

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

Meeting of Council 30 November 2023

Questions by Members

Verbal responses to be given at the meeting			
	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
1.	Councillor McKenna	Councillor (A) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets	Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC)
2.	Councillor Smith	Councillor (A) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets	Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC)
3.	Councillor Sachdeva	Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing Support	Homelessness
4.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing Support	Right to Buy
5.	Councillor Sinden	Councillor Ashford, the Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture	Safer Streets funding
6.	Councillor Booton	Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Replacement of felled trees
7.	Councillor Proudfoot	Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Greenspaces management plans
8.	Councillor Ritter	Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Biodiversity obligations
9.	Councillor Chandler	Councillor Avery, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Litter bin requests
10.	Councillor Khan	Councillor Michalowski, the Executive Member for	Permitted Development Rights

		Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	
11.	Councillor Tora	Councillor Michalowski, the Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Licensing obligations
Written responses to be given after the meeting			
12.	Councillor Khan	Councillor Ashford, the Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture	Youth Work

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

Question 1: Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete

Can the Executive Member confirm whether all our public buildings across Reigate and Banstead have been or are being checked for the presence of Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC) - both Council owned as well as other public buildings including East Surrey Hospital and schools, and in the case of the Council's known building with RAAC, the Harlequin, provide an update as to the progress to date with the surveys and when this building might re-open depending on the best and worst case scenarios.

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

Question 2: Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete

The Harlequin Theatre is a real jewel in the Crown for the residents across the Borough, it channels business and footfall through the town centre and is a place for people of every age group to join together and laugh, cry and have their five minutes of fame.

It is with great sadness that The Harlequin Theatre is temporarily closed but I also have great admiration for my old colleagues continuing to keep the dream alive and the show running while they negotiate the current issues. I'm certainly looking forward to seeing Beauty & the Beast in a big top in Memorial Park!

Following the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in The Harlequin Theatre and Redhill Library, strangely leaving one closed and the other open, would Councillor King please let the residents, visitors and businesses of Redhill know whether substantive checks for RAAC have now been performed on the rest of the building forming the Warwick Quadrant as they were all built at

the same time and whether any further cases of RAAC have been found in the complex and any other Council owned property in Redhill Town Centre?

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

Question 3: Homelessness

With the cold weather approaching fast, Could I ask what details we have about the street homeless that seem to be congregating in Redhill, and what are we as Council doing to alleviate the situation?

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

Question 4: Right to Buy

Please confirm the number of homes sold under Right to Buy in the borough for each of the last five years, how much receipts have been received from this where this money sits now?

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

Question 5: Safer Street funding

Following the award of nearly £1 million of Safer Streets funding for Redhill please can you confirm what the council, police and YMCA and other partners will each be doing differently and how long the project will last.

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

Question 6: Replacement of felled trees

When a tree is felled on Borough maintained land, what do we ensure as a council that we will do to replace such trees with at least one new one as close to the felled one as possible? And for historically felled trees where stumps remain, can we organise for a similar scheme to that which Surrey County Council are doing for land they maintain, whereby they are committing to replacing every tree stump with a new tree, inviting residents to add to an already existing map showing the location of previously felled trees, via their County Councillor?

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

Question 7: Greenspaces management plans

The Council has greenspaces which are required by government to have publicly available up-to-date management plans. However, Earlswood Common's management plan only runs to 2013, and there is no active management published for Redhill Common, New Pond Farm or Felland Copse and the management plan for Tanyard Meadows has now also lapsed. Please provide a full list of all council owned greenspaces and other Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) within the borough and for each confirm when public consultation on these plans will start and when new plans for each of these areas will be in place, or in the cases of areas that are not in Council ownership what enforcement action has been taken to ensure such plans are in place.

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

Question 8: Biodiversity obligations

In light of the government requirement for local councils to shape action plans to meet their biodiversity obligations by January 2024. Can the Executive member please give an update on progress this council is making towards the action plans supporting the biodiversity of the borough's green spaces?

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

Question 9: Litter bin requests

Several residents have questioned the lack of information given when a litter bin is requested. Does the council have a system to record the actions taken in relation to an online reported issue? Is it possible therefore to provide further information on the action taken or the reason for not completing a request in full and communicate this to the resident in addition to and I quote "the matter is now concluded and we have closed your report". For instance is there a policy relating to bins at bus stops or outside schools which can be explained.

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

Question 10: Permitted Development Rights

At September's full council meeting, this council unanimously resolved to identify where there is the potential for an Article 4 Direction to restrict Permitted Development Rights in the four town centres and 27 local centres. The first step requires the council to gather evidence through a new 'Retail Needs Survey'. Can the council update members on the progress of the new 'Retail Needs Survey'?

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

Question 11: Licensing applications

As residents, we are entitled to make a 'relevant representation' to a licensing application, which the Council will take into account when considering whether to grant the application and, if so, in what terms. However, residents are only made aware of these applications if they spot by chance an advert in say, the Surrey Mirror on a given day or read the license application that the applicant puts up outside their premises for 28 days.

In a recent case that has been brought to my attention, the Licensing Team were sent a photo of the blue licensing application announcement attached to a gate, and shown the advert posted on the same day in the local paper and on a website. Yet, from my understanding, no member of the licensing team visited the site to confirm the poster remained up for the full 28 days. It would appear that the application sign was not visible to residents and in the position that we believe it was placed, if still attached, would have been obscured for part of the day by workers vans.

In this case, the only knowledge of this application to some residents was the sign appearing attached to a fence a full month after the deadline date for representations. It is therefor disputed that the sign remained up for 28 days, Yet in challenging this, a resident would obviously need to know the sign was not there in the first place, in order to take a photo of the missing sign as evidence. A catch 22.

In light of this, how can councillors and residents sign up to be notified for licensing applications, just as they can for planning applications? And, in this era of falling local newspaper readership, what does the council consider as 'sufficient' advertising of a licensing application?

WRITTEN RESPONSES TO BE PROVIDED AFTER THE MEETING

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

Question 11: Youth Work

With regard to the S507B statutory duty, the National Youth Agency identifies nine 'essentials' to help local authorities evaluate whether local youth work offering complies with the duty. One of the aforementioned 'essentials' is a Needs Assessment that identifies gaps in the "provision of youth work in the community." If Reigate and Banstead council identifies areas where services are lacking, will it communicate this to the upper tier, namely Surrey County Council?