

# **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **COUNCIL MEETING**

**Tuesday, 12th July, 2016**

At the meeting of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council held at Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Tuesday, 12th July, 2016

**Present:** His Worship the Mayor (Councillor M R Rhodes), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor R W Dalton), Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr O C Baldock, Cllr M C Base, Cllr Mrs P A Bates, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr P F Bolt, Cllr J L Botten, Cllr V M C Branson, Cllr Mrs B A Brown, Cllr T I B Cannon, Cllr D J Cure, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr T Edmondston-Low, Cllr B T M Elks, Cllr Mrs S M Hall, Cllr S M Hammond, Cllr Mrs M F Heslop, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr S R J Jessel, Cllr D Keeley, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp, Cllr S M King, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr Mrs S L Luck, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr D Markham, Cllr P J Montague, Cllr Mrs A S Oakley, Cllr L J O'Toole, Cllr M Parry-Waller, Cllr S C Perry, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr R V Roud, Cllr Miss J L Sergison, Cllr T B Shaw, Cllr Miss S O Shrubsole, Cllr C P Smith, Cllr Ms S V Spence, Cllr A K Sullivan, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr F G Tombolis, Cllr B W Walker and Cllr T C Walker

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms J A Atkinson, M A C Balfour, Mrs S M Barker, M A Coffin, M O Davis, Mrs T Dean and R D Lancaster

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **C 16/49 MINUTE'S SILENCE**

Before the start of the meeting the Mayor invited the Council to observe a minute's silence in memory of Jo Cox MP who had been murdered while undertaking public office.

#### **C 16/50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **C 16/51 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**C 16/52 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that since the Annual Council meeting he had made visits to school fetes, plays and award ceremonies. Other memorable events included the Royal Garden Party, Tonbridge Lions It's a Knockout and the BBC Antiques Roadshow at Ightham Mote. He also commented on the successful Tonbridge and Snodland Carnivals, the Battle of Britain Memorial event and a visit with the Deputy Mayor to Porchlight in New Wharf Road, Tonbridge.

Members were reminded of the Mayor's forthcoming Garden Party at Hadlow College on 13 July and the Civic Service on 24 July. It was noted that the date of the Mayor's Quiz would need to change from 8 October and further details would follow in due course.

**C 16/53 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 16/54 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 16/55 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader referred to the election for the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union which had taken place since the last Council meeting. Both required a significant resource during the months of preparation, on the day itself and at the counts, involving 90 per cent of staff. He invited Members to join him in thanking the Chief Executive and those staff who worked on either or both exercises and, especially, to express appreciation to Richard Beesley. In the case of the referendum, if ensuring the smooth running of polling stations and the count was not enough, the severe weather warning received two days prior was an added complication. The Leader thanked Andy Edwards for taking charge of the Council's response to the significant weather situation and staff not on polling duty for ensuring as much business as usual was maintained.

The Leader commented that there was now certainty as to the name of the new Prime Minister and he wished Mrs May well as she took the helm. However, he reflected on the current time of political uncertainty and suggested that local government was best placed to maintain a degree of stability amongst the chaos of national government, being closest to the people and direct deliverers of services to them.

On the previous Friday the Leader had invited Chris Brodie, the Chairman of the South East Local Enterprise Council, to the Borough. Their tour had included a meeting at the East Malling Research Station and a walkabout of Tonbridge High Street. He was pleased to advise that the Council's bids to the third round of the Local Growth Fund were for improvements to the Leigh Flood Storage Area and the East Malling Research Station.

The Leader was grateful for the minute's silence for Jo Cox observed at the start of the meeting. He indicated that this authority had joined others in flying flags at half-mast over its buildings during the weekend after her brutal murder. He commented on living in a tolerant, diverse and accepting community and hoped that it might long remain so.

Members were reminded of the ongoing discussions with the County Council about seeking devolved powers across the County and in respect of a more joined up approach to delivering services across West Kent in partnership with Sevenoaks District Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The Leader reported that at a recent meeting of the Kent Council Leaders, there had been unanimous agreement that now was not the appropriate time for Kent and Medway to submit a devolution bid to the Government. Whilst a transfer of powers and freedoms from central to local government was considered highly desirable and might eventually bring great benefits to local residents, the current pressures on Government, not least from the need to focus upon EU exit negotiations, meant that devolution was unlikely to be a priority in the medium term. However, efforts would continue to build on the joint working and trusted relationships that had developed whilst working on the devolution agenda. In particular, joint working between clusters of authorities – for example in West Kent – would continue without any formal devolution agreement and would particularly focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of existing services.

The Leader then reflected on the numerous summer related activities throughout the Borough including school fetes, carnivals at Snodland and Tonbridge and, most recently, the very successful weekend of Music and Fireworks organised by the Tonbridge Arts Committee and particularly Andy Brett.

Finally, Members were informed that Councillor Martin Coffin, who had given his apologies for absence from the meeting, was celebrating his 30th wedding anniversary and the Leader was pleased to send congratulations to him and his wife Gillian.

## **C 16/56      EQUALITY POLICY STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES**

Item OS 16/13 referred from Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes of 14 June 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations at Minute OS 16/13 be approved.

**C 16/57 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY UPDATE**

Item GP 16/12 referred from General Purposes Committee minutes of 27 June 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations at Minute GP 16/12 be approved.

**C 16/58 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Item CB 16/48 referred from Cabinet minutes of 29 June 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations at Minute CB 16/48 be approved.

**C 16/59 TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE AND ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2015/16**

Item CB 16/49 referred from Cabinet minutes of 29 June 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations at Minute CB 16/49 be approved.

**C 16/60 MULTI-YEAR SETTLEMENT AND ASSOCIATED EFFICIENCY PLAN AND FLEXIBLE USE OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS STRATEGY**

Item CB 16/50 referred from Cabinet minutes of 29 June 2016

**RESOLVED:** That the recommendations at Minute CB 16/50 be approved.

**C 16/61 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 7.47 pm