

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Farnborough on Thursday, 20th April, 2023 at 7.00 pm.

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

Cllr A. Adeola
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 Prabesh KC
Cllr Nadia Martin
Cllr A.R. Newell
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr Calum Stewart
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr S. Trussler

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Jib Belbase
Cllr C.W. Card
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr Peace Essien Igodifo
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr Sarah Spall
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr Nem Thapa
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Honorary Alderman A.E.A. Gardiner
Honorary Alderman R.J. Kimber

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Jessica Auton, Cllr A.H. Gani, Cllr L. Jeffers, Cllr T.W. Mitchell and Cllr Marina Munro.

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chief Executive, Mr Paul Shackley, read a tribute to the Council in respect of Mr Reman Rana, one of the Council's officers who had very sadly passed away aged 29. Mr Shackley spoke of Reman's achievements and career and that he had joined Rushmoor as a Housing Officer in April 2022.

Reman was very well liked and respected and took great pride in carrying out what was a challenging role. The Chief Executive had written to Reman's family expressing the Council's sincere condolences and support. The Deputy Chief Executive would be attending the funeral along with Reman's colleagues and friends from Rushmoor. The Council stood to observe a period of silence in Reman's memory. The Mayor's Chaplain, Major Ted Benneyworth, then led the meeting in prayers.

41. **MINUTES**

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

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 23rd February 2023 be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record.

42. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Mayor reported that he had welcomed the Mayor and Mayoress of Gorkha to the Borough on 9th March 2023. The delegation had stayed in the Borough until 12th March and the group had also included the Deputy Mayor of Gorkha. The delegation had also attended the Mayor's Charity Banquet on 10th March.

The Mayor advised the Council that he had attended festivities for the Nepali New Year, which this year had fallen on 14th April 2023. The in Nepali calendar it was the year 2080.

- (2) The Mayor advised that, on 10th March 2023, he had attended an event to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Edgar Jerome Ltd in Aldershot.
- (3) The Mayor reported that, on 10th March 2023, he had held his Charity Banquet at Princes Hall in Aldershot. He thanked all Members who had supported this event, which had raised £3,000 for his charities.
- (4) The Mayor reported that, on 24th February, he had attended a topping out ceremony at Union Yard in Aldershot, which marked the completion of the building's concrete structure, when councillors, staff and representatives from the Hill Group had joined together to pour the topping concrete on the roof.
- (5) The Mayor reported that it gave him great pleasure to mark the long-service of eight councillors:
- Cllr Diane Bedford had been elected to St. Mark's Ward in 2002 and had served on many of the committees and panels during her 21 years' service. Currently, Cllr Bedford was Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and she had also served as the Leisure and Youth Portfolio Holder from 2004 until 2013. Cllr Bedford had had the honour to serve as Deputy Mayor in 2013/14 and Mayor of the Borough in 2014/15 (*20 years' service medal*).
 - Cllr Craig Card had been first elected to the Council in 1991 and had served the residents of Mayfield Ward until 2010. After a spell away from the Council, Cllr Card had been re-elected to represent the residents of St. Mark's Ward in 2022 (*20 years' service medal*).
 - Cllr Peter Crerar had been elected to the Council in 2003 to represent the residents of Manor Park Ward. Cllr Crerar had served on many of the Council's committees and panels and currently served as Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Project Advisory Board. Cllr Crerar had also had the honour of being Deputy Mayor in 2011/12 and Mayor of the Borough in 2012/13 (*20 years' service medal*).

- Cllr Paul Taylor had been elected to the Council in 2002 and had served the residents of Knellwood Ward ever since. Cllr Taylor had served as Chairman of the Leisure and Youth Panel from 2003 to 2007 and had been the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder on the Cabinet since 2007 (except for one year when Cllr Taylor had been the Customer Experience and Improvement Portfolio Holder) (*20 years' service medal*).
- Cllr Steve Masterson had been first elected to the Council in 1991 and had served the residents of Grange Ward until 1995. Cllr Masterson's second term of office had been from 2004 until 2012 and his current term of office had commenced in 2015, representing the residents of Cove and Southwood Ward. Cllr Masterson was currently the Cabinet Champion for Climate Change and had previously served as the Safety and Regulation Portfolio Holder and as Chairman of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee with involvement in many licensing hearings. Cllr Masterson had had the honour of serving as Deputy Mayor in 2017/18 and then as Mayor of the Borough in 2018/19 (*20 years' service medal*).
- Cllr Charles Choudhary was congratulated on his 31 years' service in local government. Cllr Choudhary had been a Member for Rowhill Ward (formerly Alexandra Ward) from 1987 to 1995 and again from 2000 to present. Cllr Choudhary had served on many of the Council's committees and panels and had also been the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Concessions and Community Support from 2005 to 2013. Cllr Choudhary had had the honour of serving twice as Mayor of the Borough in 2001/02 and 2020/21 (*30 years' service bar to be added to long-service medal*).

Cllr Choudhary had also been elected to serve on Hampshire County Council in 2013 and had had the honour of serving as Vice-Chairman during 2018/19 and then Chairman of Hampshire County Council in 2019/20.

- Cllr David Clifford had achieved 32 years' service in local government. Cllr Clifford had been elected to the Council in 1991 and had represented Queen's, Wellington and Empress Wards and had then been elected to serve the residents of Manor Park Ward in 2016. Cllr Clifford had served on most of the Council's committees and panels and, most notably, Cllr Clifford had been Leader of the Council since 2016. Cllr Clifford also had the honour of being Mayor of the Borough in 1999/2000 (*30 years' service bar to add to long-service medal*).
- Cllr Mike Smith had achieved 35 years' service in local government. Cllr Smith had originally been elected to the Council in 1978 to the Farnborough North Ward and had served until 1979. His second term of office had been from 1982 to 1994 when he had been elected to Grange Ward, and again in his third term of office from 2000 until 2012. After a period of two years away, Cllr Smith had been elected to the Council to serve the residents of Empress Ward. Cllr Smith had served on many of the Council's committees, with a number of chairing roles, and most

recently as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (35 years' service bar to add to long-service medal).

The long-service award Members were invited to step forward to receive their long-service medals and bars.

(6) The Mayor advised Members that this was the final Council meeting before the Borough Elections on 4th May 2023 and that, in addition to himself, there were three other Members not seeking re-election – Councillors Charles Choudhary, Lee Jeffers and Prabesh KC:

- Cllr Lee Jeffers had been elected to serve the residents of West Heath Ward in 2019. Cllr Jeffers had been Vice-Chairman of the Development Management Committee from 2021 to date.
- Cllr Prabesh KC had been elected to serve the residents of Wellington Ward in 2019. During his time on the Council, Cllr Prabesh KC had served on the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Policy and Project Advisory Board.
- Cllr Charles Choudhary – The Mayor referred to the potted history of Cllr Choudhary's service given earlier in the meeting and stated that his experience and expertise at Rushmoor would be greatly missed. 31 years' service in local government was an outstanding achievement.

The Mayor thanked Councillors Jeffers, Prabesh KC and Choudhary for their service to the Council and to the people of the Borough and wished them all well for the future.

The Leader of the Council then paid tribute to the 42 years' service to the Borough of the Mayor (Cllr J.H. Marsh), who would not be seeking re-election at the forthcoming Borough Council Elections. Cllr Clifford thanked Cllr Marsh for his long and dedicated service to the Council and the residents of the Borough of Rushmoor and stated that he would be deeply missed. There would be an opportunity to say more about Cllr Marsh at the Annual Council Meeting on 23rd May 2023.

43. **STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS**

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

44. **NOTICE OF MOTION - YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION**

The Council was asked to consider a Motion which had been submitted by Cllr Sophie Porter in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 9 (1):

"Youth violence is an issue in Rushmoor, compared to other areas in Hampshire. According to the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) report "Violence Reduction Unit –

Problem Profile (2020)", the four factors leading to an increased risk of crime involvement are: society, community, relationships and the individual.

Rushmoor continues to have higher rates of risk factors, this being due to greater deprivation. A safe space for youth, such as youth cafes, can have an impact on individual factors for reducing youth crime.

External funding has been found to implement a youth crime prevention programme in Aldershot, but there needs to be targeted schemes through the whole of Rushmoor. A submission has been made to seek external funding.

This Motion requests Rushmoor Borough Council allocates Officer resources to tackle youth crime in the area by:

- writing business cases to seek external funding for a youth café in both Farnborough and Aldershot, addressing access to the arts, youth employment and engagement with civic duties;
- the Communities Team redesign the youth provision in Farnborough with crime prevention in mind; and
- the Chief Executive writes to the Crime Commissioner requesting investment in the area for youth services."

In moving the Motion, Cllr Porter referred to a 17-year-old from Aldershot who had attended a party in Camberley who had sadly been stabbed and who had died from his injuries. This young man's family was known to Cllr Porter. Cllr Porter also advised of a recent event for 11–16 year olds where it had become apparent that many knew of someone their age who carried a knife.

Cllr Porter referred to a new crime prevention programme called "Fighting Chance" which aimed to address the causes of crime in young people by encouraging them to engage in other social activities, including sport. Members were advised that a funding bid had been made to the National Lottery for this scheme to enable it to be offered throughout the Borough, particularly to those deemed at risk of exclusion from school or vulnerable to gangs with the potential to be involved in serious youth violence. Cllr Porter stated that the Motion was not about asking for funding but asking for Council Officers to be able to devote time to the scheme.

An amendment was MOVED by Cllr Porter; SECONDED by Cllr Gaynor Austin – That the Motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to examine the "Fighting Chance" youth programme and youth services in the Borough, including the work of the Police and Hampshire County Council in respect of young people.

In seconding the Amendment, Cllr Austin referred to the importance of stability for young people and referred to the links between drugs and crime; family, relationships, deprivation and lack of stability were all factors in young people turning to drugs and crime. Cllr Austin spoke of the importance of early intervention to help prevent young people getting involved in crime. She felt that it was most important to

invest in and support the Borough's young people, by giving them good role models and showing them stability at least in some areas of life.

During debate, there was some support for the Amendment, although it was also suggested that, subject to National Lottery funding being received for the youth programme, the Motion should be referred to the Policy and Project Advisory Board. The view was also expressed that the provision of increased resources for activities to support young people at risk of entering into crime had not been raised as part of the budget setting process. It was further mentioned that Hampshire County Council was responsible for the provision of such services.

Following further discussion, the Mayor directed that, under the provisions of Standing Order 9 (4), the Motion be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration in the first instance.

45. **CONSTITUTION REVIEW - STANDING ORDERS FOR THE REGULATION OF BUSINESS**

The Mayor advised Members that, on 23rd February 2023, the Council had considered and approved an updated Constitution. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 29(1), the proposed amendments for the Standing Orders for the Regulation of Business had stood adjourned without discussion until this meeting.

It was **MOVED** by Cllr P.J. Cullum (Chairman of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee); **SECONDED** by Cllr S.J. Trussler – That the revised Standing Orders for the Regulation of Business (as set out in Annex 1 of the Agenda) be adopted for inclusion in Part 4 of the Constitution. There voted **FOR: 25; ABSTAINED: 0; AGAINST: 0** and the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

46. **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

(1) **Pay Policy Statement and Gender Pay Gap 2023/24**

Cllr P.J. Cullum introduced a report of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 27th March 2023, which recommended the approval of the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 for publication under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, as set out in Annex 2 to the agenda. It was **MOVED** by Cllr P.J. Cullum; **SECONDED** by Cllr S. Trussler – That the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 be approved.

There voted **FOR: 22; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAINED: 0** and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

(2) **Variation to the Capital Programme – Local Authority Housing Fund**

Cllr M.J. Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder, introduced the Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 18th April 2023 on progress that had been made on the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) and the proposed governance arrangements associated with the purchase of individual properties. This Fund

aimed to reduce housing pressures on local authorities arising from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

It was **MOVED** by Cllr M.J. Tennant; **SECONDED** by Cllr P.J. Taylor – That £1,818,089 be added to the Capital Programme for 2023/24 for the purchase of Local Authority Housing Fund funded properties, noting the capital financing implications of the match funding, as set out in Exempt Appendix 1 to the Report.

There voted **FOR: 22; ABSTAINED: 0; AGAINST: 0** and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

47. **QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET**

- (1) Cllr M.J. Roberts had submitted a question for response by the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder (Cllr P.G. Taylor) in respect of business rates and how these affected small, medium and large businesses.

In response, Cllr P.G. Taylor stated that support for local businesses had been extensive. The Council had distributed over £7 million to local businesses around the Borough as a result of government initiatives to mitigate the effect of the Pandemic. The business rates team had done much to make sure businesses were receiving the support they needed.

- (2) Cllr M.J. Roberts had submitted a question for response by the Customer Experience, Digital and Transformation Portfolio Holder (Cllr J.B. Canty) in respect of artificial intelligence (AI) on the work of the Council.

In response, Cllr Canty stated that, over the previous few years, the Council had seen a major shift in how residents accessed its services. Fewer people were visiting the Council Offices in person. The Council had a Customer, Digital and Technology Plan in place. Cllr Canty confirmed that there were currently no plans to roll out AI at the Council, however this was something that would be looked at more closely.

- (3) Cllr M.J. Roberts had submitted a question for response by the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder (Cllr P.G. Taylor) on various financial matters, concerning the level of borrowing/debt in respect of Capital Programme projects; the effect of inflation on goods and services; and, whether any major works would be deferred.

In response, Cllr Taylor stated that approved projects within the Capital Programme would go forward, alongside Council approved plans. The Council would keep within borrowing requirements and projects would be carried out as needed. Cllr Taylor advised that the Council would not spend or borrow until it was the right time to do so. In respect of inflation, Cllr Taylor confirmed that inflation was factored into projects.

48. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cllr M.D. Smith, presented the Annual Report of the Committee 2022/23.

The Mayor reported that one question had been submitted by Cllr Jules Crossley for response by the Chairman in respect of the scrutiny of Farnborough Airport and whether the Committee would be continuing this work through the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to look at noise monitoring, weekend flights, complaints from outside of the Borough and air quality in Rushmoor. In response, Cllr Smith stated that he expected such a Task and Finish Group to be set up and invited Cllr Crossley to be a member when it was established.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

49. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

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

Cabinet	14th March 2023
Development Management Committee	22nd February 2023
Development Management Committee	22nd March 2023
Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee	27th March 2023

50. **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD**

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 9th February and 30th March 2023 and the Policy and Project Advisory Board meeting held on 15th March 2023 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.57 pm.
