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## EXECUTIVE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne on Wednesday 29th March 2006 from 7:00 pm to 8:17 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Bowles (Chairman), Councillor Gerry Lewin (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Martin Goodhew, Jordan and John Wright.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Messrs Bilsborough, Buckett, Radford, Russell and Spiers.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Bobbin and Mike Brown.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Christine Coles, Mike Cosgrove and David Simmons.

**832** **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th February 2006 (Minute Nos. 715 - 738) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**833** **MEMBERSHIP OF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman reported that under Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2212 - Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2001, Councillor Chris Boden was no longer a Member of the Executive and the Portfolio of Assets, Contracts and Policy Development would be left vacant until the Annual Council Meeting on 16th May 2006.

**834** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

**PART A MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**

**835** **TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS FOR 2006/07**

The Chairman introduced the report, which asked the Executive to consider the draft timetable of meetings for the Municipal Year 2006/07, so that any changes could be made before it was submitted to the Annual Council Meeting on 16th May 2006 for approval.

A Member suggested that, following the lengthy Annual Council meeting last year, the Council revert to the original concept of holding separate meetings for the Mayor Making Ceremony, followed by a meeting of Full Council, with a break for the usual refreshments in between. Members expressed support for this suggestion and the Chairman requested that Democratic Services include a request on the next Despatch Letter for Members to leave free the evening of 17th May 2006, in case the Council Meeting needed to conclude its business on the next evening.

• DSO

A Member also made reference to Member Briefings and expressed his disappointment at the low attendance levels experienced. The Chairman stated that the only method to ensure that Members attended briefings was through the party system.

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The Director of Corporate Services, Governance and Scrutiny noted that via the newly formed Member Development Working Group, a desire to have briefings on more specified subjects had been expressed. Under the South East Members Development Charter, it was both the Council's and Members' responsibility to ensure that Members were fully trained and well-informed.

The Chief Executive suggested that Member Briefing subjects must be attractive and relevant to Members and that Swale Borough Council's (SBC) new Communications Manager should take a role in publicising briefings.

Members discussed these suggestions, also noting that briefings should not be arranged for the day after a Council or Executive meeting.

**Recommended:**

***(1) That the Timetable of Meetings for 2006/07 be approved, with the following alterations:***

***(i) That the Member Briefing scheduled for 17th May 2006 be cancelled to allow for the conclusion of business from the Council Meeting if required.***

***(ii) That in future, Member Briefings are not arranged for dates immediately following meetings of Council or Executive and that those on the Timetable which fall into this category be rescheduled.***

***(iii) That no Member Briefings be held in the month of December.***

• DESM

**836 REPORT FROM CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

The Chairman of the Community Safety Scrutiny Panel submitted his report, which updated Members on problems arising from the Council's role in enforcing breaches of licensing conditions and the relationship with the Police when any need for action arose.

The Executive Member for Community Safety thanked the Chairman of the Community Safety Scrutiny Panel and the Members of the Panel for their work on this subject. He highlighted that Management Team had undertaken to investigate the matters raised in the report.

The Director of Corporate Services, Governance and Scrutiny and the Director of Development, Environment and Technical Services highlighted that they had commissioned an internal review of the licensing enforcement system. This would enable decisions to be taken over how to utilise resources to deliver the best possible service.

• MT  
• HES  
• BS

**Recommended:**

***(1) That the Executive thank the Panel for their work and note all the recommendations.***

***(2) That procedures be revisited to properly reflect the new roles and accountabilities of the Police and Swale Borough Council with regard to***

*licensing enforcement.*

*(3) That the flowchart accompanying the report, which highlighted agreed current practise to administer 'Multi Agency Licensing Enforcement', be circulated with the caveat that this is subject to ongoing review.*

*(4) That a scheme whereby Members are informed of applications within their Wards be introduced.*

**837 UPDATE TO STANDING ORDERS - SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

The Executive Member for Engineering, Planning and Highways, who was Chairman of the Swale Joint Transportation Board (JTB), presented the report, which recommended an update to Standing Order No. 46(C) to include public speaking at meetings of the Swale JTB. He explained that, as Executive Member for Engineering, Planning and Transport, he received a lot of questions at Area Forum Meetings which referred to highways issues and thought that it was unfair that members of the public could not raise these concerns at the relevant Committee, particularly as the membership of the JTB included Kent County Council (KCC) Members.

A number of Members raised concerns that this proposal would lead to longer JTB meetings, as a number of Members also attended Parish and Town Council meetings, many of which were held on Monday evenings.

***Recommended:***

*(1) That recommendations (a) - (e) in the report be included under Standing Order No. 46(C), with the system to be reviewed after one year.*

**838 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL PLAN PANEL**

The Executive Member for Community Development, who was Chairman of the Local Plan Panel, presented the Minutes for approval, noting concerns he held regarding the Inspectors' apparent aim to discourage certain aspects of public involvement in the consultation process.

***Recommended:***

*(1) That the Minutes of the Local Plan Panel meeting held on 22nd February 2006 (Minute Nos. 751 - 756) be agreed.*

**PART B MINUTES FOR INFORMATION**

**839 MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE BOARD**

***Resolved:***

*(1) That the Minutes of the Performance Board meeting held on 13th March 2006 (Minute Nos. 1 - 10) be agreed.*

**840 MINUTES OF THE FAVERSHAM AND SWALE EAST AREA FORUM**

***Resolved:***

*(1) That the Minutes of the Faversham and Swale East Area Forum meeting*

*held on 21st February 2006 (Minute Nos. 747 - 750) be agreed.*

**842 MINUTES OF THE SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

With regard to Minute No. 817(2)/3/06, the Chairman suggested that Kent Highways Officers and KCC Members should be invited to the meeting.

• DDETS

**Resolved:**

*(1) That the Minutes of the Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting held on 27th March 2006 (Minute Nos. 813 - 831) be approved, subject to the inclusion of apologies from County Councillor Bowles and the change of the word 'Member' to 'Members' in Minute No. 818(3)/3/06.*

**843 CONFERENCE APPROVAL**

**Resolved:**

*(1) That the Executive endorse Councillor Gerry Lewin's attendance at the "Becoming More Enterprising" Conference on 1st March 2006 at a cost of £45.00.*

**844 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**Resolved:**

*(1) That the report be noted.*

**845 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**Resolved:**

*(1) That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the Act.*

**PART B MINUTES FOR INFORMATION**

**846 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE SUBMISSIONS FOR WRITE OFF**

The Head of Finance presented his report, which submitted seven cases for approval of write off of the National Non-Domestic Rate.

Members asked questions relating to certain of the cases, which the Head of

Finance answered.

**Resolved:**

*(1) That the write off of the National Non-Domestic Rate for the submitted cases be approved.*

**847 WRITE OFF OF HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT**

**Executive Member for Finance and Administration (including Performance)**

The Head of Finance presented the report, which submitted a case for write off of outstanding housing benefit overpayments.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the write off of the Housing Benefit Overpayment for the submitted case be approved.***

Chairman