

FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes for the meeting of the Council held at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone on Wednesday, 24 July 2019

Present: Councillors Mrs Ann Berry (Chairman), Danny Brook, Miss Susan Carey, John Collier, Laura Davison, Michelle Dorrell, Ray Field, Gary Fuller, Peter Gane, Clive Goddard, David Godfrey, Anthony Hills, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Nicola Keen, Jim Martin, Philip Martin (Vice-Chair), Connor McConville, Jackie Meade, Ian Meyers, David Monk, Terence Mullard, Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Patricia Rolfe, Rebecca Shoob, Georgina Treloar, Douglas Wade, Lesley Whybrow, David Wimble and John Wing

Apologies for Absence: None.

25. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Whybrow made a voluntary declaration in respect of questions from Councillors (question number 1), in that she was a volunteer for the Citizens Advice Bureaux.

26. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2019 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

27. **Chairman's Communications**

The Chairman advised on the following:

“During the last 6 weeks we have lost another two members of the District. Although not members of this District Council they were members of Town Councils within the District. As we know Town and Parish councillors are all volunteers who put themselves forward to serve their towns and parishes. Two of those past councillors that we have lost recently are: Reg Belcourt and John Heasman.

Reg Belcourt past member of Hythe Town Council who died after a tragic accident whilst on holiday, As well as serving on the Hythe Town Council he was a member of Hythe Rotary and was a prime mover in getting the Christmas Lights in Hythe. Reg and his wife Keren did an amazing amount of fund raising with their quiz nights and popular Curry lunches they also fostered around 80 children.

John Heasman past Mayor of Hawkinge who served as a Councillor for 43 years. His input into the community of Hawkinge was phenomenal, He was one of the prime movers for the new Community Centre and in recent days he was awarded the freedom of the Town of Hawkinge. He served them well.

Let us take a moment to remember them.

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Since the last council meeting on the 26th June the Vice-Chairman and myself have attended the following functions;

On 27th June I was invited by Folkestone Creative to attend the opening of the Gas works exhibition at the Folkestone town hall.

Sunday 30th June was Armed Forces day held on the leas. This year it was an all day event which brought in thousands of visitors. The Princess of Wales Royal Regiment Band started the opening by marching from the Arch along the leas to the bandstand. There were many charity stalls and events put on for every ones enjoyment, highlight at the end of the afternoon was the Red Arrows who put on the most breath taking spectacular display.

Monday July 1st Canada day. We all gathered at the Shorncliffe Canadian Graves for the annual memorial service. Children from most of the primary schools in the area were in attendance and laid flowers on the graves there. This is something that has been done since 1920. Next year will be another important year for this commemoration.

From Thursday 4th July the Deputy Mayor fulfilled many of my duties. He has advised me of the following:

“During the Chairman’s absence I have been privileged to represent her on the Council’s behalf at a number of events.

On 4th July I attended the Ramsgate Annual Civic Service, where the Town Mayor presented a number of awards to many individuals who had made huge contributions to the town in various ways making significant improvements to many lives.

On 5th July I accepted an invitation to the Official Opening of the new Canelian Bar in Hythe in the company of a number of local councillors and business owners and it was very encouraging watching more new business developing in our district.

The 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles celebrated their 25th Birthday Party at Shorncliffe Barracks on 9th July where I was privileged to meet a number of our very brave servicemen and witnessed HRH The Prince of Wales awarding them their well deserved medals. It was an even greater honour to meet HRH in person and during our informal chat he expressed great interest in the exciting developments and progress in our district.

Later that day, accompanied by my consort, I visited The Oast Theatre in Rainham as part of the local Mayors fundraising events. A local drama group gave a brilliant performance of the popular 1980’s TV comedy series “Are you being served”.

On 13th July I was invited to the 30th Birthday Party of Hanover House where I managed to speak with almost all of the residents of this very well run block of

assisted living apartments for retired gentlefolk. Everyone I spoke with seemed very happy there and it was rewarding to see such an example “caring for the elderly”. We exchanged a few stories (and, no I won’t go into detail) and left with them displaying a lot of smiling faces.

On 14th July I attended Margate’s Annual Civic Service at St John’s Baptist Church where I met with the Mayor and several other dignitaries”.

Thank you”.

28. **Petitions**

There were no petitions to be presented.

29. **Questions from the Public**

The questions asked, including supplementary questions (if any), and the answers given are set out in Schedule 1, appended to these minutes.

30. **Questions from Councillors**

The questions asked, including supplementary questions (if any), and the answers given are set out in Schedule 2, appended to these minutes.

31. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council**

The Leader made the following announcements:

“Good evening to you all.

I will start by saying that Cllr Peter Gane has brought to my attention a miscommunication from the Dartford Gravesham and Swanley clinical commissioning group. They have sent a letter to our residents who use the White House Surgery in Folkestone regarding the merger of the Forge Surgery Gateway Medical Practice and the Whitehorse Surgery into one GP practice called Springhead Health in Northfleet. You can see how the error came to be made as the White Horse is synonymous with Folkestone. So if you are approached by anybody worried that they might have to go to Northfleet to see a doctor, you will be able to reassure them that it is not the case. Peter has been in touch with the Whitehorse Surgery and they have said that they will send out an apology.

Talking to members of our group about Overview and Scrutiny, it became obvious that members felt that they did not have enough information on, what I shall call, legacy projects, that is, projects that were started before this administrative year. So I have asked officers that when a legacy project is brought before the committee, any relevant previous reports or decisions are also tabled so that the context of the current report is more easily understood.

Last Friday it was my great pleasure to attend the opening of the wheelchair swing facility in Radnor Park. It was wonderful to see the enjoyment of the two young ladies who tried it out. The swing is available for use by any wheelchair user that has a Radar key, and they and their chair together weighs less than 250kgs, that is 39 stone in old money, the chairs do need to be anchored down and the straps to do this are kept in the Radnor Park Tea Room. The funding for this swing mainly came from Councillors Dick Pascoe and Ann Berry. Tomorrow will see the start of the Outdoor Gym installation that will feature both Callisthenic and Cardio Stimulation equipment and additional funding was allocated by Councillors Rory Love and Carol Sacre. Once the gym is installed it will make Radnor Park one of the best equipped leisure areas in Kent and I for one will be using it”.

The Leader of the Green Group responded and stated that it was exciting news to hear about the wheelchair swings in Radnor Park. She added that she was grateful for the Leaders request for previous reports to be tabled with regard to legacy projects.

The Leader of the Labour group responded and stated that he also welcomed the wheelchair swings, and it was great to see ward grants being used in this way. He raised concerns that other children in our district were not so lucky, and some playgrounds were in a state of disrepair.

Councillor Prater, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group responded and thanked the Leader for improving the context of reports for Overview and Scrutiny Committee and added that this would also be helpful for the public. He stated that he was delighted about the new swings in Radnor Park, and hoped that the council would look to roll this out to other parks in the district.

The Leader in response stated that he understood the point about other parks, but it was important that this did not take away from the Radnor Park project. He added that the Play Strategy would be coming forward to Committees in the autumn, and would address some of these issues.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

That the announcements of the Leader be noted.

32. Opposition Business

Councillor McConville, on behalf of the Labour Group outlined the Opposition business, which asked the Council to recommend to the Personnel Committee that a minimum of £10 per hour or £19,300 per annum be awarded to all permanent and temporary staff. Also that a fixed pay ratio be incorporated into the next pay policy statement.

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Proposed by Councillor McConville,
Seconded by Councillor Davison;

That Option (d) (That the Council adopt the issue raised by Opposition business provided that the decision, so made, is within the Policy Framework and Budget and is within the power of the Council to make the decision) be agreed.

Proposed by Councillor Gane,
Seconded by Councillor Monk; and

RESOLVED:

That the wording of the opposition business be amended to read "That the Council ask the Personnel Committee to consider that a minimum of £10 per hour or £19,300 per annum be awarded to all permanent and temporary staff. Also that a fixed pay ratio be incorporated into the next pay policy statement".

In accordance with the council procedure rule 17.5 five members present demanded a recorded vote.

FOR: Councillors Mrs Berry, Brook, Miss Carey, Collier, Field, Gane, Goddard, Godfrey, Hills, Mrs Hollingsbee, P Martin, Meyers, Monk, Mullard, Peall, Rolfe, Shoob and Wimble (18).

AGAINST: Councillors Davison, Dorrell, Fuller, J Martin, McConville, Meade, Prater, Treloar, Wade, Whybrow and Wing (11)

ABSTENTIONS: Councillor Keen (1).

(Voting figures: 18 for, 11 against, 1 abstention).

RESOLVED:

That Option (d) (That the Council adopt the issue raised by Opposition business provided that the decision, so made, is within the Policy Framework and Budget and is within the power of the Council to make the decision) be agreed.

(Voting figures: 30 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

33. **Motions on Notice**

1. **From Councillor McConville, Leader of the Labour Party**

Councillor McConville set out his motion which proposed an amendment to the constitution.

Proposed by Councillor McConville,
Seconded by Councillor Monk;

That this Council moves to, under part 4 section 25.2 amend the constitution in regards to part 4 section 12.6. "Time-limit debates on opposition business shall be limited to 15 minutes". This should be amended to read 30 minutes.

As per rule 25.2 of the constitution it is resolved that this motion stand adjourned, without discussion until the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

2. **From Councillor Treloar, Green Party**

Councillor Treloar set out her motion relating to climate change which was set out in the agenda.

Proposed by Councillor Treloar,
Seconded by Councillor McConville;

That Full council:

1. Declares that we are in a state of climate and ecological emergency.
2. Commit to reduce Folkestone and Hythe District Council's estate and operations to zero net carbon by 2030.
3. Ensure that all strategic decisions, policy, budgets, investments, contracts, approaches to planning decisions and the council's own developments are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.
4. Ensure that all future council reports, where appropriate, include a climate impact statement.
5. To develop a strategy for Folkestone and Hythe District Council to play a leadership role in promoting community, public and business partnerships for this Carbon Neutral 2030 Commitment throughout the District.
6. To achieve this, create a Carbon Action Plan based on practical frameworks and advice such as provided by the Carbon Trust.
7. Establish a cross-party working group of full council to draw up, steer and monitor progress of the Carbon Action Plan, reporting back to full council in 6 months, then annually.
8. Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise.
9. Request that Cabinet shows leadership and adopts the matters raised in 1 – as above.

Proposed by Councillor Hills,
Seconded by Councillor Wimble;

RESOLVED:

That the first point of the motion be amended to read:

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“That Full Council recognises that we are in a climate emergency, and that the issue be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to get the best way forward, and price it”.

In accordance with the council procedure rule 17.5 five members present demanded a recorded vote.

FOR: Councillors Mrs Berry, Brook, Miss Carey, Collier, Gane, Goddard, Godfrey, Hills, Mrs Hollingsbee, P Martin, Meyers, Monk, Mullard, Peall, Rolfe and Wimble (16).

AGAINST: Councillors Davison, Dorrell, Field, Fuller, Keen, J Martin, McConville, Meade, Prater, Shoob, Treloar, Wade, Whybrow and Wing (14)

ABSTENTIONS: None (0).

(Voting figures: 16 for, 14 against, 0 abstentions).

RESOLVED:

That Full council:

1. Recognises that we are in a climate emergency, and that the issue be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to get the best way forward, and price it.
2. Commit to reduce Folkestone and Hythe District Council's estate and operations to zero net carbon by 2030.
3. Ensure that all strategic decisions, policy, budgets, investments, contracts, approaches to planning decisions and the council's own developments are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.
4. Ensure that all future council reports, where appropriate, include a climate impact statement.
5. To develop a strategy for Folkestone and Hythe District Council to play a leadership role in promoting community, public and business partnerships for this Carbon Neutral 2030 Commitment throughout the District.
6. To achieve this, create a Carbon Action Plan based on practical frameworks and advice such as provided by the Carbon Trust.
7. Establish a cross-party working group of full council to draw up, steer and monitor progress of the Carbon Action Plan, reporting back to full council in 6 months, then annually.
8. Call on the UK Government to provide the powers, resources and help with funding to make this possible, and ask local MPs to do likewise.
9. Request that Cabinet shows leadership and adopts the matters raised in 1 – as above.

(Voting figures: 30 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

3. From Councillor McConville, Leader of the Labour Party

Councillor McConville outlined his motion which called upon the Council to implement a parental leave policy.

Proposed by Councillor McConville,
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

RESOLVED:

To refer this parental leave policy to the IRP for consideration in their next review.

(Voting figures: 30 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

34. Members' Allowances - Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

The report recommended that the Council commence the process of recruiting members to the Independent Remuneration Panel and to establish that panel also as the Parish Remuneration Panel.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report A/19/10 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the existing members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for be thanked for their work since their appointment;**
- 3. That four members be appointed to the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 with a four year term of office from the 1 December 2019;**
- 4. That a Parish Remuneration Panel be established under the regulations, the members of which shall be identical to the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel;**
- 5. That the Head of Paid Service be authorised to draw up role descriptions for the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel;**
- 6. That an advert for candidates be placed in the press and electronically;**
- 7. That a selection panel be formed comprising the Chairman of the Council, the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Labour Group, the Leader of the Green Group and a further panel member appointed by the Head of Paid Service.**

(Voting figures: 30 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).