

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council for the District of Dover held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 6 March 2013 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Chairman: Councillor S R Nicholas

Councillors:

J S Back	B Gardner	K E Morris
B W Bano	J H Goodwin	M J Ovenden
P M Beresford	D Hannent	A S Pollitt
T A Bond	P J Hawkins	J A Rook
P M Brivio	P G Heath	M A Russell
B W Butcher	G J Hood	F J W Scales
P I Carter	S J Jones	A R Smith
S S Chandler	L A Keen	J M Smith
N J Collor	N S Kenton	R J Thompson
M D Conolly	P S Le Chevalier	R S Walkden
G Cowan	S M Le Chevalier	P Walker
J A Cronk	G Lymer	P A Watkins
M R Eddy	S C Manion	
R J Frost	K Mills	

Officers: Chief Executive
Director of Finance, Housing and Community
Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Director of Governance
Director of Regeneration and Development
Democratic Services Manager
Team Leader – Democratic Support

529 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T J Bartlett, C J Smith and J F Tranter.

530 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor L A Keen declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Minute No 536 (Council Budget 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14-2015/16) by reason of her employment as clerk to Aylesham Parish Council.

531 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

532 ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Herald of Free Enterprise

The Chairman of the Council announced that the meeting was being held on the anniversary of the Herald of Free Enterprise tragedy and called upon the members of the Council to stand in silence for one minute as a mark of respect.

(b) Use of Electronic Devices during Council meetings

The Chairman asked members of the Council to switch off electronic devices during the meeting.

533 LEADER'S TIME

The Leader of the Council, Councillor P A Watkins, included the following matters in his report:

- (a) The news that Howe Barracks and Canterbury Prison were to close and that the resulting job losses had not been forecast in regional growth figures.
- (b) That the Local Development Order had been returned from the Secretary of State without change.
- (c) That four companies would be granted funds from the Regional Growth Fund – two in the Pfizer site, one already in the district and the fourth company moving to the district. A further application from a business for Regional Growth funding was expected to be considered the following week and it was hoped that this would be approved.
- (d) That the five East Kent group of authorities (Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dover District Council, Shepway District Council and Thanet District Council) were making a City of Culture application for the area. The combined application pooled the heritage, environmental, artistic and cultural benefits of the five districts to create a critical mass. For the Dover District this included the iconic White Cliffs, golf courses, Deal Music Festival, Dover Castle and the Dover Museum.
- (e) That he had attended a meeting of the Port Consultative Committee during which £76 million of capital projects had been discussed. This included plans to upgrade and restore Dover Marine Station. The Committee had guaranteed access to the war memorial for commemorative events during the works and the general public could visit the memorial by appointment.
- (f) That air quality had shown major improvement on historic levels.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor G Cowan, included the following matters in his report:

- (a) The closure of Howe Barracks, Canterbury and the impact of it on East Kent.
- (b) That there had been no confirmation from the Port on where the funding for the Terminal 2 work was to come from.

- (c) To welcome the news of new businesses on the former Pfizer site but to remind Members that there was still a long way to go before the level of employment on the site returned to former levels.
- (d) To state his opposition to the Spare Room Supplement (referred to as the 'bedroom tax') and its impact on the most vulnerable in society.
- (e) To highlight the impact of funding cuts arising from the Chancellor's budget on local government, and in particular Dover District Council.

The Leader of the Council responded to points raised by the Leader of the Opposition Group in his report as followed:

- (a) That the Council had already adopted the measures identified by the Department for Communities and Local Government in the '50 ways to save' document.
- (b) To highlight the record of the current Council administration since 2003.
- (c) That the Council's budget would help create new jobs.

534 SEAT ALLOCATION AND GROUP APPOINTMENTS

There were no seat allocation or group appointments announced.

535 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

In accordance with Rule 12 of the Council Procedure Rules, Members of the Cabinet responded to the following questions:

- (1) Councillor L A Keen asked the Portfolio Holder for Community, Housing and Youth, Councillor S S Chandler:

"Given the underspend in the region of £40,000 in the KCC Youth Service Commissioning budget for the DCC area of £136,000, how would the Portfolio Holder for Community, Housing and Youth rate the effectiveness of the current commissioned youth service provision in Eythorne and Elvington?"

In response, it was stated that the Dover Locality Board would review the new youth service provision arrangements and a report would be made to a future meeting in respect of any underspend.

- (2) Councillor B W Bano asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor P A Watkins:

"Following the recent National Dignity in Care Day: what steps is the Shadow Health and Well Being Board taking to promote the privacy and dignity agenda across the Health and Social Care sector in the District?"

In response it was stated that the Health and Wellbeing Board was comprised of a number of partner organisations who would already be promoting dignity and privacy in health and social care and if the Board could assist in promoting and reinforcing the message then it would do so.

- (3) Councillor A S Pollitt asked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance, Councillor M D Conolly:

"Does the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance have concerns over staff and departmental pressures if the government goes ahead with plans to change voter registration?"

In response it was stated advised that although the full resource implications would not be known until the secondary legislation arising from The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 was in place, the Government had advised that it would meet the costs associated with the implementation of the new system under the new burdens doctrine.

- (4) Councillor A S Pollitt asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor P A Watkins:

"What steps are being taken to carry out an audit of projects delivered by the authority in the past decade as publicly requested by the current MP for Dover and Deal?"

In reply it was stated that the Member of Parliament for Dover had made no such request.

- (5) Councillor S J Jones asked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance, Councillor M D Conolly:

"In determining this year's budget can the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance inform Council what extra measures, if any, have been put in place to help small businesses to develop, rather than stagnate or disappear?"

In response it was stated that the Council continued to support small businesses in a number of ways despite the continued pressure on the authority's resource base. This included:

- Focusing resources on regeneration projects and the Sandwich Enterprise Zone as success in this area would feed through to small businesses.
- By being an active partner in the East Kent 'Grow for It' campaign launched on 27 February 2013.
- Supporting the continued development of a skilled local workforce through local training initiatives.
- Promoting the district and attracting spending to it through the support of major events such as the Olympic Torch event and the Open Golf.
- Simplifying the Council's procurement processes to enable local and small businesses to compete more easily for Council contracts.

- (6) Councillor P Walker asked the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection, Councillor P G Heath:

"Given the recent developments about the use of horsemeat in foodstuffs, has DCC ensured that its own house is in order with regard to any issues

within its own remit, for example Environmental Health, Foodstuffs businesses and food preparation premises?"

In reply it was stated that the Council had received no requests from the food safety agency in respect of this matter.

- (7) Councillor M R Eddy asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor P A Watkins:

"Following a resolution of the full council made in 25 July 2012, Cabinet agreed on 10 September to set up a "Partnership Board" to draw up and implement a local Community Covenant which would assist serving families and veterans and their families.

As a member of that Partnership Board is the Leader of this Council able to update the council on how the Partnership's Board's work programme is progressing, including the dates of any meetings held and how he intends to keep the council informed of further progress."

In response it was stated that following the agreement of the Cabinet to develop a local Armed Forces Community Covenant, a multi-agency civilian/military partnership board had to draft a Covenant and a date was in the process of being agreed to formally sign and launch it. In addition, further work was being undertaken to develop a work programme to identify local needs.

- (8) Councillor M R Eddy asked the Portfolio Holder for Access and Property Management, Councillor N J Collor:

"A recently published survey of Deal businesses identifies high car parking charges as the foremost problem faced by businesses in the town. Does the Portfolio Holder for Access and Property Management have any intentions of listening to Deal's hard-pressed business community?"

In response it was stated that the Council had not seen a copy of the survey of Deal businesses referred to in the question. However, the effective management of car parking had a key role to play in supporting the local business community.

536 COUNCIL BUDGET 2013/14 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2013/14 - 2015/16

The Council considered the report of the Director of Finance, Housing and Community.

It was moved by Councillor M D Conolly, duly seconded that

- (a) That the draft General Fund Revenue Budget, the Capital and Special Projects Programmes, the Housing Revenue Account budget, the Council Tax Resolution and the content of the MTFP be approved (including the amendment of the General Fund Revenue Budget to reflect the withdrawal of charges for the purchase of grave space for a child under 12 years of age).

- (b) That it be noted that it is the view of the Director of Finance, Housing and Community that the budget has been prepared in an appropriate and prudent manner and that, based upon the information available, the budgets are robust and the estimated General Fund and Housing Revenue Account balances and reserves are considered adequate for the Council's current spending plans.
- (c) That, in setting the Budget for 2013/14, the grants to other organisations as determined by Cabinet and set out at Annex 11 of the report be released.
- (d) That the various recommendations at the end of the sections within the Budget and MTFP, and summarised at Annex 15 to Appendix 1 of the report, be approved, as follows:
 - (i) Confirm the adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and, in doing so, the determination to remove second homes and empty properties discounts made at the meeting of 30 January 2013, the effect of which will be as follows:
 - (A) Approval of the policy that empty homes discount is reduced to 0% for Class C empty properties from 1 April 2013.
 - (B) Approval of the removal of the second home discount so that Council Tax will be payable in full on these properties from 1 April 2013.
 - (ii) Approve the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2013/14 and the projected outturn for 2012/13.
 - (iii) Continue the practice of delegated authority to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community to approve revenue budget carry forwards within the guidelines set out, and create and draw down Growth Point reserves in order to apply them to regeneration projects and support.
 - (iv) Approve the policies and protocols regarding the General Fund balances and earmarked reserves, and transfers between reserves as set out in Annex 6.
 - (v) Approve the 2012/13 projected outturn and the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account budget at Annex 7 of the report.
 - (vi) Approve the 2012/13 and 2013/14 transfers to the Housing Initiatives Reserve.
 - (vii) Approve the basis upon which the capital and special projects programmes have been compiled.
 - (viii) Delegate the decisions to apply capital receipts, revenue funds and other capital resources to finance the capital and special projects programmes to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.
 - (ix) Approve that capital resources required to finance new projects are secured before new projects commence.

- (x) Delegate the authorisation of projects up to £50,000 that are included in the capital and special revenue programmes to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance.
- (xi) Delegate the authorisation of projects funded from the Capital Contingency to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance.
- (xii) Approve that retained poolable housing capital receipts are used to fund capital allowances on Regeneration and Decent Homes agendas.
- (xiii) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision statement.
- (xiv) Approve the Council Tax Resolution as set out at Annex 10A.
- (xv) Note that, if the formal Council Tax Resolution at Annex 10A is approved, the total Band D Council Tax will be as set out at Annex 15 of the report.

It was moved by Councillor P Walker and duly seconded that the Motion be amended as followed:

"That the green waste subscription fee be reduced to £30 in order to encourage uptake of the service and recycling levels and to reduce the impact on hard pressed families."

The Director of Finance, Housing and Community advised the Council that the proposed amendment would need to identify the budget from where the costs were to be met in view of the fact that £30 would not cover the cost of delivering the service. Furthermore, it would be impossible to quantify the associated costs due to the need to establish the likely take-up of the service being run at a discounted rate.

On being put to the meeting the original Motion was CARRIED and

- RESOLVED:
- (a) That the draft General Fund Revenue Budget, the Capital and Special Projects Programmes, the Housing Revenue Account budget, the Council Tax Resolution and the content of the MTFP be approved (including the amendment of the General Fund Revenue Budget to reflect the withdrawal of charges for the purchase of grave space for a child under 12 years of age).
 - (b) That it be noted that it is the view of the Director of Finance, Housing and Community that the budget has been prepared in an appropriate and prudent manner and that, based upon the information available, the budgets are robust and the estimated General Fund and Housing Revenue Account

balances and reserves are considered adequate for the Council's current spending plans.

- (c) That, in setting the Budget for 2013/14, the grants to other organisations as determined by Cabinet and set out at Annex 11 of the report be released.
- (d) That the various recommendations at the end of the sections within the Budget and MTFP, and summarised at Annex 15 to Appendix 1 of the report, be approved, as follows:
 - (i) Confirm the adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and, in doing so, the determination to remove second homes and empty properties discounts made at the meeting of 30 January 2013, the effect of which will be as follows:
 - (A) Approval of the policy that empty homes discount is reduced to 0% for Class C empty properties from 1 April 2013.
 - (B) Approval of the removal of the second home discount so that Council Tax will be payable in full on these properties from 1 April 2013.
 - (ii) Approve the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2013/14 and the projected outturn for 2012/13.
 - (iii) Continue the practice of delegated authority to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community to approve revenue budget carry forwards within the guidelines set out, and create and draw down Growth Point reserves in order to apply them to regeneration projects and support.
 - (iv) Approve the policies and protocols regarding the General Fund balances and earmarked reserves, and transfers between reserves as set out in Annex 6.
 - (v) Approve the 2012/13 projected outturn and the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account budget at Annex 7 of the report.
 - (vi) Approve the 2012/13 and 2013/14 transfers to the Housing Initiatives Reserve.
 - (vii) Approve the basis upon which the capital and special projects programmes have been compiled.

- (viii) Delegate the decisions to apply capital receipts, revenue funds and other capital resources to finance the capital and special projects programmes to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.
- (ix) Approve that capital resources required to finance new projects are secured before new projects commence.
- (x) Delegate the authorisation of projects up to £50,000 that are included in the capital and special revenue programmes to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance.
- (xi) Delegate the authorisation of projects funded from the Capital Contingency to the Director of Finance, Housing and Community, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance.
- (xii) Approve that retained poolable housing capital receipts are used to fund capital allowances on Regeneration and Decent Homes agendas.
- (xiii) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision statement.
- (xiv) Approve the Council Tax Resolution as set out at Annex 10A.
- (xv) Note that, if the formal Council Tax Resolution at Annex 10A is approved, the total Band D Council Tax will be as set out at Annex 15 of the report.

(Councillor L A Keen withdrew from the meeting for the consideration of this item of business by reason of her Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the matter.)

537 PAY POLICY 2013

The Director of Governance presented the report on the Council's Pay Policy.

It was moved by Councillor S M Le Chevalier, duly seconded and

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement set out at Appendix 1 of the report be approved prior to its publication on the Council's website.

538 MOTION

Councillor P Walker gave notice under Rule 13 of the Council Procedure Rules of his intention to move the following Motion:

"Following the recent severe weather, while this Council welcomes the additional resources which have been made available to repair potholes, this Council requests KCC to ensure that its other highways repairs and maintenance obligations are not jeopardised."

The Motion was moved by Councillor P Walker and duly seconded.

It was moved by Councillor N J Collor and duly seconded that the motion be amended as followed:

"Following the recent severe weather this Council welcomes the additional resources that have been made available to repair pot holes. We also congratulate Kent County Council in ensuring that its other highways repairs and maintenance obligations have not been jeopardised."

The Amendment FELL by reason of being a direct negative.

It was moved by Councillor P A Watkins and duly seconded that the motion be amended as followed:

"Following the recent severe weather, while this Council welcomes the additional resources which have been made available to repair potholes, this Council requests KCC continue to ensure that its other highways repairs and maintenance obligations are not jeopardised."

Councillor P Walker and his seconder, Councillor G J Hood, agreed to accept the amendment, whereupon with the consent of Council it was put to the meeting as the substantive Motion and APPROVED and ADOPTED.

RESOLVED: Following the recent severe weather, while this Council welcomes the additional resources which have been made available to repair potholes, this Council requests KCC continue to ensure that its other highways repairs and maintenance obligations are not jeopardised.

539 ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE DISCHARGE OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS UNDER SECTION 14(2) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)

It was moved by Councillor P A Watkins, duly seconded and

RESOLVED: That the arrangements made by the Leader of the Council for the Discharge of Executive Functions under Section 14(2) Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) be noted.

540 URGENT BUSINESS TIME

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm