

## FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **Minutes for the meeting of the Council held at the Zoom - remote meeting on Wednesday, 25 November 2020**

**Present:** Councillors Mrs Ann Berry (Chairman), Danny Brook, Miss Susan Carey, John Collier, Laura Davison, Ray Field, Peter Gane, Clive Goddard, David Godfrey, Anthony Hills, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Nicola Keen, Michelle Keutenius, Jim Martin, Philip Martin (Vice-Chair), Connor McConville, Jackie Meade, Ian Meyers, David Monk, Terence Mullard, Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Patricia Rolfe, Rebecca Shoob, Georgina Treloar, Douglas Wade, Lesley Whybrow, David Wimble and John Wing

#### **9. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Rolfe declared a DPI in respect of agenda item 9, (Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25), in that she was a Director of Oportunitas. She confirmed that she had been granted a dispensation in respect of this interest, and could therefore participate in any discussion and vote.

Councillors McConville, Mullard and Gane also declared DPIs in respect of agenda item 9, in that they were directors on the Board of Oportunitas, and had been granted dispensations in respect of this interest and could therefore participate in any discussion or vote.

#### **10. Chairman's Communications**

The Chairman gave the following communications:

“On 8 November 2020, Remembrance Sunday, Damian Collins MP Chairman of Step Short Folkestone Ltd along with myself as Vice Chairman of Step Short were at last, able to arrange a short hand over Ceremony of the Step Short Arch to The Leader of Folkestone & Hythe District Council Councillor David Monk.

The Ceremony consisted of a welcome by myself with a formal mention on keeping a safe distance from each other during the ceremony adhering to strict Government guide lines. A register of those attending was taken and will be kept for 21 days as instructed.

Damian Collins gave a short speech and then presented Councillor David Monk with the Gifts from Step Short which consisted of: The Spade which was used by our Patron Lord Boyce Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports to dig the first turf for the Arch on 4 August 2013, exactly one year before the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WW1 in 2014.

Also there was a 3D Commemorative plaque depicting Soldiers on the Road of Remembrance which included a small replica of the plaque which Prince Henry of Wales, known to us as Prince Harry, unveiled at the Centenary Ceremony.

A short service of Remembrance followed with Prayers, the song 'Band of Brothers' was sung, A Piper played the lament 'Flowers of the Forest' then two minutes silence, wreaths were laid and the Kohima address was said by a R.B.L Veteran.

On 11 November at 11.00am I attended the Machine Gun Memorial in the Cheriton Road Cemetery and laid a wreath on behalf of the Folkestone and Hythe District Council. The Ceremony was well supported, once again within Government guidelines, as before a record of attendees was taken.

Once again I would like to thank all the officers and staff keeping us up to date as the Lockdown tightened its grip once more. Also to all the Councillors and volunteers who are giving time to help man the Hubs.

It would be remiss of me if I didn't say, a big thank you to Giles Barnard and his team for their hard work clearing leaves, (more than a thousand sacks I believe), checking on fly tipping and cleaning the Graffiti in the District".

11. **Petitions**

There were no petitions.

12. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council**

The Leader gave the following announcements:

"There has been much conjecture as to which tier we will find ourselves in when we come out of lockdown. I do not support the view held by some Kent leaders that we should all be in the same tier, probably tier 3 as Thanet and Swale in particular are suffering extremely high incidences of infection. I have argued that Kent is so large it is not sensible to include us all in the same tier, however, we will find out tomorrow. I must say that our residents have been very good at sticking to the rules. Hands, Face Space. And whatever tier we find ourselves in I know that we will continue to be sensible.

Our district wide community hub model continues to support those more vulnerable residents during this very difficult period.

I would like to thank the host organisations Age Concern UK in Hythe, Three Hills Leisure Centre in Folkestone, and New Romney Day Centre, along with the respective Hub leads Cleo Smith, Nick Shaw and Jon Wilson, for their efforts which have made the hub model a great success. There have also been over 600 volunteers involved with the hubs without whom this response would not be possible and my thanks goes to each and everyone them for committing to help our community.

I am delighted that in partnership with the Council the hubs will continue to provide support for over the coming winter months and we recently contacted over 5,000 residents by posting out over 3000 letters and sending nearly 2000 emails to ensure they are aware of the help available to them. This includes help to overcome loneliness and isolation, befriending calls, signposting to services for food deliveries and food banks, collecting shopping and prescriptions.

The hubs have also been carrying out projects as a result of winning funding from Sport England funding to help to get people active in their homes through exercise booklets as well as socially distanced exercise sessions so you can see that the hub model has a wider reach than just as a response to the pandemic.

Could I ask those of you that haven't replied to the IT survey to please do so as it is imperative that in this virtual age we have IT kit that is fit for purpose. Thank you.

As this is the last full council meeting before Christmas I will wish everyone a happy and healthy Christmas.

The council offices will be closed over the Christmas period, although our covid-19 helpline remains available on 01303 761116. For other out of hours emergency support the council can be contacted on 01303 221888".

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor McConville, stated that he shared the trepidation about Folkestone and Hythe being put in a higher tier than might be deserved based on COVID case numbers, but added that the pandemic would not be defeated in isolation. He stated that it was vital that support be given to neighbours with more serious health demands, and suggested a united approach in asking for government support for residents and businesses. The current measures were less than what was offered in the Spring. Without support from the government, many businesses would not survive the pandemic. He commended the success of the hubs, and confirmed it was a valuable service. He looked forward to seeing a long term sustainable model. He then wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

The Leader in reply stated that he endorsed neighbourly support.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,  
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

**RESOLVED:**

That the announcements of the Leader be noted.

**13. Opposition Business**

The Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor McConville, set out his Opposition Business which asked the council to sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge and to appoint a member as a 'mental health champion', and an officer to lead.

Proposed by Councillor McConville,  
Seconded by Councillor Meade, and

**RESOLVED:**

That Option (b) (Refer the issue to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as the case may be for their observations before deciding whether to make a decision on the issue) be agreed for the business below;

- To sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge run by Centre for Mental Health, Mental Health Foundation, AMHP, Mind, Rethink Mental Illness, Royal College of Psychiatrists and YoungMinds.
- We commit to appoint an elected member as 'mental health champion' across the council.
- We will seek to identify a member of staff within the council to act as 'lead officer' for mental health.

(Voting figures: 29 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

**14. Motions on Notice**

1. Councillor Miss Susan Carey, Conservative Group, set out her motion, which related to the council's Carbon Action Plan, as set out in the agenda.

Proposed by Councillor Miss Carey,  
Seconded by Councillor Hills;

**That the Council takes the following action:**

- That the Carbon Action Plan include commitments to adopt the following policies:
  - the Kent & Medway Energy & Low Emissions Strategy.
  - the Kent Biodiversity Strategy.
  - Kent's Plan Bee; and
  - an improved recycling target to benefit from the incentives in the new waste contract.
  - More opportunity for those in flats and houses in multiple occupation to recycle.

- That the plan considers:
  - a district version of the Climate Change Risk Assessment using the Climate Change Committee's methodology.
  - an Adaptation Plan to address the identified risks.
  - a 20% Biodiversity Net Gain policy for all new development in the district.
  - a 25% Biodiversity Net Gain policy for Otterpool Park.
  - Options for where the district can improve natural capital such as wildlife corridors, tiny forests, pocket parks etc.
  - Options for investment in renewable energy within the district.
  - Switching the council's vehicles to Low Emission Vehicles.
  - Increased enforcement against flytipping with more Op Assist interventions with Kent Police.
  
- That the council's action plan for Net Zero pays particular attention to how best to retrofit existing housing stock, that new housing is built to standards that do not require retrofitting to be carbon neutral and that ways are examined to improve air quality including an examination of the effects of bonfires and how these can be minimised.

Proposed by Councillor Whybrow,  
Seconded by Councillor Treloar; and

**RESOLVED:**

That the motion on notice be amended as follows:

That these suggestions be referred to the next meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group so that the Working Group can consider them and make recommendations to Cabinet.

Councillor Miss Carey, with the consent of Councillor Hills and the meeting, agreed to accept the amendment to form the substantive motion which was then open to debate and put to the vote.

(Voting figures: 29 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

2. Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee, Conservative Group, set out her motion, which proposed a review of the council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy, as set out in the agenda.

During the consideration of the motion, a Member lost connection, and the meeting was paused for three minutes to allow the Member to re-connect to the meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee

Seconded by Councillor Miss Carey; and

**RESOLVED:**

**That this Council reviews its current policies regarding the naming of new streets to allow more input from the local community and more discretion to be applied to the use of street, lane, way etc.**

(Voting figures: 19 for, 0 against, 10 abstentions).

**15. Update to the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme**

The report updated the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme for decisions which have occurred since the Council approved the budget on 19 February 2020. It also considers a proposal to provide loan funding met from prudential borrowing to Veolia Environmental Services Limited for the provision of the new fleet and equipment required for the new Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract. Changes to the Capital Programme are required to be submitted to full Council for consideration and approval. The Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee considered this report on 3 November 2020 and Cabinet agreed the report to be submitted to full Council for approval on 11 November 2020.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,  
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That report A/20/03 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme be updated for the changes outlined in section 2 of the report.**
- 3. That a budget of £4,052,000 in the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme be approved, to provide loan funding met from prudential borrowing to Veolia Environmental Services Limited for the provision of the fleet and equipment required for the new Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract.**

(Voting figures: 29 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

**16. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25**

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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. 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.

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Proposed by Councillor Monk,  
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That report A/20/04 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as appended to the report, be adopted.**

(Voting figures: 24 for, 0 against, 5 abstentions).