

---

## COUNCIL

---

**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 14 December 2016 from 7.00pm - 8.30pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Sarah Aldridge, Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Monique Bonney, Andy Booth, Tina Booth, Lloyd Bowen, Bowles, Roger Clark, Katy Coleman, Derek Conway, Mike Cosgrove, Adrian Crowther, Richard Darby, Mike Dendor, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Mark Ellen, Paul Fleming, Mick Galvin, June Garrad, Sue Gent, James Hall, Nicholas Hampshire, Harrison, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Lesley Ingham (Mayor), Ken Ingleton, Nigel Kay, Samuel Koffie-Williams, Gerry Lewin, Peter Marchington, Bryan Mulhern, Padmini Nissanga, George Samuel, David Simmons, Ben Stokes, Anita Walker, Ghlin Whelan, Mike Whiting, Ted Wilcox and John Wright.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Estelle Culligan, Abdool Kara, Chris Lovelock, Jo Millard, Mark Radford and Nick Vickers.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Bobbin, Prescott, Ken Pugh and Roger Truelove.

### 1067 PRAYERS

The Deputy Leader said Prayers.

### 1068 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Mayor outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 1069 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 November 2016 (Minutes Nos 1016 – 1027) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 1070 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

### 1071 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was a minute's silence in memory of Mrs Elisabeth Jordan, wife of Honorary Alderman Don Jordan, and former mayoress of Swale in the civic year 1995/96.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration presented a petition to provide an extended controlled parking zone, received from residents in School Road, Faversham, to the Mayor. The Mayor advised that this would be presented to the Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting on Monday 19 December 2016.

The Mayor advised that she had attended a celebration with the Swale Stroke Group who had recently received a national award.

The Mayor and Mayoress had taken part in the Candle Light Walk to raise funds for Demelza House Children's Hospice.

The Mayor referred to the Civic Christmas Card Competition and advised that there had been a winners' presentation tea at Swale House for children from All Saints Eastchurch C of E Primary School and St. Clement Site, Leysdown.

The Mayor advised that she had attended numerous carol services and Christmas shows, including the 'Lights for Love' services at Highsted Grammar School and Minster Abbey.

Lastly, the Mayor advised Members that the Swale Civic Ball would be held on Saturday 11 March 2017 at Merlins, Leysdown.

## **1072 QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PUBLIC**

The Mayor advised that a question had been submitted by Mr Greenhill, the response to which had been provided and is attached as Appendix I to these minutes. The Mayor invited Mr Greenhill to ask a supplementary question.

Mr Greenhill asked the Leader to comment and clarify whether members of the public were only allowed to stand in the foyer, that subsequently the Director of Corporate Services advised that the Chief Executive would not allow the public in because the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee had decided to exclude the public, and that this had all taken place in the region of 10 minutes before the meeting was due to take place?

The Leader acknowledged Mr Greenhill's comments, referred to the response to question three in Members' questions, and advised that once the investigation into the matter was complete, a response would be provided.

## **1073 QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS**

The Mayor advised that six questions had been submitted by Members, the answers to which had been provided and are attached as Appendix II to these Minutes. The Mayor invited relevant Members to ask a supplementary question:

### **Question one**

Councillor Mark Ellen thanked the Cabinet Member for his response, and asked the Cabinet Member if he agreed that a dedicated Regeneration Officer for the Isle of Sheppey was a more effective arrangement? The Cabinet Member for Regeneration pointed out that each of the three areas of Swale could suggest a dedicated officer for its area, but the full team's experience covering the whole Borough benefitted all areas.

### **Question two**

Councillor Paul Flaming thanked the Cabinet Member for his response, and asked if the Buddleia could be removed from the roofs in the High Street, Sittingbourne?

The Cabinet Member advised that the cost of this work was currently being investigated.

### **Question three**

There was no supplementary question.

### **Question four**

Councillor James Hunt thanked the Cabinet Member for his response, and asked if there were any plans for more varied stalls in the High Street at future events? The Cabinet Member advised that a variety of options were being considered.

### **Question five**

Councillor Mike Whiting thanked the Cabinet Member for his response, and asked whether consideration could be given to using Section 106 monies to improve the area within the Redrow application site, next to Sittingbourne Retail Park, to link up to the Dolphin Barge museum and proposed Skate Park? The Cabinet Member agreed to look at this option and respond to Councillor Whiting.

### **Question six**

Councillor Lloyd Bowen thanked the Leader for his response, suggested a repeat of the social media briefing, and highlighted the low attendance of some training sessions. He asked the Leader if he agreed that the Data Protection briefing should be mandatory. In response, the Leader said that he agreed that some Member briefing sessions should be mandatory, and he encouraged all Members to attend the sessions.

## **1074 LEADER'S STATEMENT**

The Leader presented his Statement, which gave updates on the Sustainability and Transformation Plan, the Christmas Special Park and Ride, and local policing. The Mayor invited Members to ask questions on each topic.

### **Sustainability and Transformation Plan**

The Leader reminded Members to attend the NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plan presentation on 15 December 2016.

The Leader of the UKIP Group referred to paragraph four of the Leader's Statement, and asked the Leader if he agreed that there should be more focus on overall health checks early on to prevent issues? He suggested Member briefings could be webcast.

The Leader reminded the Leader of the UKIP Group that the prevention priorities referred to in paragraph four of his statement were the priorities for the Clinical Commissioning Groups, National Health Service, and Kent County Council. He added that there were cost implications in webcasting Member briefings but that

other options, such as training sessions at differing times and more cross-Borough working were being considered.

The Deputy Leader of the Labour Group agreed with the focus on prevention of illness, and encouraged all party groups to join together to consider how to tackle the issues. She encouraged the use of community facilities, highlighted the poor communication and lack of advertising of health board meetings, and stressed the need to find suitable solutions within each area of the Borough.

The Leader of the Independent Group drew attention to the second paragraph of the Leader's Statement and suggested that practical solutions should be researched now.

The Leader thanked Group Leaders for their suggestions, and encouraged Members to read the Kings Fund report.

A discussion ensued and some Members gave personal accounts of the poor service they had received from the NHS. In addition, the following issues were raised:

- Insufficient number of staff;
- lack of communication;
- historical lack of funding, particularly in Swale;
- loss of GP services;
- delays in accessing services;
- lack of health and social care; and
- shortage of localised services.

A Member suggested that more funding for Health Services was necessary, and suggested a study in Swale to establish what services were required and the cost. The Leader warned that public opinion polls elsewhere had indicated that most people would not be willing to pay additional tax for improved health services, and that he would continue to push for localised services.

### **Christmas 'Special' Park and Ride**

The Leader of the UKIP Group thanked the local schools for their assistance in the scheme, and welcomed the community spirit. He suggested the scheme could be repeated for other events and areas within the Borough in the future.

The Leader thanked the Leader of the UKIP Group, and advised that the scheme would be taken forward once the trial was completed and evidence gathered.

The Deputy Leader of the Labour Group agreed that the scheme was in its infancy, and she hoped it continued.

The Leader thanked the Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, and highlighted the positive comments that had been received.

A Member said that there should have been more advertising of the scheme on social media and local radio, whilst another Member suggested more consultation with local Members with local knowledge.

A Member thanked the Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities and to the Council staff involved in the scheme, and encouraged its development in the future.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities reminded Members that the scheme was a trial and any decision to take it forward should be evidence-based, and he welcomed Members' views.

The Leader acknowledged and thanked the Deputy Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities, and other Members for their involvement and for their suggestions.

### **Police update**

The Leader of the Independent Group asked the Leader if he agreed that there had been frequent changes in Police staff in Swale? The Leader agreed.

### Chairman

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel