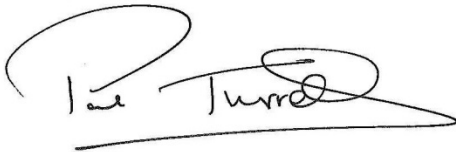


30.11.22

Dear Councillor

SUMMONS TO A MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL

I hereby summon you to attend the meeting of the Full Council to be held on **Thursday, 8 December 2022 at 7.30 pm. The meeting will be held at Council Chamber - Civic Centre.**



PAUL TURRELL
Chief Executive
01932 425500
Email: paul.turrell@runnymede.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

2. **Minutes**

5 - 14

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 October 2022 (attached).

3. **Apologies for Absence**

4. **Declarations of Interest**

If Members have an interest in an item, please complete a Member Interest Form and email it to Democratic.Services@runnymede.gov.uk by 5pm on the day of the meeting. Members are advised to contact the Corporate Head of Law and Governance prior to the meeting if they wish to seek advice on a potential interest.

5. **Speaking or Questions from Members of the Public under Standing Order 12**

Any questions received will be circulated separately following the deadline for submission of questions from the public.

6. **Petitions**

To receive any petitions from members of the Council under Standing Order No 19.

7. **Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order 13**

a. Question from Councillor Carl Mann to the Leader of the Council

Can we please have an update on the A320 Ottershaw roundabout and whether the HIF money is protected?

b. Question from Councillor Sylvia Whyte to the Leader of the Council

Following the death of 2 year old Awaab Ishak, caused by mould in the family's flat in Rochdale, the social housing regulator has ordered all landlords with more than 1,000 homes to report their most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards, the action they are taking to remedy them and to detail the process they have to identify and deal promptly with damp and mould cases, when they are raised by tenants. Can the leader of the Council assure me that Runnymede Borough Council's housing stock is inspected regularly to ensure that tragedies like this will never happen in Runnymede?

c. Question from Councillor Isabel Mullins to the Leader of the Council

Given that the original Climate Change Strategy approved by the Corporate Management Committee in April of this year included an Action Plan, and in order to give transparency to the council's actions and plans for carbon emission reductions, could the Leader of the Council ensure that this Climate Change Action Plan, or an up to date version of it, be published on the RBC website with high visibility alongside the council's Climate Change Strategy, as a matter of urgency?

d. Question from Councillor Rhys Davies to the Leader of the Council

Is the Leader aware of the chronic delays this Council's housing department is facing in assessing medical and disability submissions forms from residents applying to our housing register, does he think waiting months for these forms to be reviewed and a decision taken is acceptable?

e. Question from Councillor Robert King to the Leader of the Council

Is the Leader aware that hundreds of residents, already struggling to get a GP appointment, have had a further blow with numerous GP practices in recent months withdrawing online app services, such as Livi, making it nearly impossible to get even a telephone or online appointment. What is Runnymede doing to lobby GP practices and Surrey Heartlands to reintroduce such services?

f. Question from Councillor Abby King to the Leader of the Council

What is the Council doing to enhance street cleaning in Runnymede and is the Leader exploring a timetabling of streets, in collaboration with Surrey Highways after they carry out gully cleaning?

8. **Recommendations from Committees**

a) **Council Tax Support Scheme**

15 - 198

The Corporate Management Committee agreed the following resolution at its meeting on Thursday 24 November 2022:

That the preferred option for a revised Runnymede Council Tax Support scheme be recommended for adoption by Council, for implementation from 1 April 2023.

The report and appendices are attached. An addendum providing additional information that was requested by the Corporate Management Committee is also attached.

9. **Notices of Motion from Members of the Council under Standing Order 15**

To receive and consider any notices of motion from members of the Council under standing order 15.

From Councillor Robert King

This Council notes:

- (1) With rents soaring out of control, thousands of families are left buried in debt and under the threat of losing their home.
- (2) Many remain stuck on the Council housing list with little or no chance of an affordable secure home.
- (3) That the problem is made worse by a huge increase in the use of section 21 notices (issued under the Housing Act 1988) to secure 'no fault evictions' of tenants, destroying family homes as landlords look to take advantage of unprecedented price rises and sell up or they themselves are being impacted by the unprecedented rise in interest rates.
- (4) The East Thames Valley and Walton Local Housing Allowances (which determines the maximum level of Housing Benefit that can be paid) now is at least 30% below the market value of most rented properties, once again driving families into debt, with rent arrears blocking them from seeking another home when they're evicted.
- (5) The government has announced that LHA rates are to be frozen for another year, while the rents tenants have to pay continue to escalate with no controls on the level of rents landlords can charge.
- (6) The shortage of genuinely affordable rented homes is causing a long-term problem too. But significant numbers of empty homes and unidentified housing sites, particularly brownfield sites, remaining undeveloped, 'land banked' by property speculators who prefer to wait for local housing values to increase still further or waiting for over ambiguous planning proposal to be granted. Councils can do little about this, as they lack the cost-neutral CPO powers to bring empty homes and land-banked land back into use for genuinely affordable social rented housing.

(7) All these factors have led to a huge escalation in homelessness and particularly hidden homelessness, with hundreds of millions of pounds wasted each year across the country providing unsatisfactory temporary accommodation or by residents facing continued expense when moving between insecure homes.

The Council Believes That:

(1) All these factors combine to precipitate a real housing crisis. We are only at the very start of this perfect storm which will condemn current and future generations of Runnymede residents to insecure, unaffordable and substandard housing.

(2) A safe, secure and affordable home is a basic human right.

The Council resolves that:

(1) The Leader of Runnymede Council with other group leaders as they see fit write to Runnymede and Weybridge's MP and the Secretary of state for Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing Michael Gove demanding that he:

a. abolishes section 21 notices

b. reverses the decision to freeze LHA and increase it so it reflects the true level of private sector rents

c. allows Councils to charge up to 300% Council tax on second homes.

d. reinstates the fair rent review system to cap housing rents at a realistic level.

e. grants councils 'cost neutral' compulsory purchase powers that allow them to deduct costs from compensation paid for the compulsory purchase of long-term empty homes and land-banked land.

(2) Runnymede Council declares a housing emergency and that this enables a public information gathering excise so residents can report that concerns or experiences of renting privately and that a report can be presented to the relevant committee on its findings.

(3) Runnymede Council looks to adapt its policies and resources following such a review of resident experiences in the private sector to enhance the protections and services this Council offers to its residents.

10. **Minority Group Priority Business**

No items of minority group priority business have been registered under Standing Order 23.