

## Folkestone Town Council

**MINUTES of the Annual Council Meeting of the Folkestone Town Council held virtually via Microsoft Teams Live Event on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 6 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Ann Berry, Peter Gane, Michelle Keutenius, Jonathan Graham, David Horton (from item 1663), Dylan Jeffrey, Nicola Keen, Jackie Meade, Connor McConville (voting only from 1667), Tim Prater, Belinda Walker and Roger West.

Cllr Mary Lawes was unable to join the virtual meeting due to connection problems.

**In attendance:** Jennifer Childs (Town Clerk)

### **Prayers**

Prayers were led by Councillor Ann Berry

Cllr Jackie Meade, the retiring Town Mayor welcomed everyone to the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Folkestone Town Council and gave a summary of her year as Mayor, she felt very honoured and privileged to have been given the opportunity to be Mayor in a year when Folkestone had several historic moments including becoming the World's First Music Town, the unveiling of St Eanswythe's DNA results and the friendship agreement with Mechinager in Nepal. During the year, the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor had attended nearly 300 engagements and raised £4,500 for nominated charities so far with the Art Auction to take place later in the year. Also, to be held later this year will be the Mayors Awards Ceremony.

The retiring Mayor described the gifts she had arranged for her Chaplain, Cadet, Deputy Town Mayor, Immediate Past Mayor, the Town Clerk and Officers for their support during the year.

### **1662. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR 2020/21 AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The Town Mayor, Cllr Jackie Meade, called upon Town Councillors to submit their nominations for the election of the Town Mayor of Folkestone for the 2020/21 municipal year.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Michelle Keutenius be appointed Town Mayor for Folkestone Town Council 2020/21 until the next Annual Meeting and the acceptance of office by her successor.

Proposed: Councillor Belinda Walker

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

Voting: F: 11, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

Councillor Michelle Keutenius duly signed and dated the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the Town Clerk.

Councillor Michelle Keutenius temporarily lost connection to the meeting and the Town Clerk requested members appoint a Chairman so the meeting could

continue.

**RESOLVED: That Councillor Jackie Meade chair the meeting until the Town Mayor could reconnect.**

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane  
Seconded: Councillor Roger West  
Voting: F: 10, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

Councillor Walker spoke in support of her nomination of the Town Mayor and Councillor Keen spoke as seconder to the motion.

Councillor Keutenius reconnected to the meeting and as Town Mayor took over the chair.

The Town Mayor reported that her charities for the year would be Home Start Shepway, Kent Air Ambulance, and the Rainbow Centre.

The newly elected Town Mayor, Councillor Keutenius, then thanked Councillors for their kind words of support and moved a vote of thanks to the retiring Town Mayor, Councillor Jackie Meade and advised that a gift from members would be delivered.

Councillor Keen seconded the vote of thanks to the outgoing Town Mayor and Consort and gave a speech on her achievements over the year.

**1663. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR 2020/21 AND DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

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

**RESOLVED: That Councillor Nicola Keen be appointed Deputy Town Mayor for Folkestone Town Council 2020/21 until immediately after the election of a Town Mayor at the next Annual Meeting of Folkestone Town Council.**

Proposed: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly  
Seconded: Councillor David Horton  
Voting: F: 12, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

The Town Mayor congratulated Councillor Keen who then signed and dated the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for the Town Clerk before thanking Town Councillors and the Town Clerk for their support and kind words.

Councillor Akuffo-Kelly spoke in support of her nomination of the Deputy Town Mayor; Councillor Horton also spoke in support of the motion.

**1664. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Ray Field

Councillor Paul Bingham gave his apologies as he was unable to join the virtual meeting due to connection problems but supported all resolutions.  
Councillor Richard Wallace gave his apologies as he was unable to join the virtual meeting due to connection problems.  
Councillor Dan Brook was absent.

**1665. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

**1666. APPOINTMENT OF:**

**a) TOWN MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN**

The Town Mayor announced the appointment of Reverend Bob Weldon as her Chaplain for the ensuing year.

**b) CONSORT**

The Town Mayor confirmed the appointment of Mr Neil Keutenius as her Consort for the ensuing year.

**1667. MINUTES**

The Full Council was asked to receive the Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and the Minutes of an Extra-Ordinary Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and to authorise the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

**RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and the Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 be received and signed as a correct record upon amendment to show Cllr Ray Field sent his apologies to the Council Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

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

**1668. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Town Councillors were requested to note the following dates for forthcoming Civic Events with the caveat that due to the coronavirus pandemic they may have to cancelled:

Battle of Britain Day	15 September 2020
Dedication of Garden of Remembrance	1 November 2020
Remembrance Sunday	8 November 2020
Machine Gun Corps	11 November 2020
Holocaust Memorial Day	27 January 2021

The events were noted.

**1669. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED:** To approve the appointments to Committees and Sub Committees schedule for 2020/21 noting Councillor Field would not be accepting the seat on the Planning Committee and Cllr Akuffo-Kelly would take it.

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly

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

#### **1690. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2020/21**

The Town Council was asked to appoint Councillors to the following outside bodies. Councillor Roger West moved the following enbloc:

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be appointed as representative for the ensuing year.

- ii. Trustees for the John Bowley and Sherwood Almshouses (three Councillors)

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors Paul Bingham, Richard Wallace and Roger West be appointed as representative for the ensuing year.

- iii. Municipal Charities (four Councillors and Mayor)

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors Ann Berry, Paul Bingham, Dylan Jeffrey, Roger West and Michelle Keutenius be appointed as representative for the ensuing year.

- iv. Folkestone Town Team (two Councillors)

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors Nicola Keen and Mary Lawes be appointed as representative for the ensuing year.

- v. Folkestone Twinning Association (one Councillor)

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Jonathan Graham be appointed as representative for the ensuing year.

- vi. Folkestone CLLD

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Ann Berry be appointed as representative for the ensuing year.

Proposed: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly

Seconded: Councillor Belinda Walker

Voting: F: 12, Ag: 0, Ab: 0 (Cllr McConville's vote could not be seen)

#### **1691. APPOINTMENT OF CHEQUE SIGNATORIES**

To authorise the signatories on cheque payments as follows:

- Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and serving Past Mayors
- Chairman and Vice Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Chairman and Vice Chairman of Planning Committee
- Chairman and Vice Chairman of Community Services Committee

**RESOLVED: That the above Councillors be authorised as cheque signatories.**

Proposed: Councillor Nicola Keen

Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade

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

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

#### **1692. POLICY REVIEW**

In line with NALC guidance, Council was asked to review its policies.

**RESOLVED: To adopt the Council's policies for 2020/21.**

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Ann Berry

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

#### **1693. QUALITY COUNCIL SCHEME**

The Town Clerk advised that the Regional Accreditation Panel were unanimous in their decision to award Folkestone Town Council the Quality Gold Award, however, they had one observation about Councillors use of personal email addresses. Councillors thanked the Town Clerk for her hard work preparing the application.

**RESOLVED: To not pursue this as it is not mandatory and there would be a cost involved in setting up town council email addresses for members.**

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Tim Prater

Voting: F: 12, Ab: 1, Ag: 0

#### **1694. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

*In accordance with standing order no.3 written public questions received by the Town Clerk not less than seven clear days (excluding weekends and public holidays) before the meeting will be put to the Council.*

No questions had been received.

#### **1695. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**RESOLVED: To receive Report C/20/265 and to adopt the Investment Policy for the financial year 2020/21.**

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

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

**1696. TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

**RESOLVED: To receive and adopt Report C/20/266.**

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Belinda Walker

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

**1697. ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20**

Members duly noted the Annual Report for 2019/20.

**1698. CORPORATE PLAN**

**RESOLVED: To receive and adopt the 2020/25 Corporate Plan.**

Proposed: Councillor Roger West

Seconded: Councillor Ann Berry

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

**1699. TRAIN STATION ADOPTION**

The Town Clerk advised that Council had been approached by Southeastern Railways regarding adoption of Folkestone Train Stations to enable empty rooms and spaces to be put to use for the benefit of the local community with nominal cost to Council.

**RESOLVED: To request that the Town Clerk present a report to the next full Council meeting with detail on costs involved and the possible uses of any spaces at the stations.**

Proposed: Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly

Seconded: Cllr Ann Berry

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

**1700. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

**RESOLVED: That the Schedule of Payments for the period 1 February 2020 and 31 March 2020 be approved**

Proposed: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

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

**1701. BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20**

**RESOLVED: That the Budget Monitoring Statement to 31 March 2020 be approved.**

Proposed: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey

Seconded: Councillor Jackie Meade  
Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

**1702. WARD GRANTS**

A list of ward grants approved by the Town Clerk since 1 February 2020 was provided for information and duly noted.

**RESOLVED: To publicise grants awarded on Social Media and the website.**

Proposed: Cllr Dylan Jeffrey  
Seconded: Cllr Jackie Meade  
Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

**1703. WARD GRANT BALANCES 2019/20**

A list of ward grant balances available to each Councillor was provided for information and duly noted.

**1704. BANK RECONCILIATION**

The Bank Reconciliation was duly noted.

Councillor Dylan Jeffrey raised the issue of unrepresented cheques being cashed years later; the Town Clerk confirmed there was a reserve for unrepresented cheques and late invoices, but to date it had not been necessary to use it.

**1705. CORONAVIRUS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE GRANTS**

A list of coronavirus community resilience grants approved by the Town Clerk following consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee during the COVID-19 Emergency was provided for information and duly noted. Council asked if consultation could be extended to the Chairman of Grants Committee as well, the Town Clerk confirmed that she would include the Chairman of Grants Committee.

**1706. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

Council was asked to consider the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

**RESOLVED: That the Statement of Internal Control for 2019/20 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk.**

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade  
Seconded: Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly  
Voting: F: 13, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

**1707. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20**

Council was asked to consider the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 (Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020).

Councillor McConville asked for some assurance that the external auditors would be advised that Council have in good faith considered the repercussions of the Covid outbreak in terms of our liabilities listed at item 8

on page 4 of the AGAR as this is valid even after year end. The Town Clerk advised she would reiterate this to the internal auditor so that it would be included in his report.

**RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 be approved and signed as appropriate.**

Proposed: Councillor Jackie Meade

Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane

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

**1708. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN 2019/20**

Council was asked to approve the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2019/20 and the supporting bank reconciliation.

**RESOLVED: That the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2019/20 be approved and signed as appropriate.**

Proposed: Councillor Dylan Jeffrey

Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen

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

**1709. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed

The meeting ended at 7.40pm

.....Town Mayor