

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 25 MARCH 2025

Present: Councillor Dennis (Mayor);
Councillors Mpofu-Coles (Deputy Mayor), Asare, Ayub, Ballsdon, Barnett-Ward, Cresswell, Cross, Davies, Eden, Edwards, Emberson, Ennis, Gavin, Gittings, Griffith, Goss, Hornsby-Smith, Hoskin, Juthani, Keane, Keeping, Lanzoni, Leng, Lovelock, McCann, McElroy, McEwan, McGoldrick, McGrother, Mitchell, Naz, O'Connell, Rowland, DP Singh, Stevens, Tarar, Terry, Thompson, White, Williams, Woodward and Yeo

Apologies: Councillors Hacker, Moore and R Singh

51. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Mayor's Charities Fundraiser

The Mayor reminded everyone about the forthcoming Mayor's Charities fundraiser, the Big Quiz, which would be taking place on Thursday 15th May at 6:30pm.

(b) Michael Harper

The Mayor announced with great sadness the sudden and unexpected passing of Michael Harper on Monday, 10 March 2025, in the following words:

'Michael was a kind and dedicated presence in our community, serving as the Mayor's escort alongside former Mayor Tony Page during his Mayoral year in 2023-2024. Throughout the year, Michael accompanied Tony to a wide range of engagements, offering his unwavering support and enthusiasm. Most recently, he joined Tony on the judging panel for the Mayor's fundraiser, Let's Sing, in March 2024, where his warmth and generosity of spirit were evident to all. Michael will be greatly missed by all who knew him, and our thoughts are with Tony, his family and friends at this difficult time'.

The Council stood for a minute's silence in Michael's memory.

52. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

53. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

	Questioner	Subject	Answer
1.	Sam D'Arcy Darling	Good Community Relations with the Transgender Community	Cllr Rowland

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2.	Sam D'Arcy Darling	Equity for Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming and Non-binary Residents	Cllr Terry
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(The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

54. COUNCIL PLAN 2025-28

Further to Minute 71 of Policy Committee held on 17 March 2025, the Executive Director of Resources submitted a report with a proposed new Council Plan 2025-28 attached at Appendix 1 for adoption. The report also had a summary of the results of community engagement on the draft Council Plan at Appendix 2.

The report explained that the draft Council Plan was structured around a vision, five high-level priorities, objectives (specific outcomes to be delivered for each priority), projects (activities being undertaken over the next three years to deliver the objectives) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which would show the progress made in delivering the objectives and how well day-to-day services were performing. Each KPI had an associated target and performance against these would be reported quarterly to Policy Committee.

The report highlighted some of the key deliverables in the Council Plan including the delivery of over 300 new council homes through the Local Authority New Build programme, completing the new Central Library and Civic Reception, investments to reduce the Council's carbon emissions in its buildings, fleet, and operations, delivering three new children's homes and four new adult social care facilities in Reading and completing the £8 million programme to improve roads and pavements. It was noted that the Council Plan provided the framework for prioritisation of resources and was used to inform Service Planning and performance objectives for staff.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Leng and CARRIED:

Resolved –

That the Council Plan 2025-28, as appended to the report, be adopted.

55. SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING - 24 JUNE 2025

Pursuant to Notice, a motion was moved by Councillor Terry and seconded by Councillor Rowland and CARRIED:

Resolved –

That the Council resolves to convene, on 24 June 2025, a special meeting for the purpose of considering a nomination for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman, in accordance with section 249 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the criteria approved by the Council on 23rd February 2022, on the following person:

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Tony Page, for having rendered eminent service on Reading Borough Council as a member for Abbey ward, including a term as Mayor of Reading and having held senior political office.

(The meeting closed at 7.17 pm)