

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held on Thursday, 22nd April, 2021 at 7.00 pm via Microsoft Teams and streamed live.

The Worshipful The Mayor (Cllr M.S. Choudhary (Chairman))
The Deputy Mayor (Cllr B.A. Thomas)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr A.K. Chowdhury
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr Nadia Martin
Cllr T.W. Mitchell
Cllr K.H. Muschamp
Cllr Sophie Porter
Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr C.J. Stewart
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford
Cllr J.B. Canty
Cllr Sophia Choudhary
Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr Prabesh KC
Cllr J.H. Marsh
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Marina Munro
Cllr A.R. Newell
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr P.G. Taylor

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr A.J. Halstead.

Before the meeting was opened, the Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend George Newton, led the meeting in prayers.

45. **HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH**

The Council observed one minute's silence in memory of His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh who had passed away on 9th April 2021, aged 99.

46. **MINUTES**

It was **MOVED** by Cllr D.E. Clifford; **SECONDED** by Cllr K.H. Muschamp and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 25th February 2021 (copy having been circulated previously) be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record.

47. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Mayor advised Members that, on behalf of the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire and the Borough of Rushmoor, both he and the Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire (Lieutenant General Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL), together with the Leader of the Council, had laid floral tributes in memory of His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh at the Council Offices in Farnborough and by the flagpole in Princes Gardens in Aldershot on Saturday, 10th May 2021.

The Mayor also advised that he had written a letter of condolence to Her Majesty The Queen on behalf of the Council and people of Rushmoor.

- (2) The Mayor announced that he had two long-service announcements to make. Firstly, the Mayor advised Members that Cllr Mike Smith had completed over 30 years' service in local Government. Cllr Smith had achieved 33 years' service with Rushmoor through four terms of office: January 1978 to 1979 (representing Farnborough North Ward); May 1982 to 1994; May 2000 to 2012 (representing Grange Ward); and, May 2014 to date, representing Empress Ward. Cllr Smith had served on many of the Council's Committees over the years, including having been Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Community Policy and Review Panel and Vice-Chairman of the Environment Policy and Review Panel. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Cllr Smith for his service to the Council and the Borough and extended congratulations for achieving the milestone of 33 years.

Secondly, the Mayor announced that Cllr Alex Crawford had completed 20 years' service with the Council. Cllr Crawford had first been elected to the Council in 1976 and had served through to 1985. He had then been re-elected at the St Mark's By-Election on 10th December 2009 and had served the residents of St Mark's until 2012. Cllr Crawford had then been elected to the Wellington Ward in 2012 and had served the residents there ever since. His period of office had been extended due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Cllr Crawford had been Deputy Mayor in 2010/11 and had then been elected Mayor of the Borough in 2011/12. Cllr Crawford had also been Leader of the Labour Group.

Cllr Crawford had served on the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee, Licensing Sub-Committee, Development Management Committee and the Policy and Project Advisory Board, as well as the Borough Services, Corporate Services and Leisure and Youth Policy and Review Panels under previous decision-making structures. Cllr Crawford had also represented the Council on numerous outside bodies.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Cllr Crawford for his service to the Borough and the Council and congratulated him on completing 20 years' service.

The Mayor advised that arrangements would be made to invite both Cllr Smith and Cllr Crawford to the Mayor's Parlour, once Coronavirus restrictions had been lifted so that formal presentations could be made.

- (3) The Mayor advised Members that Cllr Veronica Graham-Green would not be seeking re-election at the forthcoming Borough Council Elections on 6th May 2021. The Mayor stated that Cllr Graham-Green had been elected onto the Council in May 2018 to represent the residents of West Heath Ward. Cllr Graham-Green had been a Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and had served on the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee and the Development Management Committee. In addition to serving on these committees, Cllr Graham-Green had also represented the Council on several outside bodies. Cllr Graham-Green had been particularly involved in Rushmoor's international links with twinned towns and would continue as the Chairman of the Rushmoor International Association.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Cllr Graham-Green for her work representing the residents of West Heath Ward and the people of Rushmoor and wished her well for the future.

48. **STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS**

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

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

(1) **Rushmoor Homes Ltd – Business Plan 2021-2026**

The Leader of the Council (Cllr D.E. Clifford) introduced the Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th March 2021, which recommended: approval of Rushmoor Homes Ltd's Business Plan 2021 – 2026, as set out in the appendix to the Report; authorisation of the Council's Chief Executive to approve any variations in the delivery methods used to achieve the outcomes of the Business Plan provided it was within the approved budget; and, noting the funding required to finance the company's operations and acquisition and development programme.

It was **MOVED** by Cllr D.E. Clifford; **SECONDED** by Cllr Marina Munro – That approval be given to the recommendations set out in the Report, as set out in the Report.

There voted **FOR**: 34; **AGAINST**: 0; **ABSTAINED**: 1 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

NOTE: Cllrs K. Dibble, K.H. Muschamp and P.G. Taylor declared their personal and non-prejudicial interests in this item in respect of being on the Board of Directors of Rushmoor Homes Ltd and, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, remained in the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

(2) **Code of Conduct for Members**

Cllr S.J. Masterson introduced the Report of the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 29th March 2021, which recommended the adoption of the new Code of Conduct for Members from the start of the 2021/22 Municipal Year (25th May 2021).

It was **MOVED** by Cllr S.J. Masterson; **SECONDED** by Cllr Mara Makunura – That

- (i) the new Code of Conduct for Members, as set out in the Report, be adopted from the start of the 2021/22 Municipal Year; and
- (ii) the intention to seek dispensations for Members to participate in items where they have a personal interest arising from their nomination or appointment by the Council to the general control or management of any body be noted.

There voted **FOR: 31; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAINED: 1** and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

(3) **Future Arrangements for the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee**

Cllr S.J. Masterson introduced the Report of the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 29th March 2021, which recommended that approval be given to future arrangements for the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee. It was **MOVED** by Cllr S.J. Masterson; **SECONDED** by Cllr Mara Makunura – That approval be given to

- (i) the change of the Committee's name to 'Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee' from the Annual Council Meeting in May 2021;
- (ii) updates to the Council's Constitution to incorporate a new Statement of Purpose to precede the Committee's terms of reference, as set out in Appendix 1 to the Report, and updates to Role Descriptions, as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 to the Report;
- (iii) an Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to consider a Special Responsibility Allowance for Committee Members; and
- (iv) at the Annual Council Meeting, Standing Orders for the Regulation of Business be suspended to enable the proposals set out in the Report to be implemented for 2021/22.

During discussion on this item, it was **MOVED** by Cllr K.H. Muschamp; **SECONDED** by Cllr A.J. Newell – That Recommendation (iii) be amended, as follows:

“(iii) “The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel be requested to convene in Autumn 2021 to review the Council's Members Allowances Scheme, to include the request made by the Committee.”

Following discussion, the Amendment was put to the meeting. There voted FOR: 27; AGAINST: 4; ABSTAINED: 3 and the Amendment to Recommendation (iii) was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

The amended Recommendations were then put to the meeting. There voted FOR: 33; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAINED: 2 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

(4) Extension of Term of Office for the Council's Designated Independent Person

Cllr S.J. Masterson introduced the Report of the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 29th March 2021, which recommended the extension of the term of office of the Council's Designated Independent Person by two years.

It was **MOVED** by Cllr S.J. Masterson; **SECONDED BY** Cllr Mara Makunura – That the term of office of Mrs. Mary Harris, as the Council's Designated Independent Person, be extended for two years until the end of the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

There voted FOR: 35; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAIN: 1 and the Recommendation was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

50. QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET

The Mayor reported that a question had been submitted by Cllr P.J. Cullum for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr D.E. Clifford) requesting an update on discussions with Leo Docherty MP, newly appointed Minister for Defence, People and Veterans, regarding support for Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans, following the Motion at the previous meeting of the Council.

In response, Cllr D.E. Clifford stated that he had taken the issue up with Mr Docherty MP and will continue discussions following the forthcoming elections. He recognised that there was cross-party support for this matter.

51. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cllr M.D. Smith, presented the Annual Report of the Committee 2020/21.

Cllr Veronica Graham-Green asked a question of the Chairman regarding a comparison of Rushmoor's Council Tax Support Scheme with other councils' schemes in the South East. In response, Cllr Smith stated that Rushmoor provided Council Tax support up to a maximum award of 88%, which meant that residents paid a minimum contribution of 12%. He also stated that Southampton provided Council Tax support up to a maximum of 75%, with residents therefore paying a minimum contribution of 25%. He further stated that Reading provided Council Tax support up to a maximum of 65%, with residents paying a minimum contribution of 35%.

Cllr R. Cooper asked a question of the Chairman regarding the involvement of the Committee in improving the performance of Registered Social Providers and their accountability to tenants and elected Members. In response, Cllr Smith stated that the Registered Providers Group, under the chairmanship of Cllr Diane Bedford, had been working well for a number of years and had played a key role in:

- Ensuring a good working relationship between the Council and the Registered Providers
- Ensuring that issues got sorted when things had gone wrong for residents
- Managing the process of change and providing an effective conduit between the providers and local communities/residents.

Cllr Smith gave a couple of recent examples which involved work with VIVID where there was now an improved complaints system and also with A2 Dominion where the Group's input had helped to resolve some complex challenges.

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

52. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

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

Cabinet	16th February 2021
Cabinet	23rd February 2021
Cabinet	16th March 2021
Development Management Committee	17th February 2021
Development Management Committee	17th March 2021
Licensing, Audit and General Purposes	29th March 2021

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

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the meeting of the Policy and Project Advisory Board held on 24th March 2021 and the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25th March 2021 be received.

The meeting closed at 8.59 pm.
