
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Committee Room, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 12 February 2020 from 5.00pm - 5.13pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chairman, in-the-Chair), Steve Davey (Substitute for Councillor Roger Truelove), Mike Dendor, Angela Harrison, Alan Horton, Ben J Martin (Substitute for Councillor Denise Knights) and Corrie Woodford.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Keith Alabaster, Jayne Bolas, David Clifford and Philippa Davies.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Denise Knights, Roger Truelove and Mike Whiting.

506 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

507 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 October 2019 (Minute Nos. 320 – 327) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

508 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

Part A Minutes for Recommendation to Council

509 REVIEW OF POLLING PLACE - MURSTON WARD (MUN POLLING DISTRICT) - SUNNYBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Committee considered the report which set-out the proposals to change arrangements for voting in the Murston North (MUN) polling district in Murston ward at the request of Sunnybank Primary School. It was proposed that Sunnybank Primary School was no longer used as a polling station, and that Woodcombe Sports and Social Club in Church Road be used instead and that the polling place was amended accordingly.

Recommended:

(1) That the proposed change to the polling place for the Murston ward be approved.

510 REVISIONS TO PLANNING COMMITTEE PROCEDURE NOTES

The Vice-Chairman in-the-Chair introduced the report which set-out amendments to the Planning Committee procedures with the aim of improving and expediting

discussion of planning applications referred to the Planning Committee. He drew attention to the tabled amendments from Councillors Alan Horton and James Hunt. Members agreed that this appendix, rather than the one included within the report, be the one that Members considered.

A discussion ensued which centred on the following themes:

- Acknowledged that a lot of time was spent on questions, but welcomed the option of any urgent clarification questions being asked at the Planning Committee, being subject to the Chairman's discretion;
- the officer's presentation on the night, plus any points the speakers raised could lead to further questions;
- some Members were grandstanding at Planning Committee meetings;
- felt that if Members read the reports, that would reduce the need for so many questions; and
- the Chairman's briefing enabled Planning Committee Spokespersons to get any updates from officers, and answers to questions which should then be passed to Planning Committee members.

A Member suggested that it would be beneficial for Members to see the papers going to the General Purposes Committee in advance of the agenda being published. In response, the Monitoring Officer said that a preliminary consultation could be held with Members, prior to the agenda being published.

The Vice-Chairman in-the-Chair thanked Councillors Alan Horton and James Hunt for their suggestions.

Recommended:

(1) That the revised wording to the Planning Committee Procedure Notes (Part 4.12) as set-out in the tabled update be incorporated into the constitution.

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