

Folkestone Town Council

MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Folkestone on Thursday, 10th January 2019 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Ann Berry – Town Mayor (in the Chair)

Councillors Emily Arnold, John Collier, Peter Gane, Claire Jeffrey, Neil Jones, Mary Lawes, Jacqui Meade, Martin Salmon, Richard Theobald, Sue Wallace, Richard Wallace, Rodica Wheeler, Pat West and Roger West.

In attendance: Jennifer Childs (Town Clerk) and Georgina Wilson (Admin Officer)

1551. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Danny Brook, David Monk and Carol Sacre.

1552. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Ann Berry and Claire Jeffrey declared a personal interest in item 14, Step Short Arch as they are members of Step Short.

1553. MINUTES

The Council was asked to receive the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Council Meeting held on 11th October 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Council Meeting held on 11th October 2018 be received.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded: Councillor Roger West
Voting: F:14, Ag:0, Ab:0

1554. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Public questions had been received from Mr Mouland and Dr J Charlesworth.

Mr Mouland read out his question which related to Councillors buying a tree with their Ward Grants to improve the local area. The Town Clerk responded that Councillor Richard Wallace had contributed £1000 from his ward grant to purchase new trees.

Dr J Charlesworth asked for details on the cost of the Christmas Switch On Event and Fireworks. The Town Clerk responded that £10,000 was budgeted for the event with £2,500 for the fireworks. More detailed costings will be sent to Dr Charlesworth after the meeting.

1555. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCOUNCEMENTS

Having attended approximately 46 engagements since the last meeting, the Town Mayor reported on the following:

- The Big Sleep Out

- Opening of two new shops in Guildhall Street
- Weekly visit to Academy FM
- Folkestone Nepalese Dashain
- Relaunch of Age UK
- Remembrance Service and Dedication
- Royal Artillery Roll Call
- Machine Gun Corps
- Battles Over Commemorations - Piper on the Leas and the Beacons Alight
- Girl Guiding Concert
- Charity Event at Folkestone College
- Christmas Light Switch ons
- Year 6 Christmas Concert
- Many local Carol Services including CHARA, Dover College, New Romney
- Sea Cadets Awards Night
- Boxing Day Dip

The Town Mayor gave thanks to all the contractors, staff and Councillors who worked to ensure that all these significant events went ahead.

1556. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Planning Committee moved that the Council receive the Minutes of the Planning Committee's meetings of 30th August, 20th September, 11th October, 1st & 22nd November 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Planning Committee's meetings of 30th August, 20th September, 11th October, 1st & 22nd November 2018 be received and adopted.

Proposed: Councillor Richard Theobald

Seconded: Councillor Jacqui Meade

Voting: F:14, Ag:0, Ab: 0

1557. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee moved that the Council receive the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee's meeting of 23rd August & 18th October 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee's meeting of 23rd August & 18th October 2018 be received and adopted.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane

Seconded: Councillor Neil Jones

Voting: F:13, Ag:0, Ab: 1

1558. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Community Services Committee moved that the Council receive the Minutes of the Community Services Committee's meeting of 7th August & 2nd October 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting of 7th August and 2nd October 2018 be received and adopted.

Proposed: Councillor Roger West
Seconded: Councillor John Collier
Voting: F:14, Ag:0, Ab: 0

1559. MINUTES OF THE GRANTS COMMITTEE

The Vice Chairman of the Grants Committee moved that the Council receive the Minutes of the Grants Committee's meeting of 16th August 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Grants Committee meeting of 16th August 2018 be received and adopted.

Proposed: Councillor Rodica Wheeler
Seconded: Councillor Pat West
Voting: F:14, Ag:0, Ab: 0

1560. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019/20

RESOLVED: To approve the schedule of meetings for the municipal year 2019/20.

Proposed: Councillor Roger West
Seconded: Councillor Pat West
Voting: F: 14, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1561. FTC/FHDC PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Town Clerk reported on a recent Working Group with the District Council following a resolution from the Grants Committee with regards to the Town Sprucer and facilities within the Town;

A new scheme has been set up called 'See it, Own it, Do it+run by Giles Barnard, where Councillors can report issues, such as graffiti, fly tipping etc, directly to Mr Barnard who then directs the team. So far, the scheme has been very well received. They are also looking at getting seagull proof rubbish bags. There were discussions on public toilet provision at Bouverie Place as the requirement for Bouverie Place to provide public toilets has now ended, the District Council were considering taking on the toilets themselves. There was also discussion around the roles of all the different groups involved in the town and the market place. A schedule is being drawn up to meet every three months. The Town Clerk will continue to update the Council after these meetings.

Councillor Martin Salmon requested copies of these Working Group minutes to be circulated to all Councillors for information. He also felt more needs to

be done about the charity workers and %chuggers+who work in the town. The Town Centre Management receive payment for allowing these workers in the town who, some feel, are harassing people and putting people off from coming into the town area. Cllr Salmon urged twin hatted Councillors who sit on the Cabinet at the District Council to take this issue forward to try to improve the situation.

There was general agreement that there needs to be more coordination between all the groups involved in managing the town. Councillor Ann Berry confirmed she would be bringing these issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

1562. FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2019/20

Councillor Mary Lawes expressed disappointment that the precept had increased and that this would be difficult for low income families. Also, the District Council deal with investment money on the Town Council's behalf and receive a small percentage in exchange, Cllr Lawes questioned why the Town Council let this happen and not do it inhouse and invest the money in buying properties around the town.

There was discussion around these points, and it was clarified that the precept is increasing by 0.4% if the precept wasn't raised then services would have to be cut. The Town Council's precept had been kept at a low level and when there was no need to increase, it hadn't been increased. The Town Council now have a Museum to run and are responsible for CCTV among other services. The Town Council could take back responsibility from the District Council for investing its own money but that would have staffing implications and there is a risk with investing money in property etc. It was recommended that Cllr Lawes read through the Town Councils Treasury Management Policy.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/19/242**
- 2. To approve the Town Council's budget for 2019/20 as set out in the Appendix attached to report C/19/242**
- 3. To confirm the Precept for 2019/20 in accordance with the provisions in Sections 39, 41 and 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 of £807,860**
- 4. To authorise the Town Mayor to sign the Precept demand on the District Council.**

Proposed: Councillor Richard Theobald

Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane

Voting: F:12, Ag:1, Ab:1

1563. COASTAL COMMUNITIES FUND ROUND 5

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council have been invited to apply for round 2 of the Coastal Communities Fund for improvements in the Town, worth circa £1.5 million. The application is due in by 21st January and a meeting has been arranged for shortly before this date to allow Councillors to view the submission prior to the deadline. Some of the improvements in the

town would be around The Stade area, the Leas Lift, a Land Train. We should receive a response by the end of March for the money to be spent from April over a period of two years.

Councillors thanked the Town Clerk for her work on this project.

1564. STEP SHORT ARCH

Councillor Ann Berry declared a personal interest and left the meeting. The Town Clerk reported that a request had been received from Damian Collins MP for the Town Council to take ownership of the Step Short Arch. Step Short have now ceased operating as the project they were set up to carry out has been completed. If Councillors wanted to take ownership of the Arch, agreement needed to be reached by June 2019 to tie in with the anniversary of the signing of the treaty of Versailles. Costs of maintaining the Arch have been estimated at £1500 per year for cleaning and insurance. There was a query regarding how long the Arch would last before it needed significant structural work. It was suggested that if Town Council agree to take ownership of the Arch, any monies left over after Step Short disbanded should be handed over to the Town Council.

There was then further discussion around Damian Collins MP withdrawing his support, once Step Short had ceased, to the Arch. It was felt that all the time Damian Collins is an MP he should help to support the costs of the Arch as he had been involved in setting up Step Short to carry out this project. Councillors felt it should not be a financial burden on the residents of Folkestone.

The terms should be the same as the terms the Town Council took on responsibility for the Gurkha Memorial, i.e. the Town Council is responsible for insurance and maintenance but do not organise or fund any events for the memorial and any legal fees are covered by the transferrer.

Representatives from Step Short responded to some of the queries from Councillors by confirming the steel has a guarantee of 200 years. The running costs are very low, cleaning once a month and replacing lightbulbs as necessary. They were not able to give any indication on whether there would be any funding left once they had ceased or if they were able to transfer charity money to the Town Council, but they would be speaking with their Accountant with regards to this.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk proceeds with negotiations, making use of external legal advice to look at taking ownership of the Arch and investigate further if there would be any money transferred along with the Arch and report back to the March Council meeting.

Proposed: Councillor John Collier

Seconded: Councillor Roger West

Voting: F: 12, Ag: 1, Ab: 1

Councillor Ann Berry returned to the meeting.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The press and public are to be excluded for the remainder of the meeting under Section 1, sub-section 2, of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

Proposed: Councillor Ann Berry
Seconded: Councillor Emily Arnold
Voting: F: 14, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1565. CITIZENSHIP AWARDS

RESOLVED: To arrange a meeting of the Citizenship Awards Panel and refer this back to them for further discussion.

Proposed: Councillor John Collier
Seconded: Councillor Emily Arnold
Voting: F: 14, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

It was requested that in future only the names of people put forward for awards are given to the Council and not a copy of the minutes of the Citizenship Awards Panel itself.

1566. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

Ordinary Council Meeting . Thursday 14th March 2019

The meeting ended at 8.02pm.

.....Town Mayor
14th March 2019