

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, 9th July, 2019

At the meeting of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council held at Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Tuesday, 9th July, 2019

Present: Her Worship the Mayor (Councillor Mrs J A Anderson), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor R V Roud), Cllr M C Base, Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr V M C Branson, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr C Brown, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr A E Clark, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr A P J Keeley, Cllr D Keers, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp, Cllr K King, Cllr Mrs C B Langridge, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr Mrs R F Lettington, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr P J Montague, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr L J O'Toole, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr J L Sergison, Cllr T B Shaw, Cllr N G Stapleton, Cllr K B Tanner, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr Miss G E Thomas, Cllr D Thornevell, Cllr F G Tombolis and Cllr C J Williams

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J L Botten, M O Davis, Mrs T Dean, N Foyle, S M Hammond, A Kennedy and D W King

PART 1 - PUBLIC

C 19/56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

However, Councillor T Bishop referred to agenda item 10 (Larkfield Leisure Centre Capital Schemes 2019/20 – Mechanical, Electrical and Roofing Work), which was referred from Cabinet (CB 19/41), and advised that he was a Board Member for the Leisure Trust.

C 19/57 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

C 19/58 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Reference was made to the recent sad death of Honorary Freeman and former Mayor Mrs Marion Cole and the Mayor paid tribute to her service

as a local councillor. The funeral would be held at St Peter and St Paul's Church, Aylesford on Thursday 25 July at noon. The service was open to everyone and the Mayor asked that those wishing to attend inform the Mayor's Office so that the family could have an idea of numbers.

The Mayor reported that since her inauguration at Annual Council she had attended a number of events. These included the Queen's Garden Party, Tonbridge Carnival, the Tonbridge Lions It's a Knockout event and the Tonbridge and Malling Cricket Festival. She was also pleased to report that the recent Civic Service had been well attended.

Upcoming activities and events included the Mayor's Garden Party, which would be held in the Memorial Garden at the Royal British Legion Village on Tuesday 23 July, and another Local Schools Debate was arranged for 11 October. Details of the Charity Quiz to be held around Christmas would follow in due course.

Finally, the Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Roger Roud) for attending many events on her behalf and commented that this had been an exceptionally busy period.

C 19/59 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.6

No questions were received from members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.6.

C 19/60 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.5

No questions were received from Members pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.5.

C 19/61 NOTICES OF MOTION SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 5.27

Consideration was given to a Notice of Motion pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 5.27 submitted jointly by Councillors N Heslop, M Coffin, R Betts, D Lettington, V Branson, M Base, F Tombolis and M Boughton in the following terms:

We believe that a sustainable low-carbon future is essential for our own sake, and that of future generations – and is needed urgently to avoid the dangers of runaway climate breakdown.

A recent report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that in order for us to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C, worldwide CO2 emissions need to decline by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050. This

target will allow us to support the international commitment to keep the planet's temperature rise below 1.5°C (above pre-industrial levels) as agreed under the Paris Agreement. We also note the recent Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services report on global species and habitat loss.

Further to this, Council resolves to:

- 1. Declare its recognition of global climate change and biodiversity emergencies;*
- 2. Consider how the Council can strengthen local protection and enhance protection of species, habitats and ecosystems under available powers;*
- 3. Review services and operations to ensure Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council has policies that support climate change mitigation, for example the provision of electric charging points across the borough, so that it is one of the most welcoming places in the country for driving electric and hybrid vehicles;*
- 4. Request an initial report is made to the Cabinet setting out how, in partnership with other agencies, the Council will be making positive contributions to combat climate change.*

Councillor N Heslop proposed, seconded by Councillor R Betts, an alteration adding text to point 4 of the original motion as follows;

'... and bring forward a revised draft Climate Change Strategy by May 2020 including deliverable performance indicators and an aspiration for Tonbridge and Malling to be carbon neutral by 2030.'

Members signified consent to this alteration.

A number of amendments to the substantive motion were proposed (as set out below).

- (1) It was proposed by Councillor F Hoskins and seconded by Councillor A Clark that the substantive motion include an additional point *'calling upon Westminster to provide the powers and resource to make the 2030 target possible'*.

Upon receipt of the necessary requisition under Council Procedure Rule No 8.4 voting on the amendment was recorded as follows:

Members voting for the proposed amendment to the motion:

Cllr T Bishop, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr A E Clark, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr W E Palmer,

Cllr R V Roud, Cllr T B Shaw, Cllr N G Stapleton, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr M Taylor and Cllr D Thornewell.

Total = 14

Members voting against the proposed amendment to the motion:

Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr M C Base, Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr V M C Branson, Cllr C Brown, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr A P J Keeley, Cllr D Keers, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp, Cllr K King, Cllr Mrs C B Langridge, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr Mrs R F Lettington, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr P J Montague, Cllr L J O'Toole, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr J L Sergison, Cllr K B Tanner, Cllr Miss G E Thomas, Cllr F G Tombolis and Cllr C J Williams

Total = 33

Members abstaining: None

RESOLVED: That the proposed amendment to the motion be rejected.

(2) It was proposed by Councillor F Hoskins and seconded by Councillor A Clark that the substantive motion include an additional point *'we will liaise with other governments (both local, national and international) to determine best practice methods to limit global warming to less than 1.5 degrees C'*.

Upon receipt of the necessary requisition under Council Procedure Rule No 8.4 voting on the amendment was recorded as follows:

Members voting for the proposed amendment to the motion:

Cllr T Bishop, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr A E Clark, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr T B Shaw, Cllr N G Stapleton, Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr M Taylor and Cllr D Thornewell.

Total = 14

Members voting against the proposed amendment to motion:

Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr M C Base, Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr V M C Branson, Cllr C Brown, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr A P J Keeley, Cllr D Keers, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp, Cllr K King, Cllr Mrs C B Langridge, Cllr J R S Lark, Cllr D Lettington,

Cllr Mrs R F Lettington, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr P J Montague,
Cllr L J O'Toole, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr J L Sergison,
Cllr K B Tanner, Cllr Miss G E Thomas, Cllr F G Tombolis and
Cllr C J Williams

Total = 33

Members abstaining: None

RESOLVED: That the proposed amendment to the motion be rejected.

Finally, the Leader of the Council advised that careful consideration had been given to the deadlines and it was felt that May 2020 was a realistic target given the significant amount of work to be undertaken and outcomes identified. Members were reassured that the Climate Change Strategy would be driven forward to meet this deadline.

Upon receipt of the necessary requisition under Council Procedure Rule No 8.4 voting on the Substantive Motion as proposed by Councillor N Heslop and seconded by Councillor R Betts was recorded as follows:

Members voting for the Substantive Motion:

Councillor Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr M C Base, Cllr Mrs P A Bates,
Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr V M C Branson,
Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr C Brown, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr A E Clark,
Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D J Cooper, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D A S Davis,
Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr F A Hoskins,
Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr A P J Keeley, Cllr D Keers, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp,
Cllr A Kennedy, Cllr K King, Cllr Mrs C B Langridge, Cllr J R S Lark,
Cllr D Lettington, Cllr Mrs R F Lettington, Cllr B J Luker,
Cllr P J Montague, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr L J O'Toole,
Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr R V Roud,
Cllr J L Sergison, Cllr T B Shaw, Cllr N G Stapleton, Cllr K B Tanner,
Cllr Mrs M Tatton, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr Miss G E Thomas,
Cllr D Thornevell, Cllr F G Tombolis and Cllr C J Williams

Total = 46

Members voting against the Substantive Motion:

Total = 0

Members abstaining:

Cllr T Bishop

RESOLVED: That the Notice of Motion (as amended) proposed by Councillor N Heslop and seconded by Councillor R Betts (set out below) be agreed:

1. The Borough Council's recognition of global climate change and biodiversity emergencies be declared;
2. Consideration be given to how the Borough Council can strengthen local protection and enhance protection of species, habitats and ecosystems under available powers;
3. Services and operations be reviewed to ensure Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council has policies that support climate change mitigation, for example the provision of electric charging points across the borough, so that it is one of the most welcoming places in the country for driving electric and hybrid vehicles;
4. An initial report be made to the Cabinet setting out how, in partnership with other agencies, the Council will be making positive contributions to combat climate change and a revised draft Climate Change Strategy brought forward by May 2020 including deliverable performance indicators and an aspiration for Tonbridge and Malling to be carbon neutral by 2030.

C 19/62 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

As this was the first full Council meeting since the local elections, the Leader welcomed the opportunity to record appreciation for the relatively smooth first few weeks for the newly elected Council. He had attended all the committee meetings, advisory boards and the majority of area planning committee meetings and had found the quality of scrutiny and debate to be of a high quality.

The Leader was pleased that the Motion on Climate Change had been adopted, so that crucially the Borough Council would review current activities for its contribution to improving the environment while considering additional measures.

Finance

Members were aware that in setting the budget for 2019/2010 in February, projections at that time suggested a funding gap between expenditure and income of circa £550,000. This 'gap' was translated into three savings and transformation contributions of £100,000, £400,000 and £50,000 to be achieved by the start of the year 2020/21, 2024/25 and 2028/29 respectively. Latest projections were that this had increased to over £600,000 highlighting why it was important to identify and implement opportunities to deliver at least this year's savings and transformation contribution of £100,000. The funding gap would undoubtedly change many times throughout the year and the challenge

sat alongside the cumulative savings of £2.5 million achieved since 2016 and the cumulative savings in excess of £4m achieved over the past 6-7 years.

The Leader advised that Cabinet recently reviewed both the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the Savings and Transformation Strategy (STS), with a view to identifying and considering opportunities for both income generation and savings in the medium term. The immediate task was to meet this year's saving tranche and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been tasked to review three areas: the community safety function, including CCTV provision and the role of the Community Safety Unit; Disabled Facilities Grants; and the Borough Council's Public Health Function.

As of 31 March 2019, the final collection rate for Council Tax, for the year 2018/19, was 98.91%; and for Business Rates, 99.42%. Once again, both of these collection rates were the highest in Kent.

The Borough Council had recently received two Geoplace Exemplar awards for local address data quality in 2019 and congratulations were extended to the officers in achieving this accolade. Both awards recognised quantifiable benefits to residents of the 'My Account' facility on the website. The judges also focussed on evidence of both savings delivered and collaboration across the Council for service delivery whilst meeting a clear user need.

Local Plan

Officers continued active dialogue with the Planning Inspectors regarding the submitted Local Plan and remained confident that all of the Inspectors' questions could be responded to. It was likely that there would be further engagement on some specific supplementary material over the summer and early autumn and as soon as this was agreed with the Inspectors Members would be updated.

Members were advised that a bid was made last November to the Government's Garden Communities Programme in respect of the proposed Borough Green Gardens Scheme that was included in the Local Plan. The outcome of a competitive bidding process was that Borough Green Gardens was one of 19 new garden villages announced in the programme.

This had resulted in an award of £150,000 to help fund the project and was a welcome acknowledgement of the opportunities that the new development would provide. While Borough Green Gardens could be delivered without any further financial assistance, the importance of the early delivery of the relief road and other important infrastructure had been emphasised throughout the plan making process. The Borough Council could now plan for the best possible development and looked forward to working with a range of partners to progress towards the

delivery of a sustainable community that benefited from high quality design and much needed investment in infrastructure, in a timely manner in parallel with the submitted Local Plan.

Waste Services Contract

The Leader reported that the new waste contract had started successfully and at future meetings of the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board, Members would receive performance updates against a range of performance indicators.

Subscriptions for the garden waste service were going extremely well with over 9000 residents signed up already and represented 55% of the annual target. This uptake had been helped by some creative marketing overseen by the Member Working Group, the latest example of which was bin hangers on every resident's bin reminding them to not miss out on the early bird discount that would close on 2 August.

The Borough Council was getting closer to the start of the commencement of the new service arrangements on 30 September, and the delivery of the garden waste bins would start in a couple of weeks with the food waste caddies being delivered to every household in the Borough in August.

Before the new service started every resident would receive an information booklet through the post to explain the new arrangements and the website would continue to be updated.

Housing

The Council's work with partner councils and organisations to engage with rough sleepers continued and a total of £250,000 had been received from central government to fund pilot programmes. The Borough Council was also actively working on the options for a night shelter and in the coming months it was hoped to formally launch the Severe Weather Action Protocol, which was trialled last winter and already had many partners involved.

Economic Regeneration

The Borough Council had now adopted a new Economic Regeneration Strategy for the period 2019-2023. The Strategy set out a vision which aimed to: "Maximise the unique strengths of the local area to help create a resilient, dynamic and inclusive economy that fosters sustainable growth in the Borough."

In order to achieve this, a number of key objectives, each underpinned by a number of activities had been identified: Planning for economic growth; obtaining funding for key infrastructure; supporting skills and work-readiness among school students; creating an environment that

supported local business; helping the town centres to become resilient during a time of change; promoting tourism and supporting the rural economy.

The Leader was pleased to have hosted a business networking event in Tonbridge last Wednesday for a number of small business owners from across the Borough. Similar events had been held last year in Tonbridge, Snodland and Kings Hill and it was intended to have a rolling programme of similar events across the Borough.

Since formally launching the New Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme to enhance the town and district centres at the end of March, a scheme supported by Business Rate Retention pilot, the Leader was pleased to report that 11 applications had now been approved equating to a total grant contribution of £29,000.

Members would have read that Hadlow College was placed in administration by the Secretary of State for Education and that West Kent and Ashford College was in financial difficulties. While this was an alarming position, both colleges remained open with no immediate impact on teaching staff and students.

The FE Commissioner had now invited expressions of interest for the management of both colleges which were currently being assessed and a decision as to the preferred bidder was expected within the next few weeks. The Chief Executive and the Leader had been invited by the FE Commissioner to speak to members of his team and make the case of the provision of further education in West Kent.

C 19/63 LARKFIELD LEISURE CENTRE CAPITAL SCHEMES 2019/20 - MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL AND ROOFING WORK

Item CB 19/41 referred from Cabinet minutes of 5 June 2019.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations at Minute CB 19/41 be approved.

C 19/64 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY UPDATE

Item GP 19/12 referred from General Purposes Committee minutes of 19 June 2019.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation at Minute GP 19/12 be approved.

C 19/65 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Central Services regarding the reappointment of Mrs M Heslop and the appointment of Mr D Cure as nominated trustees of the Petley and Deakins Almshouse

Charity Tonbridge. It was suggested that one Trustee be (re)appointed for two years initially and the other for four years to stagger the terms to ensure there was no period without a Council representative.

In addition, consideration was given to the appointment of nominated trustees of the Board of the Hospital of the Holy Trinity, Aylesford for a four year term to July 2023.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Mrs M Heslop be reappointed as a trustee of the Petley and Deakins Almshouse Charity for a period of two or four years;
- (2) Mr D Cure be appointed as a trustee of the Petley and Deakins Almshouse Charity for a period of two or four years; and
- (3) Councillors D Keers and C Williams be appointed as trustees to the Board of the Hospital of the Holy Trinity, Aylesford for a four year term

C 19/66 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

RESOLVED: That authority be given for the Common Seal of the Council to be affixed to any instrument to give effect to a decision of the Council incorporated into these Minutes and proceedings.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm