

Meeting: **Council**  
Date: **26 July 2023**  
Time: **7.00 pm**  
Place: **Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone**

To: **All Members of the Council**

**YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED** to attend a meeting of the Council on the date and at the time shown above.

Anyone who wishes to have information on any matter arising on the Agenda which is not fully covered in these papers is requested to give notice prior to the meeting to the Chairman or appropriate officer.

This meeting will be webcast live to the council's website at <https://folkestone-hythe.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

Please note there will be 37 seats available for members of the public, which will be reserved for those speaking or participating at the meeting. The remaining available seats will be given on a first come, first served basis.



Dr Susan Priest  
Chief Executive

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest (Pages 7 - 8)**

**Queries about the agenda? Need a different format?**

Contact Jemma West – Tel: 01303 853369  
Email: [committee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:committee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) or download from our  
website  
[www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](http://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

Members of the Council should declare any discloseable pecuniary interest or any other significant interests in any item/s on this agenda.

3. **Minutes (Pages 9 - 14)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the council held on 21 June 2023 and to authorise the Chairman of the Council to sign them as a correct record.

4. **Chairman's Communications**

5. **Petitions**

There are no petitions to be presented.

6. **Questions from the Public**

There are no questions from the public.

7. **Questions from Councillors**

(Questions can be found on [www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](http://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) from noon 2 days before the meeting, on Modern.gov, under the agenda for this meeting).

Up to 45 minutes is allowed for questions from councillors.

8. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council**

To receive a report from the Leader of the Council on the business of the cabinet and on matters that the leader considers should be drawn to the council's attention. The leader shall have 10 minutes to make his announcements.

The opposition groups will have an opportunity to reply to the leader's remarks. Both opposition group leaders shall have 5 minutes to respond after which the Leader of the Council will have a right of reply. Any right of reply will be for a maximum duration of 5 minutes.

9. **Portfolio Holder reports to Council (Pages 15 - 22)**

10. **Opposition Business**

The Labour Group has raised the following matter:

Council Notes:

- That due to failures in compliance, amongst a number of other issues, FHDC made the decision to bring housing provision under direct control after the dissolution of East Kent Housing.
- In order to maintain high levels of compliance with regards to health

- and safety, the council still relies on outside contracts in Mears.
- A recent stock condition survey was undertaken of the vast majority of council owned housing.
  - That ensuring safe and habitable housing is paramount to the council's vision.

**Council Believes**

- Delivery of maintenance and ensuring compliance will require additional resources, training, and oversight to ensure any decent homes standard regulations are met.
- A housing maintenance and compliance team, delivered directly by council could, in the future, deliver services to council owned housing outside of the HRA.

**Council Resolves**

- To consider as an option, the delivery of maintenance and compliance for council owned housing, as a council owned service. As opposed to the awarding of an outsourced contract.
- That any such paper which looks to tender for a new contract includes this option in both its planning and decision making.

Debates on opposition business shall be limited to 30 minutes. If the time limit is reached or the debate concludes earlier, the leader of the group raising the item shall have a right of reply.

The Council shall:

- a) Note the issue raised and take no further action;
- b) Refer the issue to the cabinet or relevant overview and scrutiny committee, as the case may be for their observations before deciding whether to make a decision on the issue;
- c) Agree to examine the matter as part of a future scrutiny programme;
- d) Adopt the issue raised by opposition business provided that the decision so made is within the policy framework and budget.

**11. Motions on Notice**

The following motion has been placed on the agenda. Up to 60 minutes shall be allowed for debates on motions on notice:

**1. Councillor McConville, Labour Group**

**The Council notes:**

The Elections Act received Royal Assent on the 28th of April 2022.

The Act is a major piece of national legislation with local implications for the residents of [insert Local Authority], including the use of mandatory photographic voter ID at the polling station,

changes to overseas voting and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.

The 2021 census showed that [1 in 6 usual residents of England and Wales were born outside the UK](#). They live, work, study, make use of public services, and call the UK their home. Many foreign-born residents from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, over [1 million residents](#) across England and Northern Ireland do not have a right to vote.

Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.

A poll conducted by Number Cruncher showed that [63% of people agree that all residents should have the right to vote in local elections in England and Northern Ireland](#).

**The Council welcomes:**

That all our residents, no matter their nationality, call [Local Authority] their home and bring significant value to our area.

That the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained.

That [the London Assembly passed a motion in support of residence-based voting rights on the 11th of November 2021](#) and that various organisations in the democracy and immigration sector [support](#) the Our Home Our Vote campaign for residence-based voting rights.

**The Council expresses concern that:**

EU citizens who enter the UK from the 1st of January 2021 and are not covered by bilateral voting rights treaties (currently only active with Poland, Luxembourg, Portugal, and Spain) will not have voting and candidacy rights in local elections when the Elections Act is fully implemented. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.

The complexity in voting eligibility causes confusion reduces voter turnout in local elections amongst migrant voters, a group already showing disproportionately lower voter registration rates compared to British voters.

Local Authorities will be under-resourced to manage the removal of a significant number of EU citizens from the electoral register, possibly resulting in some being wrongfully removed from the electoral register.

**The Council Resolves:**

- That the Leader of the Council write to the Minister of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities requesting that the franchise for local elections in England and Northern Ireland be extended to all qualifying foreign nationals in line with eligibility criteria in Scotland and Wales. This would ensure a UK-wide and fair approach so that all our residents, who are also our council taxpayers, are enfranchised.
- Work collaboratively with other local authorities and voluntary sector organisations to develop a strategy of communications about voter eligibility following the Elections Act.
- Ensure council officers in Democratic Services have a strategy in place to ensure that the implementation of the Elections Act, including the removal of some EU citizens from the register, does not wrongfully remove eligible voters from the register.

12. **Committee Membership Changes (Pages 23 - 24)**

Under the Folkestone and Hythe District Council Constitution, Part 8.1 'Delegation to Officers', paragraph 3.18, the Head of Paid Service is authorised to make appointments to committees or sub-committees at the request of the relevant political group leader. This report sets out the appointments made, under these powers, on the instruction of the Leader of the Conservative Group.