

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2024 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Debra Owen-Hughes (Chair); Councillors Ara, Edwards, Austin, Bambridge, Barlow, J Bayford, Boyd, Albon, Braidwood, Bright, Bright, Britcher, Crittenden, Currie, Davis, Dawson, Dennis, Donaldson, Driver, Duckworth, Everitt, Farooki, Fellows, Garner, D Green, Huxley, Keen, Kup, Makinson, Manners, Matterface, Pat Moore, Paul Moore, Munns, Anne-Marie Nixey, Ovenden, Packman, Pressland, Pugh, Rattigan, Rogers, Scobie, W Scobie, Scott, Towing, Whitehead, Wing, Worrow, Wright and Yates

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D'Abbro, Smith, Pope, Nichols and Rusickei.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was proposed by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair and agreed that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 May 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair.

3. **MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL OF 9TH MAY 2024**

It was proposed by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair and agreed that the minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 9 May 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair.

4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Manners back to the Chamber after a period of ill health.

5. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

6. **PETITIONS**

(a) **Report back on Toilet Petition**

It was noted that the council's response to the petition had been outlined in the agenda.

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

(a) **A QUESTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC REGARDING PLANNING PERMISSIONS WHICH IMPACT HABITATS**

Ms Sabin Dawson asked Councillor Everitt the following question:

On behalf of Save Minster Marshes I would like to ask the leader of the council who has responsibility for looking at the cumulative impact of the many planning permissions which impact upon habitats for wildlife in Thanet?

There have been numerous planning permissions granted, or requested retrospectively, which, when considered separately may not appear to make a huge impact, but when considered alongside others they make an enormous impact on the wildlife of Thanet.

Although we (Save Minster Marshes) are aware that TDC will not have any input on the decision about National Grid's Sealink proposal, we would like to know who is ultimately responsible for looking at the cumulative impact of the numerous battery storage and solar panel planning applications which are in the same area.

Councillor Everitt responded:

- As part of the examination of the Sealink Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, the Planning Inspectorate will consider the cumulative impact of the proposed development in addition to committed development on the environment under the Environment Impact Assessment regulations, including the battery storage and solar panel developments in Richborough.
- Individual planning applications for developments in the Richborough area are screened under the EIA regulations if required by legislation, to determine whether an Environment Statement is required with applications on the basis of cumulative impact. The cumulative impact of development on the environment is also a material consideration for future planning applications. The determination of these applications is the responsibility of Thanet District Council.

(b) **A QUESTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC REGARDING CEASEFIRE**

Ms Oldfield asked Councillor Everitt the following question:

"In light of the recent motion passed by Cambridge City Council on 23rd May 2024, addressing the ongoing conflict in Palestine-Israel, will Thanet District Council stand on the right side of history and support these actions:

Thanet District Council demands the UK Government:

Press for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, Israel, and the rest of Palestine.

Uphold international humanitarian law.

Guarantee civilians access to essential humanitarian aid, including medical supplies, food, fuel, and water.

Revoke all licenses for arms exports to Israel and suspend all arms sales.

Furthermore, Thanet District Council will:

Only bank and invest with ethical institutions. Our financial practices must reflect our moral values.

It's time for Thanet District Council to lead with courage and integrity. Let's make a stand for justice, peace, and humanity."

Councillor Everitt responded:

The Council passed the following Motion at its meeting in February 2024:

To Call upon the UK Government and all Westminster political parties to-

Call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire,

Call for the opening of humanitarian corridors into Gaza to allow aid and other vital medical resources to flow unhindered in,

iii. Call for the immediate unconditional release of the hostages held by Hamas; iv. Call for resumed negotiations to seek a peaceful two state solution that ensures justice, safety, fairness and equality for all;

(v) request that the Leader submits this Motion to the UK Prime Minister."

- In accordance with the Motion passed the Leader passed this Motion to the then UK Prime Minister

- It is a matter of regret to all of us that this conflict continues, but I believe the council's position on it is already clear.
- Concerning ethical investing, investment guidance, both statutory and from CIPFA, makes clear that all investing must comply with the principles of security, liquidity and yield, in that priority order.
- However, nonetheless the council is committed to high ethical standards.
- In relation to investment connected with Israel, or firms with connections to them, the council does not have any direct investment exposures of this type. However, it should be noted the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is putting forward a bill which would effectively outlaw divestments from firms with exposure to the conflict.
- DLUHC says the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) bill, which is expected to reach Royal assent later this year, prevents public bodies from being influenced by political or moral disapproval of foreign states when taking economic decisions unless they are aligned with government policy.
- We await further guidance on this matter. However, as our existing treasury management investments are made largely within the UK and as already mentioned where there are investments made internationally, the key considerations are return and risk rather than non-commercial considerations. Therefore, we do not believe the Bill will have any significant effect on our overall treasury management decisions.

(c) **A QUESTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC REGARDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Ms Bailey asked Councillor Whitehead the following question:

"The amount of house building in Thanet, and Kent generally, is understandably, a very hotly debated topic.

While it is depressing to see so much of our countryside being built on, the need for a mix of affordable, sustainable housing for those on Thanet's waiting lists, including those in temporary and sub-standard accommodation, is recognised.

I'm aware that TDC have recently purchased some affordable housing at WWX for our residents but, can you please set the record straight over assertions which are sometimes made on social media.

Is it true that London boroughs buy and house their own tenants in Thanet?

If so, do we have the figures around this.

When affordable housing is provided as part of a large strategic allocation, is there a policy for these to be offered to Thanet residents first?"

Councillor Whitehead responded:

- New housing in Thanet is delivered in a range of different ways.
- The council and its housing association partners are building homes directly on sites that are in their own ownership or purchased for the provision of affordable housing only schemes. These homes are provided by regulated landlords, such as the council and are let to local people and accessed through the Thanet Housing Register.
- Similarly, affordable homes that are provided via a section 106 agreement with private housebuilders are also owned and managed by regulated landlords and are let to local people and accessed through the Thanet Housing Register. As such they are offered to local residents, and the Housing Register has clear local connection criteria, applied to all applicants.
- We can definitely confirm that none of these new affordable homes are purchased by London Boroughs.

- The council has less control over who purchases market housing, which is sold by housing builders directly to new owners, generally owner occupiers. We have no evidence to suggest that London Boroughs are buying new market housing in the area.

(d) **A QUESTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE DCO PROCESS**

Mr Wright asked Councillor Everitt the following question:

“Please may I ask the council leader for an update on its involvement in the DCO process with rsp?”

Councillor Everitt responded:

- I can update that the council has invited RSP to provide a briefing for all councillors which will allow us to receive an update on the project and that we will continue to engage with RSP as the project develops.
- Although the council was not the decision maker in the DCO process, as this was the previous government, we did respond to each stage of consultation and will continue to work with RSP on the details of the development as and when they emerge.

8. **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

(a) **A QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MANNERS REGARDING LEISURE CENTRE POOLS**

Councillor Manners asked Councillor Duckworth the following question:

Can the portfolio holder please tell the Council when was the last time that the water in Hartsdown Pool and Ramsgate pool was fully drained and replaced?

Councillor Duckworth responded:

- The industry practice is that water within the pools is never completely drained and replaced due to complications that this could cause around the integrity of the pool tiles and structure. However fresh water is periodically added weekly through the ‘backwash’ process and topped up with fresh water where required.
- The water quality management process at our pools is
- 1. Automatic Dosing – both pools have automatic dosing systems that test the quality and adjust chemical dosing accordingly to the need, bather load etc.
- 2. Manual Quality Tests and Recalibration – all pools are manual tested (minimum of 5 times per day). This is checked against the automatic dosing system to ensure that readings are accurate and any recalibration to the automatic dosing is identified and actioned where necessary.
- 3. Weekly Backwash (Filter Cleaning) – all filters are cleaned weekly via a backwash process. This includes agitating the filter medium (sand) in the filters to disperse physical contaminants which are then through, reversing the flow to the filters extracted to drain. Due to this water from the pool and circulation pipework is sent to waste and is then topped up with fresh intake water. Once this process is completed and circulation returned to the pools point 2 is then undertaken to ensure readings are correct including any recalibration required for point 1. This process may become more frequent depending on bather load and will be identified through pressure differential within the filters.

- 4. Monthly Bacteriological Testing – all pools are independently tested whereby sample water from the pools are removed and taken to labs for various testing and examination of which results are returned.
- 5. Super dosing – periodic super dosing is undertaken as needed or at least annually. This involves shocking the system with high concentration of disinfection (chlorine) over and above that which is within the parameters for bathing. Therefore, this is done during times when the public are not using the facility. Following this process the pools are returned to operational levels via the above points.
- 6. Top Ups – topping up the pools with ‘fresh’ water is frequently carried out to maintain circulation due to evaporation, bather displacement and point 3.

Councillor Manners asked a supplementary question, asking when the pools had been drained and changed? Further questioning was asked whether the council were looking into upgrading the pools to a 50m swimming pool?

Councillor Duckworth responded that due to budget constraints the council could not foresee this happening. It was not desirable for the pool to be drained.

(b) **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR GREEN REGARDING THE DERELICT WESTCLIFF HALL IN RAMSGATE**

Councillor Green asked Councillor Everitt the following question:

What powers do the Council have to affect a remedy to deal with the listed but increasingly derelict Westcliff Hall on Ramsgate’s western seafront given the impact upon the promenade and the likely threat to the highway? Have we engaged with the owners?

Councillor Everitt responded:

- TDC does not have responsibility for the maintenance of the building, all maintenance responsibilities sit with the building owner. It is clear from the sale documentation that the building owner must maintain the building, which includes the boundary walls.
- The sale documents include provisions to the benefit of TDC, which include the requirement for the owner to maintain the building and also to provide access to the council and the public over the promenade to at least a width of 5m. These provisions can potentially be enforced through court action, however the available remedy is compensation for any losses incurred as a result of the breach of the covenants. It would not require the owner to undertake any work.
- We do have enforcement powers that are potentially available to the council in respect of dangerous structures which are exercised through our Building Control service. If the building is a dangerous structure we can serve notice requiring works and can undertake works in default if necessary. This only applies where the structure is assessed as being dangerous and we would only consider these powers where it is reasonable to do so and in the public interest. To start this process our Building Control Service has inspected the building. They did not find anything that would indicate that the building is currently a dangerous structure.
- Building Control have also met with the current owner to discuss the building. The current owner advised that he is currently looking to sell the property. Since the visit, Building Control have written to the owners under the Building Act 1984, Section 77, Dangerous Structures, which instructs the owner to monitor the condition of the property and seek guidance from a competent builder or surveyor who can outline any steps necessary to prevent any deterioration or to execute the repairs.
- The planning enforcement team are also able to consider whether any planning enforcement action, eg a section 215 notice process, would be appropriate.

Section 215 primarily deals with the appearance of a building and its impact on the amenity of the local area, and may not be the most effective powers to deal with any structural issues.

- Additionally, the building does potentially impact the adjacent highway. The Council would be raising this further with Kent County Council.

(c) **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR BAYFORD REGARDING UNSUITABLE AND OVERCROWDED PROPERTIES**

Councillor Bayford asking Councillor Whitehead the following question:

“At the Cabinet Advisory Group in May, it was confirmed that applications to join TDC’s waiting list for social housing can take up to 26 weeks, due to applications being received incomplete and to a shortage of staff to process them. What steps are the council taking to address this situation and reduce the waiting time for individuals and families who may be living in unsuitable and overcrowded properties?”

Councillor Whitehead responded:

- The council’s Housing Options Service provides support for people in housing need in the district. This includes help and advice with homelessness and homelessness prevention, rough sleeping services and advice about finding a new home. The team manage statutory homelessness applications, manage temporary accommodation and manage the Thanet Housing Register.
- The Housing Register is the main way in which people can apply for a permanent council or housing association home. Council and housing association homes are increasingly the only affordable option for households on low, or below average incomes, and applicants face a long wait for a new permanent council and housing association. We currently have 1,500 live applications on the register and a further 1,800 applications waiting to be processed. The team is assessing applications in date order, as the Housing register prioritises applicants in date order within four priority bands, although we are able to process applicants from households living in temporary accommodation more quickly.
- The number of new applications has been increasing. The current economic circumstances and the pressures on the local private rented sector are contributory factors in this increase. We received 160 applications May 2023. By May 2024 this had risen to 219 applications, representing an increase of 37%. Each application needs detailed assessment. Officers also need to check all identity documents and supporting evidence and contact applicants to request any missing documentation.
- During this time we have also had to direct some staff time towards the implementation of the council’s new, Kent wide, housing register computer systems and have had periods of staff shortages. The system implementation is now complete and the roll out of new chromebooks to the team has improved processing times. In addition, the team is currently fully resourced. The new system allows applicants to upload their own applications and supporting information.
- The team have also reviewed arrangements for telephone cover to allow more dedicated time for the processing of applications. Telephone cover, other than for emergencies, is in place from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday. We will keep this under review but these arrangements have so far worked well.

Councillor Bayford asked a supplementary question around whether within the current climate, and housing applications likely to increase, would there be more trained staff to deal with the demand.

Councillor Whitehead responded that the star chamber process was ongoing, and would look at what the housing team needed. Currently, the housing team was fully resourced.

(d) **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAWSON REGARDING PARKING IN THANET**

Councillor Dawson asked Councillor K. Bright the following question:

“Will the council please set out their strategic action plan for seasonal parking chaos across the Thanet district. With Warmer weather approaching, residents are enduring parking chaos which is causing obstructions to roads yet again around our golden beaches.

We know that Thanet is a visitor hotspot and is entering a busy time of the year. We also know that the council has not been successful with retaining wardens. Will the council please produce a report to capture why the failings have occurred. Why have you been unable to recruit and retain, compared with other local authorities in similar circumstances. The council has found that this particular issue over the years has been unsustainable. Is it now prudent that the council seek other measures, alternatives which may include outsourcing to create stability to this ongoing issue.”

Councillor K. Bright responded:

- As has been widely communicated, a new parking strategy is being developed for Thanet. The vision for this strategy is to ensure there is high quality and appropriately located parking that supports economic development and regeneration, prioritises active & sustainable transport, and provides a positive parking experience for residents, businesses and visitors. Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders has already taken place earlier this year along with survey work and analysis of parking data. A draft strategy has been produced following that consultation and a second round of consultation involving district councillors, town & parish councillors, stakeholder groups and members of the public is due to commence very shortly with more details on that to be shared very soon.
- When completed, the strategy will set the high level direction for parking in Thanet and a range of plans and projects will be proposed from this for the benefit of Thanet’s residents and visitors.
- There have been continuous efforts to recruit staff to vacant Civil Enforcement Officer posts. It remains the case that this role is extremely difficult to recruit to and this is a problem faced by local authorities across the country with a number of Kent authorities currently running recruitment campaigns. We have successfully recruited a number of employees over the last 2 years but retention is also an issue with some staff deciding the role is not for them early in their employment.
- Since April this year we have seen an increase in the number of staff in the team with 5 posts currently filled. Following recruitment there is a period of training and shadowing with experienced members of the team so it does take some time before new staff are able to perform the full functions of the role. We continue to advertise for the role and have an objective of reaching a total of 9 full time equivalent posts filled by the end of the calendar year. We offer a shift allowance and a market supplement (which was increased in value in April 2024) to enhance the attractiveness of the role to potential candidates.
- Outsourcing of parking enforcement has been considered previously and outsourced enforcement in some areas such as littering has been trialed before. Parking enforcement is highly regulated and outsourcing of this service would make no difference to the legal responsibilities and requirements upon the council as a local authority. Ensuring compliance and maintaining control would be more challenging. The council does not undertake enforcement activity for the purposes of generating revenue, the primary purpose and intention is always to influence and encourage behavior changes to the benefit of our communities and neighbourhoods.

- When enforcement services like this are outsourced to the private sector the overarching objectives can be distorted and operative actions may be driven by profit generating motives. In such cases this can lead to a range of unintended negative consequences. For example, some members of the public being targeted for relatively minor offences that result in a higher revenue return, whilst those more troublesome and complex issues that we know are important matters and concerns for our residents may not be prioritised by a private operator because they are too hard to generate a revenue stream from.
- There are currently no plans to explore outsourcing in this area.
- The subject of recruitment to enforcement roles and the development of the parking strategy have been well communicated for some time. The recruitment issue has also been the subject of previous questions to council recently. There are no plans and no need to bring a report to the council on this matter. We look forward to the completion of the parking strategy work and the plans and improvement projects that will be proposed as a result of that important work.

Councillor Dawson followed up by asking a supplementary question, asking whether the parking chaos would be monitored, if there was a potential to implement a parking portal, whereby complaints could be noted and if necessary be accessed by relevant police departments.

Councillor K.Bright responded that this would take budget considerations, but was a good idea and this would be discussed further.

(e) **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR WING REGARDING JET SKI SAFETY**

Councillor Wing asked Councillor Albon the following question:

“With the hot weather finally arriving so have the jet ski’s and whilst many operate within the rules that keep all beach and water users safe, it is clear too many are not. What information are jet ski owners given when they apply for access to our launching locations including the one at Ramsgate Harbour and how do residents/visitors report incidents as they happen, to who and where is this information displayed on our beaches?”

Councillor Albon responded:

- Thanet District Council currently offers two launching locations, Ramsgate Royal Harbour and Jet Ski World. There are no further locations as the Eastern Undercliff, Ramsgate was closed as a launch site this year. Information on Jet Ski use is on all of our main notice boards and within the code of conduct booklet.
- Ramsgate Royal Harbour permits Jet Skies to launch from the sea if they are moored in the harbour. There are a limited number of spaces available (under 10).
- Harbour terms and conditions are given to the person booking their berth. The Harbour team are currently reviewing these terms and conditions and as part of this review it is suggested that the code of conduct for the coast line is added to the information supplied.
- Investigations have shown that many Jet Ski users are visitors from outside of the area. Kent Rural Police and our Coastal Enforcement Officers carry the equipment required to read the codes on the side of a jet ski to enable them to identify it and undertake enforcement where required.
- Signage has been reviewed in hot spot areas as they become the main focus for Jet Ski launches, such as Western Undercliff, Ramsgate. Where identified within the review, new signage is being ordered and will be installed as soon as possible.

- Kent Police have advised recently that the public should continue to report incidents to them for their response in an emergency situation using the appropriate emergency phone number. This may require further intervention from the Coast Guard. In addition craft identification numbers can be reported to the beach and coast team by email beaches-and-coast@thanet.gov.uk or by calling 01843 577000.

Councillor Wing followed up by asking a supplementary question, noting that the signage disappears when the tide is at its highest. This should be looked at, as jet skis arrive during this time.

Councillor Albon responded that this would be looked at further.

(f) **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR ROGERS REGARDING DISPOSABLE BBQ's**

Councillor Rogers asked Councillor Albon the following question:

“As disposable BBQs are banned under the Beach and Coast PSPO are officers enforcing the prohibition? Have fines or warnings been issued? They are still causing a danger on beaches due to the time discarded BBQs take to cool down causing a risk particularly to small children, they are a leading cause of bin fires requiring Emergency Service attendance, grass is burnt when using on grassy areas, they are a major cause of litter and they do not support the use of local food outlets.”

Councillor Albon responded:

- Coastal Enforcement Officers are warning (education intervention) of the prohibition but have not had a situation so far this season of an incident where a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) would be appropriate to issue during their patrol hours. The use of disposable BBQs is mainly happening after 6pm, but our Coastal Enforcement Officers currently finish their patrols at 6pm. We are looking to review the hours of patrol to mitigate this issue now that we have more officers on patrol during the summer season.
- Signage is placed around our coastline as either individual signage in hot spot locations or on our main beach boards. Information is also included within our code of conduct booklet which can be found in all bay inspector offices, the Margate beach office, our main offices and visitor information centres. Our communications team also put out messages on social media platforms.

Councillor Rogers asked a supplementary question, noting that climate change was a large part in causing wildfires. Having BBQ's on the grassed areas could be a risk to the general public and wildlife.

Councillor Albon responded that the majority of grassed areas were mowed. These BBQ's on the grassed areas were easier to be seen in comparison to BBQ's on the beach, being buried with sand.

9. **NOTICE OF MOTION**

(a) **Notice of Motion regarding Temporary Accommodation**

It was proposed by Councillor Everitt and seconded by Councillor Albon that:

“Council notes the outcome of the general election and congratulates the successful candidates in Thanet. We call upon the new government to take urgent action to support this local authority and others whose capacity to deliver services in general is threatened by the rising demand for, and therefore cost of, temporary accommodation due to the

threat of homelessness, as well as to prevent the damaging impacts on the Thanet families and individuals affected. We call upon the local MPs to make representations to government to provide more support as a matter of urgency.”

It was agreed that the opposition Leader in accordance with council procedure rule 3.7 would provide a response to the motion. Councillor Pugh provided a response to the motion.

It was proposed by Councillor Everitt, seconded by Councillor Keen and Councillors agreed to debate the motion.

During the debate Councillors made the following comments:

- The motion was an important and emotive nationwide issue that needed to be addressed.
- It was important that families were not dispersed around the country.
- Section 21 and evictions needed to be ended.

Councillors debated the motion, Councillors agreed and the motion was carried.

10. LEADERS REPORT

The Leader, Councillor Everitt, gave his report making the following key points:

- There had been an incident at dreamland, where Emily Stokes had died. This incident was being considered seriously by police.
- Councillor Manners was welcomed back to the Chambers after a period of ill health.
- There was a new timetable for the Local Plan update, this would be presented to Cabinet at a later date.
- The council was confident that it would exceed the expectation of the creation of 400 affordable homes.
- Compliments had been given regarding public toilets in the district, which was pleasing.
- There was a procurement process going through for the regeneration projects.
- The pathfinder board was due to meet.
- There was a planned free event for the 75th anniversary of the Viking Ship, Hugin.
- Congratulations were given to the new Margate Mayor, Councillor Packman.

Councillor Pugh, as Leader of the Conservative Group, made the following points:

- The recent deaths were distressing, and sympathies were given to the families involved.
- Questioning was raised around the Council and any action against dreamlands licence pending the investigation.
- Councillor Manners was welcome back into the Chambers.
- Toilets needed to be opened for longer periods of time during the summer season.
- The regeneration progress was positive news.
- Questioning regarding the process of concluding the Winter Gardens progress was raised.
- There was little published regarding the event on the 75th anniversary of the Viking Ship, Hugin.

Councillor Everitt responded with the following points:

- The licensing panel was due to meet regarding Dreamlands license.
- Winter and summer opening times of the toilets differed. There had been staffing issues, and challenges in terms of public behaviour around this.
- Cabinet would publish a report on the Local Plan issues shortly after the meeting of council.

Councillor Garner, as Leader of the Green Group, made the following points:

- Sympathies were given to the tragic incidents in dreamland and around Margate Pier.
- Further appropriate measures should be put in place around harbour arms to minimise risks.
- It was disappointing that major planning consents were not able to be paused.
- Congratulations were given to Polly Billington.
- Cliffs End were providing a free event on the 75th anniversary of Viking Ship, Hugin, which would be celebrated in Broadstairs.

Councillor Everitt responded with the following points:

- Communications team would look into pushing out events further into the public eye.
- Pauses to the major planning consents would not result in a difference to the process.

Councillor Worrow, Leader of the Independent Group, made the following points:

- Sympathies were given to the incidents which had happened in Margate.
- The security in Dreamland was unsatisfactory.
- Councillor Manners was welcomed back to the Chambers.
- Support was given to the proposed motion to revoke the Local Plan.
- It was positive that the Council was moving forth with processing bids to run the Winter Gardens.

Councillor Everitt responded with the following points:

- There was no evidence that London Boroughs were buying houses in the district to house their residents.
- Agreement regarding the Winter Gardens was given.

11. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Councillor Fellows, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, circulated the full report prior to the meeting. It was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel were looking for subjects to look into, suggestions from Councillors and residents were welcome.

Members noted the report.

12. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

It was proposed by Councillor Yates, Councillors agreed that the recommendation set out in the report be agreed, namely:

“That Council approves the supplementary capital budgets, numbered i to ii inclusive, as set out in section 3 to this report.

3.1 General Fund Capital Programme Additions

It is proposed that the following changes to the capital programme (already reflected within the opening balances of the Annex previously provided to Cabinet) be approved.

(i) Sea Wall Remedial Work : Increase the budget by £61,788 to cover additional spend on this project, which is externally funded. Additional 2023/24 spend as per annex 1 is £36,788 and it is expected that a further amount of approximately £25,000 will be incurred.

(ii) High Street Heritage Action Zone Grant - Ramsgate: Increase the budget by £5,834 to cover additional spend on this project, which is externally funded.”

13. REVISED 4 YEAR HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Councillor Whitehead proposed, Councillor Albon seconded and Councillors agreed the recommendations in the report, namely:

“Council is asked to:

1. Approve the revised capital programme attached at Annex 1.
2. Note that amounts included within the programme for the Acquisitions and Development programme for the three years from 2025 to 2028 are indicative at this stage, and will need to be adjusted to reflect actual approved schemes.”

14. REALIGNMENT OF CAPITAL BUDGET FOR MILL LANE CAR PARK

Councillor K.Bright proposed, Councillor Duckworht seconded and Councillors agreed the recommendation in the report, namely:

“To approve a supplementary 2024/25 general fund capital budget of £100K for the lift replacement at Mill Lane Car Park in Margate, to be funded from the decriminalisation reserve.”

15. BIRCHINGTON-ON-SEA CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL ADOPTION

The Leader proposed, Councillor Albon seconded and Councillors agreed the recommendation in the report, namely:

“The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and associated documents, as appended to the report, be adopted and published by 1 August 2024.”

16. AMENDMENTS COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES REGARDING FREQUENCY OF QUESTIONS

The Chair proposed, the Vice-Chair seconded the following recommendation in the report, namely:

“13.8 Amalgamated Answers to Questions When very similar questions on the same subject are received by Democratic Services for the same meeting, a Cabinet Member may amalgamate the answers and so provide a single answer to multiple questions. Before doing so the Cabinet Member should seek the approval of the Chief Executive to do so. If multiple questions are asked and none of the members of the public attend the meeting, cabinet members, at their discretion, have the right to read out the answer to that question.”

Councillor Everitt proposed to delete the word "Cabinet" from the recommendation, changing this word to "Councillor." Councillor Pugh seconded recommendation. Councillors agreed the amendment to the recommendation and the amended recommendation was approved.

17. AMENDMENT TO CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024-2027

The Chair proposed, the Vice-Chair seconded and Councillors agreed the recommendation in the report, namely:

"That Council agrees to move the Governance and Audit Meetings of the 26 September and 27 November to the 3 October and 4 December respectively."

18. CHANGES TO COMMITTEES

Councillor Pugh, Leader of the Conservatives, had informed Democratic Services of the following changes:

Cllr Barry Manners will be replaced on the Licensing Board by Cllr Jill Bayford;
Cllr Barry Manners will be replaced on the Governance & Audit Committee by
Cllr Matthew Scott;
Cllr Matthew Scott will be replaced on the Constitutional Review Committee by
Cllr John Davis.

No other group leaders had any changes to committee's.

Meeting concluded : 9.17 pm