

A G E N D A

Mayor's Announcements

1. To receive Mayor's Announcements.

Declarations of Interest

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

Minutes

3. The Mayor to sign the Minutes of the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on 18 October 2016 (Pages A1-A10)

Petitions

4. To receive petitions in accordance with Standing Order 8.

Questions from Members of the Public

5. Questions in accordance with Standing Order 9.

Questions from Councillors

6. Questions in accordance with Standing Order 10.

Reports and Recommendations from Committees

7. Budget 2017-18: Approval of Council Tax Base, NNDR1 Estimate & Estimated Collection Fund Surplus; Approval of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2017/18; and Removal of Empty and Second Home Council Tax Discounts

Report by Strategic Finance Director (Pages B1-B25)

8. Future Audit Arrangements - Appointment of Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd

Report by Strategic Finance Director (Pages C1-C9)

9. Reading's 2nd Health & Wellbeing Strategy

Report by Director of Adult Care & Health Services (Pages D1-D50)

10. Reading Fair Workload Charter

Councillor J Williams to move:

This Council notes:

1. Reading Council's published aims in the Reading First programme is to have all schools in Reading rated either Good or Outstanding and in the top 25% in the UK within the next three years.
2. The continuing pressures on finding, recruiting and retaining quality teachers, particularly in the South-East region where the cost of living is high.
3. That amongst others, one of the key pressures on teachers is workload. The DfE's own workload statistics show an increase in working hours for all categories of teachers compared to 2010. Primary class room teachers have increased by more than 9 hours a week to 59.3, while secondary classroom teachers have experienced nearly a 6 hour increase to 55.6. In primary classrooms, this is exacerbated by the changing and onerous requirements for statutory assessment, at the end of both Key Stages One and Two, which have also been putting unreasonable pressure on our very youngest of students. The work of the More Than A Score coalition highlights the need for significant change.

This Council believes that:

1. Reading should be at the forefront of best teaching practice in the UK.
2. In order to achieve our stated education aims, it is essential to employ and retain quality teachers who have Qualified Teacher Status.
3. Commitment to a manageable workload should be a key factor in attracting, recruiting and retaining the best teachers in the region, and from across the UK, to Reading.

This Council:

1. Undertakes to introduce a 'fair workload charter' for Reading, available for local schools to sign up to, by the end of the academic year 2016/17 in conjunction with teacher unions.
2. Instructs Officers to draft the Charter for Reading, noting the following key points¹:
 - No more than two hours on top of directed time each day for teachers (three hours for those with leadership responsibilities).
 - Clear policies about what student work should (and shouldn't) be marked, as informed by the Ofsted marking myths.
 - Clear policies on what data should (and shouldn't) be collected
 - Protection of Planning, preparation and assessment time from cover and other tasks.
 - Annual review of workload policies and their effectiveness.

- Staff having recourse to an external adjudication process where they believe their school has not delivered on the principles it has signed up to.
3. Resolves to report back to the next ACE Committee with a draft Charter for Reading Schools, to devise a monitoring group, and to encourage Reading's schools to sign up.

¹These reflect elements of the Charter drawn up in Nottingham by representatives from Unison, the National Union of Teachers, the National Association of Head Teachers, the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, and the Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

http://www.nottinghamschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/53683_EIB-FAIR-WORKLOAD-CHARTER-2PP_6.pdf

For reference

Ofsted marking myths

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015/ofsted-inspections-mythbusting>

More Than A Score

<https://morethanascore.co.uk/>

11. Closure of Royal Berkshire Hospital Hydrotherapy Pool

Councillor Hoskin to move:

This Council notes:

- Reading's Royal Berkshire Hospital has announced plans to close its hydrotherapy pool at the end of March 2017
- the hospital's own website declares that hydrotherapy can help with the relief of pain and muscle spasm, increasing range of movement and improving both the strength and control of muscles as well as helping encourage weight-bearing especially where land-based exercise is very difficult
- the strong objections to the closure by a range of charities and support groups including Berkshire Disabled People Against Cuts, Arthritis Matters, Parkinson's UK, Reading Families' Forum, Reading Fibromyalgia Support Group, the MS Society and the Berkshire MS Therapy Centre.

This Council welcomes the wide-ranging community campaign to save Reading's Hydrotherapy Pool, including local cross-party support for the campaign involving councillors, MPs and a former MP.

This Council is disappointed by the lack of detail to the RBH's rationale for closure of the pool which is described by the hospital as making a small loss and not a facility it thinks an acute hospital should provide.

This Council believes that decisions about the future of our local NHS services should be made after involving and consulting with patients and Reading residents.

The Council supports the resolution of the December meeting of the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee to request that the Royal Berkshire Hospital performs a full consultation before making a decision on the Hydrotherapy Pool.

This Council believes there is a strong probability that the human and financial costs caused by the detrimental impacts on people's health and wellbeing from the closure of this therapy service will far outweigh any short-term savings.

This Council resolves that the Managing Director writes to the Chief Executive of the Royal Berkshire Hospital and the Chief Officer of the Reading NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to convey this Council's objection to the closure of the Hydrotherapy Pool, to repeat its demand for a full public consultation and that a comprehensive assessment of the full health and wellbeing impacts of the loss of the therapy pool is performed.

12. Four Yearly Elections

Councillor Stevens to move:

The Council spends around £510,000 a year on elections and maintaining the electoral roll. We elect Councillors in thirds and so hold local elections 3 in 4 years. So over 4 years the cost is about £1.53M. In most years we additionally hold General Elections, European Parliament elections and last year a referendum. Central government reimburse us around £100,000 for each of these national elections so the net expenditure is around £410,000 p.a. or around £1.23 M every four years.

The Council incurs the cost of maintaining the electoral roll regardless of whether elections were held. 2013/14 was a 'fallow year' i.e. there were no elections. That year the running costs were only £181,000 compared with the following two years which were £336,000 each year. So we can deduce that each local election costs RBC around £150,000.

On Wednesday 7 December 2016 in the House of Commons Ranil Jayawardena, Conservative MP for NE Hants proposed a 10 minute rule bill regarding Electoral Reform for local government. He proposed that local elections should be held on an all out basis every four years - rather than thirds. His arguments in favour are that:

- this would lead to considerable savings;

- they tend to concentrate voters' minds - leading to increased voter turn out;
- Councils can plan longer term rather than just be looking to the next local elections;
- Recognising the saving of £300,000 over 4 years and the benefits identified by Ranil Jayawardena MP, this Council instructs the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to report to the next Council meeting on the steps required by the authority to resolve to move to all out elections from 2018.

13. BREXIT Negotiations

Councillor Rodda to move:

This Council is increasingly concerned that the uncertainty over BREXIT negotiations is causing unnecessary worry for local residents regarding workers' long established rights.

This Council therefore resolves to lend its support to the backbench Bill which calls for protection of rights, such as maternity and paternity leave, paid holidays and job security.

It further resolves to write to the local M.P.s urging them to support the Bill and to urge the Government to set out clearly how it intends to enshrine these rights into Post-BREXIT legislation.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note that this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Mayor will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during a webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Members of the public seated in the public gallery will not ordinarily be filmed by the automated camera system. However, please be aware that by moving forward of the pillar, or in the unlikely event of a technical malfunction or other unforeseen circumstances, your image may be captured. **Therefore, by entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.**

Members of the public who participate in the meeting will be filmed, unless they have given prior notice that they do not consent to this.

Please speak to a member of staff if you have any queries or concerns.