

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Farnborough on Thursday, 8th December, 2022 at 7.00 pm.

The Worshipful The Mayor (Cllr J.H. Marsh)
The Deputy Mayor (Cllr C.P. Grattan)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Jessica Auton
Cllr Jib Belbase
Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr A.H. Gani
Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo
Cllr Prabesh KC
Cllr Nadia Martin
Cllr T.W. Mitchell
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr Nem Thapa

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford
Cllr J.B. Canty
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cllr Jules Crossley
Cllr Keith Dibble
Cllr Michael Hope
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr A.R. Newell
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr Calum Stewart
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr S. Trussler

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Christine Guinness, Cllr Marina Munro and Cllr Jacqui Vosper.

Before the meeting was opened, the Mayor's Chaplain, Major Ted Benneyworth, led the meeting in prayers.

24. **MINUTES**

It was **MOVED** by Cllr D.E. Clifford; **SECONDED** by Cllr M.L. Sheehan and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 6th October 2022 (copy having been circulated previously) be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record.

25. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Mayor reported that he had been sad to receive news of the passing of Honorary Alderman Colin Balchin, who had passed away on 9th November. Alderman Balchin had served as a Councillor for 32 years and his loyal and distinguished service had been recognised by the Council in 2014 when he was made an Honorary Alderman. He would be long remembered, having left a

lasting legacy through his contribution to community life and the well-being of the Borough.

- (2) The Mayor informed Members that former Councillor Pat Devereux had passed away on 5th December. She had spent the last few years of her life living in Brighton close to her family. Mrs Devereux had been elected to the Council in 1987 for Empress Ward and had served for nineteen years. She had been Mayor of the Borough in 1995/96 and had also served on Hampshire County Council. The Council's thoughts and sympathies were with her family.
- (3) On Sunday 13th November, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor had attended several wreath laying services and Services of Remembrance. The Mayor expressed appreciation to all Councillors and officers who had supported these important commemorative events.
- (4) On 1st December, the Mayor had hosted a reception in partnership with the Garrison and the Deputy Lieutenant for Surrey, Shahid Azeem, where a statement of goodwill and collaboration had been signed between Rushmoor and Rawalpindi, the home of the Pakistani Army. The event had marked the roles and importance that Aldershot and Rawalpindi played with their respective armies.
- (5) On Monday 5th December, the Mayor's Christmas Coffee Morning had been held at the Council Offices and had raised £218 for the Mayor's charities. The Mayor thanked all who had supported the event.
- (6) The Community Carol Service event, organised jointly by the Council, HQ Aldershot Garrison, Aldershot Town Football Club, Aspire Defence and Grainger, was to take place the following day, Friday 9th December, at the Royal Garrison Church of All Saints, Aldershot. In addition to the carol service at 6.30 pm, the event would include a giant snow globe, a brass band, food stalls and family entertainment from 5.00 pm. All were invited to attend.
- (7) The Mayor reported that Honorary Alderman John Debenham had been in touch to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and he wished to be remembered to the Council. Alderman Debenham, who had been a former Leader and Mayor of the Borough, reported that he was healthy and living at Knellwood.
- (8) The Mayor informed Members that his Charity Quiz night would be held at 7.00 p.m. on Friday 27th January at the Council Offices to raise funds for his charities. Further information would be circulated soon.
- (9) The Mayor reported that Ms Catriona Herbert, Corporate Manager – Legal Services, would be leaving the Council on 23rd January 2023, having been with the Council for just over four years. He thanked her for her service to the Council.
- (10) Also leaving the Council was Mr Andrew Colver, Head of Democracy and Community, after a very impressive 38 years of service for the Council.

Mr Colver had joined the Council in Summer 1984 as a Committee Assistant, progressing to the position of Head of Member Services and later Head of Democratic Services. Once a Head of Service, his responsibilities had expanded and he had led several different teams and services over the years. These had included the community safety team, building and property services, facilities and energy management, corporate policy, corporate communications, customer services and community development. However, the one constant had been Andrew's leadership of the Democracy Team and Electoral Services.

Mr Colver had excelled in the delivery and modernisation of the Council's elections and had been instrumental in developing a range of elections projects to increase voter engagement and turnout. In particular, there had been projects for early voting, internet voting and working to improve arrangements for military service electors.

In 2012, Mr Colver had been awarded an OBE for services to Local Government and this had been very much in recognition of the outstanding contribution he had made in the elections field.

More recently, Mr Colver had taken a leading role in the Council's response to the Covid Pandemic, successfully and tirelessly co-ordinating activity between the Council and its health and community partners. He had also taken a central role in supporting and leading arrangements for Rushmoor's international links and visits.

The Council thanked Mr Colver for his commitment to Rushmoor with a round of applause.

At this point, further votes of thanks were made by the Leader of the Council, Cllr Clifford and Cllr Dibble.

Mr Colver thanked Councillors and Officers for their good wishes.

26. **STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS**

The Mayor reported that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order 8.

27. **RECOMMENDATION OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Protocol for the selection of Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Cllr. P.J. Cullum introduced the Report of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 28th November 2022, which recommended the approval of several changes to the protocol for the selection of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. It was **MOVED** by Cllr. P.J. Cullum; **SECONDED** by Cllr Jessica Auton – That approval be given to the changes set out in the Report.

There voted **FOR: 34; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAINED: 2** and the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED.**

28. **APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM EXECUTIVE HEAD OF FINANCE AS SEC 151 OFFICER**

Members were informed that the Council had a statutory requirement to appoint a Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) with responsibility for the administration of the financial affairs of the Council. Under the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the designation of an officer as the Council's Section 151 Officer was made by the Council, and this report sought approval to designate the new Interim Executive Head of Finance as S151 Officer following the departure of the current Interim Executive Head of Finance.

RESOLVED: That the new Interim Executive Head of Finance, **MR. SIMON LITTLE** be appointed as the Council's Section 151 Officer from 3rd January, 2023.

29. **QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET**

The Mayor reported that four questions had been submitted for response by Members of the Cabinet.

The first question had been submitted by Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo for response by the Operational Services Portfolio Holder regarding the measures the Council was taking to prioritise enforcement of housing standards in the Borough in the light of the recent death of Awaab Ishak as a result of prolonged exposure to mould in his home environment.

In response, Cllr M.L. Sheehan detailed the procedures currently in place and assured Members that Council officers would act swiftly in implementing them.

The second question had been submitted by Cllr Jules Crossley for the Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder on opposition from local residents to the potential loss of trees in Farnborough town centre as a result of the Farnborough Civic Quarter Development.

In response, Cllr M.J. Tennant stated that the planning application for the Farnborough Civic Quarter was a live application and was subject to scrutiny and that it was, therefore, not appropriate to comment on this at this time. It was confirmed that the Rushmoor Development Partnership was committed to minimising the loss of trees as a result of the development and that the scheme demonstrated an overall net gain of biodiversity.

The third question had been submitted by Cllr Sophie Porter for the Operational Services Portfolio Holder on the number of prosecutions brought by the Council since 2010 against housing associations or private landlords in relation to mouldy and damp properties in the Borough.

In response, Cllr M.L. Sheehan stated that, whilst the Council had not instigated any prosecutions since 2010, the Private Housing Team had offered advice and, where required, taken enforcement action, including the issue of prohibition notices.

The fourth question had been submitted by Cllr Sophie Porter for the Operational Services Portfolio Holder on what steps the Council was taking to respond to the poor quality of Armed Forces family houses within the Borough.

In response, Cllr M.L. Sheehan stated that issues relating to military accommodation would be treated the same as any other housing in the Borough. It was confirmed, however, that there had not been many complaints received historically from military personnel and that the communications strategy in this respect would be reviewed to increase awareness.

30. REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the following meetings be received:

Cabinet	11th October 2022
Cabinet	15th November 2022
Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee	26th September 2022
Development Management Committee	12th October 2022
Development Management Committee	9th November 2022

31. REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Policy and Project Advisory Board meetings held on 21st September 2022 and 23rd November 2022 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20th October 2022 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm.
