

Folkestone Town Council



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AGENDA

Meeting: **Annual Assembly for the Town of Folkestone**
Date: **30 May 2017**
Time: **7.00 p.m.**
Place: **Town Council Offices, 1/2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone**

To: **All Folkestone Town Councillors**

YOU ARE HEREBY INVITED to attend the Annual Assembly for the town of Folkestone on the date and at the time and place shown above to transact the business shown on the agenda below. The meeting will be open to the press and public.

Cllr Roger West
Town Mayor

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of either personal or prejudicial interest that Members may wish to make.
3. **MINUTES**
Minutes of the Town Meeting of 5th April 2016 (attached).
4. **OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE TOWN MAYOR**
5. **BESTOWAL OF FOR MERIT AWARDS**
At the meeting of Folkestone Town Council on 16th March 2017 it was resolved:

To award Christine Pledger a For Merit award for services to communities and charities of Folkestone.

To award Rose Watson a For Merit award for over 60 years' service to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

6. QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS

To provide an opportunity for the Town's Electors to ask questions to elected representatives and visiting service personnel.

7. REPORTS BY KENT POLICE

Kent Police will provide an update on matters and issues affecting the Town.

8. REPORTS BY KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Kent Fire Service will provide an update on matters and issues affecting the Town.

9. TIMES AND DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS OF FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

27 July 2017 – Ordinary Full Council Meeting, Town Hall

29 May 2018 – (Provisional Town (Electors) Annual Assembly)

Folkestone Town Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting for the Parish and Town of Folkestone held at the Town Hall, Folkestone on Tuesday, 5 April 2016 at 7 p.m.

TOWN COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Emily Arnold, Ann Berry*, John Collier*, Peter Gane*, Claire Jeffrey*, Neil Jones, Mary Lawes, David Monk*, Carol Sacre*, Martin Salmon, Richard Theobald, Sue Wallace*, Richard Wallace, Pat West and Roger West.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Frank McKenna, Rory Love. Councillors marked with * are Town and District Councillors

KENT COUNTY COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Frank McKenna, Hod Birkby and Bob Neaves.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS: Inspector Kevin Stephens - Folkestone Police, Russel Jordon, Group Manager – Kent Fire and Rescue, Chris Longfield – Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance and 16 Folkestone Electors.

IN ATTENDANCE: Jennifer Childs - Town Clerk, Ian Bishop - Town Sergeant, Georgina Wilson – Administrative Officer.

ABSENT: Councillors Brian Copping

Prayers

Prayers were led by the Mayors Chaplain, Father Stephen Bould.

1287. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Danny Brook and Rodica Wheeler.

1288. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

1289. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Town Meeting held on 26 May 2015 previously agreed and adopted were noted.

1290. OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE TOWN MAYOR

The Town Mayor welcomed Councillors, electors and guests to the meeting held in accordance with the requirements of Section 9(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for making this year so enjoyable. Personal thanks were directed to Kent Police on a personal matter. The Mayor reported that Bill Hewson, a For Merit recipient was unfortunately not able to attend the

meeting due to ill health but was keen to report on the current successes of Folkestone Invicta FC – with the team now being promoted and also to report that they now have 24 fully qualified coaches and 25 youth teams (both boys and girls). There are also over 350 youngsters being coached at Folkestone Hockey Club and over 350 being coached at Folkestone Cricket Club too. Bill expressed that it is his ambition in life to see youngsters involved in sport and wanted his best wishes conveyed to the Town Mayor and guests at tonight's meeting.

The Mayor reported that Mr Hewson will be celebrating his 95th birthday soon and wished to send the Town Council's best wishes and hope he recovers quickly.

1291. TOWN MAYOR'S CHARITY

The Town Mayor reported that the Strictly Come Dancing event on 24th April would be a major fundraising event coming, so cheques could be presented at a later date when total funds raised had been calculated.

1292. OPEN FORUM AND QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS

The Town Mayor opened the meeting with questions from the Folkestone electors.

Mr Bryan Rylands asked about Folkestone Town Council being in a contract with the Folkestone Town Centre Management when they are only registered to work in Thanet, this is a misrepresentation and FTC should sue Town Centre Management to recoup the funding. This relates to the Companies Act, Section 16.

The Town Mayor responded that we do not have any contracts with Town Centre Management, and all funding has been ceased.

Councillor Gane recommended referring the issue to the Finance and General Purposes Committee discuss whether to look into this issue further.

Mr James Kitson asked a question that he had asked at the previous Council meeting around the possibility that if we come out of the EU the migrant camps in Calais will move to Folkestone. He also wanted to ask the Police representative about how many prosecutions had there been for issues such as noisy cars and motorbikes, dog fouling and cyclists on pavements.

Inspector Kevin Stephens answered that there had been no prosecutions for these issues in Folkestone, there are other priorities for the Police to be focussing on with a reduced number of Police Officers due to the budget cuts.

Some Councillors commented that whilst they thank Mr Kitson for attending public meetings, both at the Town Council and District Council, and asking questions, he seems very negative about the town. Councillors reported on some of the good things happening around Folkestone. Mr Kitson was advised to ask

more specific questions about issues that the Town Council are actually responsible for and to be more constructive in the future.

Mr Etienne De Jager and his partner moved from London to Foord Road South, Folkestone and initially were very pleased with their decision. Unfortunately they have experienced a lot of antisocial behaviour in the road they live, including dog fouling, arson, noise and drug dealing. These issues were reported through the correct channels and logs etc have been kept, emails have been sent to Councillors, Police and District Council, roughly three per month. A year on, no progress has been made on any of these issues; CCTV has been installed by 3 residents. In the past year, there have been 4 vehicles set alight; these cars are then left in the street for long periods of time before being removed. Police response for an incident of being threatened within the home was very slow, at other times no Police Officers have attended at all; they have been in communication with the PCSOs. Also have been in correspondence with Cllr David Monk, but the last letter they received was to say that all the issues have been dealt with.

Inspector Kevin Stephens responded that the Police have been through a radical change with the cut backs, they have lost 500 Police Officers with almost 1,000 civilian roles being lost also. There are 88 uniformed Police Officers allocated to the district, this covers Lydd to Elham/Stelling Minis and all the Towns in between. Of these Officers it breaks down to around 14 Police Officers (but can go down to 10) per shift which means they have to prioritise. On an average day, the switchboards for Kent Police receive 1,400 calls per day. Inspector Stephens apologised if anyone felt that they did not receive an appropriate response.

Russel Jordan of the Kent Fire and Rescue confirmed that they had attended arson reports in this area. Kent Fire and Rescue work in partnership with the Police to provide a visual deterrent to people carrying out these kinds of crime. A fire engine will be driven through this area at various times to help try to prevent any more arson attacks.

Mr De Jager reported that the Fire Services' response times have been very good, and they went beyond their call of duty by knocking on some resident's doors to check everything was ok after attending an arson incident. There is also drug dealing going on in the open which has been reported but never investigated.

Inspector Stephens responded that not every incident can be investigated. Kent Police are working on reducing the drug problem within the area by focussing on gangs travelling from London to Folkestone. Inspector Stephens will contact Mr De Jager after the meeting and arrange to visit the residents personally to discuss these issues.

Mr and Mrs Brooker of Foord Road South have also experienced the same antisocial behaviour and have been disappointed with the response from the Police and other services.

Councillor David Monk wanted to clarify that he receives a lot of correspondence from residents and does try to respond to each one, this means passing them on to other relevant people who investigate issues and report back to him. He promised to look into this issue again.

Councillor Peter Gane reported that residents have experienced antisocial behaviour in other areas, there needs to be a public forum where residents can report these issues directly to PCSOs. Through a lot of good work with PCSOs and Giles Barnard at the District Council things can be improved.

Mr Brooker felt that with the building of the new skate park in Dover Road, this could potentially lead to more problems in the area and felt the Police/PCSOs should be looking into this now.

Mr Richard Knight asked about the market traders, specifically around prices of the pitches, they are high compared to other areas and also around parking and toilet facilities, there is no suitable place to park vans etc at present and most public facilities are closed. Mr Knight asked if it would be possible for market traders to purchase scratch cards to enable them to park in the E zone close to the market.

Councillor David Monk responded that there is currently a review on whether it is beneficial to have a market in the town. The price is comparable with Canterbury. This situation will change next year when retailers will not have to pay business rates which are far in excess of anything the market traders have to pay. With regards to parking, he will look into the possibility of market traders purchasing the scratch cards, this may affect residents in the area, but Cllr Monk will look into this further. A lot of work has been going on behind the scenes to put together a report on the current market situation.

1293. REPORTS BY KENT POLICE

Inspector Kevin Stephens reported that with all the cuts going on, all Police Officers give 110% each and every shift they work and do their very best for the people they are serving. They have priorities which cover a whole host of issues from things such as child abuse to trafficking and they also prioritise vulnerabilities, threat, risk and harm. Members of the public need to report any kind of crime or antisocial behaviour as this leads to more resources in the long run.

Councillor Sue Wallace asked if East Folkestone would be getting a new PCSO after the last one left, she had been told that they would not be getting a named PCSO for this area.

Inspector Stephens responded that there are three PCSOs that cover this area; all the details are on the website. He also went on to explain that Police Officers are moved from areas if they are needed in other areas, such as the riots in Dover.

Folkestone is considered to be a quieter part of the area when compared to others such as Thanet.

Councillor Carol Sacre asked in an ideal world, how many officers the police would need to meet current demand.

Inspector Stephens responded that ideally 30 a shift would suffice.

Councillor Claire Jeffrey wanted to comment that she feels the Police do a fantastic job in the circumstances. East Folkestone work closely with the Community Safety staff and Antisocial Behaviour Manager, as well as local PCSOs to reduce this kind of behaviour in the East Folkestone area.

1294. REPORTS BY KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Russel Jordan, Group Manager reported that they are also under pressure financially and there will be changes to the service, but they will not impact at local level. As of January 2017 they will be using a different crewing model, but no change will be noticed by the public. The figures they have relate to Folkestone and Hythe; 188 fires in the year with 64 deliberate and 124 accidental, most of which relate to cooking fires, with no fatalities. There have been 42 road traffic collisions within the past year with 1 fatality. Their priorities this year will be to target cooking related fires and road traffic collisions, deliberate grass land fires and chimney fires, specific campaigns will be running throughout the year focussing on these issues. They have recently had a couple of training exercises and have been proactively working with businesses on the harbour arm.

Councillor Mary Lawes asked about road traffic incidents on the A259 and also home safety with the large number of flats and bedsits in the area.

Russel Jordan responded that they are aware of the incidents on the A259, there are a significant number for the size of the road, but still a small number in comparison to other areas, but they are working to target specific groups to reduce this number. With regard to the home safety visits, the procedure has changed slightly recently, members of the public have to apply to receive a visit, if you are vulnerable, elderly, disabled or have young children you will qualify for a visit as resources have to be targeted.

1295. REPORT BY KENT, SURREY AND SUSSEX AIR AMBULANCE

Chris Longfield gave a report on the work of the Air Ambulance since their inception in 1990, there are now 18 Air Ambulance Trust's covering the country. Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance have attended 593 missions already this year, which equates to approx. 6 per day. From their bases they can reach anywhere in Kent within 20 minutes and never more than 30 minutes flying time away from a specialist trauma centre in London. The new helicopter has been delivered and fitted out and is currently being used to train the crews before being operational later this month. From September 2013 the air ambulance has been available 24 hours a day. The operational costs for this service are just under

£7million per year, they receive no Government funding and are completely funded by public donations, every year they reach their targets and more which is thanks to the generosity of the public.

Councillors afforded a round of applause to the Air Ambulance Service.

1296. REPORTS BY SHEPWAY DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (FOLKESTONE AREA)

Councillor Frank McKenna – East Folkestone and KCC Folkestone North East – A lot of the work in this area had been assisted by Nick Adams who very sadly passed away recently. Requested support for the Closure Order for Small Pox Hill to reduce the fly tipping in this area, which will be enforced through signage and droppable bollards. There are issues with flooding at the Wood Avenue Library, initial estimates on costs have been around £40-50,000, and further details are awaited. Nick Adams had championed the use of Speed Watch equipment and Cllr McKenna helped fund new equipment. The number of trees being removed in the area is alarming, it is KCCs policy not to replace trees, Cllr McKenna has earmarked £10,000 funding for replacement of trees and hoped that the Town Council and District Council would match fund.

The Town Mayor responded that Nick Adams had initially used the Speed Watch equipment that Folkestone Town Council own until he had the funding to purchase equipment for the use in Folkestone East. The Town Council have a tree budget of £10,000 and have funded trees for a number of years and Council are supportive of any initiatives that reduces fly tipping and antisocial behaviour.

Councillor Rory Love – Sandgate and West Folkestone – Only a small part of Cllr Love's ward is in Folkestone, but he is proud of the area and feels it is on the up. Last year Cllr Love reported on the issue of pedestrian access to a residential area on the border of Folkestone and Sandgate, this is still ongoing but should be resolved soon. Also trying to tackle the irresponsible parking in Bathurst Road during the school run times, a yellow line will be painted and it is hoped this will help tackle the issue, enforcement is essential.

Councillor Peter Gane – Cheriton – There has been two big clean up events in Cheriton which were very well attended; these were arranged in conjunction with Giles Barnard and his team at the District Council. Shorncliffe development has started and is already causing disruption on the roads. Cheriton were very happy with the Christmas lights and the switch on event, and are hopeful this will continue every year.

Councillor Claire Jeffrey – East Folkestone – Very sad to have lost Nick Adams, he worked very hard, the local PCSO is taking on a lot of the work he carried out until a replacement is found by the end of the year. Castle Hill School have now taken over the running of The Village Nursery. Controlled parking zones in East Folkestone are being looked into, it's important to get this right.

1297. REPORTS BY KENT COUNTY COUNCILLORS (FOLKESTONE AREA)

Councillor Hod Birkby – Folkestone West – Reported that KCC has had to slash its budget and is just about managing to provide the services the county needs, these cuts will continue for the next 4 years. The street lights are being switched back on in residential areas, Folkestone is scheduled for 8th June to 4th July. LED bulbs are replacing the old bulbs and this should pay for itself within 8 years. Biggins Wood Road and The Leas now have 20 MPH speed limits in place.

Councillor Bob Neaves – Folkestone South – Reported on the issue of unaccompanied asylum children coming into the town. Organised traffickers are known to be targeting vulnerable children in the area and getting them involved in crime. There are many things to be positive about in Folkestone, including the planning permission for work to start on the seafront.

1298. TIMES AND DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS OF FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

11 April 2017 (Provisional Town (Electors) Annual Assembly)

28 July 2016 (Full Council Meeting)

The Meeting concluded at 9.15pm.

MAS

.....Town Mayor

28 July 2016