

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL

MINUTES of the proceedings of the meeting of the Annual Council held on Wednesday 8 May 2013.

PRESENT:

The Mayor

The Deputy Mayor

Councillor J P Adams
Councillor Mrs A D Allen
Councillor I D Armitt JP
Councillor A Bardoe
Councillor L J Bobby
Councillor S H Brown
Councillor M J Bryant
Councillor R Bryant
Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Councillor P J Cannon
Councillor P F Coleman
Councillor P Cutler
Councillor M J Davis
Councillor D A Hammock
Councillor J S Hawkes
Councillor J A Hayes
Councillor D E Hunnisett
Councillor K M Kelly
Councillor P Kelly
Councillor J A Kite, MBE
Councillor E J Lampkin

Councillor A R Lloyd
Councillor T A Maddison
Councillor A R Martin
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor Mrs A Muckle
Councillor J I Muckle
Councillor J M Ozog
Councillor R S L Perfitt
Councillor M I Peters
Councillor G T Prout
Councillor B E Read
Councillor Mrs J A Rickwood
Councillor A S Sandhu, MBE
Councillor C J Shippam
Councillor M J Street
Councillor D Swinerd
Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow
Councillor A Wells
Councillor R J Wells
Councillor Mrs N C Wightman

ABSENT:

Councillor J Burrell
Councillor G Reynolds
Councillor Mrs R L Shanks

1. ELECTION OF THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF DARTFORD FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs A D Allen welcomed Members, Guests, Officers and members of the public to the Annual Council meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J A Kite, nominated Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow to be elected as Mayor of the Borough of Dartford for the next Municipal Year. In making his nomination, the Leader paid tribute to Councillor Thurlow's longstanding service as both Cabinet and Lead Member, her forthright but balanced views and her foresight. Her appointment as Mayor, if confirmed, would complete a family circle of achievement following in the footsteps of her late husband Keith, a past Mayor of Dartford. Councillor A R Martin seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow was duly elected the Worshipful the Mayor of the Borough of Dartford, for the 2013-14 Municipal Year

Following her election, Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow made her declaration of acceptance of office.

The meeting then adjourned for a short period.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR MRS P A THURLOW IN THE CHAIR

The Mayor thanked her colleagues and all Members for electing her as Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming municipal year and said she would endeavour to be fair in all matters she was called upon to do.

The Mayor announced that Mr Denzil Reynolds would be her Escort for the ensuing municipal year and invited him to come to the front of the dais where he was invested with the Escort's badge and ribbon of office.

The Mayor also informed the meeting that she had appointed Reverend Nick Williams as her personal Chaplain during her term of office. Father Zammit invested Reverend Williams with the Chaplain's Cross.

2. PRAYERS

The Reverend Williams led the Council in prayer.

3. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Mayor announced that Councillor Avtar S Sandhu MBE would be Deputy Mayor of the Borough for 2013-14.

Councillor Sandhu made his declaration of acceptance of office and was invested with the Chain of Office. Councillor Sandhu informed the meeting that his wife, Mrs Sukhwinder Sandhu would be his Deputy Mayoress and duly invested her with the Chain of Office.

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4. **VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR IN RESPECT OF SERVICES RENDERED DURING THE PAST YEAR**

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor J A Kite to propose a vote of thanks to the retiring mayor.

Councillor Kite moved the Motion and offered his congratulations to the newly elected Mayor, her Escort and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress on their appointments, before expressing his thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor Mrs Ann Allen for an exceptional year in office representing the Borough and people of Dartford.

The Leader praised Councillor Allen's many qualities and her quiet but effective unassuming manner. He noted in particular her championing of the disadvantaged, her ability to connect and empathise with people and in the process, enrich their lives. She unfailingly addressed constituent's problems and concerns and wherever possible found solutions, or suggested a way forward through her unrivalled local knowledge of Dartford and its affairs.

The Leader also praised the efforts of Miss Kim Cooper in her role as Mayor's Escort and the full part she had played during an exceptionally busy mayoral cycle, including the many events to celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics. Miss Cooper had grown into the role and played a full part in assisting the Mayor as escort, guide and friend in representing the Borough throughout the year.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor A R Martin seconded the Motion and added his own congratulations to the Mayor, her Escort, the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress on their election to Office, before adding his thanks to Councillor Allen as departing Mayor.

He paid tribute to Councillor Allen's many endearing personal qualities which were underpinned by a steely determination to get things done. He praised her commitment to her many charitable causes and to addressing constituents concerns. He also paid particular tribute to the efforts of Miss Kim Cooper as Mayor's Escort and the role of Father Zammit as the Mayor's personal Chaplain during the past mayoral year.

The Shadow Leader of the Council, Councillor G T Prout offered his congratulations to the newly elected Mayor, her Escort and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress on their appointments, prior to congratulating Councillor Allen and her Escort Miss Kim Cooper on their outstanding year in office. He paid particular tribute to the many functions and events that Councillor Allen and Miss Cooper had attended during a particularly busy mayoral year which had featured both the 2012 Olympic events and the celebration of The Queen's Diamond Jubilee. He regretted that the English Summer had not matched the efforts of Councillor Allen and Miss Cooper who, despite the adverse weather on many occasions, had stuck to their task in representing the Borough and sharing with its residents many notable occasions.

Councillor Read offered his congratulations to the new Mayor, her Escort and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress on their election to office, before adding his congratulations to Councillor Allen on an exceptional year in office. He praised Councillor Allen for speaking for the people of Dartford during her term as Mayor without political bias or favour and for making many trips to his own constituents in Swanscombe and Greenhithe during her mayoral year.

Councillor Maddison added his congratulations to those already offered to the newly elected Mayor, her Escort, the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress prior to congratulating Councillor Allen on her year in office. He recalled his long friendship with Councillor Allen over more than twenty years as a Parish, Borough and County Councillor colleague and paid tribute to her commitment towards achieving social equality for her constituents, helping the disadvantaged and her support of worthy charitable causes. Her ability to communicate effectively with all levels of society allied to her determination to achieve her objectives had contributed to an outstanding year in office representing Dartford and its residents.

The Mayor's Escort Miss Kim Cooper added her own personal thanks to Councillor Allen for giving her the opportunity to act as her Escort during what had been a fantastic year, which she would always remember fondly and cherish.

The Mayor, Councillor Thurlow, added her own thanks to Councillor Allen for her help and guidance during the past year when Councillor Thurlow had been Deputy Mayor. Councillor Allen had introduced her slowly and quietly into the role of Deputy Mayor, in addition to advising her on the forthcoming role of Mayor by example. Councillor Thurlow also praised the role played by Miss Cooper as Mayor's Escort and the role of Father Zammit as Mayor's Chaplain.

On conclusion of the speeches the Motion was put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED:

That sincere thanks and appreciation be accorded to Councillor Mrs A D Allen for her outstanding service as Mayor during the past year.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor JA Kite, presented Councillor Mrs Ann Allen with a bouquet of flowers together with a gift on behalf of the Council.

The Shadow Leader, Councillor G T Prout then presented a bouquet of flowers to the outgoing Mayor's Escort, Miss Kim Cooper.

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow then invited Councillor Allen to respond to the vote of thanks from Members.

Councillor Allen began by congratulating the incoming Mayor, her Escort and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress on their election to office. She also thanked Councillor Thurlow and Mr Denzil Reynolds for all their help and support in the preceding year as her Deputy Mayor and Escort.

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Councillor Allen advised Members that she had enjoyed a terrific year as Mayor, made all the more memorable by the London Olympic events and the celebration of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, despite the frequently poor weather. Sadly the year had also been marked by the loss of close friends known to the Chamber. There had been many highlights during the year, but visiting all units of Sheltered Housing in Dartford and hosting the residents at the Civic Centre in return, had been particularly gratifying. Engaging with the residents and hearing of their experiences during the Second World War as teenagers, had been both instructive and humbling. Councillor Allen also made particular mention of the continuing role played by The New Yorkers Club charity, in providing facilities for young adults with learning difficulties in Dartford.

Councillor Allen thanked her Mayoral team for their support and all her colleagues on the Charity Committee. She also thanked all Members, Officers and her family for their understanding and support throughout the year, with special thanks to her Escort Miss Kim Cooper and her personal Chaplain Father Zammit for their particular support, friendship and guidance.

5. PRESENTATION OF A BAR FOR THE PAST MAYOR'S BADGE

The Mayor invited Councillor Mrs A D Allen to the front of the dais where she was presented with a bar to her past Mayor's badge.

6. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MEMBERS MAY WISH TO MAKE

No declarations of interest were made.

7. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors J Burrell and Mrs R L Shanks.

8. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite and seconded by Councillor A R Martin and

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the GAC held on 18 March 2013 be confirmed as an accurate record.

9. TO NOTE THE ON-GOING APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Mayor asked Members to note the on-going appointments of Councillor J A Kite MBE and Councillor A R Martin as Leader and Deputy Leader of the

Council respectively until the May 2015 Annual Meeting and invited Councillor Kite to address the Council.

The Leader noted that the Council was meeting for the first time since the sad passing of Baroness Thatcher, who had a special connection with Dartford from her early years in politics. He passed his condolences to Baroness Thatcher's family. He also offered his congratulations to colleagues from all sides of the Chamber following their success in the KCC elections held on 2 May. He noted that 2013 also marked the 80th anniversary of the Charter of Incorporation creating the Borough of Dartford. To mark that historic event it was proposed to resurrect the Dartford Civic Society, under the leadership of Councillor Ian Armitt, to draw on his experience and that of other former Mayors in the formation and progress of Dartford as a Borough Council. The year also marked the 30th anniversary of the founding of The Orchard Theatre Dartford. Councillor Kite acknowledged the pivotal roles played by Councillor John Muckle and former Councillor Ivor Jones in founding the theatre.

Looking to the year ahead, the Leader hoped that Dartford FC would build on their success of the 2012-13 season, despite the loss of some key players to clubs in higher divisions. DFC had raised the profile and reputation of Dartford during their first season in the Conference Premier League. The past year had also seen Dartford named as a Mary Portas Pilot Town under the scheme for the enrichment of High Streets and awarded £80,000 in Government cash and advice for the continued development of the town centre. The Town Centre Team and the Council looked forward to spending the award wisely on new ventures to promote the town centre. He noted that Mary Portas had recently visited Dartford and been supportive of the Council's efforts in the development of Lowfield Street, advocating a proactive engagement with Tesco to bring the retailers development plans to fruition as quickly as possible.

Finally Councillor Kite advised Members of what he considered the high spot in the Council's achievements during the past year, the award by UNISON to the Council for being a Living Wage Employer: the first local authority in Kent to sign-up to this undertaking.

10. ANNOUNCEMENT OF SHADOW LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, GROUP LEADERS AND THEIR DEPUTIES

The Mayor announced that Councillors G T Prout and M J Bryant of the Labour Group would hold the offices of Shadow Leader and Deputy Shadow Leader of the Council respectively.

The Mayor further announced that Councillors B E Read and L J Bobby would be the Leader and Deputy Leader respectively, of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association.

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11. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE SIZE OF THE CABINET AND TO ALLOCATE ALL EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS TO THE CABINET AND DETERMINE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE CABINET

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the size of the Cabinet be set at five members;
- (2) That functions be allocated to the Cabinet as a body with the Terms of Reference set out in Appendix A to the agenda.

12. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE CABINET

The Mayor, in accordance with Section 11(3) (b) of the Local Government Act 2000, called upon the Leader to announce the membership of the Cabinet, their portfolios and other Lead Members.

The Leader advised that for the ensuing year, the Cabinet Members would be Councillors J A Kite, A R Martin, P F Coleman, A R Lloyd and C J Shippam, with himself as Chairman and Councillor Martin as Vice-Chairman with the portfolios set out in Appendix B to the agenda.

The Cabinet would be supported by the following Lead Members - Councillors Mrs A D Allen, A Bardoe, S H Brown, D Hammock, E J Lampkin and B E Read with responsibilities as set out in Appendix B.

13. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEED, TRUST AND OBLIGATIONS COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

That the Deed, Trust and Obligations Committee be established under the Local Government Act 2000 and that the appointments as to membership, and the appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the Terms of Reference, be as set out in Appendix C to the agenda.

14. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Mayor announced that Mr Graham John Harris would be the Head of Paid Service (pursuant to section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) and Chief Finance Officer (pursuant to section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972) and that Mr Christopher Gordon Oliver would be the Monitoring Officer (pursuant to section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

15. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Thurlow renewed her thanks to all Members for choosing her as Mayor, a role she regarded as a great honour and one she would not be undertaking lightly. She assured Members that she would do her best to promote Dartford, its people and businesses whenever and wherever she could during her term in office.

The Mayor advised that she took great pride in her contribution to the work of the Mayor's Charity Committee which had raised more than £82,000 in the past 5 years alone. She would be supporting two local charities during the forthcoming mayoral year:

- The Renal Unit at Darent Valley Hospital
- The North West Kent Disabled Foundation

The Mayor explained that the regional Renal Unit at Darent Valley Hospital being set up under Dr Sri Prasad was of particular importance to her, given her late husband Keith's illness and the considerable distances he had had to travel to obtain treatment. She hoped to invite Dr Prasad to address Members at a future date on his proposals. Her second supported charity revolved around helping disabled people who meet at Waller Park Pavilion: a proactive group who had recently acquired a new mini bus to pursue their activities in the local community and beyond.

The Mayor also expressed a wish to see the skate park in Central Park completed, and would be raising awareness of that project during her term in office.

In concluding her announcements the Mayor thanked all Members, her Escort Mr Denzil Reynolds and all her family for their support during her year as Deputy Mayor.

16. CONFIRMATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS

The details of the size and membership of political groups formed by Members of the Council was presented. The Political Groups on the Council comprise the Dartford Borough Council Conservative Group (31), Labour Group (9) and the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association (4).

RESOLVED:

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That the size and membership of political groups formed by members of the Council, attached at Appendix D to the agenda, be noted.

17. ADOPTION OF RULES FOR SUBSTITUTION

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin and;

RESOLVED:

That the Rules for Substitution on Standing Committees, Boards and Panels, set out in the amended copy of Appendix E as contained in the tabled Addendum and Errata, be adopted.

18. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR GROUP AND THE ALLOCATIONS/DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Mayor announced that the structure of the Labour Group and the allocation/distribution of responsibilities would be as set out in Appendix F to the agenda

19. TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

That the terms of reference for the General Assembly of the Council, set out in Appendix G to the agenda, be agreed.

20. TO CONSIDER AND ESTABLISH COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, BOARDS, PANELS AND OTHER BODIES, APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES AND DETERMINE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF AND DELEGATIONS TO SUCH COMMITTEES, BOARDS, PANELS AND OTHER BODIES

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

(1) That the review of the representation of the political groups on Standing Committees, Boards and Panels (as it affects the Council) and other "bodies" within the meaning of the Local Government and Housing Act

1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 be agreed. Details of the entitlement of each political group to representation on each of these "bodies" to be as set out in Appendix H(i) to the agenda in accordance with the principles contained in the 1989 Act and 1990 Regulations attached at Appendix H(ii) to the agenda.

- (2) That the adoption of the Licensing Committee respectively under Section 102(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Licensing Act 2003 and the adoption of other Committees, Sub-committees, Boards and Panels under Section 102(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as applicable the Local Government Act 2000 and the appointments to membership made in accordance with the wishes of the political groups on the Council and the appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, set out in Appendices I to U to the agenda and the Addendum and Errata to the agenda tabled at the meeting, be agreed.
- (3) That the adoption of the Cabinet Advisory Panels and the appointments to membership made in accordance with the wishes of the political groups on the Council set out in Appendix V(i) to the agenda be noted.
- (4) That the adoption of the Dartford Locality Board and the appointments to membership set out in Appendix V(ii) to the agenda be agreed.
- (5) That the adoption of the Joint Transportation Board as a non-statutory forum and the appointments to membership made in accordance with the wishes of the political groups on the Council set out in Appendix V(iii) to the agenda be agreed.
- (6) That the Terms of Reference for the Cabinet Advisory Panels, Dartford Locality Board and the Joint Transportation Board set out in Appendices V(i), (ii) and (iii) to the agenda respectively, be agreed.

21. TO APPOINT THE DAYS AND HOUR OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND OF ITS STANDING COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, BOARDS, PANELS AND OTHER BODIES/FORUMS DURING 2013/14

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

That the dates and times of meetings set out in Appendix W to the agenda be agreed.

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22. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENTS OF COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES BY EXTERNAL BODIES, AND TO OUTSIDE BODIES WHERE THE TERM OF OFFICE EXCEEDS ONE YEAR

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

That the appointments of Councillor representatives to outside bodies, for a term exceeding one year, as set out in Appendix X be noted.

23. TO APPOINT COUNCILLORS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND TO LIAISON GROUPS

It was moved by Councillor J A Kite, seconded by Councillor A R Martin, and

RESOLVED:

(1) That the appointments of Councillor representatives to outside bodies for 2013/14 set out in Appendix Y to the agenda be adopted.

(2) That the appointments of Councillor representatives to liaison groups for 2013/14 set out in Appendix Z to the agenda be adopted.

Before bringing the meeting to a close, the Mayor asked Members to join her in offering her congratulations to Councillor Patrick Kelly, following his award of the Imperial Service Medal from Her Majesty in recognition of his long and distinguished service at the Ministry of Defence.

Councillor Patrick Kelly thanked the Mayor and Members for their congratulations and offered his own to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointments.

At the conclusion of proceedings the Mayor invited Members and their guests to join her for refreshments.

The meeting closed at 8.21 pm

MAYOR