

## COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2019 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

**Present:** Councillor David Saunders (Chairman); Councillors Ashbee, Bambridge, Bayford, Braidwood, Buckley, Campbell, G Coleman-Cooke, K Coleman-Cooke, Connor, Crow-Brown, Curran, Dawson, Day, Dennis, Dexter, Edwards, Evans, J Fairbrass, L Fairbrass, Falcon, Fenner, Game, I Gregory, Grove, Hayton, G Hillman, Jaye-Jones, Johnston, Larkins, Matterface, Messenger, Parsons, L Piper, S Piper, L Potts, R Potts, Pugh, Rogers, Rusiecki, M Saunders, Savage, Shonk, Stummer-Schmertzing, Taylor, Taylor-Smith, Tomlinson, Townend, Wells and Wright.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Constantine, Dellar, Dixon and Martin.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and agreed, that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 February 2019 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. Petition regarding Modern Day Slavery

The petition had been withdrawn from the agenda at the request of the petition organiser.

#### b. Petition regarding the budget

Mr Finnegan was unavailable to present the petition, however Members noted that an e-petition containing 37 valid signatures had been received and the petition prayer read as follows:

“We the undersigned petition the Council to reconsider two points of the Budget set by the Council ”

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.

### 6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

a. **Question No. 1 from a member of the public regarding clean streets and highways**

Mr Wise asked Councillor Savage the following question:

'The basic competence of a Council can be measured in it's ability to keep streets and highways free from litter and other detritus. To it's shame, Thanet Council fails spectacularly in this regard and shames us all. What are you going to doing about it? Residents and visitors deserve better'

Councillor Savage responded with the following points:

- The behaviour of residents and visitors who littered and fly tipped was shameful.
- The level of detritus had reduced from 21.9% in 2017, to 5.1% in 2019. This was below the Council's target of 7%
- In 2017, 17% of the District's streets had an unacceptable level of litter, this had improved to 10% in 2019 and the Council was working to meet its target of 5%.
- All businesses in Thanet were required to have an appropriate commercial waste disposal process. 90 businesses had recently received a trade waste notice from the Council as they were not compliant.
- The Council had successful conducted numerous enforcement activities in the last 12 months including:
  - 190 Pest Damage by Rubbish notices;
  - 772 Environmental Protection Act Section 46 notices to present domestic waste correctly by households;
  - 60 commercial trade waste inspections;
  - 107 Community Protection Warnings for litter/waste offences;
  - 20 Community Protection notices with £100 fines for litter/waste offences;
  - 3,755 Enforcement litter/waste investigations.
- In the last 12 months the Council had collected;
  - 3500 tonnes of litter from the beaches;
  - 840 tonnes swept from the streets,
  - 900 tonnes of public litter;
  - 100 tonnes of fly tipped waste.
- The Council's staff, who worked hard to keep the District clean, deserved acknowledgement and thanks. Members offered a round of applause to show their appreciation.

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

a. **Question No.1 from a Member regarding the Funding of Tourism Services**

Councillor Johnston asked the Leader the following question:

"Tourism is one of the most important wealth and well being generators in Thanet. Could the Cabinet member confirm she is persuading colleagues to reverse the allocation of 3 million pounds to this building and using some of the monies to save our vital tourism staff and services"

The Leader responded with the following points:

- The allocation of £3million was from the capital fund, money from this fund could not be used to pay for the provision of services, this included tourism services.
- The Council offices had been built in the 1970's and now showed signs of deterioration.
- The Council would assess all available options, before deciding how best to proceed.

Councillor Johnston followed up her question by asking what effort had been made to redeploy the tourism staff that were at risk?

The Leader responded that it would be inappropriate to discuss staffing matters, however tourism was vital to the District and needed to continue to be successful in the future.

## **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 Council looked to minimise the potential impact that Operation Brock, and the use of the former Manston Airport site as a lorry park, would have on the District if it was called into use following Brexit.
- The Council had selected Ramsgate to bid for a share of the Future High Street Fund.
- The Council had received two payments from Government in connection with Brexit.
- The Council had successfully made a Coastal Revival Fund bid to commission a feasibility study into the Lido and Cliftonville Baths site.
- Business that used public litter bins to dispose of their business or commercial waste were breaking the law.
- The Council had recently introduced a scheme to tackle rogue Landlords.
- The Council had provided the Local Government Association (LGA) with a presentation on social integration and cohesion that the LGA had incorporated into its new cohesion guidance.
- A Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Advisory Group would be set up to advise Cabinet on issues connected to the East Kent Hospitals Trust.
- The Council had negotiated the sale of freehold land to Margate Football Club which would allow the club to expand.
- The Council had facilitated the sale of the Royal Sands site in order to guarantee the development of the site in the near future.
- Margate had been selected to host the Blue Flag Awards this year.
- Almost £3million had been generated over the year through the sale of Council properties that were surplus to requirements.
- The Leader offered his thanks to both the senior management team for their support of the Cabinet, and the staff of the Council for their work for the residents of the District.

Councillor Wells as Leader of the Independent and UKIP Group made the following points:

- While it was good that the Council had received two Brexit payments, the Council had suffered prolonged and ongoing cuts to its funding from Central Government.
- It was hard to see the logic behind the use of the former Manston site as a lorry park.
- Councillors Johnston and Hayton both deserved a round of applause as they were standing down in May after many years of service to the District. Members offered a round of applause for Councillors Johnston and Hayton.

The Leader replied to Councillor Wells' comments with the following point;

- He believed that the public may have run out of patience with politicians over the handling of Brexit, and he hoped that this would not lead to apathy from electors in the May 2020 elections.

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

- Better communication with the public was needed to avoid apathy at the polling stations.
- Operation Brock could not be seen as a long term solution.
- It was good that Ramsgate had been chosen to bid for a share of the Coastal Revival Fund.
- Fly tipping was a blight on the community, a robust response would be required from the new administration in May.
- There was lots of good news in the Leaders report.
- It was welcome that a feasibility study for the Lido and Cliftonville baths would be carried out and that it would not be funded by the Council.
- Members may have hoped that the Leaders report would contain details of a Ramsgate Port feasibility study.

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

- If the Leader remained in position after the May elections, a Ramsgate Port feasibility study would be completed by the end of the year.

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

- There was concern that Operation Brock and the lorry park would make Thanet inaccessible.
- Work to tackle litter was important, however bins were not emptied regularly enough. Additionally, the contents of red bags sometimes blew out which added to the problem.
- There was no mention in the Leaders reports of bus service cuts that would be introduced from 7 April 2019.
- Councillor Matterface wished to thank everyone in the chamber, and wished anyone sitting in the May elections good luck.

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

- The Council would soon deploy 75 smart bins that would send a signal to be emptied when they were full.

#### **10. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE, POLICY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

Councillor G Coleman-Cooke, Chairman of the Executive, Policy and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, presented his report which noted some of the panels key activities and achievements over the year. Thanks were offered to those Members and Officers who had supported the panel throughout the year, and to members of the Cabinet for their presentations and engagement.

#### **11. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE, BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL**

Councillor L Piper, Chairman of the Finance, Budget and Performance Scrutiny Panel, presented her report and highlighted the panels achievements over the year. Councillor Piper offered her thanks to the Members and Officers who had support the panel while she was in the chair.

#### **12. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Councillor Day, Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee, presented his report on the work of the Committee and drew Members attention to the action plan for 2019/20. He wished to thank Officers and Members of the committee for their effort and support over the municipal year.

**13. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Dr Sexton, the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee presented his annual report which summarised and commented on the work of the Committee over the 2018/19 year.

**14. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT STANDARDS MEMBERS**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed to approve the appointment of Dr Sexton as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee until the 2020 Annual Council meeting.

It was then proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed to approve the appointment of Mrs Bacon as an Independent Member of the Standards Committee until the 2020 Annual Council meeting.

It was then proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed to approve the appointment of Mr James as Independent Person until the 2020 Annual Council meeting.

It was then proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed to approve the appointment of Mr Tucker as Deputy Independent Person until the 2020 Annual Council meeting.

**15. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES - MANDATORY TRAINING**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice-Chairman and Members agreed to amend article 8 of the Council's constitution to make training mandatory for all Councillors on General Purposes, Planning and Licensing Committees and those Councillors who are substitutes on Planning Committee. The following paragraph would be included:

“No member or substitute member of the General Purposes Committee, Planning Committee or the Licensing Board will be allowed to take their seat on the committee unless they have received relevant, appropriate, up-to-date training.

In relation to Planning Committee this is attending at least one session run by the Council's Planning team every six months. In relation to Licensing Board this is attending at least one training session run by the Council's Licensing team every six months. In relation to the General Purposes Committee this is attending at least one training session run by the Council's Monitoring Officer at least every six months.”

**16. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice Chairman and Members agreed the proposed calendar of meetings for May 2019 to May 2023 as set out at Annex 1 to the report.

**17. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES - REPORT BACK FROM THE EKJIRP COMMITTEE**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice Chairman and Members agreed to note the comments of the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel.

**18. RAMSGATE CHARITIES NOMINATIONS**

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by the Vice Chairman and Members agreed the two recommendations detailed in the report, namely:

“That Council agrees the appointment of Mr J R Wood as a representative Trustee of Ramsgate Charities with a term of office starting on 21 January 2019 and expiring on 21 January 2023.

That Council agrees the appointment of Mrs C Griggs as a representative Trustee of Ramsgate Charities with a term of office starting on 20 November 2017 and expiring on 20 November 2021.”

**19. CHANGE OF POLLING PLACES FOR THE 2019 DISTRICT ELECTIONS**

The report was for information only.

Meeting concluded: 8.00pm