

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2014 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Gideon (Chairman); Councillors Harrison, Driver, Edwards, K Gregory, Matterface, Moore, Scobie, M Tomlinson and Watkins

In Attendance: Councillors Binks, C Hart, S Hart and Johnston

396. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following Members:
Councillor I. Gregory;
Councillor Hornus;
Councillor Nicholson;
Councillor D. Saunders;
Councillor Huxley substituted by Councillor Edwards.

397. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

398. MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Councillor K. Gregory proposed, Councillor Harrison seconded and Members agreed the minutes.

(a) Minutes of Previous Scheduled Meeting

Councillor K. Gregory proposed, Councillor Harrison seconded and Members agreed the minutes.

399. RESPONSES OF CABINET/COUNCIL TO OSP RECOMMENDATIONS

The report was noted.

400. CABINET MEMBER PRESENTATION

Councillor C. Hart, the Leader of Council gave a presentation. He said that a number of meetings had been held with representatives of the owners of Manston Airport. The major issue that came up was that of viability problems affecting the operation of the airport. The Council also met with the local MPs and government officials to explore opportunities for keeping the airport open or identify a viable way forward. Additional notes on the presentation are attached as Minute Item 400 to the minutes.

Council was therefore considering the option of proposing that Manston Airport and Business Park be included in the Enterprise Zone to include the Richborough Corridor and the Discovery Park. Such a proposal was with due regard being given to the impact of such a proposal on neighbouring Dover District. Councillor C. Hart advised the meeting that the Job Centre was providing support to airport staff that were likely to be affected by the pending closure of the airport. Councillor Hart said that night time flying was not a factor in the possible closure and that there was cross party support to find a solution to the problems affecting the viability of the airport.

Members of the Panel expressed their support for the initiatives that were being undertaken by the Council. Some Members said that it was common practice that private companies would normally plan years in advance of such a closure. They suggested that it was unfortunate that such commercially sensitive and confidential information was difficult to share with a local Council. If such information could be shared it would have helped the Council to plan ahead.

The Panel generally supported the idea of a twin track approach to resolving this issue; which included efforts to keep Manston Airport open or proposing that it be included in the Enterprise Zone. They said that it was important to take a holistic approach to planning whereby all Council Planning Policies where appropriate would need to be revised to include the strategic relationship between economic development in the district and Manston Airport.

Members suggested that the Local Plan Cabinet Advisory Group took on board the airport issue as they finalise their recommendations to Cabinet.

401. POST HOC SCRUTINY REVIEW - ASSET DISPOSAL, ROYAL PAVILION

The Chairman noted that this item had been withdrawn.

402. PLEASURAMA SITE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW TFG REPORT TO OSP

The report was noted.

403. REVIEW OF ROLE OF COUNCILLORS TAKING DECISIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT BOTH TOWN//PARISH COUNCIL AND DISTRICT COUNCIL LEVEL

Members said that this issue had been discussed by Council on previous occasions and Members had been advised that there was nothing inherently wrong with a dual-hatted role for Councillors regarding involvement at both parish and district level on planning applications.

Councillor Harrison proposed, Councillor K. Gregory seconded and Members agreed to include the proposed scrutiny project on the OSP work programme for 2014/15 with a recommendation to set up a working party/TFG or commission a detailed officer report.

404. REVIEW OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2013/14

The report was noted.

405. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR 2013/14

Members agreed that this report forms the basis of the Panel's Annual Report to be presented to Annual Council by the Chairman.

406. FORWARD PLAN AND EXEMPT CABINET REPORT LIST - 1 MAY 2014 TO 11 SEPTEMBER 2014

The report was noted.

Meeting concluded: 7.48 pm