

21.02.24

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, 29 February 2024 at 7.30 pm. The meeting will be held at Council Chamber - Civic Centre.**



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A G E N D A

1. **Mayor's Announcements**

2. **Minutes**

6 - 12

To confirm and sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the following meetings:

- Council held on 8 February 2024 (attached)
- Standing Council Tax Setting Committee on 22 February 2024 (to follow)

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**

At the time of publication, one question had been received. Any additional

questions received before 12 noon on Thursday 22 February 2024 will be published as part of a supplementary summons.

a) Question from Aileen Owen Davies to the Leader of the Council

“The whole landscape of Runnymede is considerably less “green” than it was a few years ago. In my part of Runnymede very few trees seem to have been planted. There are so many spaces which could become little mini forests such as suggested by the RHS, I have seen no evidence of this. There are many other places where trees would enhance the look, air and carbon absorption of the area.

Increasing green cover will be a benefit to the beauty of the area and with the looming Climate Catastrophe, it is hugely important. They offer shade, habitat for birds, insects and other wildlife, as well as benefiting the quality of the air.

Trees in Conservation Area gardens cannot be either pruned or felled without council permission. Trees in other gardens can be felled whenever the owners wish. There should be similar controls for all properties. Presumably those on public ground do have to have council permission.

So I ask now, how many trees have been felled in Runnymede and how many have been planted during the past year and what is your “greening” plan for the future?”

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) From Councillor Robert King to the Leader of the Council

“Can the Leader confirm the total and Individual departmental costs from the use of agency staff for this financial year so far and for the previous 22/23?”

b) From Councillor Abby King to the Leader of the Council

“With the UK now in a recession, the ongoing migration to Universal Credit and the end of Household Support Fund funding from April, what is his administration’s plan for helping residents from April who face real financial hardship?”

c) From Councillor Rhys Davies to the Leader of the Council

“Network Rail’s funding settlement for 2024-2029, was recently approved by the Leader’s own Conservative government, and within that settlement £1.2 billion was slashed from its budget, which is 6% of its total. With the corresponding Office for Rail Regulations report and vocal warnings from engineers and track side safety teams, sounding alarm bells that this will increase safety risks, reduce reliability on the network and almost totally remove community match funding for projects like level crossing replacements, is he as disappointed and angry as me that Runnymede residents are now doomed to face more delays, a less reliable service and more potential barrier down time at crossings because of cuts made by his own government and MPs?”

d) From Councillor Eliza Kettle to the Leader of the Council

“Will the leader join me in thanking officers for their proactive support and efforts to listen to local residents, and mitigate the disruption caused in Englefield Green

by large scale funerals, whilst ensuring that loved ones are treated with dignity and respect at the most difficult of times?”

8. **Recommendations from Committees**

a) **Climate Change Action Plan - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee**

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 22 February 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#). The Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met.

b) **Pay Policy Statement - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee**

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 22 February 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#). The Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met.

c) **Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/25 - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee**

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 22 February 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#). The Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met.

d) **Preliminary consideration of mayoral selection - recommendation from the Corporate Management Committee**

The report associated with this item was circulated to all members with the [agenda for the 22 February 2024 Corporate Management Committee](#). The Committee's recommendation will follow after it has met.

9. **Preliminary consideration of deputy mayoral selection**

In accordance with Standing Order 7, the Council is asked to consider candidates for the office of Deputy Mayor for the 2024/25 municipal year.

If there is more than one nomination, the selection of Deputy Mayor will be conducted by secret ballot. In the event of an equality of votes on the nomination, the Mayor will exercise a casting or second vote.

The nominee will be put forward as a candidate for the office of Deputy Mayor at the Annual Council meeting on 15 May 2024 providing that they are still a member of the Council.

10. **Review of allocation of seats to political groups**

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Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out how ordinary Committees must be constituted when the authority is divided into one or more political groups. The authority is to give effect, as far as reasonably practicable, to the following four principles in constituting its committees or sub-committees:

- a) that not all the seats on the committee or sub-committee are allocated to the same political group;
- b) that the majority of the seats on the committee or sub-committee are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging

to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;

- c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that Authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and
- d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the committee or sub-committee which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.

It is important to note that the commonly accepted definition of a “political group” is a grouping of two or more members. Independent councillors therefore do not have an entitlement to a seat on a committee, although the Council is at liberty to allocate seats to independent councillors, should it so wish.

The Licensing Committee is separately constituted under the Licensing Act 2003. There is no statutory requirement for political balance but it has been the practice of the authority to ensure that this committee is constituted with consideration for proportionality arrangements. The Licensing Committee is therefore included in the wider calculations.

The groups' calculated entitlement to seats on committees is attached.

Proposals regarding the allocation of seats will be circulated at the conclusion of discussions between group leaders.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the allocation of seats to political groups be agreed.**
- 2. That the Council note group leaders are able to make appointments to committees in accordance with Standing Order 22.8.**

11. 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 Don Whyte

To seek to abolish the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner and redirect the resources to frontline policing.

Motivation:

This motion is being brought forward by the Runnymede Liberal Democrat Group to seek the better use of council tax receipts and to deliver more effective services for residents by abolishing the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Council:

1. Recognises the bravery and hard work of Surrey's police officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), and staff in trying to keep our local communities safe.

2. Notes that despite their efforts, and Surrey residents paying the highest council tax in England for their police force, just 150 out of over 2,700 residential burglaries were solved in the year to August 2023, and there were over 6,500 vehicle crimes, representing an annual increase of over 14%.
3. Believes that many more crimes could be prevented in Runnymede with an increased community policing presence and that many of our communities have seen a drop in police visibility and presence over recent years.
4. Notes that the operating budget for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, including staff and running costs, is £1,667,000, representing an increase of nearly 70% since March 2021.
5. Further notes that, according to Home Office statistics, the number of PCSOs on Surrey's streets reduced by nearly 50% from 140 to just 71 in the two years since March 2021.
6. Believes that the costs of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner should be spent on providing frontline police services, funding the equivalent of around 70 new PCSOs.
7. Further believes that, regardless of the incumbent's political allegiances, it is clear that the role of Police and Crime Commissioner is not necessary and should be abolished, with its functions transferring to Police Boards, made up of local councillors and representatives from relevant local groups.

The Council resolves to:

Call on the Leader of the Council to write to the Home Secretary expressing this Council's view that this needlessly political role should be abolished, with the financial savings reinvested into frontline policing that would benefit Runnymede and all of Surrey.

12. **Minority Group Priority Business**

No minority group priority business has been registered under Standing Order 23.

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

To consider any items so resolved at the meeting.