

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

22 October, 2020 at 7.30 pm via MS Teams

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor P Sohi) in the chair.

Members of the Council present Councillors M Adams, A Alderson, J Broadhead, T Burton, I Chaudhri, B Clarke, D Clarke, D Cotty, M Cressey, S Dennett, R Edis, E Gill, L Gillham, J Gracey, T Gracey, M Harnden, M Heath, C Howorth, J Hulley, N King, R King, M Kusneraitis, S Lewis, 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: Councillors D Anderson-Bassey, M Brierley, J R Furey and S Mackay.

253 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that he would be stepping down as Mayor with immediate effect. The Mayor reported that he had had a memorable extended Mayoral year and had attended many events and acknowledged the commitment and hard work of many residents. The Mayor was particularly proud of all Members and Officers for their dedication and coming together in a difficult year.

The Mayor thanked his Mayoress and son and daughter for their commitment and support during the year.

The Mayor had raised £28,000 for his chosen charities, namely:

1st Virginia Water Scouts

Combat Stress

Sight For Surrey

Finally, the Mayor thanked all those persons who had helped him during his Mayoral year. The Mayor thanked Katie Edmond (Mayoral Assistant) for her valuable support and organisational skills during the Mayoral Year. The Mayor wished his successor all the best for their Mayoral term.

Many Councillors expressed their appreciation of the service and commitment given by the Mayor and his Mayoress.

The Deputy Mayor in expressing her appreciation of the Mayor also announced that she would be stepping down as Deputy Mayor with immediate effect. Following the resignation of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the Chief Executive presided over the meeting and called for nominations for the office of Mayor Cllr Gill was duly nominated.

254 MAYOR – ELECTION OF

RESOLVED that –

Councillor Elaine Gill be Mayor of Runnymede for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

255 DECLARATION BY MAYOR OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The statutory declaration of acceptance of office was made and signed by Councillor Gill, who thanked the Council for her election and took the Chair.

In accepting the office of Mayor, Cllr Gill thanked all Members and expressed her appreciation of Cllr Linda Gillham and former Mayors and ex Councillors Eiry Price and Peggy Broadhead, for their support.

The Mayor stated that her Consort would be her husband Harry Gill.

(The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Gill in the Chair).

256 DEPUTY MAYOR – APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

RESOLVED that –

Councillor Margaret Harnden be Deputy Mayor of Runnymede for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21

257 DECLARATION BY DEPUTY MAYOR OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The statutory declaration of acceptance of office was made and signed by Councillor Harnden, who thanked the Council for her appointment.

258 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 16 July and 28 September ,2020 were confirmed and signed as correct records. With regard to the Minutes of 28 September 2020, for clarification, the following wording was agreed to be added to the final paragraph of the preamble to the resolution of the Minute on the Budget Monitoring Report:

“It was made clear to all Members that by authorising the Chief Executive in the way that the resolution is worded in the report, that would not restrict him applying his discretion whether to freeze non-essential expenditure or recruitment where a special case was made ”.

259 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Anderson-Bassey.

260 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

261 SPEAKING OR QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 12

No requests to speak or ask questions from the public had been registered by the deadline.

262 PETITIONS

No petitions had been submitted by Members of the Council under Standing Order No 19

263 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 12

Question from Councillor S Whyte to the Leader of the Council

Councillor S Whyte asked the following question:

'Her Majesty's Government are currently looking at ways to improve the planning system in order to increase the number of dwellings being built. Can the Leader please tell me the total number of dwellings that have been granted planning permission by Runnymede Borough Council since April 2018, and of those how many were designated affordable dwellings?'

In response, the Leader of the Council made the following statement which he would forward to all Members after the meeting:

"The Council has approved a nett increase of 1,330 residential units (Use class C3) in the period 1st April 2018-31st of March 2020 - which is the period the Council currently has available data for. This figure includes planning permissions, prior approvals (for example office to residential), certificates of lawfulness, and residential conversions of existing buildings. The figure does not include student accommodation or C2 units such as care homes.

316 of these approved units were affordable housing units. Only applications for planning permission that provided an increase of more than 14 dwellings (nett) would have been subject to an affordable housing requirement under planning policy requirements during this period."

In response, Cllr Whyte asked for the number of dwellings where building works had been started or completed against those which had been approved planning permission since 2018. The Leader of the Council would ask Officers to provide a response to this supplementary question after the meeting.

264 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 30 JULY 2020 AND OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE- 1 OCTOBER 2020 -TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

Council considered the recommendations from Corporate Management Committee held on 30 July 2020 and Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee held on 1 October 2020 regarding the Treasury Management Annual Report.

RESOLVED that –

the Treasury Management Annual Report 2019/20 be received and noted.

265 RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE -30 JULY 2020- SHARED COST ADDITIONAL VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION SCHEME

Council considered the recommendation from Corporate Management Committee held on 30 July 2020 regarding the Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme

RESOLVED that –

- i) the implementation of a shared cost salary sacrifice additional voluntary contribution (SCAVC) pension arrangement for members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) be approved;**
- ii) earnings related payments, such as overtime, pay rises and redundancy are calculated on the notional salary and not the reduced salary sacrifice be approved;**
- iii) the inclusion of a new discretion in the Council's Discretionary Pension Policy Statement to authorise shared cost SCAVCs as one of the discretions be approved and that the Discretionary Pension Policy Statement be amended as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report;**
- iv) in line with other salary sacrifice schemes approved by the Council, in the event of any redundancy situation, any redundancy pay should be calculated on the notional pre-sacrifice salary; and**
- v) the services of a financial partner, AVC Wise, be contracted to set up, promote and administer the scheme until such time as the Council has the resources to manage the process in-house.**

266 RECOMMENDATION FROM STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE -22 SEPTEMBER 2020- LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS – BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Council considered the recommendation from Standards and Audit Committee held on 22 September 2020 regarding a number of recommendations arising from a report issued by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) in January 2019.

Council was content with all the recommendations but felt that the new Model Code of Conduct needed to be more robust to deal with potential breaches such as specifying the instances when a member could be suspended from holding office and the offences which might justify a Member being recalled. Therefore, the Leader agreed to send a letter to central Government regarding the need to reinstate meaningful sanctions in the Model Code of Conduct. The Chief Executive would also consult with Cllrs Nuti and T Gracey on formulation of the Council's own Code of Conventions on Member behaviour.

RESOLVED that –

the steps taken be endorsed and the proposed further actions be taken and changes be made to comply with best practice issued by the Committee on Standards in Public Life as set out below:

- i) Best Practice 1: the definition of bullying and harassment as set out in the report be added to the Code of Conduct, along with examples of such behaviour;**
- ii) Best Practice 2: Councillors will be expected to comply with any formal standards investigation;**
- iii) Best Practice 3: when reviewing the Code of Conduct for elected Councillors, the Council regularly seeks, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities;**
- iv) Best Practice 5: the register of gifts and hospitality for elected Councillors be published on the Council's website in an accessible Format;**
- v) Best Practice 6: the Council introduces a public interest test that complaints would be treated on a case by case basis and would be considered if the public interest outweighs that of taking no further action;**
- vi) Best Practice 10: the Council publishes straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the Code of Conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes;**
- vii) Best Practice 13: the Council's Scheme of Delegation be amended to facilitate an informal arrangement with another local authority for the investigation of complaints should a conflict of interest arise for the Monitoring Officer; and**
- viii) Best Practice 15: to formalise the current arrangements, standards issues be added as a standing item on the agendas for the Chief Executive and senior Officers regular meetings with political group leaders**

267 RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE- 15 OCTOBER 2020-CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/2022

Council considered a recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee held on 15 October, 2020 regarding the proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2021/2022

RESOLVED that

The calendar of meetings for May 2021- May 2022 ,as reported,be approved

268 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 15

No Notices of Motion had been received from Members of the Council under Standing Order 15.

269 ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE-REPLACEMENT RESIDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE

Following the death of Mr Andrew Panter, who had served as one of the Residents Representatives on Englefield Green Committee for many years, it was necessary to appoint a replacement to fill the vacancy. All the Englefield Green ward Members paid tribute to Andrew Panter for his long and dedicated service on the Englefield Green Committee and sent their condolences to his family.

'Qualifying tenants' had been canvassed to ascertain their wishes on filling the vacancy. Mr Alistair Buchanan had allowed his name to go forward for consideration in order to fill the current vacancy. The candidate's submission was circulated to all Members. There had been no other nominations.

RESOLVED that:

Mr Alistair Buchanan be appointed as the second local Residents' Representative on Englefield Green Committee.

270 MINORITY GROUP PRIORITY BUSINESS

No items of Minority Group Priority Business had been registered under Standing Order 23

(The meeting ended at 8.36 pm)

Mayor