

RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONSULTATION WITH APPROPRIATE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN IN RESPECT OF URGENT ACTION TAKEN UNDER STANDING ORDER 42

TO: Councillors T Gracey and C Howorth
Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Management Committee

FROM: Paul Turrell

OFFICER REFERENCE: 1010

DATE: 16.09.22

Synopsis of report:

Following the sad death of our late Queen, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Runnymede Borough Council has been proud to play its part in the formal arrangements for the Proclamation of the new King, King Charles III, and in supporting the arrangements during the period of National Mourning.

This report aims to provide an overview of those actions, and in line with the Council's own Constitutional requirements, to seek the necessary budgetary approvals.

2. Reasons why this matter cannot wait for a Committee Decision.

While the Council maintains action plans to be followed in these circumstances, it cannot of course anticipate when such an event may occur. Therefore, swift decision-making is required in the immediate hours and days which cannot wait for formal Committee approval. The Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council will maintain communication throughout the period of National Mourning, ensuring the Leader is fully appraised of Council activity and that appropriate consultation takes place.

3. Recommendation(s)

To note the proposed actions to be undertaken by the Council and approve the supplementary budget estimate in the sum of £50,000.

4. Context of report

The Council is obliged to follow national protocol in many areas, such as the timing of announcements and the formal Proclamation for the new King, much of which is set out in formal plans cascaded throughout public organisations. The Council also works closely with partner agencies such as the Police, to support arrangements for HM Queen Elizabeth's funeral cortege to pass through the Borough, for example. The Council also needs adapt its own services and address the funding impact this shall create in light of these exceptional circumstances.

5. Report and, where applicable, options considered

As noted above, there is a strict protocol in place for announcing the death of the Monarch. On the afternoon of 8th September, following the reporting in the media of serious concerns over Her Majesty's health, the Chief Executive alerted senior Members and Officers of the potential for invoking this formal protocol. Later that day, the death of the Queen was confirmed, and the protocol activated.

Initial actions included mobilisation of both internal and external groups for information sharing and planning purposes. Local arrangements began for lowering the flag at the required time, opening a Book of Remembrance at the Civic offices and identifying places in each of our three towns, Addlestone, Chertsey and Egham, for the laying of floral tributes.

A core group of officers was assembled to ensure swift responses were made within limited timescales, including officers from the Chief Executive's office, Communications, Environmental Services and Assets and Regeneration.

Throughout the following days, contact was maintained with this core group, who worked to set up the arrangements for the local proclamation, held at the Civic Offices in Addlestone on Sunday 11th Sept; activating a telephone cascade to contact invitees, confirming the details of the proclamation itself and preparing the Civic offices for the occasion, providing refreshments and raising/lowering the flag. Orders of Service and Proclamation details were confirmed and circulated, and live streaming of the event was set up and can be viewed via the Council's website.

In addition, staff worked to ensure the Mayor, Leader and Chief Executive were able to attend the Surrey proclamation and service at Guildford Cathedral, co-ordinating travel arrangements and timing.

Additional duties fall to Runnymede BC due to the route to be taken by the Queen's cortege, on Monday 19th September, when it travels from Westminster to Windsor, following the period of lying-in-state. This element of work has needed close engagement with partners. RBC officers are required to be deployed to the affected roads for both presentational and security issues. For example, our teams will litter pick the area before and after the cortege passes through, will empty litter bins ahead of security searches, will close adjacent car parks to avoid security risks, and will clear the road of any debris (including flowers) to enable the re-opening of the road as swiftly as possible. Considerable planning and logistics are required to co-ordinate these activities with those of the police and security services and a senior officer has been deployed to Surrey Police Headquarters at Mount Browne, Guildford to facilitate this. Officers have also played a key liaison role with businesses located within the area to be affected by road closures.


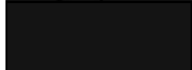

One key service adjustment has been recommended, which is to alter the refuse collection timetable for those properties that would normally have had their bins emptied on the 19th. These will be collected instead on the previous Saturday. Letters have been sent to these households and to other residents who may be affected by road closures. The provision of Meals at Home may also be affected by traffic issues and road closures on Monday 19th, so plans are being considered to flex the service while continuing to maintain provision of meals.

The Council's website is being kept updated as events unfold, and as details are released. As mentioned above, there are strict protocols for the release of data (such as routes for the cortege) so some information can only be released publicly once official permission has been given.

The website will contain details of events to be held to mark the National Moment of Reflection, and one-minute silence, which will take place at 8pm on Sunday 18 September 2022, the night before the State Funeral, as well as guidance for those wishing to hold their own event to mark this moment.

The announcement of a special Bank Holiday for the day of Her Majesty's funeral, 19th September, means that the majority of the Council's staff will be able to take time to reflect on the late Sovereign and choose how they wish to mark the day. A number of staff, however, will be required to work to support the measures above and to provide the Council's usual bank holiday arrangements for critical services such as Housing or Community Services. Refuse operatives and Street Cleaning crews for example, will be providing additional resources both on the day of the funeral and to support the altered bin collection patterns. This is in addition to the extra hours worked by staff in the days leading up to the 19th, a core group of whom have been readily available throughout the whole period, during evenings and weekends.

None of this would be possible without the goodwill and flexibility of those staff who have willingly stepped forward to support this occasion. Nevertheless, this does come at some additional cost to the Council which requires approval under the Council's financial regulations, by the Corporate Management Committee, and in this case, under the Urgency procedure for the reasons set out in Section 2.

<p>6. Policy framework implications</p> <p>None</p>
<p>7. Financial and Resource implications (where practicable)</p> <p>Where possible, the costs for supporting the Proclamation of the new King and the National Period of Mourning for Her Majesty, will be met within existing budgets. Some staff may choose to take Time Off in Lieu rather than claim additional hours and some costs may fall within existing contingencies. There are, however, likely to be some additional, unavoidable costs for which a supplementary estimate will be required. It is difficult to accurately predict the level of these costs as the Council needs to remain agile and respond quickly as the need arises. These costs are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overtime payments for Refuse, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Operatives; Co-ordinators, Communications team, Facilities, Customer Services and Parking staff • Bank Holiday payments for other staff required to be on duty on the 19th (Housing/Community Services/Safer Runnymede) • Postage costs • Fuel costs • Consumables and equipment <p>A maximum supplementary estimate of £50,000 is recommended to be approved to cover the cost of the work outlined in this report. The final sum will be reported within future financial monitoring reports to this Committee.</p>
<p>8. Legal implications</p> <p>The Council has the discretion to exercise its power under the Localism Act 2011 s.1, to fund and provide such support as set out in this report where there is no statutory restriction preventing it from doing so.</p>
<p>9. Equality implications</p> <p>There are no equality implications in respect of this decision.</p>
<p>10. Other implications (where applicable)</p> <p>None</p>
<p>11. Background papers</p> <p>None.</p>
<p>12. <u>Chief Officer(s) Decision</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signature of authorised officer </p> <p>I have been consulted and am in agreement with the above </p> <p>Signature(s) and position(s) of other relevant Chief Officer, Corporate Heads or authorised representatives</p> <p>.....</p> <p>NB: this <u>must</u> include the Assistant Chief Executive or his authorised representative where the decision involves expenditure, loss of income, or future implications for budget or financial forecast.</p>
<p>13. <u>Chief Executive's Decision</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signature of Chief Executive ... </p> <p>I have been consulted and am in agreement with the above</p>

14. **Chairman and Vice-Chairman Comments**

I concur in the Chief Officer's decision

Signed _____

Date _____

Signed _____

Date _____

I have the following further comments:

Further information may be obtained from Mario Leo, Corporate Head of Law and Governance on Ext.5640

The completed copy is to be returned by the Councillor to the Corporate Head of Law and Governance (c/o Andrew Finch) who will send a copy to the Chief Officer and report to the relevant Committee, as necessary.