

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Farnborough on Thursday, 22nd June, 2017 at 7.00 pm.

The Worshipful The Mayor (Cllr Sophia Choudhary (Chairman))
The Deputy Mayor (Cllr S.J. Masterson (Vice-Chairman))

Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford
Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr R.L.G. Dibbs
Cllr D.S. Gladstone
Cllr Barbara Hurst
Cllr B. Jones
Cllr J.H. Marsh
Cllr A.R. Newell
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr M. Staplehurst
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr B.A. Thomas
Cllr J.E. Woolley

Cllr D.M.T. Bell
Cllr J.B. Canty
Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cllr Liz Corps
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr Sue Dibble
Cllr Jennifer Evans
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr A. Jackman
Cllr G.B. Lyon
Cllr Marina Munro
Cllr J.J. Preece
Cllr P.F. Rust
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr L.A. Taylor
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Honorary Alderman C. Balchin J.P.
a Honorary Alderman R.J. Debenham, M.B.E.
Honorary Alderman R.J. Kimber
a Honorary Alderman G.J. Woolger

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Sue Carter and Cllr K.H. Muschamp.

Before the meeting opened, the meeting was led in prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Steve Stewart.

9. MINUTES

It was MOVED by Cr. Barbara Hurst; SECONDED by Cr. G.B. Lyon and

RESOLVED: That, the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 23rd May, 2017 (copy having been circulated previously) be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

10. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Mayor invited Honorary Alderman Mr. Colin Balchin, J.P. to step forward to present to the Council four framed photographs of streets in Aldershot which had been taken over 100 years ago.
- (2) The Mayor advised Members that the first event she had attended as Mayor had been at the invitation of the Buddhist Community Centre UK. This had been a "Life Long Empowerment: and "Dharma Talk Programme" on 27th May in the presence of His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Tinley Dorje – the spiritual leader of the Karma Kagyu lineage of Tibetan Buddhism.
- (3) On 28th May the Mayor and Mayoress had attended the annual Gurkha Cup football tournament at the sports ground on Queen's Avenue. The Mayor advised Members that the Tamu Dhee Association UK had presented her with a cheque for £500 for the Mayor's charities.
- (4) The Mayor reported that she had attended the annual Farnborough Donkey Derby on 29th May, which had been organised by local Rotarians at King George V playing fields. The event had been well supported and had raised a considerable amount of money for local charities.
- (5) The Mayor had had the honour of attending a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 1st June and had been accompanied by her sister, Zoonia, and the Leader of the Council and his partner, Liz Stovell.
- (6) On 3rd June, the Mayor advised Members that she had attended the Rushmoor 'Get Involved' Fair in Union Street, Aldershot. This was an event which had been supported by 31 voluntary organisations and had been organised to give local people the opportunity to find out what these local charities, community groups and clubs did. The other purpose of the event was to show people how they could get involved in volunteering and support local organisations who played an important part in the local community. The event had been a great success.
- (7) The Mayor stated that she had been proud to attend the Victoria Day event in Aldershot town centre on 10th June. More than 500 people from community groups, schools and businesses had taken part in the grand parade. The Mayor thanked those at the Council who had organised the event with the help of the Aldershot Community Together group which comprised volunteers and residents who all helped to make the event a very successful one.
- (8) The Mayor had attended a Kids Out event on 14th June which had been held at the Army Rugby Club in Aldershot. Rotary volunteers from Rushmoor and surrounding areas had made the day a great success for over 500 local disabled and disadvantaged children. The Mayor said that it had been a privilege to be at the event and to be able to witness so many caring people bringing fun and happiness into the lives of disabled and disadvantaged children from the area.

- (9) On 18th June, the Mayor had had the honour of attending a memorable drumhead service at the Aldershot Military Cemetery to mark the 35th anniversary of the Falkland Islands conflict. The service had been attended by hundreds of veterans from Aldershot's former Parachute Regiments. Following the service, the commemoration had moved to Aldershot town centre where the Mayor had been proud to be part of the saluting party outside Princes Hall, when serving soldiers representing 16 Air Assault Brigade, plus hundreds of veterans, had taken part in a march through the town centre.
- (10) On 19th June, the Armed Forces Day flag had been raised in Princes Gardens, Aldershot. The Mayor had been joined by the Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire, the Mayor's Chaplain, civic guests, members of the public, representatives of the Royal British Legion, Military and the Fire and Rescue Service. The Armed Forces Day flag would be flown until the end of Armed Forces Day on 24th June.
- (11) The Mayor reported that the grand opening of a new restaurant in Farnborough – Sticky Sisters – had taken place on 13th June which had been attended by the Deputy Mayor. The company had presented the Deputy Mayor with a cheque for £500 for the Mayor's Charities.
- (12) The Mayor advised Members that a few events were being organised over the coming months in aid of her charities. On 3rd September a charity cycle ride would be held, organised by Naya Yuva and the Rushmoor Cycle Forum. On 15th September the Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament would be held. Details about both events would be sent out shortly.

11. **RUSHMOOR COMMUNITY AWARD 2017**

The Rushmoor Community Award recognised local people who had in some way made a significant contribution to the community. The Mayor reported that, in 2017, the Council had agreed to present the Award to two people: Mr. Mick Mills and Mrs. Caroline Mills in recognition of their significant and admirable fundraising and volunteering activities over many years.

The Mayor advised Members that both Mr. and Mrs. Mills had given an incredible amount of time to the community over recent years. Their roles in Scouting had seen them: running weekly meetings for Cubs; organising summer camps and weekend camps for the Cubs; and being involved with District Scouting events such as Cubs 100 Camp. Mr. and Mrs. Mills also organised and ran fundraising events for the Scout Group which raised over £2,000 per year, which was vital to the running of the Scout Group. It was considered that, without the efforts of Mick and Caroline the 2nd Aldershot Scout Group would not be as successful as it was.

Mr. and Mrs. Mills were also very much involved with the Aldershot Branch of the Royal British Legion; Mick was the Secretary of the Branch and Caroline was the Poppy Appeal Organiser for Aldershot. Since becoming Poppy Appeal Organiser for Aldershot, Caroline had increased the amount raised each year with the assistance of a team of volunteers and the full support of Mick. Over £221,000 had been raised since she had taken over the role of Poppy Appeal Organiser.

Caroline and Mick also organised bi-monthly coffee mornings for the members of the Aldershot Branch, giving them the opportunity to meet up as well as a weekend away for the members during the year. Mick and Caroline were also key members of the committee that arranged the Service of Remembrance in the Municipal Gardens in Aldershot. This was a very well attended service attended by all sectors of the community, including war veterans and local youth organisations as well as representatives of all areas of the local community. Attendance at this event had grown considerably over recent years. Mick had also built links with Aldershot Town Football Club with whom he had arranged a number of events around the Poppy Appeal, including standard bearers being on the pitch to mark two minutes' silence.

Mick and Caroline were also involved in organising social fundraising events for the Royal Naval Association. Mick had also been a school governor and Caroline had been involved with the Parents' and Teachers' Association at Newport School (now Alderwood School).

It was evident that Mick and Caroline supported all areas of the local community – young, old and in-between. They were both very generous with their time and help, not only with raising vitally important funds for local charities, but also in passing on their skills and knowledge to the youngsters and adults alike, which would help to provide a brighter future for Rushmoor. They were able to engage with all areas of the local community and it was felt that they were a huge asset to the Borough and very worthy winners of the Rushmoor Community Award for 2017.

The Mayor then presented Mr. and Mrs. Mills with their Awards and certificates. In thanking the Council for the Awards, Mr. Mills said that it was nice to be recognised for the volunteer work and awards like this were very motivational to those who gave up their time for others. However, as was taught to the pair of them during their time in the Royal Navy, it was teamwork that enabled major tasks to be achieved effectively. He paid tribute to the wonderful teams of people who worked with them on the charity work. All the Scout leaders in the 2nd Aldershot Scout Group and across the District worked as a team to give children an opportunity to experience adventurous activities as well as helping to make them good citizens for the future.

Within the Royal Naval Association and the Royal British Legion, the committees worked tirelessly to ensure members and their friends were able to meet up for trips, coffee mornings or nights out. They were also there for their welfare and to help them where necessary. By far the biggest team was the Poppy Appeal collectors in Aldershot. Mr. Mills paid tribute to their dedication and service. Increasing the total amount raised each year from £17,000 to £45,000 in five years and winning a County Poppy Award on the way was a great achievement by the team.

Mr. Mills thanked the Council for its support of the Royal British Legion, Royal Naval Association and 2nd Aldershot Scout Group. He felt that volunteering was very rewarding. Although it was hard work, time consuming and often stressful, he felt that there were many memorable and fun-filled moments along the way. He thanked their family for their continuing support of their voluntary work. Mr. and Mrs. Mills thanked the Council for the Awards and accepted the Awards on behalf of the community teams that they represented.

12. **STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS**

The Mayor reported that two questions had been submitted in pursuance of Standing Order 8(3).

The first question had been submitted by Cr. J. Canty and related to what reassurance could be given to residents of the actions being taken by the Council to ensure the safety and integrity of multi-storey buildings across the Borough and what steps would be taken to maintain the highest standards of fire protection in those buildings following the recent tragedy at Grenfell House in London.

In response, the Health and Housing Portfolio Holder (Cr. Barbara Hurst) stated that, since the tragic events the previous week, she had been working with officers to ensure that the Council's response was effective, timely and sensitive to the situation. The Council had responded proactively and in response to instructions from the Department of Communities and Local Government to ensure that multi-storey buildings met the necessary standards of health and safety. The Council's focus so far had been on residential blocks to ensure regulatory safety standards were adhered to and the Council was working with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Homes and Communities Agency, registered providers of social housing and Hampshire County Council.

On 14th June, officers had taken immediate action to contact each registered provider operating in the Borough, requesting details of their flatted developments and copies of fire risk assessments. The Council had received a positive response to that request and registered providers had confirmed that they had taken action to ensure their properties and residents were safe. The Council had compiled a database to record responses.

On 19th June, officers had submitted the formal response required by the Department of Communities and Local Government, providing details of all blocks of flats in excess of six storeys or 18 metres high. The Council had identified five blocks that matched the definition and had arranged joint inspections with the landlord and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. Fire safety inspection, advice and guidance fell within the remit of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and it was guiding the Council in respect of its role and any action it might need to take. The Council would be carrying out joint risk assessments on all four and five storey flatted developments.

In addition, the Homes and Communities Agency had advised the Council that it had written to all registered providers to remind them of the obligation to comply with part 1.2b of the Regulators Home Standard (Health and Safety). This was a follow-up to

the Department of Communities and Local Government instruction and had insisted on an immediate email response on any potential non-compliance.

Cr. Hurst also advised that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service was working with all high-rise building owners and landlords to ensure all of these structures were inspected and that residents felt safe in their homes. Cr. Hurst had been working with officers to ensure that the Council could provide all the support and advice it could. The Council recognised that it needed to maintain momentum in the aftermath of the fire in London and awaited further information following the tragedy.

The second question had been submitted by Cr. A.H. Crawford and concerned landlords' self certification with respect to fire regulations.

In response, the Health and Housing Portfolio Holder (Cr. Barbara Hurst) stated that the current arrangements had been introduced by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005, which was based on the principle that those responsible for activities that gave rise to risk also had the responsibility for the fire safety of their premises and the people who could use them. There was therefore a duty on landlords or owners to carry out fire safety risk assessments and to identify, implement and maintain appropriate measures to ensure the safety of occupants and anyone else likely to be affected by a fire on the premises. In some circumstances, such as in houses in multiple occupation, there was a joint responsibility between the housing authority and the fire regulation authority in relation to common or shared parts. In Rushmoor's case, the Council carried out risk assessments with the landlord where an issue was brought to the Council's attention. Cr. Hurst had discussed this with officers and steps would be taken to raise awareness of the health and safety issues and to encourage residents and landlords to contact the Council around these responsibilities. The Council also intended to use the good liaison arrangements it had with landlords and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, such as through the Landlords' Forum, to highlight responsibilities and to ensure that action was taken in premises where residents might be anxious.

13. **RECOMMENDATION OF THE CABINET - CHANGES TO THE BUDGET**

The Leader of the Council (Cr. D.E. Clifford) introduced the Report of the Cabinet, which recommended the approval of a variation of £1.8 million to the 2017/18 Budget.

It was MOVED by Cr. D.E. Clifford; SECONDED by Cr. P.G. Taylor – that approval be given to the variation of £1.8 million to the 2017/18 Budget..

There voted FOR: 21; AGAINST: 0 the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

14. **QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET**

The Mayor reported that five questions had been submitted for response by the Cabinet.

- (1) Cr. M.J. Roberts asked a question of the Health and Housing Portfolio Holder regarding the Council's initial assessment of the need for additional fire prevention measures for blocks of four storeys and over in the Borough.

In response, Cr. Hurst stated that joint inspections had been carried out on two out of the four blocks of flats which had been identified as high risk under the definition provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government (i.e. blocks of flats in excess of five storeys or 18 metres). The remaining had been scheduled for the following week. The Council had decided that all four and five storey residential blocks would be prioritised, using the risk assessment information provided by the Borough's registered providers. Programmed inspections would be made, the timing of which was dependent on the workload of the fire authority.

Fire safety inspection, advice and education fell within the remit of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Council would be guided by them in respect of the Council's role. It exemplified the strength of the Council's partnership with the Service and the good track record of the joint response to issues.

- (2) Cr. A.H. Crawford asked a question of the Health and Housing Portfolio Holder regarding the results of fire risk assessments and any recommendations of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service with respect to the blocks of offices which had been converted to residential flats in the Borough and how this information was being communicated to residents concerned, such as at Alexander House and Stafford House in Station Road, Aldershot.

In response, Cr. Hurst confirmed that fire risk assessments had been carried out at both Alexander House and Stafford House in April 2017. The landlord, Accent Housing, had provided copies of these to the Council. Whilst the risks identified in those inspections had been minimal, officers (including housing and building control officers), the fire officer and a representative of the Accent Group had carried out a joint inspection earlier that day.

Cr. Hurst reported that both the buildings were safe and did not pose any immediate fire risk to residents and this had been confirmed by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service. There were some minor issues around fire safety signage and this was being addressed.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service had advised the Leader of the Council that Rushmoor had been the first local authority in Hampshire to request a joint inspection. The Service had been impressed with the speed with which Rushmoor had initiated and responded to the request to carry out these assessments.

In response to a supplementary question about advising residents, Cr. Hurst confirmed that when the report was published, it would be communicated to the residents of the buildings concerned.

- (3) Cr. Jennifer Evans asked a question of the Health and Housing Portfolio Holder regarding when the next emergency planning exercise would be carried out in Rushmoor and asked if the organisers could focus this on a fire in a multi-storey residential block of flats.

In response, Cr. Hurst advised that there was currently no date for the next emergency planning exercise, although Hampshire County Council was currently in the process of developing a Hampshire-wide event to look at current issues. Rushmoor would be part of that event. In addition, Members were advised that the Council was in regular contact with other districts and the County Council to share knowledge and ensure that the response from the emergency services and local authorities was effective and timely in the event of an emergency taking place.

Cr. Hurst stated that, at a national level, there was Resilience Direct, which was a national secure online hub that allowed authorities to share resilience information, work together and respond effectively. Rushmoor was part of this network and used it to support its local work.

- (4) Cr. M.J. Roberts asked a question of the Health and Housing Portfolio Holder about a review of risk strategy by the Council.

In response, Cr. Hurst stated that Rushmoor had a set of risk management policies which ensured safety and continuity at the Council's premises. These were regularly reviewed to take account of advice, guidance and regulations. Regular reports were provided by the Council's health and safety adviser to identify issues and the action being taken.

In relation to fire safety in registered providers' premises, it was noted that the Council was working closely with Hampshire Fire and Rescue and would act on guidance from the Service. The Council would be holding registered providers to account, working with the Homes and Communities Agency for the properties they owned. All registered providers had received communication from the Homes and Communities Agency about obligations to comply with part 1.2b of the Regulations Home Standard (Health and Safety). This issue could be an area to be considered by a policy and review panel.

- (5) Cr. M.J. Roberts asked a question of the Leader of the Council about representations to be made by the Council via the Local Government Association for an immediate suspension of further austerity cuts for local government.

In response, Cr. D.E. Clifford stated that councils across the country were urging the suspension of further austerity cuts and advised of the work being undertaken by the Local Government Association in relation to this issue.

15. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

- (1) **Cabinet –**

It was MOVED by Cr. D.E. Clifford; SECONDED by Cr. M.J. Tennant and

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Meetings of the Cabinet held on 2nd and 30th May, 2017 be received.

(2) **Development Management Committee –**

It was MOVED by Cr. B.A. Thomas; SECONDED by Cr. J.H. Marsh and

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the Meetings of the Development Management Committee held on 26th April and 24th May, 2017 be received.

(3) **Licensing and General Purposes Committee –**

It was MOVED by Cr. A. Jackman; SECONDED by Cr. J.E. Woolley and

RESOLVED: That the Report of the Meeting of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held on 25th May, be received.

16. **REPORTS OF POLICY AND REVIEW PANELS**

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the undermentioned meetings of the Policy and Review Panels be received:

POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL	DATE OF MEETING
Community	6th April, 2017
Borough Services	10th April, 2017
Environment	11th April, 2017
Leisure and Youth	5th June, 2017
Environment	6th June, 2017

The meeting closed at 8.12 pm.
