

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE ON 20 MAY 2023

Present: Councillor Mortimer (Mayor) and Councillors Bartlett, Mrs Blackmore, Bryant, Burton, Clark, Cleator, Coates, Conyard, Cooke, Cooper, Cox, Eagle, English, Forecast, Fort, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Harper, Harwood, Hastie, Hinder, Holmes, Jeffery, Jones, Joy, Khadka, Kimmance, Knatchbull, Munford, Naghi, Newton, Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Reid, Mrs Robertson, Round, Russell, J Sams, T Sams, Spooner, M Thompson, S Thompson, Webb, Wilby, D Wilkinson, J Wilkinson and T Wilkinson

1. **PRAYERS**

Prayers were said by the Very Reverend John S Richardson of All Saints Church.

Note: Councillor Hastie entered the meeting after the Prayers (9.05 a.m.).

2. **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The Mayor welcomed Councillors Derek Eagle, Vanessa Jones, James Reid, Michael Thompson, Stephen Thompson and Joanna Wilkinson to their first meeting of the Council following the elections on 4 May 2023. It was noted that the other new Councillor, Paddy Riordan, was unable to attend the meeting.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Cannon, Riordan, Rose, Springett and Trzebinski.

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. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CURRENT MAYOR 2022/23

The Mayor congratulated those Councillors who were returning after the elections on 4 May 2023 and offered a warm welcome to the seven newly elected Members. He then provided an overview of events and engagements throughout the year, highlighting the children's street party at Lockmeadow to celebrate the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla and the Saint George's Day Parade with scouts and cubs from all over Kent marching through the town.

The Mayor said that he wished to thank the Communications Team for their work in ensuring the success of the street party. He also wished to thank Mr Bill Cockcroft, Deputy Lieutenant, and his wife for their valuable contribution to the Borough of Maidstone and beyond and to wish them all the best for the future.

8. ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Munford, seconded by Councillor Naghi, supported by Councillors Cooke, Jeffery and Cleator, and

RESOLVED: That Gordon William Newton, a Councillor of the Borough, be duly elected Mayor of the Borough of Maidstone until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2024.

** THE MAYOR (COUNCILLOR NEWTON) IN THE CHAIR **

9. CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MAYOR

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

Rafaelle Lamb	Maidstone Grammar School
Katie Sampson	Maidstone Grammar School for Girls
Jude Crawford	Archbishop Courtenay Primary School

10. THE RETIRING MAYOR

It was moved by Councillor Clark, seconded by Councillor Munford, supported by Councillors Round, J Sams and Harper, and

RESOLVED: That the hearty thanks of this Council be given to Councillor Derek Mortimer and Mrs Sally Mortimer for the admirable discharge of their duties as Mayor and Mayoress during the past year, and for their courteous approach to all sections of the community.

11. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 19 APRIL 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Borough Council held on 19 April 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

13. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

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

RESOLVED: That Councillor Martin Ashley Richard Cox be duly appointed Deputy Mayor for the Borough of Maidstone until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2024.

14. NEW MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The new Mayor had no announcements at this time.

15. ADDRESS BY MR BILL COCKCROFT, DEPUTY LIEUTENANT

Mr Bill Cockcroft addressed the Council prior to his retirement as a Deputy Lieutenant for Maidstone, taking the opportunity on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant, Lady Colgrain, to wish the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor all the very best for the forthcoming year and to thank the Mayoral team and Mr Trevor Sturgess, another Deputy Lieutenant, for their support.

The Mayor presented a gift to Mr Cockcroft to mark his retirement.

16. REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON APPOINTMENTS TO THE CABINET AND THE DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

Councillor Burton, the Leader of the Council, advised the Council that:

- The Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions would be as set out in the document circulated and the Delegation of Executive Functions to the Officers would be as set out in Part B of the Constitution.

- His appointments to portfolios were as follows:

Councillor John Perry – Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid – Cabinet Member for Housing and Health

Councillor Patrik Garten – Cabinet Member for Environment

Councillor Claudine Russell – Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts

Councillor Paul Cooper – Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development and Deputy Leader

- The Proper Officer would implement the changes into the Constitution and give effect to the consequential amendments to the Policy Advisory Committees arising from the portfolios.

- He wished to thank Councillors Round and S Webb for their year of service as Lead Members.

17. TO CONSIDER ANY MOTION MOVED BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24

Councillor Burton, the Leader of the Council, advised the Council that he did not intend to move a motion which would potentially avoid decisions being made without reference to the Policy Advisory Committees. He stated that it would not be the right way to collectively approach responsibilities and would not provide the opportunity to involve all Members in the decision-making process.

The Leader of the Council stated that challenges ahead included the obligation to provide temporary accommodation, the setting of a balanced budget, the delivery of the Town Centre Strategy and the adoption of a new Local Plan, perhaps the biggest item of collective responsibility to ensure that controls are in place.

18. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, INSIGHT 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 English, and

RESOLVED: That the allocation of seats on Committees be as set out in amended Appendix 2 to the report of the Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance circulated at the meeting.

19. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

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

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

20. ADOPTION OF THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION OF NON-EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

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

RESOLVED: That the Scheme of Delegation of Non-Executive Functions, as set out in Part B of the Constitution, be adopted.

21. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24

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

RESOLVED: That Councillor Russell be appointed as the Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

22. DURATION OF MEETING

9.00 a.m. to 10.40 a.m.