

FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes for the meeting of the Council held at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone on Wednesday, 26 June 2019

Present: Councillors Mrs Ann Berry (Chairman), Brook, Miss Susan Carey, John Collier, Davison, Dorrell, Field, Fuller, Clive Goddard, David Godfrey, Anthony Hills, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Keen, Martin, Philip Martin (Vice-Chair), McConville, Meade, Ian Meyers, David Monk, Terence Mullard, Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Patricia Rolfe, Shoob, Treloar, Wade, Lesley Whybrow, Wimble and John Wing

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Peter Gane

15. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Prater declared a voluntary interest with regard to agenda item 10 (Motions on notice), as his wife was a paid volunteer at Hythe Swimming pool.

Councillor Fuller declared a voluntary interest with regard to agenda items 5 and 6 (Questions from the public and questions from Councillors), in that he lived in an East Kent Housing property.

16. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

17. Chairman's Communications

The Chairman gave the following communications:

"Before I go fully into my communications let us remember in a quiet moment: Brian Copping who died a few weeks ago and was a Cllr on this District Council for many years.

Tuesday 11th June I attended the KCC Civic reception at County Hall to meet the new Chairman, and also many other Civic dignitaries from across the County. This gave us all a chance to get acquainted and of course do some networking.

Saturday 15th I attended the very successful and well attended Annual Lydd Club Day which started with an amazing lunch for invited guests, which included Cinque Ports Mayors and many local people, after which we moved to the Rye and watched some dancing and a fancy dress parade of young children. There were many side shows and pleasure rides which enhanced the fun of the day's activities.

Thursday 20th June I was invited to attend the Lord – Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L'Isle MBE at Penshurst Place for his farewell reception. There were many guests who had travelled from all over Kent and we were graciously received and entertained by the Lord Lieutenant who gave us a brief history of Penshurst Place. An unusual feature of the Baron's room where the reception

Council - 26 June 2019

was held was a huge open fire in the centre of the room. I noted a few people navigating towards this amazing feature.

On Sunday 23rd June, the vice chairman attended the annual service at New Romney.

Sunday 23rd June I attended the Blessing of the Fisheries which is held on Town Sunday each year. We gathered at St Peters Church on the Durlocks for the 3.00pm procession down to the Stade where a service with prayers, readings and hymns is held for the Fisheries. The Bishop blesses the Sea and at the end of the service we process back to the Church and have refreshments in the Garden. This service is always very well attended.

Monday 24th was the Flag raising ceremony at the Civic Centre, this is always done in the week before Armed Forces Day and was attended by myself and the Vice-Chairman, and Veterans, Councillors and residents. Father Stephen Bould read the service.”

18. Petitions

There were no petitions.

19. 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.

20. 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.

21. Announcements of the Leader of the Council

The Leader made the following announcements:

“Good evening.

Several members from the Marsh complained to me that we did nothing for them so I would like to take this opportunity to update members on some of the excellent work that this council is carrying out, or in numerous ways is supporting the Romney Marsh.

The council is supporting employment and skills on Romney Marsh in line with the Romney Marsh Socio-economic Deliver Plan 2017-2020 produced for the Romney Marsh Partnership. The key priority within this plan is to develop a business hub and skills centre at Mountfield Road industrial estate and putting in the infrastructure to unlock remaining plots for future business growth. This is

also a key priority in the council's Corporate Plan and officers are working hard on ways to secure funding and feasibility work to bring this project forward.

Earlier this year, the council launched its own £3million High Streets Fund. Details for the scheme will be coming to Cabinet very soon and will include criteria against which bids can be made. This will provide a potential resource to enhance the High Streets in New Romney and Lydd.

The nuclear sector is a major employer on Romney Marsh so as a Council and through the RMP, we work closely with Magnox Ltd, EDF, Dungeness SSH and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and others in the nuclear industry to secure future employment in the nuclear sector and develop skills of local people relevant to the nuclear industry and its supply chain.

Through the RMP FE and Skills Sub Group, we are supporting partnership working to skill/upskill local people and promote the area as a good place to live, work and relocate to. We have been successful in achieving priority status for Romney Marsh from the NDS socio-economic funding scheme and are currently developing a major partnership bid to support further economic development for the area. To maximise future employment in the nuclear sector we are also promoting the case for Dungeness A to be the site for Accelerated Decommissioning which would enable the retention of a significant number of jobs on site for the medium to long term.

We work closely with Romney Resource Centre and via the RMP support new initiatives such as delivery of construction courses, upgrading digital facilities and initiatives to meet the needs of businesses and local people, including returners to work, young people not in education training or employment and older residents wishing to upskill and participate in lifelong learning.

Romney Marsh is a special landscape and environment. We are involved in the new South East Nature Tourism Initiative to promote sustainable tourism year round on Romney Marsh consistent with the SARMS (Sustainable Access and Recreation Management Strategy) report for the area. The initiative will have two nature tourism hubs at Rye Discovery Centre and Romney Marsh Visitor Centre, New Romney. The RMP and FHDC also sit on the 5th continent Project Board and are supporting their green tourism initiatives including new interpretation hubs around the Marsh, new cycle and walking tours, training programme, and promoting the Romney Marsh branding. Wildlife tourism is popular off season so this will help to offer tourism employment out of peak season. We are also working to refresh the Romney Marsh medieval churches tour and support the upgrade of the Royal Military Canal.

The council through RMP is represented at the New Romney Coastal Community Team to ensure a good fit with their priorities for the area. Recently the RMP has commissioned a feasibility study for a local transport scheme to explore getting community transport hopper buses from Romney Marsh to Appledore railway station to connect with Ashford, Rye and Hastings so people

Council - 26 June 2019

can access work and training opportunities. The RMP helps to promote joint working with partners, often the sole forum where they do so. Partners include four local authorities, nuclear industry, education providers and business organisations.

As you can see, there is an enormous amount of good work being carried out by this council on the Romney Marsh and I am happy to commit to continuing to fund all of this work for the duration of our administration.

To change the subject, when we were considering applying for Green Town Status for Otterpool Park, we arranged coach trips to see existing New Towns. As there are now several new members who might like to see what is out there, we will arrange more trips for those who want to go”.

The Leader of the Labour group responded and stated that it was good to see the Marsh was still in the picture in terms of strengthening the district. He looked forward to following the High Street Fund through Cabinet, and hoped it would be used wisely to improve high streets across the entire district. Green tourism initiatives were welcomed and he would also like to see green thinking applied to all aspects of the council. He worried for the vulnerable residents of the marsh in terms of transport. A similar scheme had been trialled in Ashford and failed. He would like to see a more in-depth proposal and feasibility study results. He would like to see more community run transport in the area to fill the gaps left by Stagecoach, and a stronger message to them should come from the Council Chamber.

Thank you for your invitation to visit garden towns – happy to visit if it our benefits our district. He thanked the Leader for the invitation for a tour of garden villages and stated he was happy to undertake anything which would benefit the district.

The Leader of the Green Group responded and stated that she was also pleased to see what was happening on the Romney Marsh. She stated that if local transport could be improved it was important. She added that she was not keen on the idea of more nuclear job, and would prefer more green energy opportunities. She also was pleased to hear about the High Streets Fund.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group waived his right to respond.

The Leader in response stated that he agreed with the points raised.

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

RESOLVED:

That the announcements of the Leader be noted.

22. Opposition Business

Councillor McConville, on behalf of the Labour Group outlined the Opposition business which asked the Leader of the council to consider writing to the Secretary of State for business Greg Clark MP, to note this Council's concerns with UberEats and Deliveroo regarding the following:

- a) That workers are all registered to work in the UK and are being paid at least the UK living wage
- b) That these employers recognise a trade union and respect membership.
- c) That these employers pay their employees the same wage for the same work, regardless of age.
- d) That all workers have equal rights from day one, including sick pay, paid holiday, and protection from unfair dismissal.
- e) That their process on working with and promoting smaller businesses interested in using their service is reasonable and fair.
- f) That they will not use targeted social media advertising to promote unhealthy eating habits.
- g) That as employers they will refrain from making deductions from tips, so staff get to keep 100%, and customers know who their money is going to.
- h) That they will refrain from taking a cut of any tips paid via card.

Proposed by Councillor McConville,
Seconded by Councillor Dorrell; and

RESOLVED:

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.

(Voting figures: 14 for, 10 against, 4 abstentions).

23. Motions on Notice

Councillor Prater set out his motion which was set out on the agenda.

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

Proposed by Councillor Prater,
Seconded by Councillor Whybrow; and

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1. The hostility of local people to the proposals to develop Princes Parade, as evidenced by the local election results;
2. The damage it will do to the environment and the setting of the scheduled ancient monument that is the Royal Military Canal;
3. The financial risk this Council faces by pursuing this highly risky £29 million+ project;
4. The clear ongoing need for a new swimming pool and leisure centre in the district, and that a location for that at Martello Lakes would better support Hythe and Romney Marsh, than one nearer the Folkestone Sports centre.

This Council resolves to withdraw its planning application Y17/1042/SU for Princes Parade, and cease immediately any ongoing plans to develop that area for anything other than outdoors recreation.

This Council further resolves to immediately take up the option for a Leisure Centre site at Martello Lakes and will bring forward plans no later than November 2019 to open a new swimming pool and leisure centre there, whilst also seeking indicative funding support from partners for that site.

At the Leader's request, the Monitoring Officer provided clarity on the decision and advised the following:

"The resolution which has just been passed would not be binding on the Executive. Decisions on making and withdrawing planning applications are matters for the executive, as are decisions on where to site any new leisure facility".

FOR: Councillors Davison, Dorrell, Field, Fuller, Keen, Martin, McConville, Meade, Mullard, Prater, Shoob, Treloar, Wade, Whybrow and Wing (15).

AGAINST: Councillors Mrs Berry, Brook, Miss Carey, Collier, Goddard, Godfrey, Hills, Mrs Hollingsbee, P Martin, Meyers, Monk, Peall, Rolfe and Wimble (14).

ABSTENTIONS: None (0).

(Voting figures: 15 for, 14 against, 0 abstentions).

As the time limit of 60 minutes had expired, the other motions set out on the agenda were not considered.

24. Scheme of delegation of Executive Functions made by the Leader of the Council

Council - 26 June 2019

The scheme of delegation had been prepared by the Leader in accordance with the constitution and the Local Government Act 2000.

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

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report A/19/11 be received and noted.**

(Voting figures: 15 for, 0 against, 14 abstentions).