



FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Date of Publication: 10 March 2022

AGENDA

Meeting: **Folkestone Town Council**
Date: **17 March 2022**
Time: **7.00 p.m.**
Place: **Town Council Chamber, 1/2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone**

To: **Town Councillors**

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of the Folkestone Town Council on the date and at the time and place shown above to transact the business shown on the agenda below. The meeting will be open to the press and public.

Any member who wishes to have information on any matter arising on the agenda which is not fully covered in these papers is requested to give notice prior to the meeting to the Town Mayor or Town Clerk.

J Childs
Town Clerk

Prayers

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
To receive and approve any apologies for absence.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of either personal or prejudicial interest that Members may wish to make.
- 3. MINUTES**
To receive the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 13th January 2022 and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

4. TOWN GRANT APPLICATIONS

The following Town Grant applications have been received and assessed by members on merit against five categories. Applicants requesting town grants £1000 and over, will answer any questions that the Council may have. Applications will be considered later in the meeting.

Ref	Applicant	Purpose	Amount Requested
1	Custom Folkestone CIC	Locavore Growing Club	£2,500
2	Strange Cargo	Charivari 2022	£2,500
3	Remembrance Line	'Southern Queen' – a Folkestone / Dunkirk 'LITTLE SHIP'	£2,500
4	Folkestone Town Team	Umbrella & Various Hangings Project - Guildhall Street	£2,500
5	Folkestone Nepalese Community CIO	Community Garden	£1,610
6	Moving Being CIC	FolkeFest: Folkestone Contemporary Folk Festival	£950
	Total		£12,560

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Up to 15 minutes shall be allowed for written public questions from registered electors to be put to the Council in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.

6. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

7. TOWN MAYOR'S AWARDS

Members of the community who have done something particularly noteworthy during the municipal year can be nominated for a Town Mayor's Award. The following awards have been recognised during the 2021/22 municipal year:

- for the voluntary work undertaken in supporting vulnerable members of our community.
- for hard work and dedication to the continued success of the 2nd Sandgate Scout Group.
- for hard work and dedication in raising funds for charities and unwavering support of local projects.
- for long-term commitment and hard work in maintaining local pathways to the beaches.

- for the amazing commitment and dedication of the organisers and volunteers shown in supporting the local vaccination programme, ultimately leading to less people falling ill and a lower death rate.

The recipients have been invited to an afternoon tea with the Town Mayor so she can convey the awards and show her appreciation in recognition of their support.

8. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

To receive the Minutes of the above Committee's meeting of 27th January 2022.

9. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

To receive the Minutes of the above Committee's meeting of 16th December 2021.

10. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

To receive the Minutes of the above Committee's meeting of 12th October 2021.

11. MINUTES OF THE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

To receive the Minutes of the above Committee's meeting of 14th October 2021.

12. MATTERS AND RESOLUTIONS FROM COMMITTEES

(items in bold italic have been brought forward for debate)

Finance and General Purposes Committee

At the Finance and General Purposes meeting held on the 17th February 2022 it was noted at minute 1458 – Budget Monitoring Statement, that the sum of £1,030 remained in the 'Lunches for Children' reserve, although it was understood that this scheme would no longer be continued. It was therefore requested that full Council consider moving this sum to another reserve, such as 'Christmas Gifts for Children'.

13. GRANT SCHEME REVIEW

At the Full Council meeting held on the 12th November 2021 it was resolved at minute 1818 to review the current process for Town Grants after the next Council meeting. Report C/22/305 presents options for moving forward.

14. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

In line with section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003, Report C/22/307 reviews the Council's treasury management policy for 2022/23 and is attached for approval.

15. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RISK ASSESSMENT AND INSURANCE REVIEW

Report C/22/308 presents the annual business risk assessment and review of the current insurance arrangements for the Council's approval.

16. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Attached for members information is a Kent County Council report by Councillors Jeffrey and Meade.

17. NOTICE OF MOTION

Cllr Jonathan Graham would like to move a motion for the title of address for the Mayor & their consort, to be decided in accordance with how they wish to be addressed by the individual mayor and their partner.

18. TOWN MAYOR ELECT 2022/23

Town Councillors are requested to select the Town Mayor Elect for the ensuing municipal year 2022/23.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The press and public are to be excluded for the remainder of this meeting under Section 1, sub-section 2, of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

19. TOWN GRANT SCORES

The Town Clerk has reconciled members scores and the exempt table provided sets out the percentage scored and the calculated final award which is based on combined score and available budget in accordance with Council's adopted guidelines. Council is asked to approve the final award.

20. FREEDOM OF ENTRY TO THE TOWN

The Citizenship Awards Panel met on 18th February 2022 and requested Council consider a nomination to award a Freedom of Entry to the Town, Exempt Report C/22/306 is attached for consideration. A resolution by 100% of Councillors present is required to confer the award.

21. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Annual Statutory Meeting - Tuesday, 10th May 2022 (provisional)
Annual Town Assembly - Thursday, 17th May 2022 (provisional)

Folkestone Town Council

MINUTES of the Full Council Meeting of the Folkestone Town Council held at the Town Council Offices on Thursday, 13th January 2022 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Ann Berry, Paul Bingham, Ray Field, Peter Gane, Jonathan Graham, Nicola Keen, Michelle Keutenius, David Horton, Dylan Jeffrey, Mary Lawes, Connor McConville, Jackie Meade, Belinda Walker, Richard Wallace and Roger West.

ABSENT:

In attendance: Phil Cross (Finance Officer), Georgina Wilson (Executive Assistant)

1821. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Danny Brook and Tim Prater, and the Town Clerk.

1822. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

1823. MINUTES

The Full Council was asked to receive the Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 11th November 2021 and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 11th November 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor David Horton

Voting: F: 15, Ag: 0, Ab: 1

1824. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

1825. MAYORS COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUCEMENTS

The Mayor reported on the events that she had attended since the last Council meeting and thanked the organisers of these events.

1826. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 21st October 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Connor McConville

Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane

Voting: F:15, Ag: 0, Ab: 1

1827. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED: To approve the amended schedule for 2021/22 and the provisional schedule for 2022/23 with the provision of amending meetings held during the purdah period.

Proposed: Councillor Jonathan Graham

Seconded: Councillor Paul Bingham

Voting: F:16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1828. FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2022/23

Councillors discussed the merits of restricting the precept to an increase of 2% or 3% due to the current financial pressures on residents and the increasing costs of living. It was also stressed how important it was to ensure that the Town Council continues to provide services, including the play parks, which the Town Council has recently taken on, without depleting its reserves for future years.

RESOLVED: To receive report C/22/302, to approve the budget of £941,550 for 2022/23 with a Precept of £915,510 (being a 3% increase for a Band D property) and using £26,040 from the General Fund and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign the Precept demand on the District Council.

Proposed: Councillor Connor McConville

Seconded: Councillor Jonathan Graham

Voting: F:9, Ag: 7, Ab: 0

PROPOSED: To receive report C/22/302, to approve the budget of £941,550 for 2022/23 with a Precept of £906,620 (being a 2% increase for a Band D property) and using £34,930 from the General Fund and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign the Precept demand on the District Council.

Proposed: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey

Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane

This motion was lost.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The press and public are to be excluded for the remainder of this meeting under Section 1, sub-section 2, of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business.

Proposed: Councillor Michelle Keutenius

Seconded: Councillor Ann Berry

Voting: F:16, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

1829. TOWN GRANTS

RESOLVED: To amend the award to Music and Arts for the Shepway Community to £1,875 (i.e., 75% of the requested amount rather than 50%) as the percentage scored was higher than others within the same grouping.

Proposed: Councillor Belinda Walker
Seconded: Councillor Jonathan Graham
Voting: F: 10, Ag: 1, Ab: 5

There were discussions around the way to proceed with the grants process in the future. An additional round of town grants will be held at the Council meeting on 17th March to ensure all organisations get time to apply if they missed the previous deadline due to the Christmas period.

RESOLVED: To approve all grants as set out in the exempt table (subject to the above resolution) and to hold another round of grants at the Full Council Meeting on 17th March 2022.

Proposed: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly
Seconded: Councillor David Horton
Voting: F: 15, Ag: 0, Ab: 1

1830. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 17th March 2022 at 7.00pm

The meeting ended at 7.40pm

.....Town Mayor

Folkestone Town Council

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Thursday 27th January 2022 at the Town Council Offices, The Town Hall, 1-2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone.

PRESENT: Councillors Paul Bingham, Jonathan Graham, Mary Lawes, Jackie Meade, Richard Wallace and Roger West.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Liz Timmins – Communities and Grants Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Nicola Keen.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard Wallace declared an interest in application 22/0109/FH Princess Royal.

3. PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 20th May 2021

The Committee was asked to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 20th May 2021 and to authorise the Chairman of the Committee to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 20th May 2021 be received and that the Chairman of the meeting be authorised to sign them as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Paul Bingham

Seconded: Councillor Jacki Meade

Voting: F:6, Ag:0, Ab: 0

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllrs noted the previous applications.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application number	19/0704/FH
Location	Highview School, Moat Farm Road
Proposal	Erection of 30 residential units with access road, footpaths and associated landscaping.
Closing date	3 rd February 2022
Link to documents	Planning Application: Y19/0704/FH (force.com)
Comment	No objection – the committee felt that rigorous drainage checks should be carried out and that it is subject to neighbours' concerns.

Application number	21/2539/FH
Location	51 Wear Bay Crescent

Proposal Replacement Single-Storey Rear Extension
Closing date 8th February 2022
Link to documents [Planning Application: 21/2539/FH \(force.com\)](#)
Comment **No objection**

Application number 21/2529/FH
Location Tesco Car Park, Cheriton High Street
Proposal Installation of 6 No. fascia signs, 1 No. 15" digital booth screen and 3 No. booth lettering.
Closing date 8th February 2022
Link to documents [Planning Application: 21/2529/FH \(force.com\)](#)
Comment **No objection**

LATE APPLICATIONS

Application number 22/0109/FH
Location Princess Royal, 28 South Street
Proposal Partial demolition of the Princess Royal (unsafe structure)
Closing date 22/02/22
Link to documents [Planning Application: 22/0109/FH \(force.com\)](#)
Comment **Object – The Committee have received comments made on behalf of Go Folkestone and agree that an independent survey should be carried out that would state the reason for demolition. The Committee also agreed that the application should be referred to the District Council Conservation Officer and the area checked for conservation status. Councillors Richard Wallace, Mary Lawes and Roger West wished to express concerns for lack of information over plans for future development.**

Application number 22/0012/FH
Location 73 Cheriton High Street
Proposal Change of use and conversion of existing redundant store building, shop & residential space over into 7 no. one-bedroom, one person flats along with rear extension
Closing date 15/02/22
Link to documents [Planning Application: 22/0012/FH \(force.com\)](#)
Comment **Object – the Committee believe that the property has not be marketed as a ‘shop for**

sale' for 12 months, as required. There was also concern regards to the parking facilities available.

6. PREMISES LICENCES

Application number PR202201-74033
Address Folklore, 69 The Old High Street, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1RN
Activities This is a variation to extend opening hours and hours of service, also to add the provision for live music and plays.
Last date for representations 08/02/2022
Link [Process: PR202201-74033 \(force.com\)](#)
Comment **Object – the committee have proposed the following: 23:00 Sunday – Thursday for live music. 00:00 Friday-Saturday for live music. 01:00 - Close**

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
24th February 2022


..... Chairman

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at Folkestone Town Council Offices, Town Hall, 1-2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone on Thursday, 16th December 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors R Field, P Gane, D Horton, D Jeffrey, M Lawes, C McConville (Chair) and B Walker.

ABSENT:

OFFICERS PRESENT: P Cross (Finance Officer).

1442. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Town Clerk and Cllrs D Brook, M Keutenius and T Prater.

1443. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were received from Cllrs R Field, P Gane and C McConville, in their capacity as Folkestone & Hythe District Councillors, with regard to item 10 'Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan & Report 2021/22'.

1444. MINUTES

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st October 2021.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st October 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor D Horton

Seconded: Councillor B Walker

Voting: F:6, Ag:0, Ab:1

1445. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The Committee considered the schedule of payments for the period 1st October 2021 to 30th November 2021.

RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1st October 2021 to 30th November 2021 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor M Lawes

Seconded: Councillor P Gane

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

1446. BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2021/22

The budget monitoring statement to 30th November 2021 was received by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Budget Monitoring Statement to 30th November 2021 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor M Lawes
Seconded: Councillor B Walker
Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

1447. BANK RECONCILIATION

The Committee received the bank reconciliation statement as at 30th November 2021.

RESOLVED: That the Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30th November 2021 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor P Gane
Seconded: Councillor C McConville
Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

1448. WARD GRANTS

A list of ward grants approved by the Town Clerk between 1st October 2021 and 30th November 2021 was provided for the Committee's information and duly noted.

1449. WARD GRANT BALANCES 2021/22

A list of ward grant balances available to each Councillor as at 3rd December 2021 was provided for the Committee's information and duly noted.

1450. BUDGET 2022/23

Report F/21/301 set out the draft proposals for the Town Council's budget for 2022/23, considering proposed growth items submitted by spending committees. Members were requested to make final recommendations for the budget/precept for presentation to the full Council on 13th January 2022.

RESOLVED: That the draft budget be noted and agreed but the precept be deferred to full Council in January when the new property tax base figures will be available.

Proposed: Councillor D Jeffrey
Seconded: Councillor P Gane
Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

1451. PARISH INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN & REPORT 2021/22

Presented for the Committee's approval, prior to submission to Folkestone & Hythe District Council by 31st December 2021, was a Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan & Report focusing on improvements to Parks and Play Areas during the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years.

The Committee wished to pass on their thanks to the Communities & Grants Officer and the Town Clerk for their hard work on this project.

RESOLVED: That the Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan & Report 2021/22 be approved.

Proposed: Councillor P Gane

Seconded: Councillor D Horton

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

1452. SILVERSCREEN CINEMA GAS BOILER

The Committee was updated regarding a proposed variation to Charlier's contract to accommodate replacing the gas boiler in the cinema with a new Worcester Greenstar Boiler, 2 additional radiators and associated works for the sum of £11,518.75 ex VAT.

RESOLVED: That a decision on the boiler replacement be delegated to the Chairman, subject to him receiving further information regarding the proposed boiler and whether other options had been considered.

Proposed: Councillor D Jeffrey

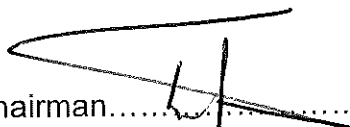
Seconded: Councillor C McConville

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

1453. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 17th February 2022

The meeting concluded at 7.40pm

Chairman.....

Date.....17/2/2022.....

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held at the Town Hall, 1 – 2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone, CT20 1DY on Tuesday, 12th October 2021 at 7pm.

Present: Councillors Abena Akuffo – Kelly (Arrived at 19:03), Ann Berry, Paul Bingham, Peter Gane, Nicola Keen and Roger West.

In attendance: Vicky Deakin, Communities & Events Officer

1165. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

1166. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

1167. MINUTES

The Committee were asked to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 1st June 2021 and to authorise the Chairman of the Committee to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st June 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Paul Bingham

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

Voting: F:6, Ag:0, Ab:0

1168. FOLKESTONE MUSEUM REPORT CS/21/297

Noted

1169. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 'SWITCH ON' & PARADE REPORT CS/21/298

The report was noted and it was

RESOLVED: That £12,000 be released from the Christmas Festivities Budget, £500 of which to be allocated to the Cheriton event for security provision and the remainder to support the delivery of the Town Centre Switch On event.

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Paul Bingham

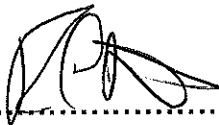
Voting: F:6, Ag:0, Ab:0



1170. COMMUNITIES & EVENTS OFFICER REPORT CS/21/299
Noted

1171. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
1st February 2022 @ 7pm (provisional)

Meeting concluded at 19:30

Chairman 

Date

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Climate and Environment Committee meeting held on Thursday, 14th October 2021 at 7pm at the Town Hall.

Present: Councillors Ann Berry, Abena Akuffo-Kelly (Chair), David Horton, Connor McConville, Jackie Meade, Belinda Walker and Richard Wallace (arrived at 19:05).

Absent: Councillor Danny Brook

In attendance: Vicky Deakin – Communities & Events Officer

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from Councillors Ray Field and Tim Prater were received and approved.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor David Horton declared a personal interest in respect of the Allotment Agenda Item.

26. MINUTES

The Committee were asked to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate and Environment Committee held on 2nd September 2021 and to authorise the Chairman of the Committee to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd September 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Ann Berry

Seconded: Councillor Belinda Walker

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

27. ALLOTMENT RULES

After considerable debate and comprehensive consideration of the draft version 12 updated Allotment Rules, it was

RESOLVED: That a further review of the Allotment Rules be conducted by the Town Clerk and Allotment Manager with particular consideration and attention to Rules 3.23 and 3.24 respectively, specific prohibited items to be listed with reasons why (indicating that any exceptions for consideration would require a request made in writing by the tenant) and that notices must be displayed detailing exactly what pesticide, herbicide or inorganic fertiliser has been used on what date with FTC to compile a list of recommended products.

Proposed: Councillor Connor McConville

Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

28. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The committee were asked to consider additions 5.3 to 5.5 and note the updated action plan. After some debate and Members requesting that the Town Clerk provide Town Councillors with details of cost implications of actioning the plan, it was

RESOLVED: That the updated Action Plan be adopted.

Proposed: Councillor Belinda Walker

Seconded: Councillor David Horton

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

29. COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT OFFICER REPORT CE/21/300

Noted

30. BUDGET 2021/22 – POTENTIAL GROWTH ITEMS

The Committee were asked to consider proposals for possible growth items and non-recurring revenue expenditure for climate & environment projects and initiatives for next year.

RESOLVED: That a request to increase the Tree Planting Budget to £20,000 for 2022/23 be taken to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration at its meeting on 16th December 2021.

Proposed: Councillor Belinda Walker

Seconded: Councillor David Horton

Voting: F:7, Ag:0, Ab:0

31. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

3rd February 2022

The meeting concluded at 7.40pm.

Chairman ^{Ure} *Belinda Walker*

Date *3rd February 2022*

This report will be made public on 10 March 2022

**Folkestone
Town Council**



Report Number **C/22/305**

To: Full Council
Date: 17 March 2022
Status: Public Report
Responsible Officer: Town Clerk

SUBJECT: Grants Scheme Review

SUMMARY: At its meeting of 11 December 2021, Council resolved to review the current process for Town Grants after the next Council meeting. This report outlines the current situation and provides options for moving forward.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

A motion for a new Councillor Community Grant Scheme, proposed at the Council meeting of 6 April 2021, was lost. At the same meeting it was resolved not to reinstate the Grants Committee. As a result, it was noted that for 2021/22 Town Grants would be considered by Full Council using the existing Town Grant forms and requiring all Councillors to submit scores using the scoring system previously established by the Grants Committee. Council must now decide if it wishes to continue with this or adopt a new process.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) To receive and note the report.**
- 2) To agree a process for consideration of Town Grant applications.**

Aims and Objectives – *To comply with Best Practice and Quality Council legislation.*

Financial Implications – *To use Town Council funds efficiently and effectively.*

Equal Opportunities – *Equal access to services for all.*

Environmental Impact – *The environmental impact has been considered in the preparation of all budgets.*

1. Introduction/background

- 1.1 Folkestone Town Council operates two separate grant schemes. Ward Grants consist of a sum of money (divided amongst Councillors based on the electorate in each ward) which can be used by each Councillor for projects which demonstrate a direct benefit to the ward, or any part of it, or to all or some of its residents. Town Grants are generally for applications for larger sums and, for the last year, have been considered by Full Council. It is Town Grants which are the subject of this review.
- 1.2 When the Council first introduced the Grants Scheme in 2005, town grants were considered at the Finance and General Purposes Committee. In time, as the Scheme became more popular and available funding was significantly increased, meetings became very lengthy due to the number of applications. As a result, it was deemed necessary to establish a committee solely to deal with these applications and in August 2015 the Grants Committee was established to ensure that a reasonable amount of time could be given to each application. At its initial meeting the Committee considered 16 applications, 14 of these applicants attended to answer questions.
- 1.3 At its meeting of 12 November 2020 (Minute 1746), Council resolved to abolish the Grants Committee, stating that the Council wanted a scheme similar to F&HDC and that this would free up officer time for an Environment Committee in the future.
- 1.4 A proposal for a new Councillor Community Grant Scheme, to replace Town Grants, was put forward in report G-21-278 at the Council meeting of 18 March 2021. However, the motion to adopt the new grants scheme was lost.

2. Current process

- 2.1 There are currently two options when applying for a Town Grant from Folkestone Town Council.
- 2.2 Town Grants (under £1,000) may be submitted by groups, organisations and individuals but must be under £1000 and must demonstrate a benefit to some or all of the town's residents.
- 2.3 Town Grants (£1,000 and over, up to £2,500) may be submitted by groups, organisations and individuals for between £1,000 and £2,500 and must demonstrate a benefit to some or all of the town's residents.
- 2.4 Applicants should only apply for one grant per project and may apply for up to three projects per year. No more than £2,500 can be requested per project.

- 2.5 Where £1,000 or more is requested, a representative may be invited to attend the relevant meeting and answer questions put to them by members.
- 2.6 Up until its abolition, the Grants Committee held three meetings per year, to broadly coincide with the events schedule, taking into account the times when most applications were received. The three meetings were arranged for April, September/October and January.
- 2.7 Since the aforementioned meeting of 6 April 2021, applications and scoresheets have been submitted to all Councillors several weeks in advance of the Council meeting, so that accumulated scores can be presented at Council and grants awarded. Applicants have not previously been invited to attend Council meetings due to the pandemic. However, invitations have been reinstated with effect from the 17 March meeting.

3. Options

- 3.1 Four possible options have been outlined below, all will have pros and cons. Councillors may have other options which they would like to put forward.
- 3.2 There have been far fewer applications over the last two years due to a significant reduction in public events caused by the pandemic. However, between 2015 and 2019 there were an average of 36 applications per year, over 90% of which were requesting £1,000 or more. The time required to question applicants should therefore not be under-estimated.

3.3 OPTION 1

To continue the current practise of considering Town Grants at Council meetings.

The following will need to be considered:

- The frequency that grants are to appear on the agenda.
- Meetings during the first part of the financial year (i.e. Annual Meeting, Town Assembly, AGAR Meeting) are not suitable for the inclusion of grants. Therefore, the first meeting at which grants could be considered would be in September, too late for summer events.
- Inviting applicants to attend the meeting will extend the meeting times considerably. Bearing in mind that the Town Council's standing order 3(x) states that a meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours, it is highly likely that, on occasion, Council business will not be concluded.

3.4 **OPTION 2**
To reinstate the Grants Committee.
Council may wish to consider reinstating the Grants Committee, possibly increasing the number of members or, perhaps, inviting all 18 Councillors to score applications prior to meetings, thus improving inclusivity.

3.5 **OPTION 3**
Abolish the Town Grants scheme and add the budget to Ward Grants. Having just one scheme would simplify the process and allow for faster payments. Members would each have a much larger ward grant fund and the only approval required would be from the Town Clerk.

3.6 **OPTION 4**
To reconsider the Councillor Community Grant Scheme presented in report G-21-278.

4. Recommendations

4.1 To consider options for Town Grants and agree on a process for moving forward.

This report will be made public on 10 March 2022

Folkestone
Town Council



Report Number **C/22/307**

To: Full Council
Date: 17 March 2022
Status: Public Report

Subject: TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

SUMMARY:

This report is in two sections.

Section A provides an update on the treasury management activities that have taken place during 2021/22.

Section B sets out the proposed strategy for treasury management for 2022/23.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because:-

- a) The Council must have regard to the Financial Codes when carrying out its duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- b) The Council is required to approve an Investment Strategy for the forthcoming year.
- c) The Financial Standing Orders require that the Council receives an annual report on its treasury management activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/22/307.**
- 2. To adopt the Investment Policy, as set out in Section B of the report, for the financial year 2022/23.**

Aims and Objectives – *Quality Council Status*

Financial Implications – *To maximise investment income at no risk to the Council*

Equal Opportunities – *Equal access to services*

Environmental Issues – *N/A*

SECTION A

1. REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES FOR 2021/22

- 1.1 The Council's main source of income for 2021/22 was the Precept. In accordance with good practice and the Council's approved policy, surplus monies were placed on deposit with Folkestone and Hythe District Council at an agreed rate of 0.25% below the bank rate. The bank rate recovered to 0.5% in February 2022.
- 1.2 Some additional funding has been held on deposit and interest of approximately £200 has been received.
- 1.3 The Council had the following amounts invested/on deposit at the dates shown:-

	<u>Investment</u>	<u>Deposit Accounts</u>
At 31 March 2021:	£500,000	£250,000
At 10 March 2022:	£500,000	£300,000

SECTION B

1. INVESTMENT POLICY 2022/23

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to approve the attached Investment Policy for 2022/23 which complies with the requirements of the Local Authorities Regulations 2003.
- 1.2 The Policy will allow the Council to invest a proportion of its funds in investments which do not have immediate access, for up to one year's duration, where the rates are advantageous.

Folkestone Town Council

INVESTMENT POLICY

1. **Strategy:**

“Investment” means any transaction that relies upon the power in section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 (the “2003 Act”) and is recorded in the Council’s balance sheet under the heading of investments within current assets or long-term investments.

The Council’s strategy is to invest for the best income return having regard to (i) the requirements of the 2003 Act and the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, and (ii) the absolute requirement to avoid capital loss.

2. **Objectives:**

The Council’s priorities are, in the following ranking order:

- i. The security of capital to minimise the risk of losses.
- ii. The liquidity of investments to meet the cash flow needs of the Council.
- iii. Maximising income within the framework of the national economic situation.

The Council will aim to achieve the best rate of return on investments commensurate with adequate safeguards of security and liquidity.

2. **Policy:**

- i. To retain not less than three month’s average working capital requirement to meet projected expenditure in current accounts, deposit accounts or other approved investments with immediate access.
- ii. Any other funds may be placed on deposit of up to one year’s duration, depending on the prevailing interest rates and forecast cash flow requirements. Access to invested funds must be within the time limits required to ensure that adequate funds are always available to meet the Council’s financial commitments.
- iii. Deposited funds must be made with a body or in an investment scheme which has been awarded a high credit quality or made with the UK Government or another Local Authority. The required level of Credit Rating for UK Banks and Building Societies is ‘A’ or above from Standard and Poor’s, Moody’s Investors Service Ltd or Fitch Ratings Ltd unless the bank is registered with the Financial Services Authority (FSCS) and the Council is otherwise satisfied as to its levels of capital and liquidity.
- iv. The Council will not knowingly invest directly in businesses whose activities and practices pose a risk of serious harm to individuals or

groups, or whose activities are inconsistent with the Council's mission and values. This would include, avoiding investment in institutions with material links to:

- Human rights abuse (eg child labour, political oppression, modern slavery)
- Environmentally harmful activities (eg fossil fuels, pollution, destruction of habitat)
- Socially harmful activities (eg tobacco, gambling, production of armaments)

- v. The Council will if possible provide information on the ethical ratings schemes of its investments. The council will use The Ethical Investment Research Service (EIRIS), which is a global leader in the provision of environmental, social, governance research for responsible investors.

3. Treasury Management:

Council does not use external advisers to offer information, advice or assistance relating to investments, nor does it regard there as being a need for its staff to be trained in investment management given the nature of its investments but will rely on information which is publicly available. Investments shall be decided and placed by the Responsible Financial Officer having used due diligence and consultation with the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

4. Investment of Money Borrowed in Advance of Need:

In the unlikely event of money being borrowed in advance of need, it will be invested in specified investments in accordance with this strategy.

5. Risk Management:

Unless with an approved local authority, no more than 50% of the funds are to be placed with any one borrower, unless a proposal is made to and accepted by Full Council.

For the prudent management of its treasury balances, funds must only be deposited or invested with banks, building societies, local authorities or other public authorities, unless an alternative proposal is made to and accepted by Full Council.

The Responsible Financial Officer will monitor the risk of loss on investments by reference to credit ratings of organisations in which the Council holds investments on a bi-annual basis.

6. Review:

The investment strategy will be reviewed annually and approved by Full Council.

7. Transparency:

This policy is publicly available on the Councils website.

8. Training:

Officers and Councillors responsible for Treasury Management will receive training as offered by the National Association of Local Councils and other appropriate bodies.

This report will be made public on 10 March 2022

**Folkestone
Town Council**



Report Number **C/22/308**

To: Full Council
Date: 17 March 2022
Status: Public Report

Responsible Officer: Town Clerk

**Subject: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RISK ASSESSMENT
AND INSURANCE REVIEW 2022/23**

SUMMARY:

This report updates the Governance and Accountability Risk Assessment and reviews the current levels of insurance.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to agree the recommendations below because:

- a) The Council is required to demonstrate that it has considered any risks which may affect its business.
- b) The Council must be adequately insured.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/22/308**
- 2. To approve and adopt the Governance and Accountability Risk Assessment 2022/23**
- 3. To approve the Insurance Review and any recommended amendments to insurance cover**

Aims and Objectives – To carry out a business risk assessment and make certain that the Council has adequate insurance cover

Financial Implications – The present budget for insurance premiums is adequate

Equal Opportunities – Equal opportunities for all

Folkestone Town Council

Governance and Accountability

Risk Assessment

2022/23

No.	Risk Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Measures Taken	Recommendations
1.	Failure to attract sufficient candidates for vacancies or elections	Low	Medium	Council activities published on website and in community magazine. Publicise elections & vacancies on notice boards, social media and website.	
2.	Councillors lack relevant skills, commitment or work in isolation.	Low	Medium	Councillors' skills are reviewed upon election. In-house and external training offered. Members Welcome Pack & Good Councillor Guide Town Clerk and officers roles clearly defined.	
3.	Lack of Strategy and Forward Planning.	Medium	Low	Council adopts a five year Corporate Plan which sets out key aims and objectives. Councillors skills are reviewed and appointments to committees are made utilising individual strengths and interests wherever possible.	
4.	Adverse publicity and the impact on the services and facilities offered to the public. Lack of consultation.	Low	Medium	Good working relationship with the local media to ensure that the public are informed of any future projects or events. Agendas and minutes of Council meetings are available to the public. The Council promotes full disclosure and transparency. Decisions delegated to the Town Clerk relating to the granting of a permission or license, affecting the rights of an individual or awarding a contract or incurring material expenditure are made available for viewing by the public and retained by the Council for 6 years	
5.	Breaking and entering into the Town Hall offices & museum.	High	Low	Intruder alarms and fire extinguishers fitted. Secure locks fitted. Record of key holders maintained. Emergency call-out measures in place. Alarms and fire protection equipment serviced at least annually. CCTV Coverage. Security Grille to rear door corridor.	

No.	Risk Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Measures Taken	Recommendations
6.	Damage to third party property or individuals.	High	Low	Public Liability Insurance with reputable insurance provider. Staff awareness of health and safety policy.	
7.	Loss or damage to Council properties, furniture and equipment.	High	Medium	Town Hall insured by the Town Council with reputable insurance provider. Furniture and equipment insured by the Town Council with reputable insurance provider. Maintenance of asset register. Regular maintenance of equipment including alarms and fire extinguishers. Staff presence during Museum opening hours. CCTV Coverage.	
8.	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty.	Medium	Low	Fidelity Guarantee with reputable insurance provider. Secure storage of cash. Regular banking of cash receipts. Thorough vetting process for job applicants and annual staff reviews. Minimise distance between office and bank. Carry out banking at random times.	Ensure that Fidelity Guarantee is sufficient to cover a minimum of total reserves plus half of precept.
9.	Loss of Council funds held in bank accounts.	High	Low	Fidelity Guarantee with reputable insurance provider. Monthly bank reconciliations. Two approved signatures for all payments. Regular schedule of payments reports to Finance & General Purposes Committee. Internal Audit. External Audit.	Ensure that Fidelity Guarantee is sufficient to cover a minimum of total reserves plus half of precept.
10.	Insolvency of insurance company.	High	Low	Use of one of the largest companies providing specialist cover for Councils.	Seek advice from the Financial Services Authority if in doubt regarding insurance company.
11.	Failure to keep proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements.	High	Low	Regular financial reporting. Adoption of financial regulations. Internal Audit checks. Annual External Audit. Appropriate staff training.	

No.	Risk Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Measures Taken	Recommendations
12.	Non-payment of bills.	High	Low	Efficient financial systems. Sufficient authorised signatories.	
13.	Insufficient precept to provide Council services.	High	Low	Approval of budget by full Council. Provision of regular budget monitoring statements.	
14.	Insufficient reserves to meet unexpected expenditure.	High	Low	Prudent budgeting. Sensible reserves.	
15.	Failing to comply with legislation and council policies.	High	Low	Qualified Town Clerk. All key legal and regulatory requirements are identified. Regular Committee meetings. Internal Audit. External Audit. Councillor and staff training. FTC employs the services of NatWest Mentor as both HR and H&S consultants to assist with risk mitigation and competent person.	
16.	Failure to ensure that employment law, pension and PAYE/N.I. regulations are adhered to.	High	Low	Contracts of employment for all staff. Systems in place for updating records for changes in relevant legislation. Maintenance of accurate personnel files. Organogram in operation providing clarity of posts.	
17.	Unfair dismissal claims.	High	Low	Disciplinary policy and grievance procedure in place. All staff are offered training. All staff have an annual appraisal and regular meetings with the Town Clerk. All staff have a job description and receive a copy of the employee handbook.	Seek advice from South East Employers and NatWest Mentor to ensure regulations are correctly administered.
18.	Loss of Key Staff	High	Low	Systems, plans and processes are documented wherever feasible. More than one member of staff trained in particular functions wherever possible. Training is offered to all staff. Formal Notice Period written into Contracts.	

No.	Risk Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Measures Taken	Recommendations
19.	Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff and/or visitors.	High	Medium	CCTV coverage. Staff awareness of health and safety policy. Appropriate training for frontline staff. Employers' liability cover with reputable insurance provider. Presence of SIA officer during public opening hours. Risk assessments carried out for all activities undertaken by employees.	
20.	Failure to ensure HMRC regulations are met with regard to VAT and the construction industry scheme.	High	Low	Regular returns to HMRC. Systems in place for updating records for changes in relevant legislation. Appropriately experienced/trained staff.	
21.	Failure to comply with Health & Safety and Fire regulations.	High	Low	Annual review of Health & Safety Policy. Prominent display of Health & Safety and Fire Safety advice. Appropriately trained staff. External Competent Person appointed.	
22.	Failure to provide accurate reporting of Council business.	Medium	Low	Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy in safekeeping. Minutes circulated appropriately. Minutes placed on website (in draft initially). Minutes approved at next meeting.	
23.	Failure to ensure the proper use of funds granted to local community groups.	Low	Low	Schedule of payments reported to Finance & General Purposes Committee. Internal Audit. External Audit. Feedback Forms or Reply slips from successful applicants to confirm appropriate use of grants.	
24.	Failure to respond to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection.	Low	Low	Minutes placed on website. Advertising of end of year accounts and making them available to the public for inspection, as required under the Financial Regulations.	Meet statutory dates and comply with legislation.
25.	Failure to record members' interests, gifts	Medium	Low	Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and a register of gifts and hospitality received, kept by	Annual reminder sent to Councillors requesting that they update the

No.	Risk Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Measures Taken	Recommendations
	and hospitality received.			Town Clerk. Disclosures of interest as item on agendas. Internal Audit check. Update declarations of interest by councillors is Councillors responsibility when circumstances change.	disclosure of pecuniary interests register.
26.	Inappropriate use of amenities/facilities by third parties and community groups.	Medium	Low	Leases and agreements in place for use/hire of amenities/facilities by third parties and community groups. Annual review of Leases & Agreements.	
27.	Failure of Computer System in whole or part.	High	Medium	Service contract with reputable organisation. Virus protection and data backup via Microsoft Azure Cloud and physical disk. Cyber Essentials certification. All PCs running Windows 10 and Microsoft 365 Business Premium. Staff Training.	
28.	Failure to comply with codes of practice for procurement of goods and services.	Medium	Low	Purchase order system. Contracts awarded in line with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Procurement Policy.	Adherence to codes of practice for procurement.
29.	Failure to comply with GDPR & Freedom of Information Act	High	Low	Town Clerk appointed as Data Protection Officer. GDPR Fundamentals certification. Annual review of Data Protection and associated audits & procedures. Council adheres to the model publication scheme. The Council is registered with the ICO.	
30.	Government Policy and changes in legislation	High	High	All proposed legal and regulatory changes affecting local authorities monitored and reviewed. Membership of NALC. KALC & SLCC ensures council is always informed of any proposed changes.	
31.	Global Pandemic	Medium	Medium	Business Continuity Plan, Hybrid Working, Contingency & Reserves and Town Clerk's Scheme of Delegation.	To continue to monitor the situation and operate within government guidelines.

INSURANCE SCHEDULE 2022/2023

Insurance	Asset Value *	Existing Cover	Recommended Adjustments
<i>Buildings:</i> The Town Hall, 1-2 Guildhall Street Club House, Park Farm Road Allotments Toilet Hut, Park Farm Road Allotments Loss of Rent (Town Hall)	£700,000	£2,974,883 (Rebuild Value) £1,957 (+ £1,957 Contents) £1,957 £60,000	
<i>Contents/All Risks:</i> Civic Regalia Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings Chambers/Cinema Furniture & Kiosk Chambers/Cinema Screen & Speaker System Other Contents and Consumable Stock Computer and Office Equipment Cash (in locked safes) Cash (in transit in the custody of an employee) Cash (in locked receptacles other than safes) Temporary Contents (Third Party Exhibition Items) Rented Items	£93,890 £52,355 £28,300 £24,900 £33,485	£127,310 (See Note 1) £52,400 £30,924 £27,209 £2,217 £33,949 £5,000 £5,000 £500 £614,937 £4,797	£35,000
<i>Additional Items:</i> Street Furniture (inc. Leas Beacon) Speedwatch Equipment William Harvey Statue War Memorial Gurkha Memorial Paintings ('Belgian Refugees' & 'Viaduct') 2 x WW1 Archive Books CCTV Equipment Christmas Lights Power Columns (Cheriton High Street) Folkestone Collection (including display cabinets) Bus Shelters Play Equipment	£26,750 £2,251 £124,833 £59,073 £30,000 £21,706 £2,000 £129,250 £65,870 £4,400 £2,000,000 £22,500 £100,000	£33,886 £2,768 £153,529 £72,652 £33,765 £26,696 £2,460 £130,000 £66,000 £4,808 £2,251,018 £22,500 £100,000	£27,500

Insurance	Asset Value *	Existing Cover	Recommended Adjustments
Public Liability		£10,000,000	
Employer's Liability		£10,000,000	
Hirer's Liability		£2,000,000	
Libel and Slander		£250,000	
<i>Motor Vehicle:</i>			
Damage to Property		£5,000,000	
Repairs		No limit	
Legal Expenses and Uninsured Loss Recovery		£100,000	
Fidelity Guarantee (All Members and Employees)		£2,000,000 (See Note 2)	
Personal Accident (Accident and Assault Cover)		£500,000 any one person £2,000,000 any one incident	

* It is an Audit requirement that assets, as shown in the balance sheet, are not revalued but remain at purchase price. However, they are insured at replacement or rebuild value.

Notes

1. The Council's Civic Regalia was professionally valued by a NAG Registered Valuer in August 2006. The Insurance Company has applied its standard annual increase (index linked) to all items.
2. The external auditor recommends that the fidelity guarantee insurance should be at least equivalent to cash and investments at year end plus half the precept. At the end of 2020/21 this equated to:

Cash and Investments	£881,820
Half Precept	<u>£436,975</u>
	<u>£1,318,795</u>

The cover of £2,000,000 is sufficient to comply with the external auditor's advice.

KCC report for Folkestone Town Council - March 2022

Following a full day's debate, lasting from 9.30am in the morning until nearly 6.00pm, on Thursday 10th February, KCC agreed its £1.2 billion budget for 2022/23. Adult social care and health services accounts for £484 million of this and there is £270m for young people with the balance going on nearly three hundred other services such as roads, which receives £52 million, digital connectivity, library services, Household Waste Recycling Centres, tackling climate change and more. The cost of providing services has risen by £84 million in the forthcoming year and this is being met by agreed savings of £38 million and a rise in council tax of 1.99% for general taxation (and a further 1% separately earmarked for social care). The increase equates to 82p per week for a typical band D household and takes effect from this April. The Council Tax bill in Folkestone will also have separate charges for Folkestone Town Council, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds, Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue Service.

Whilst the budget debate mainly focused on some of our discretionary services, where the Council is having to make savings, it's important to remember the core services amongst these that are still being guaranteed and provided, such as our Community Wardens in East Folkestone, and the subsidy for the Kent Travel Saver bus pass, which would otherwise cost between £300 and £400 more per year than the new cost that has now been agreed for the next academic year. Labour (and Jackie Meade), put forward a motion to freeze the current rate for the full price Kent Travel Saver, something which Dylan Jeffrey also refused to vote against when the amendment was voted on. The amendment was lost. The administration did agree to find additional money to freeze the cost of the Kent Travel Saver, for the next three years, for those families on low incomes or free school meals. This is a great relief for many families and does uphold the promise that both our councillors in Folkestone West and Folkestone East had made to seek to preserve the current rates for those most affected (and perhaps avoided the ignominy of one of our local councillors having to vote against his own party at County Hall prior to the new money of £54,000 per year being found). Another significant amendment to the original proposed budget was the retention of the Disabled Companion Pass. All members were broadly in agreement that we must retain this important means of transport to assist those most vulnerable in our county and to limit any increase in social isolation. The additional cost is £300,000 per year and the administration agreed to look at ways to find the money and that the companion pass would be maintained.

Another area of concern was the proposal around the Kent Homeless Connect service. It was agreed that transitional arrangements would be put in place when the £5 million contract expires in September 2022 to ensure continued support for the remainder of the financial year up until the end of March 2023, and to allow the district councils more time to take on their responsibilities in this area. A highlight of the budget was being able to demonstrate that the Council was successfully saving money through a programme of reducing carbon emissions with several major projects that are now reducing our energy use and costs, a strategy that was broadly welcomed by all that were present. Finally, there was also a £1.7 billion programme of capital works over the next ten years agreed which includes £92 million for highways and £85 million to provide additional school places.

At the end of a long day, there had been a fully costed alternative budget proposed by the Labour Group, and an additional nineteen amendments that were debated in full before we arrived at the final budget decision for KCC.

If anyone is struggling to pay their council tax, then there are schemes to help those in financial difficulty and a good place to ask for advice is Kent Together. Go to www.kent.gov.uk/kenttogether or call 03000 41 92 92.

One outcome of the budget has been the move to a new contract to deliver special educational needs home-to-school transport, which was necessary to manage the significant costs and rise in the number of those eligible to receive such support numbering over 750 additional cases in the last year, and capacity issues in the transport sector to meet these increasing needs. This re-tendering process led to the introduction of new contracts coming into force after half-term and has left many families in despair, angst and worry with lack of information, last-minute arrangements, or a failure to put arrangements in place for some of the 6,250 children who need this service to get to school and home again afterwards. Dylan and Jackie have been actively supporting families affected by this change and will continue to do so and raise questions about what has gone wrong. Dylan, along with other members of the Committee from Labour and the Conservatives, has called for the matter to be discussed by Scrutiny Committee and there will be an urgent special scrutiny meeting to look at what happened on 8th March. Hopefully any lessons learned can be used for other re-tendering exercises at KCC and a positive outcome can be achieved for all.

There is plenty of good news on the environmental front, as KCC is once again running its SolarTogether scheme which uses group buying power to get a better price for both solar panels and battery storage. You can register your interest at www.solartogether.co.uk and get a no obligation quote. Panels and a battery are installed and are able to generate around 300 kWh every six months (an average UK household uses around 10 kWh a day). If you're interested in controlling your energy costs and saving the planet, and most importantly have a property able to utilise this service, then it is definitely worth investigating or promoting it amongst residents.

EV600 is another Environment scheme that KCC has co-ordinated across Kent and one in which Folkestone & Hythe District Council is taking part. Together with *Connected Kerb* and councils across Kent, a network of 600 Electric Vehicle Charging points is being set up in council owned car parks. Locally the six existing charging points (three of which are in Folkestone) will be replaced by over 100 new charging points in 25 of the district council's 27 car parks with a minimum of four in each offering a mix of 7kw, 22kw and rapid 50kw chargers. It is hoped to have them all operational by the end of March. The new charger points are 75% funded by KCC with the company providing the service, Connected Kerb, providing the remaining 25% of costs.

February saw National Apprentice Week which highlighted the benefits of both being an apprentice and taking on an apprentice. KCC provides advice to Kent employers from help in recruiting the right apprentice to getting professional development for existing staff. KCC may also be able to offer funding towards the costs of employing an apprentice from its own Apprenticeship Levy. To qualify, businesses must show they will use the money to improve Kent lives, specifically, giving young people in the county the best start in life and contributing to economic growth or helping older and vulnerable residents. To find out more about what KCC offers please check out the link at www.kent.gov.uk/business/grow-your-business/hire-an-apprentice

Another piece of good news was the announcement that KCC will waive the costs of a road closure application for Platinum Jubilee street parties planned for any day between 2nd to 5th June. Full details about organising a street party and how to complete the form are available at www.kent.gov.uk/streetparties

On 11th February the annual Try Angle Awards were held at the Three Hills Sports Centre in Folkestone with young people being recognised for their outstanding efforts and achievements across a range of activities including sports, arts, community service and bravery. It's always good to be reminded just how many young people are doing so well and

achieving so much. Please do keep a lookout for young people in our community who are trying their best and who could be nominated for the next year's awards. The categories are wide enough to cover most anything and it really encourages the young people to know that someone cares enough to nominate them.

Over the past year, since being elected in May 2021, Dylan and Jackie have worked together to support local projects in our areas utilising the grant money available for our divisions. This is in addition to the direct support that we have given to organisations, businesses and constituents in our respective divisions. The first example of this joint working has been joint funding of £2,000 for music projects in our local schools to help local children dealing with life after the pandemic and has been referenced in a previous report. In the last few weeks, a second example has been the joint funding of £2,000 for Kent Refugee Area Network to help support delivery of Learning for Life classes 4 days a week at the Folkestone hub, where young refugees and asylum seekers learn ESOL and essential lifeskills. They also have football sessions at Three Hills, to add value to the wider offer of activities and support given to young people in addition to the classes they attend, and to help with socialisation, offer peer support and social support to combat their feelings of isolation and loneliness. This year has been tough in Kent with an ever-increasing number of young refugees and asylum seekers that has at times overwhelmed the core services that Kent County Council can provide. Projects like KRAN help with the integration of young refugees and asylum seekers into our community and life in the UK. It is for that reason that Dylan and Jackie are delighted to be able to assist in the work of KRAN locally. As the death of politicians like Jo Cox and David Amess has shown, there is more in common than that which divides us and to show humanity is a strength, not a weakness.

Another area where there was broad agreement was the need to listen to local residents in relation to the originally proposed Active Travel scheme for new cycle lanes from Folkestone to Cheriton and the removal of nearly half of all available parking along Cheriton Road. A petition with 3,369 signatures was received opposing the scheme, hundreds of letters and emails were received by County Councillors about the scheme and two packed public meetings took place in Cheriton. There were two formal KCC consultations amongst local residents and businesses that took place and nearly 1,000 respondents.

The outcome of all of this was announced in mid-January in a report to KCC's Environment and Transport Committee.

'This scheme received the highest number of comments and opposition due to the removal of parking bays and the perceived negative impact on businesses. Consequently, acknowledging the strength of community feeling, other comments received from the consultation and the feedback from the public meetings attended by officers, officers are reviewing the scheme. Kent County Council will not proceed with the proposals on Cheriton High Street that were shown in the consultation as they were.'

Officers now need to review the terms of the grant and take stock. Officers are committed to working with local businesses and stakeholders to shape improvements so that investment can still take place to encourage walking and active travel in the locality. This may involve provision of improved walking facilities between the Harvey Grammar School and Shorncliffe Road. If a suitable scheme can be delivered, details will be reported to this Cabinet Committee in March 2022.'

KCC has demonstrated the importance of listening to local people and it was also a demonstration of effective representation by most local councillors, supported by their political parties, working together to deliver an outcome that has been welcomed by the

overwhelming and vast majority of local people and businesses. This can only serve to build trust in local politics and something that we can all benefit from as a consequence of the actions that have now taken place. Dylan, Jackie (and Rory in Cheriton West), would like to place on record our thanks to all who took part in the process and hopefully we can continue to deliver what residents want.

In February, a new consultation was launched on proposed savings for the Supported Bus Services. The Supported Bus budget is being reduced from April 2022 to £4.3 million, representing a decrease of £2.2 million. KCC currently spends about £6 million a year to contract services which are not profitable for bus companies but which the council thinks are important to the communities they serve. The proposed changes mean 48 contracts have been selected for withdrawal from the budget. Locally, this includes the removal of four journeys Monday to Saturday for the 17 bus route from Folkestone to Canterbury saving £46,613 per year and withdrawal of the 111 service from Ashford to Folkestone on Thursdays saving £13,007.

Before any decisions are made, the Council wants to hear your views on:

- how the proposed bus service withdrawals could impact you
- the assumptions we have made in the draft Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)
- any additional information that you think we need to consider about our approach and the proposals identified in this document.

Please let us know your views by visiting kent.gov.uk/bussavings and completing the online questionnaire.

This consultation will run for eight weeks from 24th February until 20th April 2022.

If you, or anyone you know, would like to request paper copies of the consultation material, or if you have any questions about this consultation, please email bussavings@kent.gov.uk or telephone 03000 42 14 37 (this number goes to an answer machine which is monitored during office hours). They can then be completed and returned to Freepost BUS SAVINGS.

Easy Read and Large Print versions of this document are available from our website or on request. If you need any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or telephone on 03000 42 15 53 (text relay service 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answer machine, which is monitored during office hours.

Finally, we both wanted to acknowledge and thank the members of the Highways and Emergency Response teams who worked tirelessly after the recent storms to keep the area safe and our roads and paths open. Staff responded magnificently, and we would like to pay tribute to their excellent work. It is often very easy to criticise when things go wrong, and we must always remember to thank our staff for going above and beyond to make Folkestone and Kent the wonderful place it is, and for so often being the unseen heroes of our county.

Dylan Jeffrey – Member for Folkestone West
Email: dylan.jeffrey@kent.gov.uk

Jackie Meade – Member for Folkestone East
Email: jackie.meade@kent.gov.uk

2nd March 2022