

Folkestone Town Council

MINUTES of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting for the Parish and Town of Folkestone held at the Town Hall, Folkestone on Tuesday, 6 May 2025 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Charles Bain Smith, Jane Darling, Peter Gane, Nicola Keen, Kieran Leigh, Adrian Lockwood, Lucy McGirr, Jackie Meade, Tim Prater, John Renshaw, Belinda Walker and Roger West.

In attendance: Toni Brenchley (Town Clerk), Georgina Wilson (Corporate Support Officer), Ian Bishop (Town Sergeant), Jennifer Griffin (Administration Officer) and Stephen Fielder (Driver).

Apologies: Councillors Liz McShane, Bridget Chapman and Laura Davison.

Absent: Councillors Connor McConville and Christine Dickinson.

Prayers

Prayers were led by Interfaith Minister Anita McKenzie.

Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly, the retiring Town Mayor welcomed everyone to the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Folkestone Town Council and gave a summary of the year as Mayor.

2166. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR 2025/26 AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Town Mayor, Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly, called upon Town Councillors to submit their nominations for the election of the Town Mayor of Folkestone for the 2025/26 municipal year.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Lucy McGirr be appointed Town Mayor for Folkestone Town Council 2025/26 until the next Annual Meeting and the acceptance of office by a successor.

Proposed: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly

Seconded: Councillor Belinda Walker

Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

Councillor Lucy McGirr signed and dated the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Town Clerk.

Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly spoke in support of the nomination of the Town Mayor and Councillor Belinda Walker spoke as seconder to the motion.

The Town Mayor reported that the Mayoral charities for the year would be East Folkestone Youth Club and the Community Network Cheriton.

The newly elected Town Mayor, Councillor Lucy McGirr, moved a vote of thanks

to the retiring Town Mayor, Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly.

Councillor Adrian Lockwood seconded the vote of thanks to the outgoing Town Mayor and gave a speech thanking Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly for the past Mayoral year.

Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly was then presented with the Past Mayor's Badge.

2167. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR 2025/26 AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Town Mayor, Councillor Lucy McGirr, called upon Town Councillors to submit their nominations for the election of the Deputy Town Mayor of Folkestone.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Jackie Meade be appointed Deputy Town Mayor for Folkestone Town Council 2025/26 until immediately after the election of a Town Mayor at the next Annual Meeting of Folkestone Town Council.

Proposed: Councillor Nicola Keen
Seconded: Councillor Lucy McGirr
Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

The Town Mayor congratulated Councillor Jackie Meade who signed and dated the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Town Clerk.

Councillor Lucy McGirr spoke in support of the nomination of the Deputy Town Mayor; Councillor Nicola Keen also spoke in support of the motion.

2168. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received for Councillors Liz McShane, Bridget Chapman and Laura Davison.

RESOLVED: To accept the Apologies from Councillors Liz McShane, Bridget Chapman and Laura Davison.

Proposed: Councillor Belinda Walker
Seconded: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly
Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2169. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

2170. APPOINTMENT OF:

a) TOWN MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN

The Town Mayor announced the appointment of Revd. Christopher Johnson as Chaplain for the ensuing year.

b) CONSORT

The Town Mayor announced her husband Mr Tim McGirr as Consort for the

ensuing year.

c) CADET

The Town Mayor announced the appointment of Sgt Holly Kasinathan from the 99 (Folkestone) Squadron RAFAC as Cadet for the ensuing year.

2171. MINUTES

The Full Council was asked to receive the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 13 March 2025 and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 13 March 2025 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor Nicola Keen

Seconded: Councillor Roger West

Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2172. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Councillors were requested to note the following dates for forthcoming Civic Events.

VE Day Service (RBL)	8 May 2025 (11 am)
VE Day 80 – Beacon Lighting	8 May 2025 (8 pm)
William Harvey Sunday	1 June 2025
Normandy D-Day Service	6 June 2025
Samuel Plimsoll Service	7 June 2025
Armed Forces Day Formal Lunch	28 June 2025
Town Sunday	29 June 2025
Blessing of the Fisheries	29 June 2025
Canada Day	1 July 2025
VJ Day Annual Service	15 August 2025
Battle of Britain Wreath Laying	15 September 2025
Dedication of Garden of Remembrance	2 November 2025
Remembrance Sunday	9 November 2025
Machine Gun Corps (RBL)	11 November 2025
Holocaust Memorial Day	27 January 2026

The Civic Events were Noted.

2173. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

RESOLVED: To approve the appointments to Committees and Sub Committees schedule for 2025/26.

Proposed: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly

Seconded: Councillor Adrian Lockwood

Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2174. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2025/26

The Town Council was asked to appoint Councillors to the following outside

bodies.

- i. Kent Association of Local Councils (two Councillors)

RESOLVED: That Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly and Jane Darling be appointed as representatives for KALC for the ensuing year.

- ii. Trustees for the John Bowley and Sherwood Almshouses (four representatives)

RESOLVED: To appoint the existing representatives, as per the request from the Trustees of John Bowley and Sherwood Almshouses of Councillor Roger West, Mr Richard Wallace and Mrs Mary Lawes, with the amendment that Councillor Jane Darling should replace Mr. Paul Bingham who has stepped down.

- iii. Municipal Charities (Mayor and four Councillors)

RESOLVED: That Councillor Lucy McGirr in position as Mayor, Councillors Adrian Lockwood, Nicola Keen, Roger West and Belinda Walker be appointed as representatives for the Municipal Charities for the ensuing year.

- iv. Folkestone Twinning Association (one Councillor)

RESOLVED: That Councillor Adrian Lockwood be appointed as representative for the Folkestone Twinning Association for the ensuing year.

- v. Cinque Ports Champion (one Councillor)

RESOLVED: That Councillor Belinda Walker continue in the role as Cinque Ports Champion.

- vi) NALC Super Council Network

RESOLVED: That Councillor Peter Gane be appointed as representative for the NALC Super Council Network for the ensuing year.

- vii) Mechinager/Folkestone Twinning Association

RESOLVED: That Councillors Jackie Meade, Belinda Walker, Peter Gane, Kieran Leigh, Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Nicola Keen, Jane Darling and John Renshaw be appointed as representatives to the Mechinager/Folkestone Twinning Association for the ensuing year.

- viii) Folkestone Community Forum

RESOLVED: That Councillors Belinda Walker and Jane Darling be appointed as representatives for the Folkestone Community Forum for

the ensuing year.

Proposed: Councillor John Renshaw

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2175. APPOINTMENT OF BANK SIGNATORIES

To authorise the signatories on bank payments as follows:

- Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and Serving Past Mayors
- Chair and Vice Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee
- Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee
- Chair and Vice Chair of Community Services Committee
- Chair and Vice Chair of Climate & Environment Committee

RESOLVED: That the above Councillors be authorised as bank signatories.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane

Seconded: Councillor Kieran Leigh

Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

It would be necessary to continue with the current signatories on the mandate until Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs are appointed and the bank has made the necessary changes.

2176. POLICY REVIEW

In line with NALC (National Association of Local Councils) guidance, Council's policies require re-adoption annually.

RESOLVED: To re-adopt the Council's policies for 2025/26 including the Standing Orders and new NALC Model Financial Regulations.

Proposed: Councillor Nicola Keen

Seconded: Councillor Roger West

Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2177. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2025/26

Council were asked to note the approved provisional schedule for Council and Committee Meetings.

Noted

2178. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

13 May 2025 - Annual Assembly

12 June 2025 - AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return)

18 September 2025 - Ordinary Full Council Meeting

The meeting ended at 7:54 pm

.....Town Mayor