

# Summons and Agenda 28 March 2017

Managing Director  
Reading Borough Council  
Civic Offices, Bridge Street,  
Reading, RG1 2LU

Simon Warren  
Managing Director

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┌ To: All Members of the Council ┐

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└ 20 March 2017 ┘

Your contact is: Michael Popham - Democratic Services Manager

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Reading Borough Council to be held at the Civic Offices, Reading, on **Tuesday 28 March 2017 at 6.30pm**, when it is proposed to transact the business specified in the Agenda enclosed herewith.

Yours faithfully

MANAGING DIRECTOR

## 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 21 February 2017 (Pages A1-A12)

### 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. Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2017/18  
Report by Managing Director (Pages B1-B8)
8. Pay Policy 2017/18  
Report by Managing Director (Pages C1-C29)
9. Appointment of Chief Executive - Head of Paid Service  
Report by Managing Director (Pages D1-D4)

### Motions

10. Fair Health Care Funding for South Reading  
Councillor Pearce to move:  
  
This Council notes:

Clinical Commissioning Groups are responsible for the planning and commissioning of health care services for their local area. South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group is the lowest funded in the whole of England. This means that it is 150th out of 150 CCG's in the UK. Average funding per head across the UK is £1221, compared to just £1000 in South Reading.

Abbey, Church and Whitley Wards have the lowest life expectancy in Reading; Church and Whitley wards, which are both in South Reading, also have the lowest levels of life expectancy, and the highest rates of obesity and child poverty in Reading.

The low level of funding in South Reading is unacceptable.

A petition has been signed by hundreds of residents in South Reading demanding that this funding increases.

This Council resolves to:

Organise a meeting between the Leader & Deputy Leader of the Council, the Lead Councillor for Health, the Members of Parliament for Reading East & Reading West, the Minister for Health and South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group to urgently resolve these funding shortages in South Reading. In view of the urgency, this meeting should if possible take place by Thursday April 13th 2017.

#### 11. Audit & Governance Committee

Councillor Duveen to move:

Council notes that the recent Audit Report by Ernst & Young pointed out an anomaly in the make-up of the Audit and Governance Committee. In their words:

*'We identified that both the Leader and Deputy Leader are members of the A & G Committee. Guidance issued by CIPFA indicates that leadership of the Council should not be represented on the Committee. We recommend that the composition of the Committee be reviewed.'*

This Council recognises that having Lead Councillors sitting on the Committee, part of whose job is to scrutinise their own work and decisions, will not be seen by the citizens of Reading as either unbiased or independent in its role of auditing and scrutinising the work of the Council.

Although the Ernst and Young report called for a review of the make-up of the A & G Committee, this Council accepts the guidance offered by CIPFA and recognises that in the interests of good governance Lead Councillors should not serve on the A & G Committee.

The simplest and quickest way to resolve this anomaly is for the Lead Councillors to stand down from the Committee. There is no need to instigate a full review of the composition of the A & G Committee.

This Council therefore requires that Lead Councillors should stand down from this Committee and asks the Administration to appoint members of the Committee who are not Lead Councillors.

## 12. Refuge Provision for Women Fleeing Domestic Violence

Councillor Eden to move:

This Council notes:

1. There is no national system or funding of refuge provision for women fleeing domestic violence.
2. That beds are made available by councils with the understanding that women and children from outside of the area will need to use them because of the need to be safe.
3. That while some local authorities have always relied on others to provide refuge places Reading has a long standing commitment to ensuring that refuge is available in our town to provide sanctuary for those fleeing domestic violence.
4. That the continuing squeeze in funding from national government is increasingly forcing councils into untenable choices and that refuge funding from local authorities and across the country is being affected.
5. A letter from Reading's Community Safety Partnership signed by the Leader of the Council and Stan Gilmour Superintendent Police Commander has been sent to Government as follows:

### National Funding for Refuge Provision

*I am writing to you on behalf of Reading's Domestic Abuse Strategy Group, a delivery group of the Community Safety Partnership, to express our concern at the national loss of refuge spaces; the complete cessation of support in some LA areas; and the need for core national funding for refuge - not simply funding for additionality.*

*In Reading the local authority has a long-standing commitment to providing financial support to ensure the provision of refuge to meet both local and national need. This includes generic and specialist provision for Asian women. Reading currently has 25 refuge places in the town and around 80% of these refuge places are accessed by households from outside the Reading area. The nature of refuge provision is that to improve their safety, people experiencing abuse predominantly seek emergency accommodation a distance away from the perpetrator. Based on Reading's population size, to be in line with the average in the Thames Valley, Reading would be required to provide*

*7 refuge places per 100,000 population (if those LAs with no provision are included) or 12 if only those with some provision are included.*

*The Council is about to recommission domestic abuse services and intends to rebalance investment in domestic abuse services in line with the current domestic abuse strategy. The Council is proposing to fund 15 refuge places, which is still above the regional average, and to increase investment in non-accommodation based support and preventative activity to break the cycle of abuse as these services are over-subscribed.*

*The Partnership welcomes the opportunity to look at the balance of the way services are delivered in the area. Our experience shows that outreach is a very effective way of supporting many service users.*

*We recognise, however, that for some victims a place of safety or a "refuge" is essential to prevent serious harm. For some it may be a short stay in a local refuge whilst other actions are taken to make them safe, for many others to be safe they need to move many miles away from their old home.*

*The system of refuge therefore relies on a principal of reciprocity of provision as many victims need to move out of area for their own safety (80% of placements in Reading's refuges are from out of area but equally many referrals of local women are made out of area). The provision of refuge places can't therefore simply be looked at from a purely local perspective. At a national level, since 2010, there has been a loss of 17% of specialist refuges in England and a third of all referrals to refuges are turned away, normally due to a lack of available space (<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning-and-influencing/campaign-with-us/sos/>).*

*In the face of funding cuts local authorities are facing significant financial pressures and are forced to make often unpalatable decisions. Alarming number of authorities are ceasing to fund refuge at all. The Guardian reported last weekend that Sunderland is potentially set to become the only major city in the UK with no refuge provision - although a final decision has yet to be confirmed.*

*For authorities like Reading which are continuing to contribute to provision on the principle of reciprocity it feels deeply unjust that our local residents fleeing abuse and needing to move out of area to remain safe have fewer and fewer options. Our response as an LA is not to withdraw all refuge funding as other areas have done as councillors and partners wouldn't see that as a responsible response.*

*This is a national problem and although the Government announced £20m new one-off funding for specialist accommodation last November, the application guidance stated that the funding was for additional services and not to fund services being cut (or where not supported) by local government. Reading Borough Council applied for this funding, working in partnership with our local provider, other local authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner. We are delighted to have heard recently that our bid for*

*£132,000 was successful and this included £56,000 funding for specialist refuge provision.*

*However, longer-term a new and sustainable model of funding is required that doesn't simply fund the gaps (which is inequitable and does not reward those authorities who have protected refuges), provide short-term funding, or support 'additionality'. We urge you to consider a system of national funding for refuges which reflects the scale of need presenting and this should include the provision of specialist refuges sensitive to cultural needs.*

*A refuge is a place where women and children escaping abuse can be sure they are safe, and where they can access emotional and practical support from staff who understand what they have been through. It is a starting point for many to rebuild their lives. In breaking the cycle of abuse refuges help to change and save lives.*

*We would ask that Government recognises the specialist and unique nature of refuge provision and seeks to implement a sustainable national funding model to preserve this critical resource.*

*On behalf of the Reading Community Safety Partnership*

This Council believes

1. That keeping women safe from domestic violence should be a national priority.
2. That there is a need for funding of preventative and outreach work to tackle the causes of domestic violence, refuge provision to protect women and a strong criminal justice response to violence and abuse.
3. That the complete ending of support in some local authorities may affect Reading women and that this is an untenable situation.

This Council therefore resolves:

1. That we endorse the letter from the Leader of the Council and the Local Police Area Commander (Superintendent Gilmour) and will publish it.
2. That we will write to the Reading MPs asking for their support in this campaign.
3. That as councillors we will continue to campaign for and support a national system of core funding not just additional support.
4. To offer to support Women's Aid and Refuge in launching a national petition on this.

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