

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council for the District of Dover held as a remote meeting using Teams Live Events on Wednesday, 3 March 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor M D Conolly

Councillors:

J S Back	D G Cronk	D P Murphy
T J Bartlett	D Hannent	O C de R Richardson
M Bates	J P Haste	J Rose
D G Beaney	M J Holloway	M Rose
S H Beer	S J Jones	C A Vinson
E A Biggs	P D Jull	R S Walkden
T A Bond	L A Keen	P Walker
P M Brivio	N S Kenton	H M Williams
S S Chandler	S C Manion	C D Zosseder
N J Collor	K Mills	

Officers: Chief Executive
Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)
Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial)
Solicitor to the Council
Democratic Services Manager

47 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C F Woodgate.

48 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 27 January 2021 and 9 February 2021 were approved as a correct record for signing by the Chairman.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

50 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements made.

51 LEADER'S TIME

The Leader of the Council, Councillor T J Bartlett, included the following matters in his report:

- (a) To thank the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources), the Head of Finance and Investment and the Finance team for the work they put into preparing the budget which meant that the Council could move forward to a future of

investment and growth. The Council would invest in tourism, the economy and protecting the environment.

- (b) To welcome the extension of the furlough scheme and assistance with business rates.
- (c) That the Council had bid for £224,000 in grant funding for the installation of 49 electric vehicle charging points.
- (d) The Council had also secured funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund for solar panels at Whitfield and the Dover Museum.
- (e) That he would be meeting with the Minister to discuss the Inland Border Facility on 15 March and would discuss many issues including the road network.
- (f) That he agreed with concerns expressed by residents over the state of litter on the roads. The A256 would be cleaned in the coming weeks and in mid-May the A256 would be cleaned with vegetation cut-back. There would be a further clean in preparation for the Open Golf. The A2/M20 were cleaned by Highways England and the installation of bulk bins in lay-bys. He also expressed support for the Great British Spring Clean between 28 May – 13 June 2021.
- (g) That the Local Plan had received high levels of engagement and 19 Teams meetings had been held with positive feedback.
- (h) To express sadness at the news that the Phoenix Centre won't reopen and would be wound up. He expressed gratitude to Phil and Eleanor Scott for their work over the last 20 years at the Phoenix Centre. The Council as owner of the building would look at potential future uses for it.
- (i) That £68,000 had been raised over the last 2 years through the Dover District Lotto which had been invested in the Community Grants programme.
- (j) That Kearsney and Russell Gardens had been featured on Countryfile. The project was continuing and the toilets were no open 8am – 4pm daily and the café would reopen when allowed.
- (k) That the Council had hosted a live Fair Trade Event which he had found insightful with lots of interesting questions. He thanked Councillor P M Brivio for her work and presentation of Fair Trade Towns and also thanked the community team.

The Leader of the Opposition Labour Group, Councillor K Mills, included the following matters in his report:

- (a) To welcome the clean up of roads in the district by the Council. While he welcomed the bulk bins in lay-bys he emphasised that lay-bys were not safe parking bays for lorries.
- (b) To welcome the engagement on the Local Plan but recognise that there was no perfect answer during lockdown.
- (c) To welcome the community funding that the Dover District Lotto had generated.
- (d) To raise concerns over the inadequate parking at Kearsney and the parking problems this was causing in River.
- (e) To join the Leader in recognising the great work of the Phoenix Centre and urge the Council to find a future use for the site that would benefit the local community in Sandwich.
- (f) To enquire if any further meetings had been held following the chaos at Christmas and whether any lessons had been learnt to prevent it happening again.

- (g) To point out that the Co-Innovation Centre had been a success and had great social value that had been overlooked. The facility it provided would be needed in the future and that opportunities for employment could be generated by support for start up businesses.
- (h) To enquire what progress had been made in respect of charging in rural car parks. He pointed out that the proposals had been supported by Wingham Parish Council.
- (i) To thank the NHS for delivering covid vaccinations and to point out that it was the great success of the pandemic.
- (j) To urge the Government to raise NHS wages.
- (k) To point out that the new Kent County Council planters that had appeared without notice appeared cheap and had been placed without any public engagement.

In response the Leader of the Council advised:

- (a) That the Council need to look for Government funding to do more work to clear litter on the roads.
- (b) That he personally supported the closure of lay-bys to stop their use by lorries and that he would lobby for this.
- (c) To agree that there was an issue with parking at Kearsney and that the issue was being looked at with the potential for a Park and Ride Scheme.
- (d) That a wash up meeting had been held over the events of Christmas but that no minutes had been taken at the meeting. He would ensure that notices would be taken at the next meeting.
- (e) That the Council would continue to look for other locations for a similar project to the Co-Innovation Centre.
- (f) That work was on-going in respect of rural car parks and that he would provide an update on it.
- (g) To also thank the NHS for their work.
- (h) That the presentation he had seen on Parklets did not match what had been installed and he also felt that they did not look good. He urged Kent County Council to deal with the negative feedback that had been received in respect of them.

52 SEAT ALLOCATION AND GROUP APPOINTMENTS

There were no changes to the seat allocations and group appointments.

53 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

- (1) In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11 (as amended by Council Procedure Rule 28.9), a question from Graham Wanstall was put to the Leader of the Council, Councillor T J Bartlett:

“It is important those of us elected to public office demonstrate civic leadership. Therefore I continue with my own consistent plan of action to promote DOVER. To commemorate two important national events I propose a unique double naming in a simple way to reflect the mood of the Nation as follows:

That the subway under the A20 from the Market Square side down the slope to the bottom of the steps be called..."CAPTAIN SIR TOM MOORE PASSAGE" and the steps up to the sea front be called "DUKE OF EDINBURGH STEPS".

The names complement each other marking two much loved and respected national figures Captain Tom's life of 100 years and the 100th Birthday of H.R.H the Duke of Edinburgh.

This proposal does not require any change in road names only the naming of the subway within existing roads so I ask the Leader to please support this proposal and implement it in time for the 10th of June the Duke of Edinburgh's Birthday? It only requires four street name plates and has the support of "Highways England" who are responsible for the subway."

In response the Councillor T J Bartlett stated:

I would like to thank Mr Wanstall for his welcome proposal that the Council should consider commemorating both Captain Tom and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, through the naming of the ramp and steps leading to the subway under the A20.

As Mr Wanstall has highlighted, both individuals are much loved and respected national figures.

I am therefore very pleased to support his proposal in principle, although I would like to suggest that the ramp be named as Captain Sir Tom Moore Way rather than Captain Sir Tom Moore Passage.

With that minor change, I will now ask our officers to take this proposal forward and seek the permissions needed from the family of Captain Sir Tom Moore and the Lord Chamberlain's office with regards to the proposal regarding the Duke of Edinburgh.

54 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

The Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service presented the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22.

It was moved by Councillor C A Vinson, duly seconded by Councillor M Rose and

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

55 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2021-22

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021-22.

It was moved by Councillor C A Vinson, duly seconded by Councillor N S Kenton, and

RESOLVED: That the revised Council Tax Reductions Scheme (CTRS) for the financial year 2021/2022 be approved to embody within the scheme the principal that the income bands within the income grid used in the

Scheme are automatically adjusted upwards or downwards from time to time to reflect:

(a) Adjustments of the National Living Wage

(b) Adjustments in Working Tax Credit and Universal Credit received by claimants from the government as a COVID support measure.

Such that the percentage discount receivable by claimants is not negatively affected by these adjustments to the National Living Wage and adjustments in Working Tax Credit and Universal Credit awarded to claimants by the government as a COVID support measure.

And that accordingly the grid shown at Appendix 2a be substituted for the grid currently in the scheme, with the figures shown to be uplifted by £20 (or any other amount) for any period of 2021/22 to reflect the Government's adjustments in Working Tax Credit and Universal Credit.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.6 (voting on budget decisions) a recorded vote was held. The manner of voting was as followed:

<u>FOR (30)</u>	<u>AGAINST (0)</u>	<u>ABSTAIN (0)</u>
J S Back		
T J Bartlett		
M Bates		
D G Beaney		
S H Beer		
E A Biggs		
T A Bond		
P M Brivio		
S S Chandler		
N J Collor		
M D Conolly		
D G Cronk		
D Hannent		
J P Haste		
M J Holloway		
S J Jones		
P D Jull		
L A Keen		
N S Kenton		
S C Manion		
K Mills		
D P Murphy		
O C de R Richardson		
J Rose		
M Rose		
C A Vinson		
R A Walkden		
P Walker		
H M Williams		

<u>FOR (30)</u>	<u>AGAINST (0)</u>	<u>ABSTAIN (0)</u>
C D Zosseder		

56 COUNCIL BUDGET 2021/22 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021/22 - 2024/25

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the Council Budget 2021/22 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2024/25.

It was moved by Councillor C A Vinson, duly seconded by Councillor M J Holloway that the recommendations set out in the report incorporating the recommendations of the Cabinet at its meeting held on 1 March 2021 be approved.

On being put to the vote it was

- 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 MTFP be approved;
 - (b) That the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Digital be authorised to:
 - (i) Draw on the Council's earmarked reserves to fund the 2021/22 budget as required;
 - (ii) Apply new burdens funding as intended by Government;
 - (iii) Take any surplus 2020/21 new burdens funding and "nonearmarked" funding into earmarked reserves to support the General Fund budget and to apply them in 2021/22.
 - (c) That a Council Tax increase of 2.6% for DDC purposes be approved, resulting in an increase on Band D properties of £4.95 per year and an annual DDC Council Tax of £197.19.
 - (d) To note that it is the view of the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources), the Section 151 Officer, having due regard to the circumstances and the range of uncertainties, that the budget has been prepared in an appropriate and prudent manner and that as far as can be determined, and based upon the information available at the time of producing this report, the estimates are robust and the resources are adequate for the Council's spending plans in 2021/22.
 - (e) That the various Council recommendations at the end of the sections within the attached budget and MTFP, and summarised in Annex 10 to Appendix 1, are approved.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 18.6 (voting on budget decisions) a recorded vote was held. The manner of voting was as followed:

<u>FOR (30)</u>	<u>AGAINST (0)</u>	<u>ABSTAIN (0)</u>
J S Back		
T J Bartlett		
M Bates		
D G Beaney		
S H Beer		
E A Biggs		
T A Bond		
P M Brivio		
S S Chandler		
N J Collor		
M D Conolly		
D G Cronk		
D Hannent		
J P Haste		
M J Holloway		
S J Jones		
P D Jull		
L A Keen		
N S Kenton		
S C Manion		
K Mills		
D P Murphy		
O C de R Richardson		
J Rose		
M Rose		
C A Vinson		
R A Walkden		
P Walker		
H M Williams		
C D Zosseder		

57 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

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

- (1) Councillor M Rose asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health, Councillor D P Murphy:

“Considering the UK has achieved a world beating rollout of 20m plus COVID19 vaccinations, along the £252m funds to support Kent as part of a wider £1.2bn South East Covid support fund from Government.

How does East Kent now compare on their own vaccinations roll out locally for over 80’s, over 70’s and now the over 60’s completion rates? In particular the rates focus for Dover, Deal and Sandwich compared to the Thanet and Medway areas? Are we still in line with the successful national roll outs?”

In response Councillor D P Murphy thanked the NHS, Armed Forces and volunteers and stated:

“The vaccination data is now available at MSOA level (as well as Local Authority and Constituency) and for the Dover District is as follows. The data is currently not split into first and second doses of the vaccine. The data has recently been published and we will now look at how we can analyse the data and compare how, as per the question, we compare nationally, locally and with Thanet and Medway areas. Once we have this analysis, if the data makes it possible, we will include in the Members Weekly News as an update to all members.”

Councillor M Rose did not ask a supplementary question.

- (2) Councillor H M Williams asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor T J Bartlett:

“Is it possible to have a copy of the letter that was agreed would be written to the Government urging that the £20 uplift to benefits continues. This was agreed at full council on 27 January 2021.”

In response Councillor T J Bartlett advised that a copy of the letter had been provided to the Member.

Councillor H M Williams did not ask a supplementary question.

- (3) Councillor L A Keen asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Digital, Councillor C A Vinson:

“Given the large increase in population in Aylesham, and the probability of ongoing Covid 19 restrictions of some sort in May, is active consideration being given to providing an additional polling station in the village for the forthcoming elections in May?”

There were already large queues at the polling station in the 2019 election,; it is essential to ensure safe voting for local residents (and DDC staff) by limiting queuing, and thus enabling effective social distancing arrangements - which will not be possible with only the one polling station.”

In response Councillor C A Vinson stated:

“This is a function of the Returning Officer who has provided the following information:

Due to elector numbers, Aylesham is already a double station, usually with both stations situated in one building. In order to ensure that polling stations have space and remain covid secure, we have split the Aylesham Polling Station. Electors whose street names begin A-G will vote at Aylesham Baptist Church, Dorman Avenue South and electors whose street names begin H-Z will vote a few streets away at St Finbarr’s Church, Market Place. Letters have been sent to those electors affected advising of the change.

In terms of queues, each polling station will be provided with a bespoke layout plan, setting out where any queues should be formed. In addition, each polling station will have a poll clerk allocated to deal specifically with queue management and social distancing measures.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor L A Keen exercised her right to ask a supplementary question.

- (4) Councillor L A Keen asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services, Councillor N S Kenton:

“How effective has DDC been in ensuring that residents without access to the internet are not disadvantaged in relation to the local plan consultations; in particular how has the offer of free paper copies of the local plan to such residents been advertised in a form accessible to them.”

In response Councillor N S Kenton stated:

“A variety of consultation methods have been used for the consultation to ensure that those without internet access are not disadvantaged. Comments can be submitted online, by email and by post.

As it has not been possible to place hard copies of the consultation document for viewing in public places as would normally happen, free hard copies of documents are being provided to those without internet access.

A dedicated telephone hotline has been set up for the consultation, so that those without internet access can speak with an Officer to either request a hard copy or find out further information about the consultation. The details of this hotline are provided on the consultation material.

The consultation has been advertised through a variety of means to reach those with and without internet access, including local newspaper, social media, posters in the local areas where development is proposed and direct correspondence to those registered on our consultation database and those who have registered for updates from the Council on planning issues through ‘Keep me posted’. We have also asked town and parish councils, and local groups and organisations to share the consultation with residents.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor L A Keen exercised her right to ask a supplementary question.

- (5) Councillor C D Zosseder asked the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment and Tourism, Councillor M J Holloway:

“Dover has been hit hard in recent years and not just because of the COVID crisis. The Stembrook Co-Innovation Centre has been an excellent project that has helped several businesses start up and join the high street. Please could you tell me if there are plans to utilise any of the other large empty premises for another project of this nature to aid in the revitalisation of Dover’s High Street.”

In response Councillor M J Holloway stated:

“This was always intended as a short-term project, initially for 12 months, but which will have actually run for almost three years when it closes in August.

We have no plans to use any other premise but we do intend to work with Red Zebra and Dover Big Local over the coming months to offer support to those businesses currently based within the Co-Innovation Centre focusing especially on those who have the potential to grow.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor C D Zosseder exercised her right to ask a supplementary question.

58 URGENT BUSINESS TIME

There were no items of urgent business for consideration.

The meeting ended at 8.08 pm