



# Minutes

## Folkestone & Hythe District and Parish Councils' Joint Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Folkestone
Date	Thursday, 16 January 2020
Present	Councillors Graham Allison, Laszlo Dudas, Frank Hobbs, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Neil Matthews and Martin Sweeney
Apologies for Absence	Councillors Emily Arnold-Newing, Terence Mullard and Paul Thomas
Officers Present:	Paul Butler (Elections Manager), Kate Clark (Committee Services Officer), Gavin Edwards (Policy and Improvements Officer), Katharine Harvey (Chief Economic Development Officer), Cheryl Ireland (Lead Accountant) and Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services), Karen Weller (Environmental Health Team Leader)

Others Present:

13. **Appointment of chairman**

Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee was appointed Chairman for the meeting.

14. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Martin Sweeney declared an interest in respect of agenda item 8 as his wife owns a shop in New Romney high street.

15. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting dated 19 September 2019 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

16. **Budget Strategy and Draft General Fund Budget 2020/21**

Report FH/19/01 set out the Council's Draft General Fund Budget for 2020/21 as well as summarising the overall Budget Strategy for the same period. The report outlined the proposals being consulted upon.

In accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 full Council will consider and agree the budget and council tax for the coming financial year 2020/21, this meeting will be held on 19 February 2020. Both the draft budget and the budget strategy will build into the final position which is also affected by the Local Government Finance Settlement.

Miss Cheryl Ireland, Lead Accountant, presented the report to members.

Mrs Charlotte Spendley, Director of Corporate Services, advised members that a public consultation is currently running on budget proposals and comments are welcomed. The Budget Consultation Questionnaire can be found on the Council's website. Contact details for Mrs Spendley will be circulated to members if they wish to contact her directly.

Members resolved to receive and note report FH/19/01.

**17. Highlights of the work carried out to reduce dog fouling offences**

Mrs Karen Weller, Environmental Health Team Leader, gave a briefing on the work carried out in reducing dog fouling as well as highlighting other work carried out by the Environmental Enforcement officers.

Members noted the following:

- Three officers make up the team, one senior and two enforcement officers, there is a possibility of extra recruitment shortly.
- Pop-up events, these are carried out during the year, 6 in total. These serve to educate and inform residents as well as discuss any issues around dog and owner behaviour. The health aspects of dog fouling not being cleared are also explained
- Seasonal patrols are made early morning and late evenings to track offenders. Enforcement and prosecution can only happen if an officer witnesses a dog fouling, an owner ignoring it and walking away
- Repeat offenders can be reported online and Mrs Weller was keen to ask for any help Parish Councils can give. CCTV can be another method of enforcement however, the offender needs to be recognised in the footage.
- For information dog fouling prosecutions remain low although dogs off leads/banned area offences are higher with 7 confirmed offences already in 2020.
- If an offender is caught a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued, if payment is not received then the case is taken to prosecution. The name of the offender will be publicised thereafter. If the FPN is paid within the correct timescales then details are publicised excluding personal details.

Mrs Weller was keen to point out that a positive approach to dog fouling is important, in this respect residents are thanked for picking up after their dogs

and congratulated on keeping the area clean and tidy.

Turning to other enforcement activities, members were advised that the officers also deal with flytipping, flyposting, smoking in commercial vehicles, black sacks on pavements, waste bins out too early and ensuring correct signage is displayed.

Members were reminded that information on a wide range of environmental issues are on the Council's website, problems or offences can be reported online.

## 18. **Parish By-Elections**

Mr Paul Butler, Democratic Services & Elections Lead Specialist, gave a presentation on Parish By-Elections. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

A by-election will usually be triggered by a parish council vacancy as well as being dependent on a contested status. An uncontested election is a situation when the amount of valid nominations received does not reach or exceed the amount of vacant seats.

Mr Butler went through the legislative timescales, staffing, polling day and count and recharge costs to Parish Councils. He explained that a by-election is planned based on a 100% turnout.

Savings can be made for example, no printing or distribution of polling cards, minimum van rental costs and lowering staffing levels. This, of course, has to be balanced against transparency to our residents and the satisfaction of the Returning Officer, who has a personal liability to complete any election successfully.

Parish Council members were keen to keep by-election costs as low as possible, however, Mr Butler did explain that the processes are set by legislation and interpreted by guidance from the Electoral Commission, costs are set by the Kent Scale of Fees schedule which is reviewed annually by the Kent Chief Executives and passed through Council. He is aware that electoral legislation is outdated and there is a plan for an electoral law review to be undertaken by the Electoral Commission which would incorporate a review of filling casual vacancies. The date of this review is not set and will be carried out independently with little or no involvement of the Elections team at Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

Costs and timescales were discussed further, the committee has asked if information with regard to costs could be circulated, Mr Butler to action this request.

19. **High Street Fund Initiative**

Dr Katharine Harvey, Chief Economic Development Officer, gave a presentation on the High Street Fund Initiative. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

Dr Harvey explained the benefits and process for named towns within the district with a £3M fund available. A mixture of applications had been received with an emphasis on promoting towns. High Streets need to adapt for the future which could mean attracting services other than just retail.

Points mentioned:

- Promotion and encouragement from Folkestone and Hythe towns to visit smaller towns.
- Possibility of information boards in areas such as Lyminge, Sellindge and Postling.
- Promotion of other areas, ie seafronts in the district.

Dr Harvey welcomed applications, however did say that projects need to be appropriate for the area. The Council are very pro-active and resources are available.

It was confirmed the start date was 1 October 2019 and steady progress has been made receiving and processing applications, the closing date is fairly open ended although a maximum of three years or until funding is exhausted.

The Chairman, with the agreement from members thanked all officers for attending and providing informative and interesting information to all agenda items. She pointed out that committee members are welcome to suggest items for future meetings, although this is also covered in the bi-monthly KALC meetings.

# Parish By-Elections

# Background

Casual vacancies

Petitions

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Election timetable

Polling Day

Count

# Recharges

Scale of fees and charges

Maximum recharges

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Savings

- Poll cards
- Staff
- Rentals

# Planning

Electoral Commission

Staffing requirements

Returning Officer requirements

Elector requirements



# Questions?

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Joint Parishes & District Council Meeting  
16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Folkestone & Hythe High Streets Fund**

Dr Katharine Harvey  
Chief Economic Development Officer

# Folkestone & Hythe High Streets Fund



£3 million High Streets regeneration fund established from reserves in Feb 2019

Process for managing the fund was agreed in Sept 2019

can be used for:

**Major capital investments opportunities and other initiatives led by FHDC** in Folkestone town centre, e.g. Master planning, business case development, public realm improvements, etc

**Grants to property owners and organisations to:**

Support **renovating/improving properties** to bring back into use or new uses

Implement **wider initiatives to improve the vitality of high streets** e.g. townscape improvements, introduction of technology and/or new innovative products, Initiatives/events to increase the vitality

**Work up a project** to bring forward for funding

## Cabinet agreed to:

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- Split funding across the district - £2.2 million for Folkestone Town Centre and £800,000 for the other high streets - Cheriton, Sandgate, Hythe, New Romney, Lydd, Hawkinge, Dymchurch, Elham, Lyminge and Sellindge
- Grants of **£5,000 to £50,000** to be available for projects
- **Up to 50%** contribution expected *in normal circumstances*, with 100% available *in special circumstances*
- Fund was launched to applicants **1st Oct 2019**
- **Details and documentation** available online at [www.Folkestone.works](http://www.Folkestone.works) under Funding & Support
- Open call for projects
- Applications assessed on individual merit
- Assessed on basis of criteria including partner support and demand for project; long term sustainability of project; significance and impact on high street and value for money.
- Decisions quarterly by Decision Panels including Leader – **Cllr David Monk**, Local Economy lead Cabinet member – **Cllr David Wimble & a local ward Councillor**, with soundings taken from the council's cross -party Folkestone Town Centre Subgroup

# Applications Summary to Date

	Application £				No of applications			
	Submissions (% total available)	Decision Status			Submissions	Decision Status		
		Approved	Pending	To be decided		Approved	Pending	To be decided
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£503,728 (17%)</b>	<b>£146,000</b>	<b>£50,000</b>	<b>£290,728</b>	<b>24 *</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Folkestone</b>	£219,235 (10%)	£87,500	£50,000	£66,735	7	4	1	2
<b>Sandgate</b>	£50,500 (6%)	£48,500			2	2		
<b>Cheriton</b>	£10,000 (1%)	£10,000			1	1		
<b>Dymchurch</b>	£36,000 (4%)			£36,000	2			2
<b>Hythe</b>	£98,993 (12%)			£98,993	6*			6
<b>New Romney</b>	£89,000 (11%)			£89,000	6 *			6

*Note: Not all requested grants approved in full*

# Applications Approved to Date



Project	Location	Grant agreed/ request	% Grant to Total Project Cost	Decision
<b>Market Square, Rendezvous St - building fit out to deliver a proof of concept Food Hall for circa. 15 stalls</b>	Folkestone	£32,500	50%	Approved
<b>Conchitas, Bouverie Rd West - extension and refit to support disabled access and facilities</b>	Folkestone	£42,250	50%	Approved
<b>Big Boys Fine Burger Co, Old High St - refurbishment of existing establishment</b>	Folkestone	£7,500	50%	Approved
<b>Folkestone Town Council - Lighting infrastructure for Christmas lights and support for FTC Christmas event</b>	Folkestone	£17,500	50% (capital costs)	Approved
<b>Folkestone Town Council - CCTV expansion around Folkestone</b>	Folkestone	£50,000	100%	More information sought
<b>Installation of CCTV on Sandgate High Street</b>	Sandgate	£3,500	50% (capital costs)	Approved
<b>Street scene and public realm improvements refuse bin screen outside of Riviera Court.</b>	Sandgate	£45,000	100% capital costs	Approved
<b>Two new aspects to Cheriton Light Festival - artist residency at Cheriton Library and a permanent installation.</b>	Cheriton	£10,000	50%	Approved

# Contacts

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Senior Specialist (Economic Development)