

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE ON 18 MAY 2024

Present: Mr Gordon Newton (The Mayor) and
Councillors Barwick, Burke, Cannon, Clark, Cleator, Coates,
Conyard, Cooke, Couch, Cox, Dawes, English, Field, Forecast,
Fort, Mrs Gooch, Greenan, Harper, Harwood, Higson, Jeffery,
Jenkins-Baldock, Jones, Kehily, Khadka, McKay, Milham,
D Naghi, M Naghi, Oliver, Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Riordan,
Rodwell, Round, Russell, J Sams, T Sams, Spooner, Springett,
Summersgill, Sweetman, M Thompson, S Thompson,
Trzebinski, Wales, Wilby, D Wilkinson and J Wilkinson

1. **MINUTE'S SILENCE**

The Council stood in silence for one minute in memory of Mrs Margaret Shaw, a former Member of the Borough Council, who sadly passed away in April 2024.

2. **PRAYERS**

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

3. **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

The Mayor welcomed Councillors Sarah Barwick, Ronald Burke Grace Couch, Kathy Cox, Anne Dawes, Donna Greenan, Joe Higson, Hilary Jenkins-Baldock, Claire Kehily, Kimberley Milham, Mark Naghi, Ciaran Oliver, Rachel Rodwell, Michael Summersgill, Alison Sweetman and Simon Wales to their first meeting of the Council following the elections on 2 May 2024.

The Mayor also welcomed Councillors Rob Field and Malcolm McKay who were returning to the Council after a break in service.

4. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence, but it was noted that Councillor Barwick would be late in arriving at the meeting.

5. **DISPENSATIONS**

There were no applications for dispensations.

6. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members.

Robin Harris, Deputy Head of Legal Partnership and Deputy Monitoring Officer, disclosed an interest in agenda item 23 relating to his proposed appointment as the Council's Monitoring Officer. Mr Harris said that he would leave the room when the matter was discussed.

7. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CURRENT MAYOR 2023/24

The Mayor provided an overview of events and engagements that he and the Mayoress had attended throughout the year and explained that his aim had been to support and promote the many and varied projects in the Maidstone area, and to support the charitable events of other Kent Mayors and Chairmen. It had been a busy, memorable and enjoyable year. Together with the Mayoress, he had attended 245 engagements during the year, all of which had been informative, interesting and educational, and, in some cases, great fun.

The Mayor said that he would like to thank Julie, the Mayor's PA, and Ray and Russell, the Civic Officers, for their patience and support.

9. ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Russell, seconded by Councillor English, supported by Councillors Jeffery, Cleator and Harper, and

RESOLVED: That John Anthony Perry, a Councillor of the Borough, be duly elected Mayor of the Borough of Maidstone until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2025.

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

When thanking the Council for his election, the new Mayor took the opportunity to thank long-serving former Members Gordon Newton, Martin Cox, Cynthia Robertson, Denise Joy and Annabelle Blackmore who had not returned following the elections on 2 May 2024.

Note: Councillor Barwick entered the meeting whilst the new Mayor was being robed (9.25 a.m.).

10. CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MAYOR

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

Isaac Marriner	Maidstone Grammar School
Izzy Ratcliffe	Maidstone Grammar School for Girls
Maya Fernandes &	Archbishop Courtenay Church of England
Natalia Kostrzewa	Primary School

11. THE RETIRING MAYOR

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Gooch, seconded by Councillor McKay, supported by Councillors Springett and Naghi, and

RESOLVED: That the hearty thanks of this Council be given to Mr Gordon Newton and Mrs Carol Newton 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.

12. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2024

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Borough Council held on 21 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

14. MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 29 FEBRUARY 2024

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Borough Council held on 29 February 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

15. MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 20 MARCH 2024

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Borough Council held on 20 March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed.

16. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was moved by Councillor Trzebinski, seconded by Councillor Naghi, supported by Councillors S Thompson, D Wilkinson and Mrs Gooch, and

RESOLVED: That Councillor Martin Round be duly appointed Deputy Mayor for the Borough of Maidstone until the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2025.

17. NEW MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The new Mayor updated Members on forthcoming engagements including the Jobs Fair, meeting the High Sherriff and events commemorating the D-Day operation of 6 June 1944. The Mayor also announced the charities that he would be supporting during his Mayoral year (Diabetes UK, The Torch Trust, and Demelza, a local Charity in Kent and Sussex), and said that he wished to thank colleagues for their assistance and support.

18. ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH CORE PROVISION A2, 7.2 OF THE CONSTITUTION

It was moved by Councillor English, seconded by Councillor J Sams, that Councillor Jeffery be elected as the Leader of the Council in accordance with Core Provision A2, 7.2 of the Constitution.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 18.4, five Members requested that a named vote be taken on the motion. The voting was as follows:

FOR (34)

Councillors Barwick, Clark, Cleator, Conyard, Couch, Cox, Dawes, English, Field, Greenan, Harper, Harwood, Higson, Jeffery, Jenkins-Baldock, Jones, Kehily, Khadka, McKay, Milham, D Naghi, M Naghi, Oliver, Rodwell, J Sams, T Sams, Summersgill, Sweetman, M Thompson, S Thompson, Wales, Wilby, D Wilkinson and J Wilkinson

AGAINST (14)

Councillors Burke, Cannon, Cooke, Forecast, Fort, Mrs Gooch, Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Riordan, Round, Russell, Spooner, Springett and Trzebinski

ABSTENTIONS (1)

Councillor Coates

RESOLVED: That Councillor Jeffery be elected as the Leader of the Council in accordance with Core Provision A2, 7.2 of the Constitution.

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

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

- The Delegation of Executive Functions would be as set out in the document circulated and the Delegation of Executive Functions to Officers would be as set out in Part B of the Constitution.
- His appointments to portfolios were as follows:

Cabinet Member for Climate Transition and Nature Recovery	Cllr Vanessa Jones
Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety	Cllr David Naghi
Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources	Cllr Kathy Cox
Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Enforcement and Deputy Leader	Cllr Clive English
Cabinet Member for Healthier Stronger Communities	Cllr Stephen Thompson
Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness	Cllr Simon Wales
Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Management	Cllr Tony Harwood

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

20. TO CONSIDER ANY MOTION MOVED BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25

The Leader of the Council advised the Council that he would put the Administration's Programme for the Municipal Year 2024/25 to the next meeting of the Council which was within the requisite 60-day period. He would ensure that matters go through the Policy Advisory Committees before they go to Cabinet.

21. 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 Jeffery, seconded by Councillor English, and

RESOLVED: That the allocation of seats on Committees be as set out in amended Appendix 1 to the report of the Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance, which was circulated at the meeting, and which reflects the amendments to the Policy Advisory Committees arising from the changes to the Portfolios.

22. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

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

Councillor English stated that he wished to make the following amendments to the Committee membership schedule circulated at the meeting:

Climate Transition, Corporate and Environmental Services Policy Advisory Committee

Remove Councillor Wilby. Insert Councillor Higson.

Housing and Community Cohesion Policy Advisory Committee

Remove Councillor Higson. Insert Councillor Wilby.

Councillor Cleator stated that she wished to make the following amendments to the Committee membership schedule circulated at the meeting:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Remove Councillor Jenkins-Baldock. Insert Councillor J Wilkinson.

Climate Transition, Corporate and Environmental Services Policy Advisory Committee

Remove Councillor Barwick. Insert Councillor Jenkins-Baldock.

Planning and Healthier Stronger Communities Policy Advisory Committee

Remove Councillor J Wilkinson. Insert Councillor Barwick.

It was moved by Councillor Jeffery, 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, and as amended at the meeting, be accepted.

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

It was moved by Councillor Jeffery, 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.

24. APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25

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

RESOLVED: That Councillor Harwood be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Joint Transportation Board for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

25. APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER

Having disclosed an interest in this item, Robin Harris, Deputy Head of Legal Partnership and Deputy Monitoring Officer, left the meeting whilst it was discussed.

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

RESOLVED: That Robin Harris be appointed to undertake statutory duties and responsibilities as the Council's Monitoring Officer, as noted in the Constitution at Part B5 paragraph 19, with effect from 18 May 2024.

26. DURATION OF MEETING

9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.