

Meeting: **Council**
Date: **24 November 2021**
Time: **7.00 pm**
Place: **Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone**

To: **All Members of the Council**

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of the Council on the date and at the time shown above.

Anyone who wishes to have information on any matter arising on the Agenda which is not fully covered in these papers is requested to give notice prior to the meeting to the Chairman or appropriate officer.

This meeting will be webcast live to the council's website at <https://folkestone-hythe.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

Although social distancing rules have been relaxed, for the safety of the public, elected members and staff, we will continue to seat members of the public approximately one metre apart. This means that there will be 13 seats available for members of the public, which will be reserved for those speaking or participating at the meeting. The remaining available seats will be given on a first come, first served basis.

All attendees at meetings are kindly asked to wear face coverings, unless they are addressing the meeting.



Dr Susan Priest
Chief Executive

Queries about the agenda? Need a different format?

Contact Jemma West – Tel: 01303 853369
Email: committee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk or download from our
website
www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest (Pages 7 - 8)**

Members of the Council should declare any discloseable pecuniary interest or any other significant interests in any item/s on this agenda.

3. **Minutes (Pages 9 - 16)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting of the council held on 29 September 2021 and to authorise the Chairman of the Council to sign them as a correct record.

4. **Chairman's Communications**

5. **Petitions (Pages 17 - 20)**

A petition asking for the council to withdraw its recently published regeneration proposal for East Cliff and instead work with the community to improve the existing play area and support the bowls club and existing sports facilities has been received and has 950 signatures. As per the petitions scheme, set out in part 4 of the constitution, petitions which receive more than 250 signatures can be presented to a meeting of Full Council.

The petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting.

6. **Questions from the Public**

The following questions have been received:

1. **From Mr Brophy to Councillor Monk, Leader of the Council**

Can the Leader guarantee the people of Hythe that the plans for Prince's Parade will not be altered to accommodate more than the 150 dwellings that have been suggested and also confirm that at least 50% of the space on Prince's Parade will be planted, open green space accessible to all?

2. **From Mrs H St Clair to Councillor Monk, Leader of the Council**

Due to the hazardous and toxic nature of the waste contained on Princes Parade and the ensuing increased traffic levels in the area if this development goes ahead, how are you going to protect the children of Seabrook Primary School and local residents - are you going to issue us all with the same protective equipment that is advised for the workers on site?

3. **From Ms C Farrell to Councillor Monk, Leader of the Council**

The three Green Councillors who represent Hythe were voted onto FHDC by the largest majorities in the district, on a mandate to save Prince's Parade. Meanwhile you clung onto your seat in Folkestone by the smallest majority in the district – 19 votes. You have publicly referred to Prince's Parade as a 'blasted heath and the biggest dog's toilet in the south east of England'. Even though the result of the public inquiry is the decision of the Secretary of State for Transport and not you, work has continued on the site as if the result is a foregone conclusion. If the Public Inquiry finds in favour of the people who have voted democratically to save Prince's Parade, who you have consistently undermined, will you resign?

7. Questions from Councillors

(Questions can be found on www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk from noon 2 days before the meeting, on Modern.gov, under the agenda for this meeting).

Up to 45 minutes is allowed for questions from councillors.

8. Announcements of the Leader of the Council

To receive a report from the Leader of the Council on the business of the cabinet and on matters that the leader considers should be drawn to the council's attention. The leader shall have 10 minutes to make his announcements.

The opposition group will have an opportunity to reply to the leader's remarks. The opposition group leader shall have 5 minutes to respond after which the Leader of the Council will have a right of reply. Any right of reply will be for a maximum duration of 5 minutes.

9. Opposition Business

The Labour Group has raised the following matter:

Council Notes:

Currently an Airbnb property or similar self-contained holiday let is not licenced in the same way as a traditional BnB or hotel. The district is seeing rental costs soar, forcing out local low wage families from the area.

Folkestone came out second on the list with an average asking rent price of £1,144 per calendar month in June 2021. Rewind a year, and that figure was just £902 back in June 2020, meaning a 26.267 per cent annual change.

<https://www.kentlive.news/news/property/folkestone-sevenoaks-two-kent-towns-5751075>

Councils, including Brighton and Hove and Liverpool have made representations to the government regarding the lack of regulation within

the sector.

Council believes:

- That the council is losing income due to the current nature of Air Bnb and other self-contained holiday lets, due to the fact that these properties are entitled to business rate relief.
- That the increasing level of these properties within the district has become disproportionate and takes away from much needed housing stock for local families.
- That more is need from central government to ensure a level playing field between these types of properties and more traditional holiday accommodation venues.

Council Resolves:

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the current situation with regards to self-contained holiday lets (advertised on Airbnb and other such websites) This review should contain but is not limited to:
- The current numbers of entire properties that are registered as businesses for the purpose of holiday lets within the district
- The affect that these houses being used in this purpose has on the need for housing by local residents
- If the rising rental market within the district is being partially affected by the existence of these self-contained holiday lets.
- The details of grants awarded to these businesses in terms of Covid business relief.
- The financial burden on the council created by these businesses in terms of council services, waste collection etc.
- What methods the council has in its power to regulate these properties: Change of use within planning, business registration, licensing etc.

Debates on opposition business shall be limited to 30 minutes. If the time limit is reached or the debate concludes earlier, the leader of the group raising the item shall have a right of reply.

The Council shall:

- a) Note the issue raised and take no further action;
- b) Refer the issue to the cabinet or relevant overview and scrutiny committee, as the case may be for their observations before deciding whether to make a decision on the issue;
- c) Agree to examine the matter as part of a future scrutiny

- programme;
- d) Adopt the issue raised by opposition business provided that the decision so made is within the policy framework and budget.

10. **Motions on Notice**

The following motions have been placed on the agenda in the order received; up to 60 minutes shall be allowed for debates on motions on notice:

1. **From Councillor Treloar, Green Group**

Allow members to attend council meetings remotely.

The council notes that whilst it is preferable for members to attend meetings in person, there are a number of significant reasons why the option for remote attendance is vital for an inclusive local democracy:

- a) Some members may be particularly vulnerable to coronavirus or caring for vulnerable people; they should be given the option to avoid the risk of exposure in prolonged indoor meetings.
- b) Some members may have caring duties that make it disproportionately more difficult to attend meetings compared to other members.
- c) In keeping with the council's carbon emission reduction goals, members should have the option to avoid having to travel to the council chamber if sustainable transport isn't available.

Northern Ireland recently agreed in its parliament to allow councils to meet and vote remotely, Wales and Scotland already allow this. England is being left behind.

This Council mandates the Leader to write to the Secretary of State to call for parity across the UK and enable Councillors in England to meet and vote online as they see fit.

Should the legal framework provide for remote meetings, this Council moves to investigate the feasibility of hosting hybrid meetings in one room, such as the Council Chamber.

11. **Refresh of the Council's Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy (Pages 21 - 60)**

The District Council is part of the statutory safeguarding role within the wider public sector, with responsibilities to children, young people and vulnerable adults. The children, young people and vulnerable adults safeguarding policy has been updated and is attached at Appendix 1. Council are advised that the safeguarding policy is refreshed every two years and that the changes made to the 2019 policy include new

legislation and changes to practice that are incorporated in the 2021 policy.

12. **Licensing Policy Statement 2021-2026 (Pages 61 - 210)**

The Licensing Authority is required to review and publish a Licensing Policy Statement for every successive five year period. A new draft policy statement was prepared following a detailed process of review and consultation and reported to Planning & Licensing Committee on 11 November 2021. The committee have agreed for the new draft policy to be presented to Full Council for approval.

13. **Update to the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme (Pages 211 - 216)**

This report seeks approval to update the budget for the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme for decisions due to be taken by Cabinet earlier today regarding the District Owned Street Lighting and Biggins Wood Development schemes. The report also updates the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme for works to the Connect 38 building in Ashford which were originally agreed by Cabinet on 26 May 2021.

14. **Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2025/26 (Pages 217 - 244)**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is the Council's key financial planning document. It puts the financial perspective on the council's Corporate Plan priorities, expressing the aims and objectives of various plans and strategies in financial terms over the four year period ending 31st March 2026. It covers both revenue and capital for the General Fund. Also included are the Council's reserves policies. The MTFS is a key element of sound corporate governance and financial management.