

Draft Minute from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2022

For consideration by Executive Members at Executive on 23 June 2022

Item 9 – Reigate & Banstead 2025 Annual Report 2021/22

Members received a report from Cllr M. Brunt, Leader of the Council, on the Reigate & Banstead 2025 Annual Report 2021/22.

The Reigate & Banstead 2025 Annual Report and the Equalities Objectives Progress Report are key tools to assess the Council's progress towards its corporate plan and equalities objectives. The plan had been adopted by the Council in January 2020 and this was the second year of its implementation. 2021/22 had been a year of both good progress and ongoing challenges for the Council. Key projects such as The Rise in Redhill and Camelia Close in Tadworth had either grown nearer to fruition or had been completed this year. The Council has also maintained consistent delivery of core services, despite the lingering disruption of the coronavirus pandemic and has improved its work with local partners to deliver support to local residents and communities.

Points to note included:

- The delivery of affordable housing at Tadworth and Redhill.
- YMCA housing for young people.
- Harlequin and Community centres.
- Support for vulnerable residents with support from Surrey County Council and NHS.
- Delivery of family support including refugee support.
- Progress on The Rise at Redhill, including a cinema and bowling alley.
- Development of Merstham Recreation Park and Horley Town Centre.
- Local businesses supported to recover from the pandemic.
- New business start-ups supported.
- Local people being connected to local jobs.
- High quality services delivered by Neighbourhood Services Team.
- Record local levels of recycling.
- Awards received for greenspaces.
- New commercial strategy.
- IT strategy.
- Work to deliver the £150 Council Tax rebate.

Challenges had included:

- Changes in services throughout the pandemic and changes in the prioritisation of services.
- Rising costs.
- Focus on financial sustainability.

Members thanked officers for the report and made the following comments and observations for the Executive for its meeting on 23 June.

Average resident income – Members asked why average employee earnings in the borough had decreased in the years 2012-2016 while average employee

income in other districts had risen and asked whether this indicated that residents in the borough are not well paid. It was confirmed that this is a complex indicator but that average earnings in the borough were above the national average.

Town Centre Audits – Members asked whether some of the smaller towns and villages could be considered for funded items that the larger towns received, such as painting, maintenance of park benches and Christmas decorations. It was explained that the audits had been externally funded and so scope was limited, however, the points raised would be considered. Local CIL funding can be used to make improvements, however, if something specific was required, this could be brought to the attention of the Portfolio Holder.

Clear and Effective Communication – Members asked whether communication from residents was received via email, phone calls or letters. It was confirmed that communication from residents was received via all three channels and that a written answer would be provided to members with more detail following the meeting.

Local Plan – Members asked whether the Local Plan up to 2027 could be presented with a timeline. The Leader explained that the Local Plan had been discussed at the recent Group Leaders meeting and that a plan will be prepared with timescales for review of the current Local Plan and to develop the new Local Plan.

Leisure and Wellbeing – Members noted that a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Facilities Strategy, and Leisure and Culture Strategy were in development and commented that all Councillors should be included in the consultation and development of new strategies relating to improvements in parks and greenspaces and other leisure developments. Consultation was requested at an early stage through the provision of workshops.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Members commented that Local CIL was working well but that workshops with officers would be helpful to understand needs and focus with the upcoming review of Strategic CIL. The Leader commented that some Strategic CIL bids had been disappointing and that there would be a review of Strategic CIL bids. Members were urged to consider options for strategic projects in their own wards.

Equalities Objectives – Members commented that the Council should investigate options with partners to improve equalities, such as rising prices and the availability of affordable housing. The Leader confirmed that the Council is working with the NHS and other partners to provide integrated delivery to help residents holistically, not just from the Council's perspective. It was confirmed that advice would be sought from the Head of Corporate Policy on including this in reporting.

Members asked the Director of Place, Luci Mould to pass on their thanks and congratulations to officers for driving the borough forward successfully through the recent difficult times.

RESOLVED that the Committee –

1) Notes the Reigate & Banstead 2025 Annual Report for 2021/22 and makes the observations set out in the Minutes for consideration by the Executive.

2) Notes the Equality Objectives Progress Report for 2021/22 and makes the observations set out in the Minutes for consideration by the Executive.