

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE ON WEDNESDAY 17 JULY 2019

Present: Councillor Mrs Ring (The Mayor) and Councillors Adkinson, Bartlett, Mrs Blackmore, Brice, Brindle, D Burton, M Burton, Chappell-Tay, Clark, Cox, Cuming, Daley, Fermor, Fissenden, Fort, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Harper, Harvey, Hastie, Hinder, Mrs Hinder, Mrs Joy, Khadka, Kimmance, Lewins, McKay, McLoughlin, Mortimer, Munford, Naghi, Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Powell, Purle, Mrs Robertson, D Rose, M Rose, Round, Spooner, Vizzard, Webb, de Wiggondene-Sheppard and Young

24. MINUTE'S SILENCE

The Council stood in silence for one minute in memory of Mr Brian Mortimer, a former Member of the Borough Council and Mayor of the Borough of Maidstone, who passed away in May.

25. PRAYERS

Prayers were said by the Reverend Ian Parrish.

26. RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

Councillor D Burton reserved his right to record the proceedings.

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Garland, Mrs Grigg, Harwood, Newton, J Sams, T Sams, Springett and Wilby.

28. DISPENSATIONS

There were no applications for dispensations.

29. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The representative of the Head of Legal Partnership advised the Council that there was no requirement under the Councillors' Code of Conduct for Members to disclose an interest in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel relating to the Members' Allowances Scheme. Members' Allowances was defined in the Code as an "Authority Function" and there was no requirement under the Code for Members to disclose an interest when an "Authority Function" was being discussed.

There were no disclosures of interest by Members or Officers.

30. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

31. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

32. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 18 MAY 2019

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council held on 18 May 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

33. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor updated Members on recent and forthcoming engagements and thanked them for their support.

The Mayor and Councillors Cox, Mrs Gooch, McKay, Perry and Powell, on behalf of their respective Political Groups, paid tribute to Mr Brian Mortimer who had passed away in May.

34. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

35. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

36. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TO THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

Question to the Chairman of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee

Councillor Hinder asked the following question of the Chairman of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee:

Each year on Armistice day the County town of Maidstone like hundreds of other towns, villages and cities throughout the country pauses and unites to remember the fallen from two world conflicts and numerous other conflicts that have occurred throughout the world.

This takes place at present at the memorial site alongside Tonbridge Road.

In order for this commemoration to take place at present it necessitates many staffing costs taking out various traffic orders, the manning of barriers at road closures on key junctions which brings traffic to a standstill and further increases of pollution levels from idling engines.

Would it not benefit all if the War Memorial were moved to Remembrance Square which I believe was renamed to accommodate this? I believe that this would be of great benefit to the town, residents and motorists to avoid bringing the town to a standstill.

Can the Chairman of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee tell me what the current costs are for this commemoration and if any proposals exist for the War Memorial to be moved to a more fitting location?

The Chairman of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee responded to the question.

Councillor Hinder did not wish to ask a supplementary question of the Chairman of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee on the subject of the original question.

Note: Councillor Hastie entered the meeting after consideration of this item (6.50 p.m.).

37. CURRENT ISSUES - REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, RESPONSE OF THE GROUP LEADERS AND QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councillor Cox, the Leader of the Council, submitted his report on current issues.

After the Leader of the Council had submitted his report, Councillor Perry, the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Mrs Gooch, the Leader of the Independent Group, Councillor McKay, the Leader of the Labour Group, and Councillor Powell, the Leader of the Independent Maidstone Group, responded to the issues raised.

A number of Members then asked questions of the Leader of the Council on the issues raised in his speech.

38. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL HELD ON 24 AND 25 APRIL 2019 - MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Cox, that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel relating to the Members' Allowances Scheme be approved.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 22.4, five Members requested that a named vote be taken. The voting was as follows:

FOR (20)

Councillors Adkinson, Clark, Cox, Daley, Fissenden, Mrs Gooch, Harper, Harvey, Mrs Joy, Khadka, Kimmance, Lewins, McKay, Mortimer, Munford, Naghi, Mrs Robertson, M Rose, Vizzard and Webb.

AGAINST (24)

Councillors Bartlett, Mrs Blackmore, Brice, Brindle, D Burton, M Burton, Chappell-Tay, Cuming, Fermor, Fort, Hastie, Hinder, Mrs Hinder, McLoughlin, Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Powell, Purle, Mrs Ring, D Rose, Round, Spooner, de Wiggondene-Sheppard and Young

ABSTAINED (1)

Councillor Garten

MOTION NOT CARRIED

The Chief Executive advised the Council that since the motion was not carried, the current arrangements would remain in place.

39. REPORT OF THE DEMOCRACY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE -
AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - SELECTION
PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF NON-VOTING PARISH COUNCIL
REPRESENTATIVES

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Gooch, seconded by Councillor Webb, that the recommendations of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee relating to the introduction of a selection process for the appointment of non-voting Parish Council representatives to serve on the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee be approved.

RESOLVED:

1. That if more than one candidate is nominated by Parish Councils to fill a vacancy in the office of non-voting Parish Council representative on the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, the selection process outlined below be followed culminating in a recommendation being made to the Council:

*Completion of an expression of interest form by each candidate in support of their nomination; and
Interview by the Democracy and General Purposes Committee if appropriate.*

2. That to facilitate this process, the following changes to the Constitution be agreed:

Part 2 – Responsibility for Functions

Section 2.2.9 – Democracy and General Purposes Committee

FUNCTIONS	DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS
6. To be responsible for the appointment of independent persons to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Councillors' Allowances.	N/A
6. Consider applications from persons wishing to act as Independent Persons in connection with Councillor and Statutory Officer conduct; and for the Independent Remuneration Panel and make recommendations to Council to appoint such persons.	N/A
7. In the event of more than one candidate being nominated by Parish Councils to fill a vacancy in the office of non-voting Parish Council representative on the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, to consider expressions of interest in support of the nominations, and make a recommendation to Council as to the person to be appointed. <i>Subsequent paragraphs to be renumbered</i>	N/A

40. ORAL REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 JULY 2019

There was no report from the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee on this occasion.

41. ORAL REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 JULY 2019

There was no report from the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee on this occasion.

42. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN PUBLIC REPORT

It was moved by Councillor Cox, seconded by Councillor Hastie, that the recommendation contained in the report of the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance relating to the public report issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman following an investigation into a complaint from a local resident regarding the Housing Service be approved.

It was noted that the report had found fault with the Council's actions and set out a number of actions that had since been implemented.

RESOLVED: That the report and findings made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman be accepted and that the actions that have been taken by the Council be noted.

43. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The Mayor advised the Council that she understood that the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group also wished to make a change to the membership of Committees by adding Councillor Wilby as a Substitute Member of the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee.

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor D Rose, that the wishes of the Leader of the Conservative Group and the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group with regard to the membership of Committees be accepted.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following changes be approved to reflect the wishes of the Leader of the Conservative Group:

Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

Delete Councillor Bartlett as a Member of the Committee and add Councillor Brindle

Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee

Delete Councillor Cuming as a Member of the Committee and add Councillor Bartlett

Planning Committee

Add Councillor Brindle as a Substitute Member of the Committee

2. That the following changes be approved to reflect the wishes of the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group:

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee

Add Councillor Wilby as a Substitute Member of the Committee

44. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.05 p.m.