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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council for the District of Dover held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 30 September 2015 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor S S Chandler

Councillors:

J S Back	R J Frost	K E Morris
S F Bannister	B Gardner	D P Murphy
T J Bartlett	B J Glayzer	M J Ovenden
P M Beresford	D Hannent	A S Pollitt
T A Bond	P J Hawkins	G Rapley
P M Brivio	P G Heath	A F Richardson
B W Butcher	S Hill	M Rose
P I Carter	M J Holloway	D A Sargent
N J Collor	S J Jones	F J W Scales
M D Conolly	L A Keen	P Walker
M I Cosin	N S Kenton	P M Wallace
D G Cronk	P S Le Chevalier	P A Watkins
M R Eddy	S M Le Chevalier	
A Friend	K Mills	

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

34 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J M Heron and S C Manion.

35 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 VARIATION TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman of the Council announced that Agenda Item 10 (Operation Stack and Manston Update) would be withdrawn from the agenda due to the Motion at Agenda Item 12 covering the same business.

It was moved by Councillor S S Chandler and duly seconded that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14(c) the order of business in the agenda be varied.

RESOLVED: That the order of business be varied to take Agenda Item 6 (Questions from the Public) prior to Agenda Item 5 (Leader's Time).

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

38 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman of the Council made the following announcements:

(a) The Death of Former Councillor A J D Sansum

The Chairman announced the sad news of the recent death of former Councillor A J D Sansum who served on the Council between 1983 and 1995 representing the Eythorne Ward and was a former Leader of the Council in his capacity as the Chairman of the old Policy and Resources Committee.

The Chairman called upon the group leaders to speak and they paid tribute to his service and the qualities he brought to the Council.

(b) The Death of Former Councillor R J Tant

The Chairman also announced the sad news of the death of former Councillor R J Tant who served on the Council for 27 years. In addition to being a Dover District Councillor, he had been a Dover Town Councillors and was a former Mayor of Dover.

The Chairman called upon the group leaders to speak and they paid tribute to his service and his specialist interest in local transport issues.

The Council stood in silence as a mark of respect for former Councillors A J D Sansum and R J Tant.

(c) The Death of Councillor M R Eddy's Wife

The Chairman announced the death of Councillor M R Eddy's wife and extended the sympathy of Council to him.

The Leader of the Council made the following announcement:

(d) Statement on Syrian Refugees

The Prime Minister in a statement to the House of Commons on 7 September 2015 announced that the UK, working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), would resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees over the next 5 years taken from camps in nations bordering Syria. The resettlement programme would concentrate on the most vulnerable who could not be effectively supported in the refugee camps as determined by the UNHCR's assessment. Those resettled under the programme would be given 5 years leave to stay in the UK.

The Government would work with the Local Government Association and local authorities that volunteered to participate. The resettlement package would include financial support for local authorities funded from the foreign aid budget.

The South East Strategic Partnership for Migration (SESPM), which Councillor P A Watkins was the Chairman of and the Chief Executive a member, had met with the Home Office, the Department of Education, the Department of Work

and Pensions and the Department of Communities and Local Government to ensure the necessary support and funding arrangements were in place.

This would include the housing costs based on the Local Housing Allowance and include 2 month void accommodation costs to allow for the planning of refugee accommodation needs, disabled housing adaptation and furniture costs and funding for health and education costs.

Nationally, the resettlement programme would be based on a steady stream rather than mass arrivals with the number of families being resettled increasing steadily through the autumn.

The Chairman invited the other group leaders to speak in response to the announcement.

39 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with Rule 11 of the Council Procedure Rules, Mrs Helen Williams gave notice of her intention to ask the following question of the Leader of the Council, Councillor P A Watkins:

“What action is Dover District Council taking to support Syrian refugees in line with the latest Government initiative, and in line with the 40 other Council which have already declared their support in welcoming refugees?”

In response, the Leader of the Council stated that Dover District would receive 12 Syrian families as part of the resettlement programme, who would be housed in private sector accommodation spread across the district rather than in social housing. The Council would be working with Kent County Council and other agencies to ensure the correct support was in place prior to accepting any Syrian refugees.

As the Dover District was not a dispersal area for asylum seekers, the resettlement of 12 Syrian families would be a one-off issue for the district.

Mrs Williams declined to ask a supplementary question and thanked the Leader of the Council for his answer.

40 LEADER'S TIME

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

- (a) The continued progress of St James's (DTIZ) development with further tenant announcements expected shortly and the closure of the Russell Street car park which would allow major works to be undertaken on the site. Work was underway on site to prepare for the demolition of Burlington House. In addition, the housing on the corner of Castle Street had been nominated for a design award. Canterbury Archaeological Trust was thanked for the work that they were undertaking on the site.
- (b) The future of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership following the decision not to renew the contract of its Chairman. The Chairman had been

a supporter of Dover's ambitions in respect of the Port of Dover, Albert Road and the Discovery and had overall done a good job. The new federated governance model that was being developed was expected to work better in a two tier authority model and stop domination by the upper tier.

- (c) The continuing progress being made by the Dover Town Centre Group and its three working groups.
- (d) The traffic management issues in Sandwich and the work being undertaken to try to protect the town from environmental damage from unsuitable traffic.
- (e) That the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review would be closely monitored and budgets would be reviewed if necessary.

The Leader of the Main Opposition Labour Group, Councillor M R Eddy, included the following matters in his report:

- (a) To thank Members and Officers for their kindness.
- (b) To welcome the progress of the DTIZ but warn that spending cuts could hold back the good work currently being undertaken in respect of regeneration in the district.
- (c) The importance of the public sector in providing essential services that enabled the private sector to function.

The Leader of the Minority Opposition UK Independence Party Group, Councillor A F Richardson, including the following matters in his report:

- (a) To welcome the signs of regeneration in the district and especially the DTIZ and the new housing on Castle Street. Canterbury Archaeological Trust was working hard with lots of local volunteers on the DTIZ site.
- (b) To express concern over the departure of the Chairman of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) given the importance of having someone sympathetic to the district's regeneration needs.
- (c) That the Comprehensive Spending Review could make local government become unviable in the future and put at risk the positive work being done.
- (d) To offer support for the Government and the Council's position on Syrian refugees and urge all countries to help.

In response, the Leader of the Council raised the following matters as part of his right to reply:

- (a) That the possible locations for the 3rd Thames Crossing were either at the current location of the existing crossings or lower on the Thames at Gravesend. The Council supported the option for the lower crossing at Gravesend due to road issues, subject to the needed local road improvements being undertaken in advance, such as completing the dualling of the A2 and improvements to the A299 and A249. There had been meetings with Highways England on this matter and the Leader was seeking to meet with the roads minister in relation to the 3rd Thames Crossing and Operation Stack/Manston.

41 REVISED TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/16

The Director of Finance, Housing and Community introduced the Revised Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16.

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

RESOLVED: That the revised Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 be approved.

42 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

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

- (1) Councillor P M Brivio asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor P M Beresford:

“What effect does the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Wellbeing think the government's decision to freeze rents for social housing will have on the ability of East Kent Housing to maintain and carry out improvements to council stock?”

In response, Councillor P M Beresford advised that the detail of the Government's proposals had yet to be circulated. However, the Council understood that rents would not be frozen and instead would be reduced by 1% per annum over the next four years. It was anticipated that routine maintenance and stock improvements would continue to take place.

Councillor P M Brivio declined the opportunity to ask a supplementary question and instead asked for a written copy of the answer.

- (2) Councillor M R Eddy asked the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Waste and Planning, Councillor N S Kenton:

“Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Waste and Planning inform the Council of Kent County Council's policy towards members of the public who chose to take a couple of bags of recycling on foot to the Civic Amenity sites rather than using their car to do so?”

In response, Councillor N S Kenton advised that Kent County Council's policy was that the carrying of waste on foot to the sites was not permitted and this was supported by signage at the entrance to all of the Household Waste Recycling Centres. This was due to the large amount of traffic movements at the sites which would make entering on foot unsafe.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor M R Eddy exercised his right to ask one supplementary question.

- (3) Councillor P M Wallace asked the Portfolio Holder for Access and Licensing, Councillor N J Collor:

“The RAC's 2015 shows that a majority of Britain's motorists consider that the state of the country's roads are getting worse, with potholes and general road repairs topping the list of complaints from road users. Can the Portfolio Holder for Access inform the Council what steps is DDC taking to ensure that the roads in Dover District are improving rather than deteriorating?”

In response, Councillor N J Collor advised that apart from trunk roads owned by Highways England, Kent County Council was responsible for repairing pot holes and urged elected members and the public to report them to KCC Highways on-line or their divisional Member.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor P M Wallace exercised his right to ask one supplementary question.

- (4) Councillor L A Keen asked the asked the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance, Councillor M D Conolly:

“Will the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance join me in welcoming the comprehensive training provided for all recently elected councillors and will he outline how he proposes to review the impact of the training on the work of the Council and feed the results of that review into future training provision?”

In response, Councillor M D Conolly agreed that he welcomed the comprehensive training provided and advised that feedback, which had generally been extremely positive, would be used to inform which training providers and learning styles best suited the training needs in the future. He was satisfied that the training provided met the requirements of Article 13 of the Constitution.

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

- (5) Councillor A S Pollitt asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor P M Beresford:

“As a number of my constituents are concerned by the current Government's plan to privatise parts of our National Health Service, could the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Wellbeing inform this Council who owns the land and buildings of the Buckland hospital in Dover and the Victoria Memorial hospital in Deal?”

In response, Councillor P M Beresford advised that according to the Land Registry the land and buildings in Deal were owned by NHS Property Services Limited and the land and buildings in Dover were owned by East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor A S Pollitt declined the opportunity to ask a supplementary question.

- (6) Councillor D A Sargent asked the Portfolio Holder for Property Management and Public Protection, Councillor T J Bartlett:

“It has been reported in the national press that some local authorities are switching off their CCTV cameras to save money. Could the Portfolio Holder

for Property Management and Public Protection inform the Council whether there are plans to do the same in this district?”

In response, Councillor T J Bartlett advised that there were no plans to reduce or switch off the Council's CCTV system.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor D A Sargent exercised his right to ask one supplementary question.

(7) Councillor S Hill asked the Portfolio Holder for Property Management and Public Protection, Councillor T J Bartlett:

“Can the Portfolio Holder for Property Management and Public Protection assure the Council that the 11 public conveniences currently being cleaned by Dover District Council contractors on behalf of 7 town and parish councils at a cost of £123,450 last year are up to the standard of cleanliness, safety and sanitation that he would expect for that amount of expense?”

In response Councillor T J Bartlett stated that Monitor Services had been awarded the public conveniences contract in 2014 following a retendering process that had achieved significant savings that had been passed on in full to the Town and Parish Council's providing financial support. In addition to the cleansing of the public conveniences the contract included some elements of basic maintenance.

It was acknowledged that there had been some issues in respect of cleansing standards earlier in the year that the Council had raised with the contractor but this had been resolved by the contractor changing the personnel it used on the contract. Anyone with concerns about the level of service was urged to raise them with the Property Services team but currently there were no continuing concerns about the service.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.5, Councillor S Hill exercised her right to ask one supplementary question.

43 SEAT ALLOCATION AND GROUP APPOINTMENTS

The Group Leaders advised that there were no seat allocations or group appointments.

44 OPERATION STACK AND MANSTON UPDATE

This item of business was withdrawn from the agenda.

45 MEMBER AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Director of Governance reported the recommendations of the Governance Committee.

It was moved by Councillor P G Heath and duly seconded

(a) That Member and public participation be enhanced by the Executive including the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions on its monthly agenda

and through this process identify future agenda items of public interest that would be subject to pre-scrutiny.

- (b) That Member and public participation be enhanced by including on the agenda of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee key decisions subject to pre-scrutiny, which would enable Members and the public to speak to the agenda item and Members, where permitted being able to ask questions at the scrutiny meeting.
- (c) That the Director of Governance develop and submit any necessary amendments to the text of the Constitution to a future meeting of the Governance Committee and the Council for approval.

It was moved as an AMENDMENT by Councillor P M Wallace and duly seconded

- (a) That Member and public participation be enhanced by the Executive including the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions on its monthly agenda and through this process identify future agenda items of public interest that would be subject to pre-scrutiny.
- (b) That Member and public participation be enhanced by including on the agenda of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee key decisions subject to pre-scrutiny, which would enable Members and the public to speak to the agenda item and Members, where permitted being able to ask questions at the scrutiny meeting.
- (c) That the Director of Governance develop and submit any necessary amendments to the text of the Constitution to a future meeting of the Governance Committee and the Council for approval.
- (d) That members of the public be permitted to submit written questions to a meeting of the Cabinet relating to a matter on the agenda provided that they have given not less than 8 days' notice.

On being put to the meeting the Amendment was LOST.

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

- RESOLVED:
- (a) That Member and public participation be enhanced by the Executive including the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions on its monthly agenda and through this process identify future agenda items of public interest that would be subject to pre-scrutiny.
 - (b) That Member and public participation be enhanced by including on the agenda of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee key decisions subject to pre-scrutiny, which would enable Members and the public to speak to the agenda item and Members, where permitted being able to ask questions at the scrutiny meeting.
 - (c) That the Director of Governance develop and submit any necessary amendments to the text of the Constitution to a future meeting of the Governance Committee and the Council for approval.

MOTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13, Councillor S F Bannister gave notice of his intention to move the following Motion:

“This Council is extremely concerned by the proposals to use the former Manston airport site for parking of lorries when the cross-Channel routes are blocked for any reason, as they were this summer. The Council believes, on the basis of sound local knowledge, that this proposal will only lead to a worsening of the traffic chaos caused by Operation Stack and to the disruption of residents’ lives and livelihoods throughout this district and elsewhere in East Kent. This Council resolves to express its disquiet at the proposals in the strongest possible terms to Government and Kent County Council.”

The Motion was duly seconded.

It was moved as an AMENDMENT by Councillor P A Watkins and duly seconded that

“This Council is extremely concerned by the proposals to use the former Manston airport site for parking of lorries when the cross-Channel routes are blocked for any reason, as they were this summer. The Council believes, on the basis of sound local knowledge, that this proposal will only lead to a worsening of the traffic chaos caused by Operation Stack and to the disruption of residents’ lives and livelihoods throughout this district and elsewhere in East Kent. This Council supports the Dover Joint Transportation Board resolution to express its disquiet at the proposals in the strongest possible terms to Government and Kent County Council and urges the Department of Transport to expedite and fund early improvements to the dualling of the A2 between Lydden and Dover and the undualled section of the A256 between Sandwich and Dover.”

Councillor S F Bannister, with the consent of his seconder, agreed to accept the Amendment as an alteration of his original Motion.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried.

RESOLVED: “This Council is extremely concerned by the proposals to use the former Manston airport site for parking of lorries when the cross-Channel routes are blocked for any reason, as they were this summer. The Council believes, on the basis of sound local knowledge, that this proposal will only lead to a worsening of the traffic chaos caused by Operation Stack and to the disruption of residents’ lives and livelihoods throughout this district and elsewhere in East Kent. This Council supports the Dover Joint Transportation Board resolution to express its disquiet at the proposals in the strongest possible terms to Government and Kent County Council and urges the Department of Transport to expedite funding for early improvements to the dualling of the A2 between Lydden and Dover and the undualled section of the A256 between Sandwich and Dover.”

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18.4, Councillor P S Le Chevalier requested that his vote against be recorded.)

(Councillor N S Kenton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the matter by reason of the potential impact of Operation Stack and Manston on his employment and withdrew from the meeting for the consideration of this item of business.)

47 URGENT BUSINESS TIME

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.47 pm