
COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 24 January 2018 from 7.00pm - 8.40 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Sarah Aldridge, Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Bobbin, Monique Bonney, Andy Booth, Lloyd Bowen, Roger Clark, Derek Conway, Mike Cosgrove, Mike Dendor, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Paul Fleming, Mick Galvin, James Hall, Nicholas Hampshire, Harrison, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Ken Ingleton, Nigel Kay, Samuel Koffie-Williams (Deputy Mayor), Gerry Lewin, Peter Marchington, Padmini Nissanga, Prescott (Mayor), Ken Pugh, George Samuel, David Simmons, Ben Stokes, Roger Truelove, Anita Walker, Ghlin Whelan, Mike Whiting, Ted Wilcox, Tony Winckless and John Wright.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Billy Attaway, Robin Harris, Jo Millard, Mark Radford and Nick Vickers.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Tina Booth, Bowles, Richard Darby, Mark Ellen, June Garrad, Sue Gent, Lesley Ingham and Bryan Mulhern.

446 PRAYERS

The Mayor's Chaplain said Prayers.

447 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Mayor drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

448 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 December 2017 (Minute Nos. 390 – 401) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

449 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

450 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor drew Members' attention to the tabled paper which included the number of engagements he had attended and his visits to emergency services, hospitals and Post Office staff over the Christmas period.

451 MOTIONS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 15

Councillor Nicholas Hampshire proposed that:

"There is growing acknowledgement on this Council from all sides about the issue of air quality across Swale, together with the need for focused air quality monitoring,

so as to gauge an accurate picture of the current situation facing our residents now and into the future.

The A2, in particular in the area surrounding the Key Street roundabout, is of prime concern.

With significant development coming forward, such as that at Wises Lane in Borden, increased vehicle movements undoubtedly will adversely impact air quality further.

We believe the Council has a duty of care to its residents and ensure existing levels do not deteriorate further.

It is difficult, therefore, to conclude no adverse impact on air quality will occur from development when the Council does not have adequate, if any, air quality monitoring systems in place at key potential development sites.

This cannot continue.

This is even more pressing following the Supreme High Court ruling in Newington. This judgement indicated that “both applicant and council need to demonstrate that mitigation measures actually work”.

Additionally, we were shocked to learn from a public meeting held on Saturday 9 December 2017 at Borden Parish Hall, that independent spot checks in the Key Street area showed air quality levels to be considerably worse than those put forward by the developer in their planning application for Wises Lane.

We kindly ask, therefore, that this Council increases the budget for air quality monitoring in the Borough in its Budget for 2018/19 and, as a starter, immediately reviews the air quality monitoring equipment along the A2 and at the Key Street/Chestnut Street/Wises Lane area without undue hesitation.”

The Motion was seconded by Councillor Mike Baldock who reserved his right to speak.

In proposing the motion, Councillor Nicholas Hampshire proposed an amendment to include the word “**potential**” after “With significant.....” on the first line of the third paragraph of the motion. He referred to the Newington case and the defence of data sets put forward by developers and said that the Council needed its own data sets. He highlighted the cross-party backing and support already received from the Leader.

The Leader of the Labour Group agreed that Air Quality was a critical issue but said that it was a Borough-wide issue, not just the Key Street area. He added that the proposal was too vague and specific borrowing costs had not been included in the motion.

In the debate that followed the following points were made:

- monitoring equipment should be placed at pinch points;

- the whole of the A2 should be included;
- the motion was a good starting point;
- air quality had been measured for many years but no action taken;
- some measuring equipment was inaccurate;
- monitoring stations were expensive;
- all areas were affected and the motion included monitoring for the whole Borough;
- there had been no feedback from the Air Quality Management Plan; and
- the measuring of particulates was misrepresented.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Rural Affairs explained that the five separate Air Quality areas in the Borough had been combined and an Air Quality Strategy for 2018 – 21 was being worked on. He added that there were 72 Nox Air Quality Monitoring Tubes in the Borough and Swale Borough Council (SBC) did more in Kent to address Air Quality issues than any other Borough.

In summing up, Councillor Nicholas Hampshire clarified that the motion covered the whole of the Borough and included key potential development sites. He added that the motion would determine an action plan going forward

On being put to the vote, the amendment was agreed. There was no further debate on the amendment.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19(5), a recorded vote was taken and voting was as follows:

For: Councillors Sarah Aldridge, Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Bobbin, Monique Bonney, Andy Booth, Lloyd Bowen, Roger Clark, Derek Conway, Mike Cosgrove, Mike Dendor, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Paul Fleming, Mick Galvin, James Hall, Nicholas Hampshire, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Ken Ingleton, Nigel Kay, Samuel Koffie-Williams, Gerry Lewin, Peter Marchington, Padmini Nissanga, Prescott, Ken Pugh, George Samuel, David Simmons, Ben Stokes, Anita Walker, Ghlin Whelan, Mike Whiting, Ted Wilcox and John Wright. Total equals: 35

Against: 0

Abstained: Councillors Harrison, Roger Truelove and Tony Winckless. Total equals: 3.

The motion was agreed.

Resolved:

That the Council increases the budget for air quality monitoring in the Borough in its Budget for 2018/19 and, as a starter, immediately reviews the air quality monitoring equipment along the A2 and at the Key Street/Chestnut Street/Wises Lane area without undue hesitation.

452 QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PUBLIC

The Mayor advised that one question had been submitted by a member of the public. Mr Greenhill, on behalf of the Swale Seniors Forum, was not in attendance at the meeting but had acknowledged receipt of the response which can be viewed on the Council's website, and is attached as Appendix I to these minutes.

453 QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS

The Mayor advised that five questions had been submitted by Members, the responses to which had been provided, can be viewed on the Council's website, and are attached as Appendix II to these minutes.

Question One

Councillor Mick Galvin had arranged to meet with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing and did not have a supplementary question.

Question Two

Councillor George Samuel asked what action had been taken to engage traders? The Cabinet Member for Regeneration advised that there had been two meetings with traders and officers had been communicating with individual traders about their specific concerns, including financial hardship. He added that all deliveries were made last Friday and he thanked the traders for their cooperation in assisting with integrating the High Street into the regeneration scheme.

Question Three

Councillor Roger Truelove asked the Cabinet Member for Regeneration if he considered that the construction industry failure and lack of skills were linked? He stated that investment in training was essential. In response, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration said that the four major issues were: the commercialisation of education; the running down of alternative adequate policy; the failure of the nation not to follow the German model having a 3 tier post-11 education system and lastly not learning practical skills from parents.

Question Four

Councillor Mike Henderson thanked the Cabinet Member for his direct and precise answer and asked if the Empty Dwelling Management Order process was being used. He referred to the housing of Syrian refugees. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing said that three pieces of strong legislation were being used to bring properties back into use as the reduction in empty properties showed. He added that more Syrian refugee families would be housed.

Question Five

There was no supplementary question.

454 LEADER'S STATEMENT

The Deputy Leader introduced the Leader's Statement.

HGV Parking and Associated Issues

The Deputy Leader extended his congratulations to Councillor Mike Whiting on his recent appointment as Kent County Council (KCC) Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transportation and Waste. Members shared their thoughts of the families of the young men who had lost their lives in the recent accident on the A2 near Boughton. A Member sent his good wishes for a speedy recovery to the Leader after his recent knee surgery.

A Member requested a meeting with Councillor Whiting, the Leader and Deputy Leader to discuss appropriate areas for HGV's to park. Another Member suggested that lorry parks should be cost effective to encourage use. The Mayor added that HGV drivers often received payment for accommodation and parking.

A Member said that many hauliers had nowhere appropriate to park and suggested smaller lorry parks in local areas rather than concreting over large areas. The Deputy Leader agreed that KCC should look at hotspots.

A Member spoke of the new Swale Police District Commander Chief Inspector Rachel McNeil, as referred to in the Leader's Statement, and informed Members that Inspector Craig West had also joined the Swale Community Safety Team. The Deputy Leader welcomed the news.

Kent Environment Champions Group Celebration Event - 21 December 2017

The Leader of the UKIP Group congratulated those recognized for their achievements at the event, at which the Chief Executive had accompanied SBC staff. In response to a question from the Leader of the Labour Group, the Deputy Leader advised that he was not familiar with the Kent Environment Strategy. The Leader of the Independent Group advised that as well as his work at Milton Creek Country Park, Kris Staples had also worked hard and made a huge difference at Oare Country Park. A Member advised that Faversham had won gold in the South and South East in Bloom competition.

Reflections and Aspirations

Members referred to the Leader's comments on the new Multi-Screen Cinema and drew attention to the existing cinemas in Sittingbourne and Faversham.

The Leader of the UKIP Group highlighted the Leader's comments on the proposed development at Cleve and Nagden Marshes and asked if Members would have the opportunity to comment on the proposal? The Deputy Leader said that he would seek clarification on this going forward.

The Leader of the Labour Group drew attention that 11,000 more new homes in Swale was in excess of the 36% required by Central Government. The Deputy

Leader advised that he would be attending a meeting later in the week to discuss the Mayor of London Local Plan and its impact on surrounding areas.

The Leader of the Independent Group asked the Deputy Leader if he could confirm that there had been communication with the Duchy of Cornwall on possible development on land in the borough? The Deputy Leader confirmed that there had been communication in the Council's call for sites in the borough.

A Member spoke of the increase in housing in the area and its impact on the National Health Services (NHS). She drew attention to the five year delay in NHS funding and asked for an update on the 'Garden City' that SBC had signed up to. The Deputy Leader agreed to provide a written answer.

A Member asked if the Deputy Leader had seen the press release from Gordon Henderson MP advising that the Secretary of State had confirmed that SBC would not be affected by the increase in housing numbers, as SBC already had a Local Plan? In response, the Deputy Leader stated that he had not seen the press release and whilst he would welcome the news, he was not aware of any changes that had gone through Parliament.

Feedback

The Leader of the Labour Group requested a copy of the response from the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP as highlighted in the Leader's Statement.

A Member asked if all feedback from Central Government could be copied and left in the folder in the Members' Room. The Deputy Leader agreed to pass the request to the Leader.

455 TREASURY MANAGEMENT HALF YEAR REVIEW

The Chairman of the Audit Committee introduced the report which outlined the treasury management transactions for 2017/18, which had been discussed by the Audit Committee on 29 November 2017. He thanked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, the Chief Financial Officer and the Management Accountant and proposed the recommendations which were seconded by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance.

Resolved:

- (1) That the performance information in the report be noted.***
- (2) That the prudential and treasury management indicators within the report be approved.***

456 RESOLUTIONS FOR CALCULATING COUNCIL TAX BASE

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance introduced the report which asked the Council to agree the Council Tax resolutions, and proposed the recommendations. The Deputy Leader seconded the proposal.

The Leader of the UKIP Group referred to paragraph 3.3 on page 14 of the report and asked how the collection rate would be increased? The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance agreed to provide a response.

The Leader of the Independent Group asked how the tax base in Tonge Parish had doubled in 12 months and was advised that this was due to the increase in housing at East Hall Farm.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19(5), a recorded vote was taken and voting was as follows:

For: Councillors Sarah, Aldridge, Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Bobbin, Monique Bonney, Andy Booth, Lloyd Bowen, Roger Clark, Derek Conway, Mike Cosgrove, Mike Dendor, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Paul Fleming, Mick Galvin, James Hall, Nicholas Hampshire, Harrison, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Ken Ingleton, Nigel Kay, Samuel Koffie-Williams, Gerry Lewin, Peter Marchington, Padmini Nissanga, Prescott, Ken Pugh, George Samuel, David Simmons, Ben Stokes, Roger Truelove, Anita Walker, Ghlin Whelan, Mike Whiting, Ted Wilcox, Tony Winckless and John Wright. Total equals: 38

Against: None

Abstained: None

Resolved:

(1) That the report of the Chief Financial Officer for the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the year 2018/19 be approved.

(2) That pursuant to the Chief Financial Officer's report and in accordance with the Regulations made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended)) and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012:2914), and the Local Government Act 2003, the amount calculated by Swale Borough Council as its Council Tax Base for the whole area for the year 2018/19 shall be 46,590.79 The Council Tax Base for the individual Town and Parish Councils within the borough area shall be as itemised in Appendix II to the report.

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