

11.10.23

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, 19 October 2023 at 7.30 pm. The meeting will be held at Council Chamber - Civic Centre.**



Andrew Pritchard
Chief Executive
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A G E N D A

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

2. **Minutes**

15 - 25

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the Council held on 20 July 2023.

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 19.

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

a) Question from Councillor Don Whyte to the Leader of the Council

“Over recent weeks the subject of refugees being housed in Runnymede has received a lot of attention on social media. It is a credit to the residents of Runnymede that so many residents have offered accommodation in their own homes to the people of Ukraine seeking refuge from their awful war. Runnymede Borough Council (RBC), to its credit, offered to provide accommodation to some refugee families from Syria and Afghanistan. Regrettably, recent social media posts have been quite vitriolic and there is, I believe, a public misconception about the number of refugees currently being housed by Runnymede Borough Council. Can I ask the Leader how many dwellings have RBC provided to Syrian and Afghan refugees over the last 5 years?”

b) Question from Councillor Robert King to the Leader of the Council

“On the 13th of October 2022 members of Corporate Management Committee (CMC) were asked to approve the purchase of new vehicles for grounds maintenance, as this service was being brought back inhouse. While the delivery of services inhouse was welcome, I raised serious concerns around the rushed purchase of fleet vehicles, with no consideration being given to lease them until full-service needs were known. At Environment and Sustainability Committee (E&S) on the 8th of June 2023, agenda item 13, paragraph 4.5, confirmed the council’s intention to sell those same two vehicles which were purchased fewer than 8 months before, despite the continued reassurance the Leader and the Chief Executive, at the time, gave CMC that all due diligence had been done around their purchase. Will the Leader confirm how much his administration lost of Runnymede taxpayers money on the resale of those vehicles and other equipment which was rushed to be purchased, who he has held responsible for this and whether the previous Chief Executive ever provided a full report, as he promised publicly when challenged, on this blunder and how processes in future would be changed to ensure this does not happen again?”

c) Question from Councillor Abby King to the Leader of the Council

“Can the leader confirm at present, the number of residents who are on Runnymede’s housing register, the numbers on each priority banding, the numbers for each household size and percentage who have been waiting in 6-month periods?”

d) Question from Councillor Eliza Kettle to the Leader of the Council

“Can the leader confirm the number of non-HRA properties the Council owns either directly through the General Fund or indirectly through its Company (RBCI) that are empty, the size of those units and the length of time they have remained unoccupied?”

e) Question from Councillor Rhys Davies to the Leader of the Council

“Can the leader confirm a full RAAC survey has been conducted across the whole of the Council’s estate, including its owned companies, and that no RAAC concrete has been found or that appropriate measures have been taken to make building safe and if RAAC has been found he will provide details of these

measures to all Councillors within a week of this meeting?”

f) Question from Councillor Steve Ringham to the Leader of the Council

“On the 20th of April 2023 Corporate Management Committee (CMC) approved a Part 2 Item “Business plan covering Runnymede Borough Council’s Companies”, this was a document as confirmed in Part 1 minutes concerning the 5-year business plan of the companies which the Council owns. It owns these assets on behalf of Runnymede residents to seek an income to cover the loss of grant payments from central government since 2013, to cover the cost of providing the Council’s essential services. Would the Leader agree, at the heart of any good business plan, is a belief in accurate accounting, in transparency, in the efficient handling of business matters and other good practices such as policies which set out how to efficiently resolve disputes which may occur between clients and customers?”

g) Question from Councillor Manu Singh to the Leader of the Council

“What is the Leader and his Council doing to assist Council tenants in blocks of flats make the transition to Net-Zero and cut their gas and electricity bills with better insulation, by providing or sourcing funding so blocks, such as Collingsbourne House in Addlestone, could introduce ground or air source heat pumps, EVC charging points in car parks and/or communal solar panels on their roofs.”

8. Recommendations from Committees

a) Carbon Baseline - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 14 September 2023 meeting of the Corporate Management Committee](#).

The Committee discussed the report, which had been the subject of several months’ of work. Senior staff were being provided with similar training to that provided to members on carbon literacy. In addition, further all staff training on climate change was due to be provided.

There was discussion around the methodology for collecting the baseline data. It was noted that this was a standardised practice within the sector. Officers would look into whether it was possible to incorporate elements that related to the consumption and/or production of meat and dairy products.

It was **resolved** that:

1. The Aether Ltd Council Estate and Area GHG Baseline report (Appendix 1) be agreed, alongside other sources of information (including consultation feedback from Summer 2023), and that it should be used to develop a Climate Change Action Plan for the Borough.
2. The Committee recommend the Council note the content of the Aether Ltd Council Estate and Area GHG Baseline report.

b) Equalities Objectives - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 14 September 2023 meeting of the Corporate Management Committee](#). An updated equalities document incorporating the changes requested by the Corporate Management Committee is attached.

The Committee was pleased that the Council's equalities objectives had been reviewed and updated.

It was **resolved** that the Committee recommend the Council adopt the refreshed Equalities Objectives for the period 2023 – 2027, subject to the Equalities Group reviewing the proposed objectives document to reference the Council's level one membership of the government's Disability Confident Employer Scheme, and to express a desire to progress to higher levels of the scheme in due course.

c) Approach to Financial Sustainability - Savings, Income Generation and Efficiency Process - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 14 September 2023 meeting of the Corporate Management Committee](#).

A revised approach, incorporating the feedback received at the recent meeting of the Council, was presented to the Committee. The revised process now incorporated the opportunity for Service Committees to provide their feedback on the outcomes of service reviews, before consideration by Corporate Management Committee, as part of the overarching savings, efficiencies and income generation process.

It was **resolved** that the Committee recommend the Council agree the amended approach for the identification and delivery of savings, income generation and efficiencies, as set out in the officer's report.

d) Calendar of committee meetings - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 12 October 2023 meeting of the Corporate Management Committee](#).

The Corporate Management Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met on 12 October 2023.

e) Amendments to the Constitution - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 12 October 2023 meeting of the Corporate Management Committee](#).

The Corporate Management Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met on 12 October 2023.

f) Play Area Programme 2023/24 - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the

[agenda for the 21 September 2023 meeting of the Community Services Committee](#) which made a recommendation to the Corporate Management Committee.

The Corporate Management Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met on 12 October 2023.

g) Housing Revenue Account Development 2 - recommendation from the Housing Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 20 September 2023 meeting of the Housing Committee](#).

The Housing Development Manager outlined the background for two potential development sites that had been chosen to contribute to the Council's 125 homes target. A multi-disciplinary team would be appointed separately to the architects as part of the procurement route.

Concerns were raised about any potential developments eventually falling into the hands of buy to let landlords who would rent such properties out to students at the nearby university to be used as HMOs. A member stated that there was a significant shortage of family homes within the area because of this and asked if there were mechanisms to ensure this did not happen to any potential future developments. The Head of Housing and Business Services stated there are mechanisms in place in certain circumstances, although the longevity of these will be minimal.

Addressing concerns around right-to-buy, the Corporate Head of Housing advised that covenants are put in place on right-to-buy properties the Council sells with stipulations on how properties can be used that remains on the property through subsequent ownerships.

Resolved that:

Members approved a supplementary revenue estimate to be spread over the next 4 years for both projects to proceed from RIBA Stage 1 to 3 to be presented to Full Council.

h) Grant Funding to Improve the Energy Efficiency of Council Homes - ECO4 - recommendation from the Housing Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 20 September 2023 meeting of the Housing Committee](#).

The Corporate Head of Housing outlined the benefits of procuring an external contractor to access ECO4 funding to improve the energy efficiency of 59 of the 'hardest to treat' properties. This would enable the Council to work towards its target of ensuring all Council owned homes have an energy rating of at least a C by 2030 and would enable residents to save a significant amount of money on their energy bills.

The outlay required by the Council was modest in the context of the available grant from government.

The Chairman praised the Corporate Head of Housing and his team for getting the grant funding from the Government, and all members agreed this was a positive scheme to pursue.

Resolved that:

Members approved and referred the proposal to Full Council for the procurement of a contractor to implement energy efficiency measures to 59 Council owned homes, via the ECO4 programme.

i) Risk Management Framework 2023 - 2026 - recommendation from the Standards and Audit Committee

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 3 October 2023 meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee](#).

The Standards and Audit Committee was asked to approve for recommendation to full Council the Risk Management Framework.

The Committee was asked to recommend for approval by full Council, the Council's Risk Management Framework. The aim was to formalise, embed and continuously improve processes and procedures for the identification, evaluation and control of risks within and across the organisation.

Officers explained that the Framework was developed to support delivery of actions in the Annual Governance Statement in support of compliance with the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

Members noted the agreed definitions of risk and risk management and fully supported the intention to make the Council more risk aware to support decision making by adopting a 5 stage process to risk management. This involved:

- Setting the Council's objectives and risk appetite
- Identifying risks
- Risk evaluation
- Taking action to manage risks
- Monitoring and reporting

Each stage of the process was detailed in the Framework and Members agreed it was very comprehensive and should ensure consistency and transparency.

As a way of embedding the consideration of risk a motion was proposed and seconded to add an additional recommendation making it mandatory that a separate section on risk implications was added to the committee report template.

Officers planned to submit the Risk Appetite Statements to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee in November 2023. This supplemented the Risk Management Framework and was proposed to be updated annually as part of annual budget and business planning. A report presenting an update on and highlighting aspects of the Corporate Risk Register and associated activity would be considered at the scheduled meeting of the Committee in January 2024. Thereafter, it was intended that a report on corporate risks and mitigation would be reported twice a year to the Committee.

In addition, Officers reported that the capital and investment strategy would contain further details of the risk appetite specifically for commercial and regeneration, portfolio and divestment opportunities.

Members were very supportive of the Framework, particularly welcoming the addition of risk management to the 'dashboards' produced by the Project Management Office for senior management and Members, showing risk statistics and movements.

Members noted the policy, resource and legal implications and agreed that failure to take advantage of opportunities and mitigate business risks was a major risk to the Council which could impact on its ability to deliver strategic objectives. In addition, the Committee acknowledged that a failure to regularly review and update the Risk Management Framework could have an adverse impact on the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

The next steps following adoption of the Framework would be a series of briefings for managers, the release of the tool kit and resources, development of the dashboard for reporting and implementation of the reporting schedule to the Committee.

Officers were thanked for their input into creating the Risk Management Framework and looked forward to receiving updates at future meetings and to having an active involvement in risk management.

Resolved that full Council be recommended to:

- 1. approve the Risk Management Framework presented at Appendix 'A' of the Officer's report; and**
- 2. a section on risk implications be made mandatory on all relevant reports to Committees to ensure that all risks and mitigatory measures are identified**

9. **Local Government Act 1972 - Section 85: Attendance Dispensation, Councillor John Furey**

Recommendations

- a) The Council is asked to consider whether it wishes to exercise its powers under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 by granting a dispensation to the attendance requirements for elected Members in recognition of Councillor Furey's ill-health.**
- b) The Council is asked to agree the duration of the dispensation, to apply from 17 November 2023.**

1. Councillor Furey last attended a meeting of the authority on 17 May 2023 and has not been able to attend a meeting since then owing to ill health.
2. Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his/her last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he/she, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, will cease to be a member of the authority.
3. Therefore, if Councillor Furey fails to attend any meeting of the authority due to take place before 17 November 2023, or any meeting of an outside body to which he has been appointed as the Council's representative, he will cease to

be a member unless the Council grants a dispensation.

4. As this is the last ordinary meeting of the Council before 17 November 2023, it is suggested that in light of Councillor Furey's continuing recuperation, members consider whether a dispensation should be granted.

10. **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.

a) From Councillor Sam Jenkins

Disability Confident Leadership at Runnymede Borough Council

Motivation:

This motion is being brought forward to support the development of an inclusive and diverse workforce within Runnymede Borough Council and to support the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity.

This council notes:

The Disability Confident scheme is a Government initiative designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain people with disabilities and those with long term health conditions. The Disability Confident scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents which people with disabilities can bring to the workplace (note 1).

There are 3 levels of Disability Confident, designed to support organisations as they move through the scheme. These are, Level 1 (Committed), Level 2 (Employer), Level 3 (Leader). Each level must be completed before moving on to the next.

A new member organisation can join the Disability Confident scheme at Level 1 if it agrees to the Disability Confident commitments and identifies at least one action that it will carry out to make a difference for people with disabilities (note 2).

The Disability Confident Commitments are:

- Inclusive and accessible recruitment
- Communicating vacancies
- Offering an interview to people with disabilities if they meet the minimum job criteria
- Providing reasonable adjustments
- Supporting existing employees

Once an organisation has achieved Level 1, it can progress to Level 2 of the scheme by completing a self-assessment. The self-assessment is based around two themes; 'getting the right people for your business' and 'keeping and developing your people'. Level 2 is achieved once the organisation confirms to the Department for Work and Pensions that it has completed the self-assessment, which will include evidence of existing good-practice as well as achievable follow-up actions where there are areas for development.

To progress to the highest level of the scheme and to become a Disability Confident Leader, an organisation must have its self-assessment validated by an external stakeholder. The organisation must also provide a short narrative to show

how it is making good on its follow-up actions, confirm that it is employing people with disabilities and report on disability, mental health and wellbeing by referring to the Voluntary Reporting Framework.

A number of nearby organisations are Level 2 members of Disability Confident, including (note 3):

- Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL)
- Proctor and Gamble UK (formerly based in Egham)
- Citizens Advice UK
- Epsom and Ewell, Reigate and Banstead, Surrey Heath, Tandridge, Waverley and Woking Councils.

Other nearby organisations who have reached Level 3 include:

- Animal and Plant Health Agency (based in Addlestone)
- Unum (based in Dorking)

Runnymede Borough Council is currently a Level 1 (committed) employer.

As a Level 1 Disability Confident (Committed) employer, Runnymede Borough Council supports the five commitments of the scheme as described above. Working towards Level 2 and Level 3 will enable the Council to transform its commitments into evidence-driven action that will benefit its current workforce as well as future talent.

As part of the existing IT transformation programme, a new recruitment system will go live from April 2024 which should improve the process of identifying and supporting job candidates with disabilities. Once the new systems are in place, it should be possible for officers in the Human Resources department to complete the self-assessment and work towards the Level 2 threshold by September 2024, going on to implement the follow-up actions of the self-assessment and achieve Level 3 by June 2025.

Human Resources have identified a potential opportunity to create a National Graduate Scheme project funded by the existing apprenticeships salary budget to support the collection of evidence for the self-assessment. The trainee will work under the direction of the Recruitment Manager.

The Council Believes that:

- Working towards Level 2 and Level 3 of Disability Confident will enable Runnymede Borough Council to lead the way in Surrey as the only Level 3 local authority within the county.
- Developing RBC's participation in the Disability Confident scheme will help change attitudes, behaviours and cultures affecting residents with physical and/or hidden disabilities.
- Working towards Level 2 and Level 3 of the scheme will ensure RBC draws from the widest possible talent pool across all of its departments and service areas. It will also support employee morale and commitment across the Council by demonstrating fair treatment.
- Working towards the highest level of the Disability Confident scheme is an opportunity to practically demonstrate RBC's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Completing the self-assessment and implementing evidence-based follow up actions will help to improve the efficiency, transparency and fairness of RBC's recruitment processes to the benefit of all involved.

The Council resolves to ask the Corporate Management Committee to consider:

1. The possibility of achieving Level 2 of the Disability Confident scheme by September 2024 and Level 3 by June 2025.
2. Whether it should receive an annual report about RBC's actions as a member of the Disability Confident scheme and its progress in reaching Level 2 and 3 of the scheme.
3. Whether officers in the Marketing and Communications team are able to promote RBC's participation in the Disability Confident scheme on social media, in future newsletters to residents and on the relevant pages of the Council website.

Note 1 - Disability Confident employer scheme - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) - (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>)

Note 2 - How to sign up to the Disability Confident employer scheme - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) - (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme>)

Note 3 - Employers that have signed up to the Disability Confident scheme - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) - (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-confident-employers-that-have-signed-up>)

b) From Councillor Jaz Mavi

The Council is able to determine this motion, without reference to a committee, in accordance with Standing Order 15.6(b)(ii).

Proposed Plan to House Asylum Seekers in Syward Place

This Council is proud of our ongoing efforts to support refugees and asylum seekers, and believes that:

- those fleeing war and persecution deserve stable and suitable accommodation and support to establish their lives in the U.K.,
- integration into communities is key to this, and,
- any proposals for accommodation sites must deliver this in a sustainable way, without detriment to the local community.

Consequently, further to engagement with Chertsey residents who have clearly set out their concerns through resident surveys, this Council resolves that it does not support plans for the accommodation of 296 asylum seekers in Syward Place that will place unmanageable pressure on services and affordable housing in the Borough and does not guarantee access to services that those incoming would duly require on resettlement.

However the Council resolves to engage constructively with the Home Office to consider suitable alternative options within the borough for this accommodation in support of the Government's resettlement programme.

c) From Councillor Sylvia Whyte

Members to receive timely communication of Planning Enforcement notices, Planning Appeals raised and Planning Inspectorate Appeal decisions.

Motivation:

This motion is being brought forward by the Runnymede Liberal Democrat Group to ensure that all Members receive timely communications from RBC Planning Officers about key actions affecting the borough including Planning Enforcement Notices, Planning Appeals Raised and Planning Inspectorate decisions on Appeals.

In recent months there has been a report in the media about an enforcement notice issued by this council on a high profile planning application, which had neither been communicated to all members, nor to ward councillors.

The results of Planning Appeals were previously communicated on a regular basis until the end of 2021 but stopped without any formal agreement from Members.

The Council notes:

1. This council aspires to be open and transparent wherever possible.
2. It is recognised that people learn by example.
3. All Members are more effective when properly informed.
4. Planning Committee members can make more informed decisions with the knowledge of previous cases.
5. It is important that members are properly informed, in order that they can communicate effectively with residents, to whom they are accountable.

The Council **resolves** that the Planning Committee be asked to consider the feasibility of informing members within five working days of each Planning Enforcement notice being issued, all Planning Appeals raised and all Planning Appeal decisions.

d) From Councillor Alex Balkan

The proposed removal of Day Travelcards by the Mayor of London

The Council is able to determine this motion, without reference to a committee, in accordance with Standing Order 15.6(b)(ii).

This Council notes:

- The proposed removal of Day Travelcards by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, for those travelling into and throughout London. This will result in Surrey residents having to buy separate rail and London transport service tickets. Currently, Day Travelcards provide unlimited travel on Transport for London (TfL) services, including the London Underground, Bus, Tram, Docklands Light Railway, London Overground and Elizabeth line, and National Rail services in London. They can also be used to obtain a one third reduction in River Services fares. The proposals to remove Day Travelcards constitute an unfair, unacceptable and expensive levy on our residents who wish or need to travel to London.
- The proposals have deliberately targeted the removal of the Day Travelcard as a method to generate additional income for TfL. It is anticipated by the Mayor's own consultation that the withdrawal of Day Travelcards will result in rail operators ceasing to sell Zone 1-6 Travelcards. This will add barriers and travel friction to journeys to London – running counter to evidence that passenger journeys and the use of public transport are enhanced by improving integrated ticketing not reducing it. No regard is given in the proposals for the potential loss of revenue to the London economy that may be caused by the

increase in travel costs as Runnymede residents risk being priced out of the nation's capital. Employers, retail and leisure businesses, theatres and many others may see a reduction in revenue as residents reduce their time and/or expenditure in London.

This Council resolves to:

1. Demand that London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, immediately withdraws his proposals for the removal of Day Travelcards.
2. Request that the Leader of the Council writes to Sadiq Khan informing him of this resolution of Runnymede Borough Council, the discriminatory nature of his proposal, the impact on Runnymede residents, the negative impact on the economy of London and therefore the need to abandon plans to remove Day Travelcards.
3. Ensure the Leader of the Council writes to the Secretary of State for Transport urging him to intervene in this matter.

e) From Councillor Robert King

Rogue Landlords

This Council notes:

- The important contribution the Private Rented Sector (PRS) makes to the provision of housing in the borough, with renters of private accommodation making up the a significant proportion of occupants in Runnymede.
- Many private landlords renting out properties in Runnymede are good landlords who work in close partnership with the Council.
- However, this is not the case for all landlords and Runnymede Council should be fully committed to ensure that no private rented sector tenant is living in substandard accommodation. Everyone should live in a warm and dry home.
- A recent survey by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) showing that of those officers working on housing enforcement in the private rented sector, nine out of ten had encountered landlords engaging in harassment or illegal eviction, and 78% had dealt with landlords who persistently refuse to maintain their property to a safe condition.
- That rogue landlords can have a devastating impact on vulnerable tenants and the wider community.
- The majority of HMO licenses prescribed under the 2018 order with 5 or more persons are in 3 wards, Egham Town, Englefield Green West and East.

This Council resolves to request that:

1. The Environment and Sustainability Committee to consider whether the Council can do more to publicise successful legal action against landlords and lettings agents, which will act as a deterrent to bad landlords and raise awareness of landlords' duties and responsibilities.
2. The Environment and Sustainability Committee conduct a review on the council's communication strategy to improve publicity to tenants of the PRS homes to improve their knowledge on their rights and responsibilities.

3. The Environment and Sustainability Committee to consider the feasibility of implementing a selective licensing scheme within the Egham Town and Englefield Green West Wards.
4. The Planning Committee to consider the feasibility of implementing an Article 4 directive within the Egham Town and Englefield Green West Wards.
5. The Chair of Environment and Sustainability Committee calls on the UK Government, through a letter to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to push forward much delayed legislation to bring the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector as proposed in the Renters Reform white paper.

f) From Councillor Abby King

Against water bills rise of £156 per year

The Council is able to determine parts 1 and 2 of this proposed motion, without reference to a committee, in accordance with Standing Order 15.6(b)(ii). Part 3 of the proposed motion will require the consideration of a committee.

This council notes:

- Water companies in England and Wales have proposed for bills to increase by £156 a year by 2030 to pay for upgrades and reduce sewage discharges.
- That many households would be unable to afford such an increase, and that it would hit many families still impacted by the Cost-of-Living Crisis.
- That under the proposals submitted to Ofwat charges will go up initially by an average of £84 in 2025 rising each year to £156 extra by 2030.
- That such increase are unacceptable and that Ofwat has previously acknowledged that water companies had received enough money to develop, build and maintain a sewage system capable of properly dealing with our sewage.
- Therefore any such increase is just profiteering at the expense of citizens and that Runnymede's residents would be paying to again line the pockets of privatised water utilities, many of whom are owned by large multinationals not in the interest of UK residents.

This Council resolves:

1. To call on the Leader to write a letter which is open to be signed by all group leaders to both Ofwat and our local MP stating this Council is against such water bills increase and calling on them both to take action to ensure unreasonable bill rises are scrapped.
2. To recognise that water companies have continued to have sufficient resources to carry out their duties as providers and any increase of this level is just profiteering at the expense of residents.
3. To ask the Corporate Management Committee to review the Council's own support mechanism for the most vulnerable households should Ofwat and the government approve these plans and impact our residents in Runnymede.

11. **Minority Group Priority Business**

An item of minority group business has been registered by the Leader of the Labour, Co-operative and Green Party Group in accordance with Standing Order 23.

Statement by Cllr R King on Egham Hythe, Pooley Green and Thorpe Lea Liveable Neighbourhoods

Since the start of 2023 I have been working with officers of Surrey County Council to secure much needed additional funding for residents of Egham Hythe, Pooley Green and Thorpe Lea to ensure necessary improvements are made and resources secured to address a range of issues on local roads, pavements, cycle ways and street amenities which residents have raised with myself, Cllr Rhys Davies and our Thorpe and Egham Town Councillors. I would like to publicly thank officers who have helped me secure design and consultation funding from the Department of Transport to potentially make a Liveable Neighbourhood across a wide part of the Egham division, a reality. We were one of only two divisions across Surrey to secure this funding for our residents, in part thanks to our efforts to demonstrate the community need and the initial support of residents, businesses and civic leaders. Surrey County Council is holding in person events at the Hythe Centre, one which was held on the 18th of October between 2pm and 8pm and one which will be held in a few days' time on the 21st of October between 10am and 1pm so residents can come to see what could be potentially provided within the second round of funding if it is secured, and also log their ideas with members of the design team over the Common Place collection tool, <https://eghamhythe.commonplace.is/>

I would like to publicly thank Cllr Isabel Mullens of Egham Town Ward and Cllr Margret Harnden of Thorpe Ward who helped me lobby for streets in their Borough Wards to be included within the mappable area shown within the consultation. Their assistance was essential in securing those areas within the designated zone and in being able to provide a potential for our shared residents to benefit from this investment.

I would like to encourage all residents of Egham Hythe, Thorpe Lea and those who live around Vicarage Road in Egham Town ward to respond to the survey and consultation and residents who travel, work or worship within this area to also take part. We have the potential here to improve the communities we live, work, travel and worship in, through a range of measures such tree planting, place shaping of streets, cleaning up broken pavements, providing clear cycle routes which are safe and separate from motor traffic, reducing speeding hotspots through physical infrastructure and finally making streets generally smarter and more liveable in after many years of neglect. Please make your voice heard by the 31st of October and help us again be successful in the second round of funding which will be to secure cost of the providing delivering residents priorities.

12. **Press and Public to be Excluded by Resolution**

To consider any items so resolved at the meeting.