

Folkestone Town Council



The Town Hall,
1-2 Guildhall Street,
Folkestone,
Kent, CT20 1DY
Telephone: (01303) 257946
www.folkestoneetc.kentparishes.gov.uk

Date of Publication: 14 May 2019

AGENDA

Meeting: **Annual Assembly for the Town of Folkestone**
Date: **21 May 2019**
Time: **7.00 p.m.**
Place: **Town Council Offices, 1/2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone**

To: **All Folkestone Town Councillors**

YOU ARE HEREBY INVITED to attend the Annual Assembly for the town of Folkestone 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.

Cllr Jackie Meade
Town Mayor

1. **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 approve the Minutes of the Town Meeting of 29th May 2018.
4. **OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE TOWN MAYOR**
5. **APPOINTMENT OF TOWN MAYOR'S CADET 2019/20**
6. **BESTOWAL OF FOR MERIT AWARDS**
At the meeting of Folkestone Town Council on 14th March 2019 it was resolved to award a 'For Merit Award' for services to the heritage of the Town to Robert Moulard.



7. QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS

To provide an opportunity for the Town's Electors to ask questions to elected representatives and visiting service personnel.

8. REPORTS BY KENT COUNTY COUNCILLORS (FOLKESTONE AREA)

County Councillors representing Folkestone will provide an update on matters and issues affecting the Town, together with any proposals to improve service delivery.

9. REPORTS BY FOLKESTONE & HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (FOLKESTONE AREA)

District Councillors (Folkestone wards) will provide an update on matters and issues affecting the Town, together with any proposals to improve service delivery.

10. REPORTS BY KENT POLICE

Kent Police will provide an update on matters and issues affecting the Town.

11. REPORTS BY KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Kent Fire Service will provide an update on matters and issues affecting the Town.

12. REPORTS BY COMMUNITY GROUPS

A selection of community groups will provide an update on matters affecting the Town.

13. REPORT BY FRIENDS OF FOLKESTONE MUSEUM

The chairman of the friends will provide an update on achievements during the 2018-19 municipal year.

14. TIMES AND DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS OF FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

13 June 2019 at 6.30 p.m. – Extra-Ordinary Full Council Meeting

12 September 2019 at 7.00 p.m. – Ordinary Full Council Meeting

14 April 2020 – (Provisional Town (Electors) Annual Assembly)

Folkestone Town Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting for the Parish and Town of Folkestone held at the Town Hall, Folkestone on Tuesday, 29th May 2018 at 7 p.m.

TOWN COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Ann Berry, John Collier, Peter Gane, Neil Jones, Jacqui Meade, Carol Sacre, Richard Theobald, Sue Wallace, Richard Wallace, Rodica Wheeler, Pat West and Roger West.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS: Chief Inspector Somerville – Kent Police, Nick James – Group Manager Kent Fire and Rescue and 11 Folkestone Electors.

IN ATTENDANCE: Jennifer Childs - Town Clerk, Georgina Wilson – Administrative Officer.

ABSENT: Councillor Danny Brook

Prayers

Prayers were led by the Mayors Chaplain, Father Stephen Bould.

1506. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Emily Arnold, Claire Jeffrey, Mary Lawes, David Monk and Martin Salmon.

1507. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

1508. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Town Meeting held on 30th May 2017 previously agreed and adopted were noted.

1509. OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS BY THE TOWN MAYOR

The Town Mayor welcomed Councillors, electors and guests to the meeting held in accordance with the requirements of Section 9(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Town Mayor advised that Folkestone Museum has been celebrating their first birthday with many free family activities over the bank holiday and half term. The museum has welcomed over 40,000 visitors in the last year and was officially opened by the Duke of Kent.

1510. OPEN FORUM AND QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS

Gillian White - Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator for the Old High Street, Tontine Street and Payers Park – commented that in this area there are issues with street cleansing, fly tipping and general litter, drug dealing and

taking, homelessness and aggressive begging. Some of these issues have been dealt with but the problem has just been pushed to another area such as the graveyard at the St Eanswythe Church. These issues need a multiagency approach, how can the Town Council help to address these issues?

Councillor Peter Gane responded that at the Folkestone and Hythe District Council Scrutiny Meeting next week, the Crime Safety Unit Plan will be available, this is the ideal place to discuss these issues and he will ensure as the Chairman that Gillian White is afforded the opportunity to speak at that meeting.

Mr Mouland asked about the trees that had been cut down in October 2017 as they were damaging the pavement according to the Town Council. The stumps are still there which are causing a trip hazard, when will they be removed?

Councillor Richard Wallace responded that we have been in negotiation with the owners of the Clifton Hotel and Kent County Council who are responsible for the trees. The Clifton Hotel wishes to donate money towards the scheme to improve the area. We have been assured that the stumps will be removed, and trees replaced this year.

Ray Duff commented that the Environment Secretary has announced a review of national parks, this is the 50th anniversary of the Kent Area of Natural Beauty, will this Council support and work with colleagues to get this area part of the North Downs National Park?

Councillor Ann Berry replied that she is on a Committee at Folkestone & Hythe District Council that will be discussing this issue and will report back.

Ray Duff also asked about the Folkestone Library, several rooms have been closed at various times due to staff shortages. He has also been informed that the archives will be moved to Maidstone. If this happens it will be harder for local projects to move forward without access to important archive material. Is there any information on exactly what KCC are planning?

Councillor Ann Berry commented that we can ensure KCC Councillors are aware of these comments and this will be looked into further at the appropriate meetings.

Steve Shaw talked about the changes Stagecoach are making to various buses in the area, this will make it extremely difficult for some people to get to where they need to go at certain times and on Sundays.

Councillor Ann Berry felt that the Town Council should write to Stagecoach to find out why these changes are being made.

Councillor Peter Gane suggested that the Town Council raise this issue with the District Council and ask for it to be discussed at the Joint Transport Board.

Councillor Sue Wallace had previously had discussions with the CEO of Stagecoach on other changes and has contacted him again about this, but as yet has not had a response.

Councillor Jacqui Meade informed the Council that she has been looking into this and the changes are being made because KCC have cut their subsidies, the Town Council need to ask the District Council to champion this issue and take it back to KCC to relook at these changes as a lot of people particularly vulnerable, disabled and school children will be affected.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council lobbies Stagecoach to amend the bus routes 71 and 91 to later times and a better Sunday service.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded: Councillor Jacqui Mead
Voting: F:12, Ag:0, Ab:0

Dylan Jeffrey commented that a number of meetings have been taking place at different times, Parish meetings should be held after 6pm to ensure residents are able to attend. He also wanted an assurance that no meetings will take place before 6pm.

Councillor Ann Berry responded that it is down to the Town Council to agree on the times except the Annual Parish Assembly which must start after 6pm, but all of our main Committees start at 7pm except for the Grants Committee which commences at 6.30pm.

Dylan Jeffrey also asked about the Town Council's Social Media Policy and GDPR, he advised he had been blocked from the Town Council's Twitter account and wanted clarification on who manages the social media, who takes the decision to block people, is there a recorded list of people who have been blocked?

The Town Clerk responded that Council has been reviewing all policies in line with the General Data Protection Regulations, but only officers had access to Council's social media, so she will investigate the issue.

1511. REPORTS BY KENT POLICE

CI Andrew Somerville reported that this has been a busy year for the Kent Police, especially around June/July last year with the terrorist incidents that had been happening around the country, this saw a massive increase in calls being made to the Police. There was also a restructure in September last year which saw a reduction in Officers and staff by a third.

There has been an increase in recorded crime nationally and Folkestone has also increased by 17-22% monthly but this is below the national increase, this may be partly down to the way crime is recorded now. There has been an increase in the precept from the Police Crime Commissioner and there will be a focus on improving the 101 system and an increase by approx. 200 extra Officers and staff. In this area there was a specific rise in burglaries targeting Asian and Nepalese families last year, it is believed the perpetrators of these burglaries were travelling to this area from other areas to commit these crimes, two people were arrested out of area. There was also a rise in shop burglaries such as charity boxes and tills being stolen, three arrests have been made recently.

Councillor Carol Sacre felt that the Police aren't visible enough and should be doing more to engage younger people, such as going into schools and reassuring the elderly who do not feel safe.

CI Somerville responded that there are dedicated Youth Engagement Officers who take part in education programmes. There is also a plan to create a Police Cadet Unit in Folkestone.

Steve Shaw asked what can be done about people riding "mini motors" on the pavements putting people at risk.

CI Somerville replied that this can be reported via the 101 service but if there is an immediate risk to people it can be reported via 999. These types of crimes need to be reported so the Police know where they need to focus resources, PCSOs could be asked to patrol areas where this is happening. Non-emergency crimes can be reported online, there is also an app called Countryeye that is a rural initiative where people can easily report rural crimes quickly. There has been an increase in hate crime but again this may be down to better recording systems and education around what is a hate crime.

Councillor Ann Berry commented that Folkestone seems to have been inundated with travellers recently.

CI Somerville answered that they have been working closely with the Community Safety Partnership and several notices have been issued to travellers that have arrived in Kent illegally. If they camp on private land it is for the landowner to evict the travellers. The Police communicate with

the travellers and normally they move on within 24 hours, but it is also a cultural issue.

Councillor Ann Berry asked how well the Neighbourhood Watch scheme is working.

CI Sommerville responded that there has been an increase in neighbourhood watch Coordinators and there are now 27 Nepalese families involved in this, Andrew Judd is the Volunteer Coordinator.

Gillian White commented that she is finding it difficult getting people to sign up to be part of this scheme, she has only two other members.

This is something that can be advertised in a future Community Magazine.

Councillor Richard Wallace wanted further information on the Police Cadet Unit.

CI Somerville answered that it will be for children between 12-18 years old and getting them involved in police activities, they will get a uniform and work within the community. This scheme is currently working well in Canterbury and Dover and is being looked at for Folkestone and Ashford.

Town Councillors thanked the CI Somerville for attending the meeting and wanted to pass on thanks to the Police Force on the good work that they do in difficult circumstances.

1512. REPORTS BY KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Nick James, Borough Commander for South Kent attended the meeting to provide an update. Folkestone Fire Station is and will remain a 24/7 Fire Station. There is a recruitment drive currently for full time fire fighters, all the details are their website.

There were 970 call outs in the last financial year with 500 to the Town Centre, only 100 were for house fires, the rest were fire alarms, bin fires etc, there were over 100 road traffic accidents.

The Fire Service are focussing on initiatives such as the Home Safety Checks which is a free service open to every household and includes the fitting of a smoke alarm. A new initiative is the Safe and Well visits where a crew attends the home of vulnerable people and looks at risks such as slips and trips within the home, they can fit hand rails and give advice. If they have further concerns for the safety of vulnerable people, they work closely with partner organisations such as the Police and Social Services. After the Grenfell Tower fire there was an increase in calls from people living in high rise (6 floors and higher) buildings with concerns. Since then the Fire Service have visited every household in a high-rise building to

provide assurances and to ensure they are aware of the advice of what to do in the case of a fire, follow up visits are currently taking place to ensure any changes that were required have been made. They have carried out 58 school visits which equates to over 4000 children.

Dylan Jeffery asked if it was true that education visits were being reduced from 1 every 24 months to 1 every 36 months?

Mr James responded that they are not being reduced, all services were reviewed with regards to budget cuts, but education visits are not being reduced.

Dylan Jeffery also asked if, with the new developments being planned for the area there are any plans to change the appliances available at the Folkestone station?

Mr James replied that each station operates on the risk of an area at the time, it is an active model and it is monitored throughout the year.

Councillor Meade asked about the longest ladder available and if this is adequate for the new development?

Mr James commented that part of the planning process for any new development is fire safety, buildings of a certain height will be constructed with fire safety in mind, such as protected stairways, corridors and shafts, and there is an ongoing discussion around sprinklers. The Fire Service continue to champion the benefits of the stay put advice.

Ray Duff asked about the recent reports of white goods being a fire risk, is there anything the Fire Service can do to influence changes in this area?

There are discussions going on nationally with regards to white good fires. The advice from the Fire Service would be to not use tumble dryers etc when you are not in the house to keep an eye on them and to check on recall information for white goods.

Town Councillors thanked Mr James for attending the meeting and wanted to pass on thanks to the Fire Service on the good work that they do in difficult circumstances.

1513. TIMES AND DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS OF FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

14 June 2018 at 6.30 p.m. – Extra-Ordinary Full Council Meeting
12 July 2018 – Ordinary Full Council Meeting, Town Hall
28 May 2019 - (Provisional Town (Electors) Annual Assembly)

The Meeting concluded at 8.45pm

.....**Town Mayor**
21 May 2019