

## COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2017 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

**Present:** Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Braidwood, Buckley, Campbell, G Coleman-Cooke, K Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Constantine, Crow-Brown, Curran, Dellar, Dexter, Edwards, J Elenor, J Fairbrass, L Fairbrass, Falcon, Fenner, Game, Grove, Hayton, G Hillman, Howes, Jaye-Jones, Johnston, Larkins, Martin, Matterface, Parsons, L Piper, S Piper, L Potts, R Potts, Rusiecki, D Saunders, M Saunders, Savage, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzing, Taylor, Taylor-Smith, Tomlinson, Townend and Wells

#### 1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Brimm, Dawson, Day, Dennis, Evans, I Gregory, K Gregory, Partington and Rogers.

#### 2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and agreed, that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 February 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### 3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

#### 4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 5. **PETITIONS**

##### (a) **Access to Hodges Gap Promenade Car Park**

Ms Singer presented a petition containing 45 valid signatures as follows:

"We the undersigned petition the Council to not lock the barrier leading to the Hodges Gap Promenade car park.

Currently, the barrier is being locked with 2 padlocks and is rarely open. This is certainly the case in the early morning when many people walk their dogs, go for a walk on the beach or swim in the tidal pool. This is very inconvenient to the residents of Margate since this is the only location where you can park with easy access to the beach. Older dog walkers have difficulty managing the ramps leading down from the cliff top to the beach and vice versa, while Palm Bay is the only beach in Margate that can be used by dogs all year round. Workers who need access to Hodge Gap Promenade do not seem to have a key to the second lock and have difficulty in performing their job.

People are now parking in between Hodges Gap Promenade and Newgate Lower Promenade (which also has a barrier). There is only space for 4 cars without blocking the access to anything but many times there are many cars and the barriers are being blocked all together since there is a lack of space or people drive

down and leave again. This could potentially lead to a dangerous situation such as emergency services not being able to access either promenade.”

In accordance with the Council’s petition scheme, the petition will be referred to Cabinet without debate for report to the Council within three ordinary meetings.

(b) **Petition to Change the No.9 Bus Route**

Councillor Matterface provided Members with an update on the status of the petition as she had presented the petition to the Quality Bus Partnership on behalf of the Council.

Members noted the report.

**6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

(a) **Question 1 - GP Surgeries in Thanet**

Ms Gregory asked Councillor L Fairbrass the following question:

“NHS-England, in its ‘Sustainability and Transformation Plans’ propose reducing 16 Thanet GP Surgeries to 4. Will the Council, through the Health and Well-Being Board, please confirm or deny this, or determine whether it refers only to some community provisions and not to the full range of General Practice”

Councillor Fairbrass responded with the following points:

- To achieve future sustainability and in order to meet local population needs, it was proposed to have four primary care hubs which would be integrated with local services. This does not necessarily mean that there would be fewer GP practices.
- These hubs would be in Broadstairs, Margate, Quex and Ramsgate.
- The primary care model could provide a better service for patients and would offer patients to option to visit other surgeries to avoid lengthy waiting times.
- GP numbers had reduced in Thanet, a trend mirrored nationally. It was believed that the primary care model would help to attract GP’s to work in the District.
- Cllr Fairbrass would continue to monitor the proposed changes through the Thanet Health and Wellbeing Board.

**7. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

(a) **Question 1 - Thanet Play Areas**

It was noted that item 7a, a question regarding Thanet play areas, had been withdrawn by the questioner.

(b) **Question 2 - Briefing to Members**

Councillor Savage asked Councillor Wells the following question:

“River Oak’s Draft Statement of Community Consultation intends engagement with wider public debate which at present does not include this chamber.

For fairness and impartiality, since AVIA gave a presentation to TDC, can the Leader advise why it is not his intention to offer River Oak the same opportunity?”

Councillor Wells responded with the following points:

- RiverOak were responsible for the conduct of their consultation process, however their consultation plan included consultation with local authorities.

- It was an executive responsibility to respond to RiverOak's consultation on behalf of the Council. A formal response was being drafted.
- Individual Councillors could participate in RiverOak's public consultation.
- In the proposals published by RiverOak, they advise that they had already consulted with Thanet District Council and Kent County Council.
- Avia Solutions presented their findings to Councillors because their report was commissioned by the Council and helped to shape the Council's draft Local Plan.

Councillor Savage followed up his question by asking why Councillors were not deserving of an equal hearing from RiverOak, which would help them to take a balanced view when deciding the future of the airport site, in relation to the emerging local plan.

Councillor Wells advised that he did not control RiverOak's consultation process.

## **8. NOTICE OF MOTION**

It was noted that no motions on notice had been received in accordance with council procedure rule 3.

## **9. LEADERS REPORT**

During his report the Leader covered the following areas:

- The business case for the merger of Thanet, Canterbury, Shepway and Dover councils had been published.
- A merger into a unitary authority was not under consideration as Kent County Council and the Government were not in support of the concept.
- A public consultation and engagement would begin 22 March 2017.
- The expected continuing reduction funding from government meant it would not be possible for the Council to continue to provide current levels of services in their current form.
- At the 9 February 2017 Council meeting the Council unanimously voted in favour of the proposed budget for 2017/18 year.
- The Council had successfully sold a number of assets at auction; this was in accordance with the asset disposal plan.
- The Local Plan consultation was underway.

Councillor Bayford as Leader of the Conservative Party responded with the following points:

- The business case for the East Kent council's merger was strong.
- If no action was voluntarily taken, it was likely that the Government would impose a kind of joint working upon the councils.
- It was argued that a larger authority would make decision making more remote, however it was likely that in future more decision making powers would be devolved to parish councils.
- Credit should be offered to the finance team who worked closely with Members in a transparent manner. It was this work that led to the unanimous agreement of the 2017/18 budget at the 9 February Council meeting.

Councillor Matterface as leader of the Labour Party made the following points:

- Briefing Councillors on budget proposals was not a new concept, it had been happening since 1995.
- It was good that the engagement with the public on the East Kent council's merger had been re-labelled 'consultation engagement', because consultation was a term more understood by the public.
- Any proposed devolution of power to Parish councils would need to be resourced adequately.

Councillor Grove as leader of the Independent Group made the following point:

- There was a strong case for a merged East Kent Council in light of the future challenges facing district councils.

#### **10. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Councillor D Saunders, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (OSP), presented his report and the following points were noted:

- Since 1 December 2016 the OSP had met on three occasions, and the working parties had met on four occasions.
- The Electoral Registration Process Review Working Party had been replaced within the work programme by the Dreamland Working Group.
- There would be an item on the East Kent Council's Merger for consideration at the next OSP meeting on 2 March 2017. Non-committee Members were encouraged to attend and participate.

#### **11. EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP SCHEME**

It was proposed by Councillor Townend, seconded by Councillor Crow-Brown, and Members agreed to approve the Scheme.

#### **12. COUNCIL TAX - STATUTORY RESOLUTION**

It was noted that in accordance with council procedure rule 17.6, a recorded vote would be taken on the motion or any amendments and substantive motions.

It was proposed by Councillor Townend and seconded by Councillor Stummer-Schmertzting that Members approve the calculations at paragraph 1 of the report, and that Members approve the council tax annual charges as set out below for the listed property bands:

COUNCIL TAX PER PROPERTY BAND FOR 2017/18								
BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<b>Proportion of band D</b>	<b>6/9</b>	<b>7/9</b>	<b>8/9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11/9</b>	<b>13/9</b>	<b>15/9</b>	<b>18/9</b>
<b>Annual Charge</b>	146.58	171.01	195.44	219.87	268.73	317.59	366.45	439.74

The Monitoring Officer conducted a recorded vote on the motion as follows:

46 Members voted in favour the motion: Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Braidwood, Buckley, Campbell, K. Coleman-Cooke, G. Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Constantine, Crow-Brown, Curran, Dellar, Dexter, Edwards, Elenor, J. Fairbrass, L. Fairbrass, Falcon, Fenner, Game, Grove, Hayton, Hillman, Howes, Jaye-Jones, Johnston, Larkin, Martin, Matterface, Parsons, L Piper, S Piper, L Potts, R Potts, Rusiecki, D. Saunders, M. Saunders, Savage, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzting, Taylor, Taylor-Smith, Tomlinson, Townend and Wells.

0 Members voted against the motion.

0 Members abstained from voting on the motion.

The motion was carried

#### **13. CALENDAR OF COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2017/18 TO 2018/19**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed the recommendation as shown in the report, namely:

“That Council agrees the proposed calendar of meetings for 2017/18 and 2018/19 as set out at Annex 1 to the report.”

**14. REPORT ON URGENT INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION**

Members noted the report.

Meeting concluded: 7.55 pm