

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2018 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor David Saunders (Chairman); Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Braidwood, Brimm, Buckley, Campbell, G Coleman-Cooke, K Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Constantine, Crow-Brown, Curran, Dawson, Dellar, Dennis, Dexter, Dixon, Edwards, L Fairbrass, Falcon, Game, I Gregory, Grove, Hayton, Jaye-Jones, Johnston, Larkins, Matterface, Messenger, Parsons, L Piper, S Piper, L Potts, Pugh, Rogers, Rusiecki, M Saunders, Savage, Taylor, Taylor-Smith, Tomlinson and Wright.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Day, Evans, Jeremy Fairbrass, Fenner, Hillman, Martin, Roy Potts, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzling, Townend, Venables and Wells.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was noted that there was a typographical error in item 6a, question from the public regarding clinical waste. The minute should state that Councillor Taylor-Smith responded to the question.

Subject to this amendment it was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and agreed, that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 July 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and agreed, that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 19 July 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members offered Councillor Wright congratulations on her recent election to the Council.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6. PETITIONS

(a) A Petition Regarding Jackey Bakers

Ms Taylor was unavailable to present the petition, however Members noted that the following petition, containing 70 valid signatures, had been received:

“We the undersigned petition the council to erect a solid barrier around the perimeter of Jackey Bakers that is extremely difficult to break.

A barrier will assist to prevent further incursions on to the Land which is a valuable community asset and should be protected. It will also prevent local residents from being disturbed by the noise and anti-social behaviour that recent incursions have brought to our local area.”

In accordance with the council’s Petition Scheme, the petition was referred to Cabinet without debate for report back to the Council within three ordinary meetings.

7. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

No questions were received from the press and public in accordance with council procedure rule number 13.

8. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

(a) Question No. 1 from a Member - Regarding the Number of Staff at the Council

Councillor Johnston asked the Leader the following question:

“Thanet District Council is a major employer. Please could the Leader confirm the numbers of staff with a breakdown for each department.”

The Leader responded with the following points:

- The council currently employed 483 staff which equated to 451.16 full time equivalent posts (FTE). A departmental breakdown was:
 - Chief Executive Directorate: 6 staff, 5.04 FTE
 - Corporate Governance Directorate: 58 staff, 46.79 FTE
 - Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Directorate: 106 staff, 98.47 FTE
 - Operational and Commercial Services Directorate: 258 staff, 247.66 FTE
 - East Kent Services: 55 staff, 53.20 FTE

Councillor Johnston followed up her question by asking for details regarding staff redundancies, dismissals and tribunals.

The Leader responded that the Chief Executive was the Head of Paid Service and had responsibility for staffing. Councillor Johnston should write to the Chief Executive to request the information she required.

(b) Question No. 2 from a Member - Regarding Homeless Families

Councillor Constantine asked Councillor Game the following question:

“Could the cabinet member give me an update on the progress being made to rehouse the 71 homeless Thanet families currently in temporary accommodation?”

Councillor Game responded with the following points:

- Since the Council meeting on 12 July, 14 of the 71 families had moved into permanent accommodation and 12 had a property identified for a planned move.
- During July and August 31 new families had approached the Council for assistance.
- Between 9 July and 23 August the number of households living in temporary accommodation had reduced by 12% and the use of hotels for temporary accommodation had reduced to two child free households.
- Following the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act on 3 April 2018, 789 referrals to the service had been received and 303 personal housing plans had been completed. The service had received a letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government which stated how impressed they had been

by the progress that had been made since the introduction of the Homeless reduction act.

- Despite the unprecedented demand for the service, the Council had been successful in preventing homelessness and reducing its reliance on temporary accommodation.
- The Council would invest £30million to create 150 new homes by 2020, and a bid had recently been submitted to build 35 new homes costing £8.8 million.
- All political parties needed to work together to address the level of homelessness, this was an issue that could be seen across the country.

Councillor Constantine followed up her question by asking how the Council used the Human Rights Act to avoid splitting families and putting people in inappropriate housing.

Councillor Game responded that the Council took the Human Rights Act very seriously and always tried to avoid splitting up families. She reiterated her offer given at the last Council meeting, to meet with Councillor Constantine to discuss her concerns.

(c) **Question No.3 from a Member - Regarding the Summer Kitchen**

Councillor Matterface asked the Leader the following question:

“Following the success of the Summer Kitchen in uniting the community and helping many disadvantaged families, will Thanet District Council be applying for money from the government next year similar to the funds announced by Children and Families Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, to enable the scheme to continue here?”

The Leader responded with the following points:

- This was initially a Council initiative to provide ‘fit and fed’ sessions in Millmead and Newington during the summer holidays. East Kent Housing provided funding and the council commissioned Your Leisure to deliver the scheme.
- Our Kitchen was able to secure further funding from Kent County Councillor Lewis to enhance the service over the summer.
- Overall the project had been a great success and good example of partnership working.
- At the current time it was not known if the Holiday Activities and Food Research Fund would be available next year, however if it was then the council would apply.

Councillor Matterface followed up her question by asking if the leader would meet with her to discuss options for holding a similar event next year.

The Leader responded that he would be happy to meet with Councillor Matterface.

(d) **Question No.4 from a Member - Regarding the Newgate Gap Shelter**

Councillor Dawson asked Councillor Gregory the following question:

“TDC have neglected the Newgate Gap Shelter to the point they now seek its part demolition against the Conservation Officers advice. Will you support and work with the residents to save in its entirety this important part of Cliftonville’s heritage

Councillor Gregory responded with the following points:

- The shelter was a liability to the council due to the condition that it was in. In particularly the roof condition was of most concern.
- The planning application submitted by the council to remove the roof had been submitted following discussion with local resident groups, however a new group had since emerged called Save Newgate Shelter.
- The council had withdrawn the planning application to remove the roof in order to have further dialogue with residents and explore the possibility of community asset transfer.

Councillor Dawson followed up her question by asking how many heritage assets were at risk of falling into unrepairable decline and what was the budget allocated to maintenance?

Councillor Gregory responded that there was the strategy asset plan which dealt with the council's assets and was publically available. Cllr Gregory asked Cllr Dawson to email him in order to clarify her supplementary question.

9. NOTICE OF MOTION

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

10. LEADERS REPORT

During his report the Leader covered the following areas:

- The Council's adoption of the Draft Local plan and its publication on 23 August. The public had six weeks to comment.
- The Leader's next priority was to address the losses and generate an income at the Port
- The Port may play a significant role in providing resilience for the Country following Brexit.
- The council's response to traveller incursions was limited due to the special protected status afforded to these people, however work was completed at Jackey Bakers which would help prevent incursions at the site.
- A premises closure order had been successfully implemented at a property in Margate.
- Credit should be given to the council and agency staff who had worked hard to keep Thanet tidy during the peak tourist season.
- The House of Lords would send a Select Committee to look at the coastal regeneration which has taken place in Margate.
- The council had been awarded the South East Employers Charter for Elected Member Development, congratulations were offered to Mr Hughes and the Democratic Services Team for their work.

Councillor L Fairbrass as Deputy Leader of the Independent and UKIP Group made the following points:

- The Draft Local Plan had been published however it was not sound and offered no protection for the airport site.
- Areas of Birchington and Westgate-on-sea would have additional houses as a result of the Draft Local Plan.
- Congratulations were offered to those involved in obtaining the Charter for elected Members Development.

The Leader replied to Councillor L Fairbrass' comments with the following point:

- River Oak had submitted a development consent order to the planning inspectorate for the airport site.

Councillor Reverend Piper as Leader of the Thanet Independent Councillors Group made the following points:

- Congratulations were offered to Mr Hughes and his team for their work in achieving the Charter for Elected Member development.
- The visit from the House of Lords Select Committee should also visit other seaside towns within the District.
- Traveller incursion had been a major problem; thanks were offered to the Chief Executive for the installation of fencing at the Jackey Bakers site.
- The Thanet Independent Councillors group were glad to support the Draft Local Plan.

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

- The Select Committee would see the challenges facing seaside towns.

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

- Were talks regarding a ferry at the Port part of the Kent County Council Brexit resilience strategy?
- The presence of a cargo hub at Manston could be detrimental to tourism, which was a key driving force of economic development within the district.
- The 'beach within reach' beach wheelchairs were great, however there had been a recent incident when the beach inspector was unavailable to unlock the wheelchair so it could not be used.
- Did the Select Committee choose to visit Margate?
- Thanks were offered to Mr Hughes and everyone involved in the work on the Charter for Elected Member Development.

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

- There was a possibility that the port would be involved in the UK's resilience plan following Brexit.
- It was disappointing that the beach wheel chair had been unavailable on that occasion.
- The Select Committee chose to visit Margate as the town had been recognised as turning a corner in its regeneration.
- There was no reason why a cargo hub would impact upon the district's tourism industry.

11. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE, POLICY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL

Councillor G Coleman-Cooke, the Chairman of the Executive, Policy and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, presented his report and the following points were noted:

- The committee was set up in May and had met twice. The first meeting considered the draft Local Plan and the second agreed the work programme for 2018/19.

Members noted the report

12. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE, BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL

Councillor L Piper, the Chairman of the Finance, Budget and Performance Scrutiny Panel, presented her report and the following points were noted:

- The terms of reference were agreed at the first meeting on 29 May and the Panel had met twice since then.
- Key tasks of the Panel would be to review Cabinet proposals for the 2019/20 budget and to review the Council's performance through quarterly performance reports.

Members noted the report.

13. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2017-18

It was proposed by Councillor Gregory, seconded by the Leader and Members agreed the recommendations as shown in the report, namely:

“That Council:

- Notes the actual 2017/18 prudential and treasury indicators in this report.
- Approves the Annual Treasury Management report for 2017/18.”

14. CHANGES TO COMMITTEES PANELS AND BOARDS

PROPORTIONALITY

The Leader proposed, Councillor Game seconded and Members agreed option two as detailed at paragraph 2.6.1 of the report, namely;

“That a seat is added to the Licensing Board and that seat is given to the Conservative group.”

NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES

The Leader advised that Councillor Wright would sit on the Licensing Board, would replace Councillor Ashbee on the Executive, Budget and Performance Scrutiny Panel, and would replace councillor Game on the Constitutional review working party.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Leader proposed, Councillor Savage seconded and Members agreed that Councillor Curran be elected Vice Chairman of the Executive, Policy and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel for the remainder of the 2018/19 year.

Meeting concluded: 8.00 pm