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ANNUAL COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 18 May 2022 from 7.00 - 8.38 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock, Cameron Beart, Monique Bonney, Lloyd Bowen, Derek Carnell, Simon Clark (Mayor), Richard Darby, Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Oliver Eakin, Tim Gibson, Alastair Gould, Nicholas Hampshire, Angela Harrison, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Ken Ingleton, Carole Jackson, Elliott Jayes, Denise Knights, Peter Macdonald, Peter Marchington, Ben J Martin, Lee McCall, Pete Neal, Richard Palmer, Hannah Perkin, Ken Pugh, Ken Rowles, Julian Saunders, David Simmons, Paul Stephen (Retiring Mayor), Sarah Stephen (Deputy Mayor), Bill Tatton, Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine, Ghlin Whelan, Mike Whiting, Tony Winckless and Corrie Woodford.

PRESENT (Virtually): Councillor Roger Clark.

OFFICERS PRESENT: David Clifford, Philippa Davies, Chris Lovelock, Jo Millard, Larissa Reed and Claudette Valmond.

OFFICER PRESENT (Virtually): Emma Wiggins

APOLOGIES: James Hall, Ann Hampshire and Eddie Thomas.

1 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The retiring Mayor outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

2 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 26 May 2021 (Minute Nos. 1 - 14), the Full Council meeting held on 30 March 2022 (Minute Nos. 732 – 741) and of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 27 April 2022 (Minute Nos. 766 – 770) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Retiring Mayor as correct records.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Ben J Martin, Hannah Perkin, Julian Saunders and Tim Valentine declared a non-pecuniary interest on item 11 as they all sat as trustees on Bensted's Charity.

4 **Appointment of Mayor**

The retiring Mayor advised that the decision to appoint a Mayor elect had been taken at the Council meeting held on 24 February 2022, where it was resolved that Councillor Simon Clark be elected Mayor for the civic year 2022/23.

Councillor Roger Truelove gave a speech to support the decision to elect Councillor Simon Clark as Mayor, and Councillor Angela Harrison spoke to endorse the decision.

The Mayor read and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and he was presented with the badge of office.

5 Forthcoming Mayoral Year

The Mayor thanked Members for his election and spoke of how proud his parents would have been to see him represent the Borough as Mayor. He said he had represented the Borough with pride and dignity as Deputy Mayor.

The Mayor said he would chair Full Council with fairness and good grace and he advised that his chosen charities would be Porchlight and Livewell Kent. He thanked and praised the retiring Mayor.

6 Vote of Thanks to retiring Mayor

The Leader, Councillor Mike Baldock, proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Monique Bonney seconded a vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor Paul Stephen. Councillor Paul Stephen was presented with a Civic shield and scroll, a past Mayor's badge and mementoes of his term of office, and Councillor Sarah Stephen was presented with flowers.

Councillor Paul Stephen gave a speech in response, thanking Democratic Services, Legal Services and Councillor Sarah Stephen. He spoke of the challenges faced in chairing Council meetings remotely during the Covid-19 Pandemic and how many of his mayoral duties during the first 18 months of his term were carried out remotely. Councillor Stephen explained that once he was able to meet the public of Swale in person, he took the opportunity to meet as many as he could, and he had supported many great organisations and charities including MS Swale and Citizens Advice Swale, who he would continue to support. Finally, he welcomed Councillor Simon Clark into his role as Mayor of Swale and wished him well for his mayoral year.

7 Appointment of Deputy Mayor

The Mayor advised that the decision to appoint a Deputy Mayor elect had been taken at the Council meeting held on 24 February 2022, where it was resolved that Councillor Sarah Stephen be elected Deputy Mayor for the civic year 2022/23.

The Leader gave a short speech in support of Councillor Sarah Stephen's appointment and this was seconded by the Deputy Leader.

The Deputy Mayor read out and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was presented with her badge of office.

8 Establishment of Committees and their Terms of Reference

The Leader introduced the report which asked the Council to establish the Committees of the Council for the Municipal Year 2022/23, and to agree their terms of reference.

The Leader proposed the recommendation which was seconded by the Leader of the main opposition group.

In response to a question from a Member, the Leader confirmed that the Constitution was a living document which could have further amendments.

Resolved:

(1) That the Committees of the Council and Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix I to the report be agreed for the Municipal Year 2022/23.

9 **Allocation of Committee Seats and Committee Appointments for 2022/23**

The Leader introduced the report and proposed the recommendations which were seconded by the Deputy Leader.

During the discussion, Councillor Peter MacDonald withdrew as a nominated member of the Swale Joint Transportation Board and the number of seats were therefore not contested.

Resolved:

(1) That the political balance calculation as set out in Appendix I to the report be agreed.

(2) That the allocation of seats to Committees, in accordance with the wishes of Group Leaders, as set out in Appendix I to these minutes be agreed.

(3) That Group's nominations for Swale's membership of the Joint Transportation Board as set out in Appendix II to these minutes be agreed.

10 **Borough Council Nominations to Outside Bodies and Trusts administered by Swale Borough Council and Statutory Bodies**

The Leader introduced the report which set out the nominations received to Outside Bodies and Trusts administered by Swale Borough Council and statutory bodies. He proposed the recommendations which were seconded by the Deputy Leader.

A Member raised a query on the Kent and Medway Health and Wellbeing Board nomination. It was agreed that further research on this would be carried out and reported back to Council.

Councillor David Simmons spoke in support of Honorary Alderman Anita Walker's work on the Bensted's Charity.

Councillor Roger Truelove drew attention that Councillor Ken Rowles had been nominated for the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board, not the Oare Gunpowder Works Advisory Group as set out on Appendix I to the report.

The Mayor explained the voting procedure in respect of those outside bodies that had more nominations than seats as below:

- Action with Communities in Rural Kent;
- Bensted's Charity;
- Citizen's Advice Services Swale (formerly CAB);
- Council for Voluntary Services (CVS);
- Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board;

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- Medway Maritime Hospital;
 - Oare Gunpowder Works Advisory Group;
 - Optivo Kent General Panel;
 - Police and Crime Panel;
 - Sheppey Matters; and
 - West Faversham Community Association.

During the discussion, Councillors Cameron Beart, Lloyd Bowen, James Hunt and Alan Horton withdrew from being nominated for the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board and Councillor Lloyd Bowen withdrew from being nominated for Oare Gunpowder Works, and the seats on those boards were therefore uncontested.

Upon being put to the vote, the Mayor announced the results. The complete list of outside body appointments are attached as Appendix III to these Minutes.

Resolved:

(1) That the Borough Council nominations on outside bodies and trust administered by Swale Borough Council and statutory bodies be as set out in Appendix III to these minutes.

11 Timetable of Meetings

The Leader proposed the recommendation which was seconded by the Leader of the main opposition Group.

Members debated the timetable and drew attention that whilst there was flexibility, some meetings that were scheduled immediately after the Borough elections in 2023 should be removed from the timetable.

Councillor Mike Henderson proposed the following amendment to the recommendation:

“That Council agrees the programme of meetings set out in Appendix I to this report **with the exception of meetings scheduled for 2 and 3 May 2023.**”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Mike Whiting who proposed a further amendment:

“That Council agrees the programme of meetings set out in Appendix I to this report **with the exception for meetings scheduled for 2, 3, 9 and 11 May 2023.**”

This amendment was seconded by the Deputy Leader and accepted by Councillor Henderson as an amendment to his original amendment.

On being put to the vote, Members agreed the amended recommendation.

Resolved:

(1) That Council agree the programme of meetings for 2022/23 Municipal Year as set out in Appendix I, subject to the removal of meetings scheduled for 2, 3, 9 and 11 May 2023.

Chairman

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

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