

NEW EXECUTIVE DECISION MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

From May 2011 the Council will be required to change its Executive decision making process.

We can opt for one of two models:

- Leader and Cabinet
- Directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet

We would welcome your views on the model that you would prefer to see in Reigate and Banstead.

The following information is designed to explain the current decision making arrangements the Council operates, and provide more detail on the two models the Council must move to from May 2011.

What are the Council's current decision making arrangements?

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council moved to an Executive Leader with Cabinet model of decision making in 2001, as required by legislation at the time.

How do the current decision making arrangements operate?

The Council comprises 51 Councillors who are elected by the residents of their area. All Councillors meet together as the Council and decide overall policies and set the budget (including Council Tax levels).

Each year the Council appoints the Leader and the Executive Cabinet. The current Executive comprises the Leader plus eight other Councillors, each with responsibilities for certain service areas.

The Executive meets collectively to take important decisions within the policy and budget set by the Council.

The Executive is not responsible for decisions on individual Planning and Licensing applications. These are decided by the Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committees of the Council.

What would change if the Council moved to the new Leader and Executive Cabinet model?

The new Leader and Executive Cabinet model is broadly the same as the current arrangements.

The key differences are that the Council would only appoint the Leader. Under this model the Leader's appointment would be for 4 years, or until the end their term of office.

The Leader would appoint Councillors to the Executive Cabinet and agree any delegations of power (who can agree what), rather than the Council as at present.

All Councillors would continue to meet as the Council to set overall policies and set the budget (including Council Tax levels) each year.

Individual Planning and Licensing applications would continue to be the responsibility of the Council's Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committees. No changes would be made to the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.

What would change if the Council moved to the directly elected Mayor and Executive Cabinet model?

The Council would not appoint the Leader or Executive Cabinet. The Mayor would be elected by the residents of Reigate and Banstead in a separate election.

The Mayor would be elected for a 4 year period and could not be removed from Office by the Council.

The Mayor would appoint Councillors to the Executive Cabinet and agree any delegations of power.

The Mayor would be in addition to the fifty one Councillors who would continue to meet as the Council to set overall policies and set the budget (including Council Tax levels) each year.

Individual Planning and Licensing applications would continue to be the responsibility of the Council's Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committees. No changes would be made to the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.

What happens to the current Mayor of Reigate and Banstead?

The Borough of Reigate and Banstead has a ceremonial Mayor under a Royal Charter granted to the Borough.

If the Council moves to the new Leader and Executive Cabinet model the ceremonial Mayor will continue in its current format.

If the Council moves to the new directly elected Mayor and Executive Cabinet model then the current mayoral system would need to change. Only the elected Mayor would hold the title "Mayor".

The Council would need to appoint a Councillor to chair Council meetings, a function currently undertaken by the Mayor. Under the new model, the elected Mayor would also have Executive decision making responsibilities.

What is the cost of each model?

The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel meets annually to review the workload of Councillors and makes recommendations on the allowances they should receive. This panel would also make a recommendation for the allowance for a directly elected Mayor.

The Leader of the Council currently receives a special responsibility allowance of £12,590. There is no reason to suggest that if the Council opted for a directly elected Mayor model, the allowance would be any different for the Mayor. However, as mentioned above, this would be a matter for the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider.

The only other expected cost under a directly elected Mayor model would be the additional election every 4 years. It is anticipated that this would be combined with a Council election and the additional costs estimated at up to £30,000.

What if I have a question / want more information before responding to the consultation?

You can contact our Democratic Services team on 01737 276000 or e mail gavin.handford@reigate-banstead.gov.uk who will be happy to assist with any queries.