

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 27 MARCH 2018

Present: Councillor R Williams (Mayor);

Councillors Ayub, Brock, Chrisp, Davies, Dennis, Eden, D Edwards, K Edwards, Ennis, Gavin, Gittings, Grashoff, Hacker, Hoskin, James, Jones, Khan, Livingston, Lovelock, Maskell, McDonald, McGonigle, McKenna, O'Connell, Page, Pearce, Robinson, Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Singh, Terry, Tickner, Vickers, White, J Williams and Woodward.

Apologies: Councillors David Absolom, Debs Absolom, Ballsdon, Duveen, Hopper and Stevens.

37. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor invited Councillor Lovelock to pay tribute to the achievements of former Councillors McElligott and Rodda who had recently resigned from the Council. The Mayor then invited Councillor Robinson to speak about the contribution of former Councillor Steele who had also resigned his seat on the Council. The Council thanked the former councillors for their service.

38. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

39. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Answer</u>
1.	Tony Warrell	Invest Bus Lane Penalties	Cllr Page
2.	Ellie Emberson	Voter Registration and Engagement	Cllr Lovelock
3.	Oscar Ward	Voting Age	Cllr Lovelock
4.	Tom Steele	GDPR	Cllr Jones
5.	Tony Warrell	Council's Poor Tree Maintenance	Cllr Hacker

(The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

40. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO 10

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Answer</u>
1.	Cllr Pearce	Health Services in South Reading	Cllr Hoskin

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2.	Cllr Livingston	Implementation of Universal Credit	Cllr Lovelock
3.	Cllr McGonigle	Engine Idling Policy	Cllr Page
4.	Cllr J Williams	Arthur Hill Swimming Baths	Cllr Hacker
5.	Cllr Pearce	John Madejski Academy	Cllr Jones
6.	Cllr White	East Reading MRT	Cllr Page

(The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

41. COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2018/19

The Chief Executive submitted a report recommending that the Council considered the findings of the Independent Remuneration Panel and to adopt a scheme of Councillors' Allowances for the financial year 2018/19.

The report stated that the Independent Remuneration Panel met annually to consider a scheme of allowances and pensions for councillors and to make recommendations to Council. The Panel had recommended that the total budget for Councillors' allowances and the levels of allowances for all councillors should stay at the same level as set for 2017/18. The overall budget should therefore be £448,597 in respect of councillors' allowances; basic allowance for all councillors should remain set at £8,220 per annum; and the remainder of the budget should be split between the Leader, Deputy Leader and recipients of special responsibility allowances as set out in Section 3 of the report. The report had appended the Public Notice of the Remuneration Panel's Findings at Appendix A.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved -

That the recommendations of the independent Remuneration Panel, in respect of the scheme of allowances to be paid by the authority to Councillors for the financial year 2018-2019, be accepted and approved as follows:

- (1) That, for 2018-19, the total sum for the payment of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to councillors remain at the same level as set for 2017-18 at £448,597;
- (2) That, within this total sum, the provision for the payment of Basic Allowance to all councillors remain at £378,125; and the Basic Allowance paid to individual councillors remain the same at £8,220 a year;
- (3) That the Special Responsibility Allowances payments remain the same, as follows:
 - (a) the amount paid to the Leader to be £7,004;
 - (b) the amount paid to the Deputy Leader to be £5,722;

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- (c) the amount paid to SRA Tier 1 to be £3,816;
- (d) the amount paid to SRA Tier 2 to be £2,147;
- (e) the amount paid to SRA Tier 3 to be £1,074.

No councillor shall receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance;

(4) That the existing categorisation of tiers should remain unchanged, as follows:

- Tier 1 to be paid to the Lead Councillors and to the Leader of the main opposition Group (8 Councillors currently in receipt in 2017/18);
- Tier 2 to be paid to the Chairs of Committees and the Leader of the other political groups (10 Councillors and one independent member currently in receipt in 2017/18);
- Tier 3 to be paid to Vice-Chairs of Committees and other councillors carrying out other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require the commitment of equivalent time and effort as for other categories of activity which would qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance under Paragraph 5(1)(i) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and to the independent person appointed in accordance with Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to carry out the functions specified in that Act in relation to the Members' Code of Conduct and Local Standards Committee (4 Councillors and one independent person currently in receipt in 2017/18);

(5) That the 2018-19 arrangements for the payment of Dependant Carers' Allowance be paid in line with the living wage, currently as follows:

- (a) Up to £8.75 per hour for childcare for up to 15 hours a week
- (b) Up to £8.75 per hour towards the cost of a care attendant for an elderly or disabled relative (including a disabled child) for up to 15 hours a week

The person providing the care may not be a close relative defined as spouse, partner (opposite or same sex cohabitantes), parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents and grandchildren. The paid care attendant must sign a receipt to show that they have cared for the dependant during the hours claimed for;

(6) That, subject to (8) below, the level of subsistence allowances, with the exception of overnight subsistence, remain the same as officers receive. The allowances are currently:

Subsistence	
Breakfast allowance	£8.26

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Lunch allowance	£11.41
Tea allowance	£4.52
Evening meal allowance	£14.13
Overnight subsistence	£82.21 a day outside London £93.77 a day in London or at LGA Annual Conferences

- (7) That the level of travel allowances be set as the same as officers receive, as follows:
- Travel by councillor's own motor vehicle - 45 pence per mile
 - Travel by councillor's own bicycle - 37 pence per mile
 - Travel by councillor's own motorcycle - 40.9 pence per mile
 - Bus travel - cost of the ordinary fare, cheap fare or portion of any weekly ticket;
- (8) That the subsistence limits referred to in (6) above be exceeded in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, e.g. to enable a Councillor and an officer attending a conference to stay at the same accommodation, subject to there being sufficient budget provision;
- (9) That provision for Co-optees' Allowances are payable solely to non-councillor members of the Standards Committee attending meetings of the Committee or any Sub-Committee set up by the Committee as part of its process of assessing, investigating and hearing complaints about Councillors; the allowances to be paid at the daily rate equivalent of the Councillors' Basic Allowance; the Monitoring Officer to be authorised to settle the rate to be paid on each occasion;
- (10) That the salary sacrifice schemes available to Council staff also be made available to Councillors.

42. PAY POLICY 2018/19

Further to Minute 18 of the Personnel Committee held on 15 March 2017, the Chief Executive submitted a report outlining the draft pay policy statement, which was appended to the report. The report stated that Local Authorities were required under Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) to prepare a Pay Policy Statement that articulated the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff and the lowest paid employees.

The report explained that each local authority was an individual employer in its own right and had the autonomy to make decisions on pay that were appropriate to local circumstances and which delivered value for money for local taxpayers. Section 40 of the Act required authorities, in developing their Pay Policy Statement, to have regard to any guidance that had been published by the Secretary of State. This included Communities and Local Government guidance on Openness and Accountability in Local

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Pay and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency (as amended). The Act basically required Councils to produce a Pay Policy Statement annually that was accessible for council tax payers to be able to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration were fair.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved:

That the revised Pay Policy Statement 2018/19, as appended to the report, be approved to take effect from 1 April 2018.

43. HEALTH

Pursuant to Notice, a motion was moved by Councillor Hoskin and seconded by Councillor Eden and CARRIED:

Resolved -

This Council notes:

- Our local NHS has gone through reorganisation after reorganisation over the past eight years. Underfunding of our NHS continues to grow with a projected £495 million pound funding gap for West of Berkshire, Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire areas unless action is taken. This represents a significant threat to the ability of providers to carry out their services. Underfunding has contributed to Royal Berkshire Hospital's worst A&E winter performance on record last year.
- It's disappointing that after significant changes brought by the Health and Social Care Act 2014 and the NHS's Five Year Forward View there are to be yet more changes with the introduction of Integrated Care Systems. Integrated Care Systems operate with little transparency and accountability to the wider public. There is a potential for these Integrated Care Systems to become Accountable Care Organisations.
- That the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Jeremy Hunt, stated that these Accountable Care Organisations could be sent out and tendered by 'independent sector organisations'.

Reading Borough Council Believes:

- That NHS services should remain in public ownership and that elements of the system that have been privatised ought to be brought back into public ownership.
- That integrated working between health and social care where it is beneficial and focussed around the needs of communities and people should be pursued but can only be successful when fully funded.
- That the Berkshire West Integrated Care System needs to operate with strong transparency and accountability to the public.

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Reading Borough Council Resolves:

- To oppose the creation of any form of Accountable Care Organisation in the Berkshire West area that would be open to private contract tender or have any kind of company type structure.
- To call upon the board of the Integrated Care System partnership to make arrangements for public access to the Board's agendas, meetings and minutes.
- To call upon local the Berkshire West Integrated Care System to be fully transparent and consult the public over the development of its plans to deal with its funding gap.

(The meeting closed at 7.58 pm).