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## EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 27 April 2022 from 7.00 pm - 7.35 pm.

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

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** David Clifford, Lisa Fillery, Jo Millard and Larissa Reed.

**OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually):** Robin Harris, Kellie MacKenzie and Emma Wiggins.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Roger Clark, Carole Jackson, Ben J Martin and David Simmons.

766 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Mayor drew attention to the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

767 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

768 **Election of Leader**

The Mayor referred to Procedure Rule 4.1 19(4) and outlined how the nomination and voting of the new Leader would proceed.

The Mayor invited the current Leader, Councillor Roger Truelove to propose the nomination for Leader on behalf of the coalition. The Leader proposed that Councillor Mike Baldock be nominated as Leader of the Council, and he gave a supporting speech. Councillor Monique Bonney seconded the proposal.

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Alan Horton and the Leader of the Independent First Group, Councillor Richard Darby to propose their nominations for Leader. Neither Group Leader put forward a nomination.

The Mayor announced that Councillor Mike Baldock had been proposed and seconded as Leader of the Council, and he advised that there were no other nominations.

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

**For: Baldock, Bonney, Carnell, S Clark, Darby, Davey, Gibson, Gould, Hall, Harrison, Henderson, Jayes, Knights, MacDonald, McCall, Nissanga, Palmer, Perkin, Rowles, Saunders, P Stephen, S Stephen, Tatton, Thomas, Truelove, Valentine, Whelan, Winckless and Woodford. Total equals 29.**

**Against: Beart, Bowen, Dendor, Eakin, Fowle, A Hampshire, Horton, Pugh and Whiting. Total equals 9.**

**Abstain: N Hampshire, Hunt, Ingleton, Marchington and Neal. Total equals 5.**

Following his confirmation as Leader, Councillor Mike Baldock thanked Members and said that in moving to the Committee System, he looked forward to all 47 Members having a voice. He announced that his Cabinet would be as follows:

Climate and Emergency	-	Councillor Tim Valentine
Finance	-	Councillor Roger Truelove Councillor Derek Carnell (Deputy)
Health	-	Councillor Angela Harrison Councillor Hannah Perkin (Deputy)
Housing	-	Councillor Ben Martin Councillor Ghlin Whelan (Deputy)
Planning	-	Councillor Mike Baldock Councillor Alastair Gould (Deputy)
Community	-	Councillor Richard Palmer Councillor Elliott Jayes (Deputy)
Economy and Property	-	Councillor Monique Bonney Councillor Sarah Stephen (Deputy)
Environment	-	Councillor Julian Saunders Councillor Eddie Thomas (Deputy)

The new Leader announced that his Deputy would be Councillor Monique Bonney.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That Councillor Mike Baldock be elected as Leader of Swale Borough Council.***

**769 Community Governance Reviews**

In proposing the recommendations in the report, Councillor Roger Truelove said there were several ward boundary anomalies in the Borough that had been raised by local Members. Councillor Alan Horton seconded the recommendations and said that there was an additional boundary anomaly in The Meads ward, which the Chief Executive had been discussing with Bobbing Parish Council, and it was expected that the review for this would be carried out after the next Borough elections. He acknowledged that the additional

housing development in that area would impact on the boundary and spoke in support of the proposed review in the report.

A Member welcomed the review and said that he expected residents to be consulted at all stages. He asked how the review might impact on the Boundary Commission's review on parliamentary boundaries? Councillor Truelove said that Swale Borough Council (SBC) were in discussion with the Boundary Commission.

A Member spoke in support of the review and thanked Electoral Services for their work in progressing it.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That Council approves the commencement of the Community Governance Review and approves the terms of reference.***

**770 Committee System - Revised Constitution**

The Mayor referred to the two drop in Q & A sessions on the new Constitution held on line earlier in the week, which were well-attended.

In proposing the recommendations in the report, the new Leader, Councillor Mike Baldock, said that the document had been discussed at length by the cross party working group, at many meetings over several hours and he thanked everyone involved. He said the new Constitution would see the Council into the Committee System and make it workable. The Leader gave particular praise to officers and to the external consultant, Sandra Prail, who had delivered a briefing earlier in the evening.

Councillor Roger Truelove seconded the recommendations and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Alan Horton said he looked forward to working in the Committee System and he said the new Constitution would enable Members to do that. He thanked the cross party working group and gave particular thanks to officers who had worked on the document, acknowledging the difficult task of bringing Members from different political parties together to make a Constitution that would work for everybody within the deadline.

A Member drew attention that there should be more information on Equality and Diversity in the implications part of the report and suggested the accessibility of the Committee System in relation to the Cabinet System could be included. She also agreed with another Member that some Members were unable to attend the drop in sessions due to work commitments. Another Member thanked the Monitoring Officer in communicating and answering questions outside of the drop-in session times. A Member said that as the Committee System evolved, Committees might change but the Committee structure would not, and he considered the new Constitution was a good document.

In summing up, Councillor Truelove acknowledged the long process and amount of work involved. He agreed that Equality and Diversity was an important part of the Constitution and should be included, and he said he wanted SBC to be a more democratic Council.

The Leader said the cross party working group would continue and the Constitution would be constantly reviewed.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the text at Appendices I to X as Parts 1 to 3 of the updated constitution be adopted, to come into effect at Annual Council in May 2022.***

***(2) That delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Council Leader, to make minor changes to the Constitution aimed at rectifying typographical, formatting or paragraph numbers errors, or to resolve any residual references to the executive model.***

Chairman

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