Councillor Booton will ask the **Leader of the Council, Councillor Biggs**, the following question:

Question 12: Climate Emergency

This last week the continuing and worsening climate emergency is clear for all to see, with record temperatures and flooding worldwide. However, the previous political leadership of this Council has refused to declare a climate emergency despite the overwhelming scientific evidence. This contrasts with our six neighbouring councils and the County Council who have all declared a Climate Emergency. As the new Leader of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, who has also created a new Executive post for Environment and Sustainability, will you publicly commit that this Council, joins others in publicly declaring that we face a climate emergency and ensure we respond to this with the urgency required?

Councillor Ritter will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Avery**, the following question:

Question 13: Garden Waste

Could this Council consider community garden waste bins in areas where residents are struggling to afford one to ensure that residents' garden waste is not placed in the bottom of their general waste bin?

Councillor Kelly will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Avery**, the following question:

Question 14: Recycling bus

Do we have an update on where the recycling bus is that for many years was parked at the Town Hall after it visited many areas of the borough. Is it out of commission, or will we see it again in the future?

Councillor McKenna will ask the **Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services, Councillor Michalowski**, the following question:

Question 15: Permitted Development Rights

Please can you confirm the number of homes that have been created through permitted development rights conversion in the last three financial years, the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy that the Council would have earned and the number of these which would have been required to have been affordable homes if these had instead been granted via planning permission.

Councillor Khan will ask the **Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services, Councillor Michalowski**, the following question:

Question 16: Permitted Development Rights

A whole parade of shops, and the flats above them in Nutfield Road, Merstham, which includes Sparkle Launderette and The Oriental, is up for sale. The vendor is selling on the basis that all the retail units are, in all but name, residential units, and none of them are required to be affordable homes. Other Councils have realised that Permitted Development Rights have a harmful and negative impact on a key shopping areas and increased the number of locations with an 'Article 4 Direction' to protect shops. Will this council apply an 'Article 4 Direction' on the three shops that are still to be granted automatic change of use?