

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council for the District of Dover held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 5 March 2014 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor S R Nicholas

Councillors:

J S Back	M R Eddy	K Mills
B W Bano	R J Frost	M J Ovenden
P M Beresford	B Gardner	J A Rook
T A Bond	J H Goodwin	M A Russell
P M Brivio	D Hannent	F J W Scales
B W Butcher	P G Heath	A R Smith
P I Carter	S J Jones	C J 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	P Walker
G Cowan	S M Le Chevalier	P M Wallace
J A Cronk	S C Manion	P A Watkins

Officers: Chief Executive
Director of Environment and Corporate Assets
Director of Finance, Housing and Community
Team Leader – Democratic Support
Democratic Support Officer

531 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T J Bartlett, P J Hawkins, G J Hood, G Lymer, K E Morris, A S Pollitt, J F Tranter and R S Walkden.

532 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

533 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

534 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- (a) That Council staff be thanked for their hard work during the recent flood emergency to help local communities.

- (b) That a 'Fly a Flag for the Commonwealth' event would take place on 10 March 2014, during which the Chief Executive would raise a flag in celebration of the Commonwealth.

535 LEADER'S TIME

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

- (a) Recent flooding had affected at least 30 properties in several areas of the District. It was estimated that, working with partner agencies, Council staff had managed to save 16 properties as a result of their efforts to assist homeowners in protecting properties. It was possible that performance in other areas might be affected by staff resources having been diverted to the flooding emergency. Work would continue over the coming weeks to administer financial help to householders affected.
- (b) The Council was one of only 10 successful bidders, out of 128 who submitted entries, to receive funding of £100,000 as part of a central government initiative to assist bidders in better managing their heritage assets. The funding would be used to set up a trust in order to access further funding for the District's heritage assets.
- (c) There were radical changes planned for the delivery of healthcare through the Better Care Fund. Kent was taking part in a pilot project to develop an integrated scheme involving social and mental health services where funds would be diverted back into the community in order to enable patients to be discharged from hospital earlier in order to receive care at home which would be better coordinated and managed. Initial proposals would be submitted to Government by the end of March, with delivery starting in 2015.
- (d) There was likely to be a reduction in Government funding for transport projects. Loans for such projects were currently on hold, but those which could potentially be affected included the Waterfront Development at Dover, Middle Deal Road/Albert Road/Minter's Yard access, and changes to the Duke of York's roundabout. In relation to Connaught Barracks, it was likely that the Homes and Communities Agency would transfer the

historic Fort Burgoyne element to a special trust. Consultation on the first phase of development of the officers' mess site had started.

- (e) In relation to other regeneration matters, 73 companies were now based at Sandwich Discovery Park, employing around 1,500 people. The electrification of the High Speed rail line from Ashford to Canterbury was on schedule with Government funding allocated. A new apprenticeship scheme at the East Kent Light Railway was bearing fruit, with rail industry jobs guaranteed for apprentices on completion.
- (f) The former P & O computer site at Fanum House was due for demolition in the week beginning 10 March.
- (g) East Kent College had taken over K College in Dover and Folkestone. A meeting had taken place with the principal who was also an educational representative on the South East Local Enterprise Partnership. Hadlow College had taken over K College at Ashford.

The Opposition Group Leader, Councillor M R Eddy, responded by referring to:

- (a) Praise for Council staff and their efforts during the flooding and recognised that performance might be affected in other areas as a consequence. Canute Road, Deal had been badly affected due to the inadequacy of soakaways.
- (b) Concerns about performance in Planning and the levels of staffing in Planning and Legal sections.
- (c) Welcomed the receipt of £100,000 funding for the management of the Council's heritage assets. The District was blessed with impressive assets which needed to be preserved, conserved and presented to the public effectively in order to boost tourism.
- (d) The new healthcare proposals sounded positive but success depended on how effectively they were delivered. It was not helpful that the District was divided between two Clinical Commissioning Groups, the effect of which was likely to weaken the Council's input.

- (e) It was disappointing that funding for transport projects was likely to be reduced. As a hub, the District needed an effective transportation network.
- (f) Further education changes were welcome, but educational attainment at primary and secondary level needed improvement in order to take advantage of the opportunities offered by these changes.

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

- (a) Agreed that the District's division into two Clinical Commissioning Groups was not ideal. Proposals were underway to merge the Canterbury and Ashford Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- (b) Transport was a critical issue for the District because of the port. A priority for the Council was the construction of a third Thames Crossing, although this could have an adverse impact on the A2 depending on where it was sited.
- (c) Flooding at Canute Road, Deal had been caused by blocked drains, but the number of dropped pavements there was also an issue.
- (d) Major changes were underway in Planning, and their relocation in offices with Regeneration would facilitate a cohesive approach.

536 SEAT ALLOCATION AND GROUP APPOINTMENTS

No changes were made to the existing allocations and appointments.

537 COUNCIL BUDGET 2014/15 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2014/15 - 2016/17

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

Members also considered Cabinet decisions CAB 102 and 121 of 3 February and 3 March 2014 respectively, and the recommendations of the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee of 11 February 2014 (Minute No 487).

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

RESOLVED: (a) That the General Fund Revenue Budget, the Capital and Special Projects Programmes, the Housing Revenue Account Budget, the Council Tax Resolution and the content of the Medium-Term Financial Plan be approved.

(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 2014/15, 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 Medium-Term Financial Plan, and summarised at Annex 14 to Appendix 1 of the report, be approved, as follows:

(i) Approve the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2014/15 and the projected outturn for 2013/14.

(ii) Approve the policies and protocols regarding the General Fund balances and earmarked reserves, and transfers between reserves as set out in Annex 6 of the report.

- (iii) Approve the 2013/14 projected outturn and the 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account budget at Annex 7 of the report.
- (iv) Approve the Capital and Special Projects programmes.
- (v) Approve that capital resources required to finance new projects are secured before new projects commence.
- (vi) Approve that retained poolable housing capital receipts are used to fund capital allowances on Regeneration and Decent Homes agendas.
- (vii) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision statement.
- (viii) Approve the Council Tax Resolution as set out at Annex 10A of the report.
- (ix) 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 14 of the report.

538 PLANNING APPEAL - AWARD OF COSTS

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive on Planning Appeals – Award of Costs which had been presented to Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 March 2014.

It was moved by Councillor N S Kenton and duly seconded

- (a) That the release of £8,010 from General Fund Balances to meet the costs award for application 12/500 be approved.

- (b) That the release of up to £28,822 from the General Fund Balances to meet the costs award for application 12/311 be approved.

It was moved as an AMENDMENT by Councillor B Gardner and duly seconded that an additional recommendation be added as follows:

- (c) That this Council writes to the Minister for Communities and Local Government to inform him of the financial consequences of current Government policy and the impact that this is having on local decision-making and on local residents.

On being put to the vote the amendment was CARRIED.

On being put to the meeting, the substantive Motion was CARRIED.

RESOLVED: (a) That the release of £8,010 from General Fund Balances to meet the costs award for application 12/500 be approved.

- (b) That the release of up to £28,822 from the General Fund Balances to meet the costs award for application 12/311 be approved.

- (c) That this Council writes to the Minister for Communities and Local Government to inform him of the financial consequences of current Government policy and the impact that this is having on local decision-making and on local residents.

539 PARKING AND TRAFFIC REGULATIONS OUTSIDE LONDON (PATROL) -
AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF A
MEMBER

The Council considered the report of the Director of Environment and Corporate Assets which had been presented to Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 March 2014.

It was moved by Councillor N J Collor, duly seconded and

RESOLVED: That Councillor N J Collor be appointed to serve on the PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee and Councillor T A Bond to act as

substitute member. The term of office of the appointed Members to be until the appointment is terminated by the Council or until the Members become disqualified from acting the terms of the Joint Committee arrangements, whichever shall be the earlier.

540 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2014/15

It was moved by Councillor F J W Scales, duly seconded and

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved for publication on the Council's website.

541 PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2014/15

It was moved by Councillor F J W Scales, duly seconded and

RESOLVED: That the Programme of Ordinary Meetings for 2014/15 be approved in principle, subject to final ratification at the Annual Meeting of Council.

542 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

In accordance with Rule 12(1) of the Council Procedure Rules, Chairmen of Committees responded to the following questions:

- (1) Councillor B Gardner asked the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Councillor F J W Scales, how, now that Kent Highways have clearly stated that they regard it as their purpose to promote development, does he think that the people of Middle Deal and Sholden will understand the reasons why the Minter's Yard applications and both of the Sholden housing applications were so favourable to development.
- (2) In the absence of Councillor A S Pollitt, the Chairman of the Council advised that a written response would be sent to him in respect of the following question:

"Given the recent severe weather, what measures does the Chair of Planning propose to introduce other than minimum 'green' standards as a

requirement to ensure more sustainable and ecologically friendly house building in the Dover District?”

In accordance with Rule 12(1) of the Council Procedure Rules, Members of the Cabinet responded to the following questions:

- (1) Councillor P Walker asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor P A Watkins, if, given the progress that had been made in securing planning consent, commercial interest and the publication of the Compulsory Purchase Orders for the St James’s town centre development, he and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration could advise on the next steps and the timescales for the likely delivery of the scheme.
- (2) Councillor P Walker asked the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Waste and Planning, Councillor N S Kenton, what action he had taken to determine whether changes had taken place before necessary planning permission had been obtained at the Lydden Racing Circuit and what action would he take if it was shown that material changes have taken place without necessary permissions.
- (3) Councillor P M Brivio asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Children’s Services and Safeguarding, Youth and Community Safety, Councillor S S Chandler, to advise Members whether the budget for discretionary housing benefit to assist those affected by the bedroom tax was likely to be oversubscribed this financial year and how many Dover District tenants had been unlawfully charged or obliged to move due to the bedroom tax provisions.
- (4) Councillor R J Thompson asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Children’s Services and Safeguarding, Youth and Community Safety, Councillor S S Chandler, that, according to the minutes (Item 7) of the Youth Advisory Group meeting held on 16 January 2014, Dover District Council was providing financial support to the new build Youth Centre in Deal, therefore what financial assistance would this Council be giving to the people of Aylesham and their representative bodies to enable them to acquire the Aylesham Youth Centre which would otherwise be disposed of by Kent County Council.

- (5) Councillor M R Eddy asked the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection, Councillor P G Heath, to comment on the impact of the intervention by Mr Charles Elphicke which resulted in a considerable delay in building a new hospital in Dover.
- (6) Councillor S J Jones asked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance, Councillor M D Conolly, as councillors would shortly be receiving iPads for their work, when did the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Performance believe the Council would start to make savings by sending agendas and minutes electronically, as opposed to sending them in the post. In his reply, could he also indicate where the money for the iPads would come from and how much did the Portfolio Holder believe it would cost the Council to update the Council chamber with power sockets so Councillors could use their iPads throughout a meeting.

543 MOTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13, Councillor M R Eddy gave notice of his intention to move the following Motion:

‘This Council, while welcoming the Environment Agency’s investment in marine flood protection measures at Sandwich and Deal, calls upon:

1. The government to take action to combat flooding in inland flood risk areas of our district, such as East Studdal and the Alkham Valley;
2. The government to put ideology aside and seek appropriate assistance from the European Union for what is a widespread weather phenomenon;
3. Kent County Council to maintain, and renew as appropriate, highways drainage;
4. The privatised water companies to use their profits to improve their mains drainage systems to accommodate the water flows generated by increasingly common severe weather events.

For its part, this Council will also carry out a survey of all the drains and drainage gullies on car parks owned and managed by the Council and/or East Kent Housing and will produce a plan to replace impermeable surfacing with permeable surfaces.'

The Motion was duly seconded.

It was moved by Councillor P A Watkins, and duly seconded, that the Motion be AMENDED as follows:

'This Council, while welcoming the Environment Agency's investment in marine flood protection measures at Sandwich and Deal, calls upon:

1. The government to take action to combat, where possible, flooding in inland flood risk areas of our district, such as East Studdal and the Alkham Valley.
2. The government to seek appropriate assistance from the European Union for what is a widespread weather phenomenon;
3. Kent County Council to maintain, and renew as appropriate, highways drainage;
4. The privatised water companies to use their profits to improve their mains drainage systems to accommodate the water flows generated by increasingly common severe weather events.

For its part, this Council will also carry out a review of all the drains and drainage gullies on car parks owned and managed by the Council and/or East Kent Housing and will produce a report to replace impermeable surfacing with permeable surfaces.'

Councillor M R Eddy, with the consent of his seconder, accepted Councillor P A Watkins's proposals within his original Motion.

On being put to the meeting, the Motion was CARRIED.

RESOLVED: That this Council, while welcoming the Environment Agency's investment in marine flood protection measures at Sandwich and Deal, calls upon:

1. The government to take action to combat, where possible, flooding in inland flood risk areas of our district, such as East Studdal and the Alkham Valley.
2. The government to seek appropriate assistance from the European Union for what is a widespread weather phenomenon;
3. Kent County Council to maintain, and renew as appropriate, highways drainage;
4. The privatised water companies to use their profits to improve their mains drainage systems to accommodate the water flows generated by increasingly common severe weather events.

For its part, this Council will also carry out a review of all the drains and drainage gullies on car parks owned and managed by the Council and/or East Kent Housing and will produce a report to replace impermeable surfacing with permeable surfaces.'

544 URGENT BUSINESS TIME

There was no urgent business to transact.

The meeting ended at 8.33 pm