

Public Document Pack

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2015 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Braidwood, Brimm, Buckley, Campbell, G Coleman-Cooke, K Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Crow-Brown, Curran, Dawson, Day, Dellar, Dennis, Dixon, Edwards, Elenor, Evans, J Fairbrass, L Fairbrass, Falcon, Fenner, Game, I Gregory, K Gregory, Grove, Hayton, Howes, Jaye-Jones, Johnston, Leys, Martin, Matterface, Parsons, Partington, Piper, Potts, Rogers, D Saunders, M Saunders, Savage, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzing, Taylor, Tomlinson, Townend and Wells.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Collins, Dexter, Hillman, Larkins, Smith, Taylor-Smith.

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 15 October 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made announcements regarding the following:

- The correct use of the corporate email system.
- A thankyou offered to the public for their interest and attendance of Council meetings over the year.
- Congratulations were offered to the Thanet Visitor Information Service who recently achieved a silver award for Visitor Information Provider of the Year at the Beautiful South Tourism Awards 2015.
- Congratulations were offered to the officers and Members involved achieving an Urbanism Award for Margate.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **PETITIONS**

(a) **Ellington Park Petition**

Mrs Perkins presented a petition containing 2498 valid signatures as follows:

"We the undersigned ask the council (Thanet District Council) to support the Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the regeneration of Ellington Park, Ramsgate."

Members debated the petition.

Members agreed to continue to lead on the Heritage Lottery Fund bid process, however support was conditional until the size of the project was fully understood. In addition, the bid would require Cabinet approval before submission was made to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

(a) Cost of Manston CPO External Legal and Consultant Advice

Mr Wright asked the Leader the following question:

“How much has external legal/consultant fees relating to the Airport CPO cost the Council, is it true that RiverOak would have paid these costs if selected as an indemnity partner, and has TDC made arrangements for any future CPO partner to pay these costs incurred in going forward?”

The Leader responded with the following points:

- £2,180.00 had been spent on external legal/consultancy fees under the Labour administration, followed by a further £8,151.00 since the UKIP administration took control in May 2015.
- An indemnity partner would be expected to pay legal/consultancy costs, although any future indemnity partner would not be expected to pay historic legal/consultancy costs.
- RiverOak had not made any contribution to these costs.

7. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) The Projected Need for Affordable Housing

Councillor Matterface asked Councillor L Fairbrass the following question:

“What is the projected need for affordable housing in Thanet for the next five years?”

Councillor L Fairbrass responded with the following points:

- A recent review showed that 1985 new affordable homes were required over the next five years.

Councillor Matterface followed up her question by asking when would work start on building the 10 social housing units that received planning permission and central government funding 18 months ago in her ward?

Councillor L Fairbrass responded that she would make enquires and advise Councillor Matterface outside of the meeting.

(b) UKIP Party Whip

Councillor Bayford asked the Leader the following question:

“With regard to an issue raised at a recent Overview and Scrutiny Panel, can the Leader confirm that the UKIP group at TDC now operate a 'whipping' system”

The Leader responded that UKIP did not operate a whipping system.

Councillor Bayford followed up his question by advising that he had seen correspondence suggesting that while UKIP did not use the term 'whip' they did intend to have members performing a similar role.

The Leader responded that he had not seen this correspondence and was unaware of what Councillor Bayford was referring to.

(c) **The Minutes From The Most Recent Invest Thanet Meeting**

Councillor Savage asked Councillor Stummer-Schmertzing the following question:

“Invest Thanet, formerly the Thanet Regeneration Board was established to contribute ideas towards a strategy for Thanet's economic growth. Presuming the last meeting of 16th October took place, when will the minutes of this meeting be available?”

Councillor Stummer-Schmertzing responded with the following points:

- The minutes would be published once approved and agreed at the next Board meeting.
- The next meeting was expected to take place on 22 January 2016.

Councillor Savage followed up his question by asking for a brief outline of what the Board was doing to encourage regeneration?

Councillor Stummer-Schmertzing responded that the Board was looking at the following areas:

- Identification of, and how to address potential skills gaps in Thanet.
- Business engagement and support.
- Collaboration on marketing incentives.
- Support of key sectors of importance to Thanet's economy.
- Promotion of investment in key infrastructure.
- Resolving blockages to investment.

8. NOTICE OF MOTION

It was noted that no motions on notice had been received.

9. LEADERS REPORT

The Leader covered the following areas in his report:

- Much of what had happened since the last meeting of Council had been covered at Overview and Scrutiny or other committees; therefore he would take the opportunity to wish Members Merry Christmas.

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

- The rejection of RiverOak as an indemnity partner should be mentioned.
- Would the Leader clarify whether there were four interested parties in the airport site, as an FOI request appeared to suggest at there were not?
- Could Members be assured that the £1.2 million additional cost of Dreamland would be the last major expense of the project?
- Now that UKIP no longer had a majority on the Council, when would chairmanships be given to other party members so that they can get involved in helping to run the Council?
- The unreceived TransEuropa income should not be shown as an expense to the Council, however the compensation costs for restricting animal exports from Ramsgate Port and Dreamland should be shown as expenses.

The Leader replied to Councillor Bayford's comments with the following points:

- After consideration of legal advice the Council rejected RiverOak as an indemnity partner.
- Four groups came forward during the time negotiations were taking place with RiverOak. Soft market testing will recommence in January 2016.
- Additional costs in relation to Dreamland were coming to light as a result of decisions made before the UKIP administration came into power, the Leader believed that the £1.2 million should be the last of the costs.
- Costs relating to TransEuropa, restriction on animal exports and Dreamland have all fallen to the current administration as previous administrations failed to address them adequately.

As Councillor Collins was unavailable, Councillor Ashbee responded with the following points for the Democratic Independence Group:

- As previously mentioned, she wished for confirmation that there would be no further increase to the overspend on Dreamland.
- Could the Leader confirm that the Council remained committed to the reinstatement of an operating airport at the Manston site?
- A request that the group leader meetings took place with all leaders together rather than on a one to one basis.

The Leader replied to Councillor Ashbee's comments with the following points:

- At its next meeting, Cabinet would consider a report recommending the commencement of soft market testing with a view to finding an indemnity partner for the airport. This was a testament to the desire of the administration to get the airport back up and running.
- Group leader meetings would continue in the current format for the time being.

Councillor Johnston as Leader of the Labour Party responded with the following points:

- Funding was allocated for the Thanet spine road under the Labour administration
- The compulsory purchase orders for Dreamland and the Fort Road Hotel were agreed under the Conservative administration, at which time the Leader was a Cabinet Member of that administration.
- Decisions regarding TransEuropa were also made under the Conservative Administration when the Leader was a prominent Member.

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

Councillor D Saunders, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, presented his report and made the following points:

- The panel had met on three occasions since the last Council meeting.
- The Community Safety Partnership Working Party and Corporate Performance Review Working Party had not met since the last Council meeting.
- A watching brief was to be maintained on both the accident and emergency services at the QEQM, and the application for external funding for a professional archivist to catalogue TDC artefacts.

In response to the report the following points were raised:

- The Community Safety Conference would take place on 9 December.
- There was concern that consultation on future health service provision from the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust was not adequate to date.
- Requests for copies of meeting recordings would be made available to Members as soon as possible.

Members noted the report.

11. THE DETERMINATION OF THE LICENSING POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

It was proposed by Councillor L Fairbrass, seconded by the Leader and Members agreed the recommendation as shown in paragraph 5.1 of the report, namely that Members agree:

“To adopt the Thanet statement of licensing policy using paragraph 3.1 of this Report.”

12. THE DETERMINATION OF THE GAMBLING POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

It was proposed by Councillor Lin Fairbrass, seconded by the Leader and Members agreed the recommendation as shown in paragraph 5.1 of the report, namely that Members agree:

“To adopt paragraph 3.1 that Council adopt the statement of Gambling Policy.”

13. GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING AND CHANGES

It was noted that in accordance with council procedure rule 21.6, a recorded vote would be taken on the motion or any amendments and substantive motions.

It was proposed by Councillor Townend and seconded by the Leader, that the recommendations as set out at paragraph 9.1 of the report be adopted, namely:

“That Council approves the capital programme changes as per sections 2.5, 3, 4 and 5 of the report.”

23 Members voted in favour the motion: Councillors Braidwood, Brimm, Buckley, G. Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Crow-Brown, Dellar, Dennis, Dixon, Edwards, Evans, J. Fairbrass, L. Fairbrass, Falcon, Howes, Jaye-Jones, Piper, Potts, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzing, Taylor, Townend and Wells.

23 Members voted against the motion: Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Campbell, K. Coleman-Cooke, Curran, Dawson, Day, Fenner, Game, I. Gregory, K. Gregory, Hayton, Johnston, Martin, Matterface, Parsons, Partington, Rogers, D. Saunders, M. Saunders, Savage and Tomlinson.

3 Members abstained from voting on the motion: Councillors Elenor, Grove, and Leys.

The Chairman made his casting vote in favour of the motion.

The motion was carried.

14. FEES & CHARGES 2016/17

It was noted that in accordance with council procedure rule 21.6, 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 Leys, that the recommendation as set out at paragraph 4.1 of the report be adopted, namely:

“That Council approve the Fees and Charges for 2016-17 as set out in Annex 1.”

With the following amendment:

“That free Saturday parking was maintained at Leopold Street car park, and to retain charging on Saturday for Cannon Road car park, subject to the loss of £9000.00 of income to be funded by Ramsgate Town Council.”

48 Members voted in favour the motion: Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Braidwood, Brimm, Buckley, Campbell, G. Coleman-Cooke, K. Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Crow-Brown, Curran, Dawson, Day, Dellar, Dennis, Dixon, Edwards, Evans, J. Fairbrass, L. Fairbrass, Falcon, Fenner, Game, I. Gregory, K. Gregory, Grove, Hayton, Howes, Jaye-Jones, Johnston, Leys, Martin, Matterface, Parsons, Partington, Piper, Potts, Rogers, D. Saunders, M. Saunders, Savage, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzing, Taylor, Tomlinson, Townend and Wells.

1 Member voted against the motion: Councillor Elenor.

No Member abstained from voting on the motion.

The amended motion was carried.

15. EAST KENT JOINT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed the recommendations as shown in paragraph 6 of the report, namely:

“To confirm the Council’s continued participation in the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel until 30 November 2019.

To appoint Mrs Kerry Sabin-Dawson and Mrs Sue Longden as Thanet District Council’s appointees to the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel for a four year term from the 1 December 2015.”

16. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND BOARDS - 2015/16

PROPORTIONALITY

Councillor Bayford proposed and Councillor Savage seconded option two as detailed in paragraph 4.4.1 of the report, namely:

“That the Conservative Group will gain a seat on the Planning Committee and will need to make a new nomination to that Committee. In addition the Conservative group will also gain a seat on the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and will need to make a new nomination to that Committee.”

Upon being put to the vote this motion was lost.

Councillor Johnston proposed and Councillor Fenner seconded option one as detailed in paragraph 4.3.1 of the report, namely:

“That the Conservative Group will gain a seat on the Planning Committee and will need to make a new nomination to that Committee. In addition the Conservative group will also gain a seat on the Licensing Board and will need to make a new nomination to that Committee.”

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES

Councillor Bayford advised that he nominated Councillor K Gregory to sit on Planning Committee, and Councillor M Saunders to sit on Licensing Board.

Councillor Wells advised that he nominated Councillor Jaye-Jones to sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, and Councillor Dixon to sit on the Governance and Audit Committee.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Councillor Wells proposed and Councillor L Fairbrass seconded that:

“Councillor Buckley be elected Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee.”

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

There was an adjournment during the item while Members sought clarity on the election process.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN TO THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

Councillor Wells proposed and Councillor Edwards seconded that:

“Councillor Dixon be elected as Vice-Chairman to the Governance and Audit Committee.”

Upon being put to the vote the motion was lost.

Councillor Bayford proposed and Councillor Savage seconded that:

“Councillor I. Gregory be elected as Vice-Chairman of Governance and Audit Committee.”

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT PERSONS

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed the recommendation as detailed at 7.1 of the report, namely;

“To re-appoint Mr Dennis James as Independent Person and Mr Peter Tucker as Deputy Independent Person to a term expiring on the day of Annual Council in May 2019.”

Meeting concluded: 8.55 pm

This page is intentionally left blank