

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE MAIDSTONE EXHIBITION HALL, KENT EVENT AND EXHIBITION CENTRE, DETLING, MAIDSTONE ON 22 MAY 2021

Present: Councillor Mrs Ring (Mayor) and
Councillors Bartlett, Mrs Blackmore, Brice, Brindle,
Burton, Cannon, Clark, Coates, Cooke, Cooper, Cox,
Cuming, Daley, English, Eves, Fissenden, Forecast,
Fort, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Harper, Harwood,
Hastie, Hinder, Holmes, Joy, Khadka, Kimmance,
McKay, McKenna, Mortimer, Munford, Naghi, Newton,
Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Purle, Mrs Robertson, D Rose,
M Rose, Round, Russell, J Sams, T Sams, Spooner,
Springett, Trzebinski, R Webb, S Webb, Wilby and
Young

1. **PRAYERS**

Prayers were said by the Reverend Wil North of St Margaret's Church, Barming.

2. **RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS**

Councillor McKay reserved his right to record the proceedings.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Bryant and that Councillor Harwood would be late in arriving at the meeting.

4. **DISPENSATIONS**

There were no applications for dispensations.

5. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

6. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

7. **ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR**

It was moved by Councillor Munford, seconded by Councillor Perry, supported by Councillors Cox and Harper, and

RESOLVED: That Fay Lynette Gooch, a Councillor of the Borough, be duly elected Mayor of the Borough of Maidstone until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2022.

Note: Councillor Harwood joined the meeting when the new Mayor was being robed.

****THE MAYOR (COUNCILLOR MRS GOOCH) IN THE CHAIR****

8. CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MAYOR

The Mayor received congratulations on her election from scholars representing local schools as follows:

Samuel Luxton	Maidstone Grammar School
Anna Soan	Maidstone Grammar School for Girls
Ruby Symington	Barming Primary School

9. THE RETIRING MAYOR

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Blackmore, seconded by Councillor Mrs Joy, supported by Councillors Mrs Gooch and Harper, and

RESOLVED: That the hearty thanks of this Council be given to Councillor Mrs Marion Ring and Mr Richard Ring for the admirable discharge of their duties as Mayor and Mayor's Consort during the past two years, and for their courteous approach to all sections of the community.

10. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

11. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2021

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Borough Council held on 24 February 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed.

12. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Clark, seconded by Councillor Munford, supported by Councillors Springett and McKay, and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Derek John Mortimer be duly appointed Deputy Mayor for the Borough of Maidstone until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2022.

13. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor informed the Council that there would be a relaunch of the Maidstone Market on 12 June 2021 and she would like to see as many Members there as possible.

14. ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Purle, seconded by Councillor Mrs Blackmore, and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Burton be elected as the Leader of the Council until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2022.

15. APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Mrs Blackmore, and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Purle be appointed as the Deputy Leader of the Council until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2022.

16. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, COMMUNICATIONS AND GOVERNANCE - REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

In accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council considered the allocation of seats to each Political Group in relation to its various Committees.

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Harper, and

RESOLVED: That the allocation of seats on Committees be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance.

17. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

In accordance with Section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council considered the appointments to its Committees and Substitutes.

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Harper, and

RESOLVED: That the wishes of the Group Leaders with regard to appointments to Committees and Substitutes, as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting, be accepted.

18. ADOPTION OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION, INCLUDING THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION, AND THE HYBRID (PUBLIC) MEETINGS ADDENDUM TO THE CONSTITUTION

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor S Webb, that, subject to the deletion in Part 3.1, Rule 32(1), of the sentence: "The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each Service Committee shall come from different political groups", the Council's Constitution, including the Scheme of Delegation, and the Hybrid (Public) Meetings addendum to the Constitution be adopted with effect from 22 May 2021.

Amendment moved by Councillor Harper, seconded by Councillor Cox, that in the interests of good governance and democracy, and to enable a full consideration of the implications, the proposed deletion of the sentence specifying that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each Service Committee shall come from different political groups be referred to the Democracy and General Purposes Committee to make a recommendation to a future Council meeting prior to implementation.

AMENDMENT LOST

The original motion was then put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the deletion in Part 3.1, Rule 32(1), of the sentence: "The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each Service Committee shall come from different political groups", the Council's Constitution, including the Scheme of Delegation, and the Hybrid (Public) Meetings addendum to the Constitution be adopted with effect from 22 May 2021.

19. REPORT OF THE DEMOCRACY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 31 MARCH 2021 - APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON AND RESERVE INDEPENDENT PERSON

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor R Webb, that the recommendations of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee relating to the appointment of an Independent Person and a Reserve Independent Person be approved with the amendment of the second recommendation and the addition of a third recommendation as follows:

2. That the allowances paid per annum to the Independent Person and Reserve Independent Person being £749 and £249 (plus indexation rises for 2020/21 and 2021/22 in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme) respectively, be approved.

AND

3. That Mrs Barbara Varney, the previous Independent Person, be thanked for her services and valuable contribution over the years.

RESOLVED:

1. That Mr Alan Harrison be appointed as the Independent Person for the Council and Mr Paul Murphy be appointed as the Reserve Independent Person for a term of four years with immediate effect until 21 May 2025.
2. That the allowances paid per annum to the Independent Person and Reserve Independent Person being £749 and £249 (plus indexation rises for 2020/21 and 2021/22 in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme) respectively, be approved.
3. That Mrs Barbara Varney, the previous Independent Person, be thanked for her services and valuable contribution over the years.

20. **NOTICE OF MOTION - EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

The following motion was moved by Councillor Purle, seconded by Councillor Perry:

1. *That Council agrees, in principle, to revert to executive arrangements from its next Annual Meeting for the Municipal Year 2022/23 onwards.*
2. *That Council recognises the substantial work required to bring forward final proposals, to review interim arrangements and other aspects of Member involvement.*
3. *That Democracy and General Purposes Committee be requested to consider the matters outlined in two and put a proposed executive arrangements model to Council for adoption in order to allow the executive arrangements to be adopted to meet the principle agreed in one.*

When put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That Council agrees, in principle, to revert to executive arrangements from its next Annual Meeting for the Municipal Year 2022/23 onwards.
2. That Council recognises the substantial work required to bring forward final proposals, to review interim arrangements and other aspects of Member involvement.
3. That Democracy and General Purposes Committee be requested to consider the matters outlined in two and put a proposed executive arrangements model to Council for adoption in order to allow the executive arrangements to be adopted to meet the principle agreed in one.

Note: Councillor Fort left the meeting after consideration of this item.

21. NOTICE OF MOTION - WHOLE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The following motion was moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Purle:

At the briefing given by the Local Government Boundary Commission it was made clear that if the current system of election by thirds were to be retained Borough Council Wards would have to comprise three Members. It was noted that there could be exceptions; but, these were rarely granted.

The Council considers that there are a number of examples in our Borough where three Member Wards would not be appropriate. Therefore, in the light of the Boundary Commission's default position, the Council requests and requires that Officers produce a report on Whole Council Elections for the next Democracy and General Purposes Committee meeting to enable the Democracy and General Purposes Committee to reconsider whether the current system of election by thirds is fit for purpose and report back to the Council with its considered views.

When put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED: At the briefing given by the Local Government Boundary Commission it was made clear that if the current system of election by thirds were to be retained Borough Council Wards would have to comprise three Members. It was noted that there could be exceptions; but, these were rarely granted.

The Council considers that there are a number of examples in our Borough where three Member Wards would not be appropriate. Therefore, in the light of the Boundary Commission's default position, the Council requests and requires that Officers produce a report on Whole Council Elections for the next Democracy and General Purposes Committee meeting to enable the Democracy and General Purposes Committee to reconsider whether the current system of election by thirds is fit for purpose and report back to the Council with its considered views.

Note: Councillor Hastie left the meeting after consideration of this item.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL ACTING AS CORPORATE TRUSTEE OF THE CHARITY KNOWN AS THE COBTREE MANOR ESTATE

22. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, COMMUNICATIONS AND GOVERNANCE - REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON THE COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Cox, seconded by Councillor English, and

RESOLVED: That the allocation of seats on the Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee be as follows:

Conservative	3
Liberal Democrat	1
Independent	0
Labour	1

23. APPOINTMENT OF THE COBTREE MANOR ESTATE CHARITY COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Mrs Blackmore, and

RESOLVED: That the wishes of the Group Leaders with regard to the appointment of Members and Substitutes to serve on the Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee, as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting, be accepted.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL ACTING AS CORPORATE TRUSTEE OF THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT MUSEUM TRUST

24. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, COMMUNICATIONS AND GOVERNANCE - REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT MUSEUM TRUST COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Mrs Ring, and

RESOLVED: That the allocation of seats on the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust Committee be as follows:

Conservative	3
Liberal Democrat	1
Independent	1
Labour	0

25. APPOINTMENT OF THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT MUSEUM TRUST COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Round, and

RESOLVED: That the wishes of the Group Leaders with regard to the appointment of Members and Substitutes to serve on the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum Trust Committee, as set out in the schedule circulated at the meeting, be accepted.

26. DURATION OF MEETING

11.00 a.m. to 1.15 p.m.