

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL5 December 2019 at 7.30 pmThe Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor P Sohi) in the chair.

Members of the Council present Councillors M Adams, A Alderson, D Anderson-Bassey, M Brierley, J Broadhead, T Burton, I Chaudhri, B Clarke, D Clarke D Cotty, M Cressey, S Dennett, R Edis, J Furey E Gill, L Gillham, J Gracey, T Gracey, M Harnden, M Heath, C Howorth, J Hulley, N King, R King, M Kusneraitis, S Lewis, S Mackay M Maddox, I Mullens, A Neathey, M Nuti, J Olorenshaw N Prescott, P Snow, J Sohi, P Sohi, S Walsh, D Whyte, S Whyte, M Willingale and J Wilson

Members of the Council absent: None

384 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Mayor read out the Fire Precautions.

385 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council noted the Mayoral announcements.

386 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 17 October 2019 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

387 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 13

a) The following question, as amended, was put to the Leader of the Council by Councillor Walsh:

“Can the Leader of the Council commit to supporting local residents in lobbying The Department for Transport, Highways Agency and Local MP in carrying out resurfacing work and noise reduction work on the M25 between Junctions 10 and 11; further that this work is needed for the health and well-being of the 48,000 residents living within a 3 kilometre border either side of the motorway; further that residents, children attending local schools and people who work in the area have been and are currently adversely affected by the ever increasing volume of traffic and continued deterioration of the original concrete surface; and acknowledges that an online petition for drivers and a paper petition for residents has collected a significant number of signatures calling for the resurfacing of the road.”

In response, the Leader of the Council agreed to use all measures available to him to lobby relevant Government agencies and the new MP for Runnymede and Weybridge on behalf of residents.

b) *The following question was put to the Leader of the Council by Councillor Neathey;*

“I obviously thank the Runnymede Foodbank for their work feeding people in need in Runnymede, especially in the run up to Christmas. However, does the Leader of the Council agree with me that the fact that 22,428 emergency meals were given out last year by the Foodbank in the borough is not a sign of the success of the Conservatives in office either locally or nationally?”

In response, the Leader of the Council commented that the presence of foodbanks was not something he wished to see, but he did not consider foodbanks were a reflection of the performance of the Conservative government. Unemployment both nationally and locally was low, although he acknowledged that Universal Credit had not been handled well at a national level. The Leader questioned the source and accuracy of the figure on emergency meals given by Councillor Neathey.

Councillor N King who had recently attended a foodbank gave a brief outline of their operation and expressed his appreciation of the work of the volunteers who manned the foodbanks. Food and valuable social support was provided to persons experiencing hardship some for only short- term periods. Cllr King did not wish to see their work politicised. Cllr King also pointed out that the number of meals given out was not representative of the number of persons helped, which was much lower.

Cllr Neathey commented that the figure of meals had been obtained from Foodbanks, and that poverty was a reason for presence of foodbanks and Runnymede had 6 deprived wards in the borough which included Egham Hythe and Englefield Green West.

The Leader of the Council commented that need existed across the region and a way to address it was to encourage economic growth at national and local levels. Cross party effort was required to reduce the number of foodbanks. The Leader of the Council would provide Cllr Burton with details of any financial assistance given by the Council to Foodbanks in the previous 12 months.

c) *The following question was put to the Leader of the Council by Councillor R King;*

“Given that Conservative Surrey County Council has decided to push ahead with the cuts to fire services, including those at Egham, despite the unanimous opposition from Councillors present when it was discussed and voted on in this chamber, what does the Leader of the Council think RBC’s next step should be in order to protect our residents from these fire service cuts?”

The Leader of the Council commented that there would be no reduction in the number of fire engines, no fire station closures or any firefighter redundancies. The impact of this proposal on response times, which had also been modelled and independently verified, would be insignificant. In terms of the Runnymede area specifically, the proposals meant a fire engine would be available at Egham fire station during the day (7am – 7pm) when it was known the risk was higher and the service was busier. From 7pm until 7am, if a fire engine was needed in the area, this would come from a neighbouring fire station. The Leader believed the impact of these changes was small and that residents would certainly be made safer because the increased prevention work would reduce the likelihood of emergencies happening in the first place. The Leader considered that any risks could be appropriately managed.

Concerns had been previously expressed to the Leader of Surrey CC and the relevant cabinet Member opposing reduction in service at Egham fire Station and reiterating concerns. Some Members felt that response times could be compromised and asked for this to be monitored.

The Leader confirmed he would monitor the impact of the proposed changes and incidences of night time fires and had also urged SCC to do the same.

The Deputy Leader confirmed that she had participated in many discussions on the matter and that she and the Leader of the Council would meet on 17 December with Dan Quin (Assistant Chief Fire Officer) and Sarah Kershaw (Chief of Staff) at Fire HQ in Reigate and Cabinet Member Denise Turner-Stewart to discuss the matter and would report back to Council Members.

388 **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR D. WHYTE - ALL COMMITTEE PAPERS TO INCLUDE AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AS A MATTER OF COURSE**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor D Whyte

- ***All documents greater than three pages will include an executive summary from the 1st January 2020.***
- ***Executive summaries will be no longer than one page.***

Some Members were supportive of the Motion as it would give Members an oversight of matters to be discussed at Committees of which they were not Members, would assist the public and provide greater transparency. However, some Members expressed reservations over the Motion as it could potentially lead to some Members only reading the executive summary and not reading the report in its entirety taking account of all relevant considerations. Some Members considered the existing synopsis and recommendation on agenda reports was sufficient.

Some Members commented that agenda reports of a non- technical nature might lend themselves to an 'Executive Summary' approach and this could be looked at further, possibly by one of the Member Working Groups.

Cllr Mackay had requested a named vote on the above Motion, and the voting was as follows:

For (16) Councillors Alderson, Brierley, Burton, B Clarke, Cressey, Gillham, Gill, Harnden, R King, Kusneriatis, Mackay, Mullens, Neathey, Olorenshaw, D Whyte and S Whyte.

Against (24) Councillors Adams, Broadhead, Chaudhri, D Clarke, Cotty, Dennett, Edis, Furey, J Gracey, T Gracey, Heath, Howorth, Hulley, N King, Lewis, Maddox, Nuti, Prescott, Snow, J Sohi, P Sohi, Walsh, Willingale and Wilson.

Abstention (1) Councillor Anderson-Bassey

The Motion was declared to be duly lost.

389 **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR HULLEY – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor J Hulley

The community of Englefield Green be congratulated on the establishment of the Englefield Green Village Neighbourhood Forum;

The Thorpe and Virginia Water Neighbourhood Forums are also to be congratulated on the work undertaken to date to develop Neighbourhood Plans for their designated Areas;

The Leader of the Council be requested to write to Resident Associations and Community Groups in the borough informing them of the Forums already established and to encourage them to establish Neighbourhood Forums and Plans of their own, where communities want them.

A majority of Members supported the Motion and acknowledged the benefits Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Plans could bring to residents in empowering them to shape their communities. However, concern was expressed by some Members over the capacity and resources of the Council to support the potential number of Neighbourhood Plans which could come forward and expectations could be raised with residents associations which could not be fulfilled owing to lack of these resources. It was also acknowledged that considerable work and commitment would be required of residents and Councillors in regard to Neighbourhood Planning.

An Amendment that the matter be remitted to Planning Committee and Corporate Management Committee to assess the potential resource implications associated with the future establishment of Neighbourhood Forums and Plans was lost.

Cllr Nuti had requested a named vote on the Motion, and the voting was as follows:

For (28) Councillors Adams, Anderson-Bassey, Brierley, Broadhead, Burton, Chaudhri, D Clarke, Cotty, Dennett, Edis, Furey, Gill, J Gracey, T Gracey, Heath, Howorth, Hulley, N King, Lewis, Maddox, Nuti, Prescott, Snow, J Sohi, P Sohi, Walsh, Willingale and Wilson.

Against (11) Councillors Alderson, B Clarke, Cressey, Gillham, Harnden, R King, Kusneraitis, Mullens, Neathey, D Whyte and S Whyte.

Abstentions (2) Councillors Mackay and Olorenshaw

The Motion was duly passed and it was:

RESOLVED that-

- i) The community of Englefield Green be congratulated on the establishment of the Englefield Green Village Neighbourhood Forum;*
- ii) The Thorpe and Virginia Water Neighbourhood Forums are also to be congratulated on the work undertaken to date to develop Neighbourhood Plans for their designated Areas;*
- iii) The Leader of the Council be requested to write to Resident Associations and community Groups in the borough informing them of the Forums already established and to encourage them to establish Neighbourhood Forums and Plans of their own, where communities want them*

390 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR NEATHEY- MODERN SLAVERY CHARTER

The following Motion was moved by Councillor Neathey

1. The Corporate Management Committee review the Co-operative Party's Charter Against Modern Slavery and form a report and recommendation for full council. This report should consider the merit of adopting the charter and any other additional policies to tackle modern slavery in Runnymede.

2. If the Corporate Management Committee deems it necessary, then each service committee should conduct a review of their current suppliers to ensure that modern slavery is not part of our current supply chain.

3. The Co-operative Party Charter Against Modern Slavery is as follows [Runnymede Borough Council] will:

- A. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.***

- B. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.**
- C. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.**
- D. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.**
- E. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.**
- F. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.**
- G. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.**
- H. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.**
- I. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.**
- J. Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.**

All Members agreed that slavery had no place in modern society and was totally unacceptable. The Leader of the Council made reference to future consideration of adoption of the SCC Anti-Slavery Policy. **The Motion was passed subject to an addition to investigate how victims of modern slavery could be supported.**

It was:

RESOLVED that

- 1. The Corporate Management Committee review the Co-operative Party's Charter Against Modern Slavery and form a report and recommendation for full council. This report should consider the merit of adopting the charter and any other additional policies to tackle modern slavery in Runnymede and investigate how victims of modern slavery could be supported.**
- 2. If the Corporate Management Committee deems it necessary, then each service committee should conduct a review of their current suppliers to ensure that modern slavery is not part of our current supply chain.**
- 3. The Co-operative Party Charter Against Modern Slavery is as follows [Runnymede Borough Council] will:**
 - A. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.**
 - B. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.**
 - C. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.**
 - D. Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.**
 - E. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.**
 - F. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.**
 - G. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.**
 - H. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.**
 - I. Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.**
 - J. Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.**

391 **MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR R KING- BECOMING A REAL LIVING WAGE EMPLOYER**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor R King:

The Corporate Management Committee, in consultation with the HR Working Group, review and form a report and recommendation for full council. This report should consider the following plan of action:

- 1. To raise all employees to a real London Living Wage within 3 years (taking account of any further rises in either the Minimum Wage, the National Living Wage or the Real Living Wage.)***
 - a. The above subject to a consultation with Unison***
- 1. Integrate Living Wage requirements into our procurement process at the next procurement strategy review.***
- 3. Once these and any other requirements have been met, become a fully accredited Living Wage provider.***

The Chairman of the HR Member Working Group confirmed that the Working Group would be looking at the lower end of pay scales and that the Real Living Wage would be addressed as part of the review of the overall pay strategy.

An amendment to the first sentence of the Motion was moved and seconded that the issue of the Real living Wage for all RBC staff be considered as part of the overall pay strategy review by HRMWG and Corporate Management Committee for eventual submission to Full council.

The amendment was passed and it was:

RESOLVED that-

The issue of the Real Living Wage for all RBC staff be considered as part of the overall Pay Strategy review by HRMWG and Corporate Management Committee, and subsequent submission to Full Council. This report should consider the following plan of action:

- 1. To raise all employees to a real London Living Wage within 3 years (taking account of any further rises in either the Minimum Wage, the National Living Wage or the Real Living Wage.)***
 - a. The above subject to a consultation with Unison***
- 2. Integrate Living Wage requirements into our procurement process at the next procurement strategy review.***
- 3. Once these and any other requirements have been met, become a fully accredited Living Wage provider.***

CLlr R King had requested a named vote on the above substantive Motion, as amended, and the voting was as follows:

For (38) Councillors Adams, Alderson, Brierley, Burton, Chaudhri, B Clarke, D Clarke, Cotty, Cressey, Dennett, Edis, Furey, Gillham, Gill, J Gracey, T Gracey, Harnden, Heath, Howorth, Hulley, N King, R King, Kusneraitis, Lewis, Mackay, Maddox, Mullens, Neathey, Nuti, Prescott, Snow, J Sohi, P Sohi, Walsh, D Whyte, S Whyte, Willingale and Wilson.

Against (1) Councillor Broadhead

Abstentions (2) Councillors Anderson- Bassey and Olorenshaw

392 RUNNYMEDE COUNCIL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION – CO-OPTION

Council considered the co-option of the Chair of the Runnymede Council Residents' Association (RCRA) as a non-voting member of Housing Committee, for purposes affecting Council housing tenants.

The RCRA had been in existence since the Stock Options Appraisal exercise, formed from an amalgamation of the old Tenants' Service Group and the then newly formed group of residents that took part in the stock options consultation.

The RCRA had a formal constitution and appointed Officers, including a Chairman. Mrs Jenny Hill had been the Chair of the RCRA since its inception and had worked tirelessly in promoting residents' views on all matters of Council policy and procedures. As the Chair of the RCRA she –

- i) attended meetings of the Housing Committee,
- ii) organised and attended all meetings of the RCRA,
- iii) was the Chair of the Tenants Committee of the Association of Retained Council Housing,
- iv) had taken an active role in helping to select contractors for major contracts and staff for key posts,
- v) had organised responses to Government consultations aimed at tenants and attended seminars on such issues,
- vi) had supported other residents groups by providing advice and information.

For many years, the Government had encouraged local authority landlords to involve their tenants in the delivery of services. The RCRA would continue to take a key role in taking this work forward.

Until May 2003, the Tenant's representative was a co-opted non-voting member of the Committee, but Council then determined that the representative could best fulfil the role as an invitee without the need for formal co-option and this had continued to be the case since that date with Jenny Hill fulfilling this role. As an invitee, Jenny Hill could remain and take part in discussion of items in the public part of agenda but for confidential matters she had to withdraw. Following the report of the Housing Regulator and the Council's related Action Plan, and the need to involve Mrs Hill in matters related to procurement matters in future which were often of a confidential nature it was considered appropriate for the Chairman of the RCRA to be appointed as a non-voting member of the Housing Committee, which would allow her to remain for confidential matters. The conditions of the co-option were that the co-optee must be the Chairman of the RCRA, could only participate in matters which related to social housing and tenancies. The appointment would be confirmed at the start of each Municipal Year at Annual Council.

The Chairman of Housing Committee and the Housing Committee had indicated informal support for this proposal, and Council was also supportive.

RESOLVED that

the Chair of the RCRA be appointed as a non-voting Member of the Housing Committee for the remainder of this Municipal Year with immediate effect.

(The meeting ended at 9.35pm)

Mayor