

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL

MINUTES of the proceedings of the meeting of the Annual Council held on Wednesday 7 May 2014.

PRESENT:

The Mayor

Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow

The Deputy Mayor

Councillor A S Sandhu MBE

Councillor Mrs A D Allen, MBE

Councillor A R Lloyd

Councillor I D Armitt JP

Councillor T A Maddison

Councillor D J Baker

Councillor A R Martin

Councillor A Bardoe

Councillor D J Mote

Councillor S H Brown

Councillor Mrs A Muckle

Councillor M J Bryant

Councillor J I Muckle

Councillor R Bryant

Councillor J M Ozog

Councillor J Burrell

Councillor M I Peters

Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill

Councillor G T Prout

Councillor P J Cannon

Councillor B E Read

Councillor P F Coleman

Councillor Mrs J A Rickwood

Councillor P Cutler

Councillor Mrs R L Shanks

Councillor M J Davis

Councillor C J Shippam

Councillor S J Doran

Councillor M J Street

Councillor D A Hammock

Councillor D Swinerd

Councillor J S Hawkes

Councillor A Wells

Councillor J A Hayes

Councillor R J Wells

Councillor D E Hunnisett

Councillor J A Kite, MBE

Councillor E J Lampkin

ABSENT:

Councillor K M Kelly

Councillor P Kelly

Councillor R S L Perfitt

Councillor Mrs N C Wightman

1. ELECTION OF THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF DARTFORD FOR THE ENSUING YEAR AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MAYORESS AND MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN

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

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J A Kite, nominated Councillor Avtar Singh Sandhu to be elected as Mayor of the Borough of Dartford for the next Municipal Year.

In making his nomination, the Leader recalled Councillor Sandhu's late father and the qualities that he had imbued in his family, generally and in Cllr Sandhu particularly. He highlighted Councillor Sandhu's commitment to the community and to his family, his honesty and strength of character, and the way his ambition to progress had been tempered with his obvious patience.

Councillor Kite added that he was looking forward to working with Councillor Sandhu as Mayor in what promised to be a fascinating forthcoming year. Councillor A R Martin seconded the nomination.

There being no further nominations Councillor Sandhu was duly elected the Worshipful the Mayor of the Borough of Dartford, for the 2014-15 Municipal Year

Following his election, Councillor Sandhu made his declaration of acceptance of office.

The meeting then adjourned for a short period.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR COUNCILLOR A S SANDHU IN THE CHAIR

The Mayor thanked his colleagues and all Members for electing him as Mayor of the Borough for the forthcoming municipal year. .

The Mayor announced that Mrs Sukhwinder Sandhu would be his Mayoress for the ensuing municipal year and invited her to come to the front of the dais where she was invested with the Mayoress' Chain of office.

The Mayor also informed the meeting that he had appointed Reverend Marcel McCarron as his personal Chaplain during his term of office. The outgoing Chaplain, Father Williams, invested Reverend McCarron with the Chaplain's Cross.

2. PRAYERS - MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN

The Reverend McCarron led the Council in prayer. He made special mention of the recent death of Mrs Dulcie Jones, wife of Alderman Ivor Jones, who had served as Mayoress of Dartford in 1998 to 2000 and Deputy Mayoress 2002 -2003. Reverend McCarron asked that Members remember Mrs Jones' husband and family.

3. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEPUTY MAYORESS

The Mayor announced that Councillor Ian D Armitt would be Deputy Mayor of the Borough for 2014-15.

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

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, his lady Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress on their appointments, before expressing his thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor Mrs Thurlow for an exceptional year in office representing the Borough and people of Dartford.

The Leader firstly explained that the outgoing Mayoress was recognised as being the heart and soul of the Council and Dartford, with total commitment to everything that she undertook, and that her Mayoralty was no exception to that.

He reported that it was no secret that Mrs Thurlow, had suffered a number of personal setbacks in the past years, she had lost her husband Keith and had suffered serious illness herself during this time, yet she chose to take on the role of Mayor, a role which she commenced with her usual commitment and vigour.

She had made an extra ordinary contribution in her year as Mayor, undertaking many visits and engagements, and devoting special attention for children and young people. She was an extremely popular figure and could easily have filled the Council chamber a number of times over had she been able to invite all her friends to the ceremony. This was all made much the more outstanding by the fact that she had experienced a period of extremely serious illness during her mayoral year. However true to her nature she returned to her civic duties with remarkable speed, and was soon undertaking engagements on her release from hospital.

Councillor Kite also expressed his thanks and admiration for the Mayor's escort – Mr Denzil Reynolds, Mr Reynolds had performed superbly during the year, acting as an excellent partner for Mayor and supporting her at many events.

In conclusion the Leader said that he knew that that he was proud of Mrs Thurlow as Mayor, as she had displayed courage and fortitude to overcome obvious obstacles and that she was fair, strong and an example to all future Mayors. He added that her family were extremely proud of her, and that the Members of the Council were proud of her as well.

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

He expressed his admiration for her work and that of her escort in the year past and that he was delighted that she was returning to the Cabinet after her current absence.

The Shadow Leader of the Council, Councillor G T Prout offered his congratulations to the newly elected Mayor, his Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress on their appointments.

Councillor Prout informed Members that he was very pleased to be able to join the vote of thanks to Patsy and Denzil, as he had a high regard for them both, and understood that they had a high regard for Dartford and its people and that this had been displayed admirably during this Mayoralty. He commented on her strong commitment and feeling for the Borough and its people noted that the Mayor had reported regularly to the Council on her engagements and consequently all Members were aware of the work that she had undertaken. She had also been particularly active in attending events in support of her chosen charities.

In conclusion he stressed that the role of Mayor was both an honour and a responsibility and believed that Councillor Thurlow had done well in both respects, and was a credit to Dartford.

Councillor Read offered his congratulations to the new Mayor, his Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress on their election to office. He thanked Councillor Thurlow for all her work in her Mayoral year and commented that she had excelled herself in this past year, especially when dealing with children and young people.

Councillor John Muckle firstly offered his congratulations to the newly elected Mayor, his lady Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress on their appointments, before expressing his thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor Mrs Thurlow.

Councillor Muckle paid tribute to Mrs Thurlow both as a Mayor and as a friend. He commented on her dedication to the Borough and her great courage and fortitude when dealing with her illness and subsequent recovery. He thanked Mrs Thurlow for her work as Mayor, her commitment and her friendship.

Councillor Lampkin offered his congratulations to the new Mayor, his Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress on their election to office. He expressed this thanks to Councillor Thurlow and told how he had been privileged to accompany Mrs Thurlow to a number of engagements and had witnessed the great affection in which she was held by the public in general. Councillor Lampkin also thanked Denzil Reynolds for his hard work as Mayor's escort and extended his thanks to Mrs Thurlow's family who had been extremely supportive in her mayoral year.

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The Mayor, Councillor Sandhu, added his own thanks to Councillor Thurlow for her help and guidance during the past year when Councillor Sandhu had been Deputy Mayor. He also extended his thanks to Denzil Reynolds for his help and wished Councillor Thurlow all the success she could wish for in the years to come.

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 P A Thurlow for her outstanding service as Mayor during the past year.

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

The Shadow Leader, Councillor G T Prout then presented a bottle of champagne and a commemorative tumbler to the outgoing Mayor's Escort, Mr Denzil Reynolds.

The Mayor, Councillor Sandhu then invited Councillor Thurlow to respond to the vote of thanks from Members.

Councillor Thurlow began by thanking all the speakers for their kind words and congratulating the incoming Mayor, the Mayoress and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress on their election to office.

Mrs Thurlow commented that her year in office had flown by, and that she had met some fascinating people during the time. Dartford was an exceptionally diverse area and this was reflected in the wide variety of engagements that she had undertaken.

Also, as Mayor she felt that she belonged to the people of the Borough and that she had needed her family to support her and allow her to do the job properly. Accordingly she was extremely grateful and passed her thanks to them for their support.

Councillor Thurlow thanked her Mayoral team for their support and all her colleagues on the Charity Committee. She also thanked Councillor Kite, and all Members, and Officers and for their understanding and support throughout the year. She also reserved special thanks for Councillor Coleman and his wife Dorean for the great support given to her during her illness and recuperation.

5. PRESENTATION OF THE PAST MAYOR'S BADGE

The Mayor invited Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow to the front of the dais where she was presented with 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 P Kelly, K M Kelly, R S L Perfitt and Mrs N C Wightman.

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 meetings of the GAC held on 16 December 2013 and 24 February 2014 be confirmed as accurate records of those meetings subject to the amendments notified to Members in the circulated errata sheet.

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.

Councillor Kite firstly reported the sad demise of Mrs Dulcie Jones, the wife of Ivor Jones a former Councillor and Mayor of Dartford. Whilst he was sure that Members would receive further details at the next General Assembly of the Council, Councillor Kite asked that his best wishes should go to the family at this difficult time.

Councillor Kite next took the opportunity to welcome the relatively newly elected Councillor Stafford to her first meeting of the General Assembly of the Council, and also Mrs Sarah Martin the newly appointed Strategic Director: (Internal Services).

Looking to the summer ahead, the Leader listed a number of events being staged by the Council for local residents, including "Dartford Remembered" which was being staged on the forthcoming weekend, the Dartford Festival, and "Summer Sizzlers" which would focus this year on providing training in circus skills to young people, the usual and ever popular summer bandstand concerts, and the staging of a number of free open air theatre performances.

Councillor Kite also mentioned a commemorative trip that would take place later in the year where a number of local residents would visit World War I sites in Belgium to mark the Centenary of the start of the first world war.

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Finally Councillor Kite extended his thanks to all Members of his group, and other coalition Members and to the Members of the opposition for their work in ensuring that the electors of Dartford obtained good value for money and clear decision making.

10. RE-DESIGNATION OF POLLING PLACES FOR FLEET ESTATE (BB) AND FLEET DOWNS (BC) POLLING DISTRICTS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor JA Kite requested that the Council approve a change of polling places for the Fleet Estate and Fleet Downs Polling Districts due to the unavailability of the Fleetdown Community Centre which is currently closed for repair due to extensive damage caused earlier in the year by high winds.

RESOLVED

That the General Assembly of the Council agrees to the designation of the Fleetdown Library as the polling place for both the Fleet Estate and Fleet Downs Polling Districts with immediate effect.

11. TO NOTE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 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 J Hayes would be the Leader and Deputy Leader respectively, of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association.

12. 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 AND TO ALLOCATE ALL EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS TO THE CABINET AND DETERMINE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE CABINET (APPENDIX A)

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 six 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.

13. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE CABINET (APPENDIX B)

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, C J Shippam, and Mrs Thurlow, 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, K M Kelly, E J Lampkin and B E Read with responsibilities as set out in Appendix B to the Agenda.

14. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEED, TRUST AND OBLIGATIONS COMMITTEE UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000, ITS MEMBERSHIP, FUNCTIONS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE (APPENDIX C)

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 provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and that the appointments of 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.

15. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT 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), that Mrs Sarah Jane Martin would be the Chief Finance Officer (pursuant to section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972) and that Mrs Sheralyn Ann Green would be the Monitoring Officer (pursuant to section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

16. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Sandhu renewed his thanks to all Members for choosing him as Mayor, a role she regarded as a great honour and one he would not be undertaking lightly.

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He explained that he wanted to build and develop on the solid base already provided by the Borough of Dartford and hoped to achieve this by reaching out to as many groups, businesses and individuals as he possibly could during his year in office.

The Mayor advised that he took great pride in the work of the Mayor's Charity Committee and announced that he would be supporting some 31 charitable organisations in the forthcoming year. He was aware that this was a large number but he stressed that he had links to all of these groups and hoped to be able to make a significant contribution to all. (Details of the charities were circulated to Members at the meeting)

In concluding his announcements the Mayor extended his thanks to his family, especially his brother and his wife, all Members of the Council, and all Council staff for the hard work and support they had contributed during his year as Deputy Mayor.

17. TO CONFIRM THE SIZE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE POLITICAL GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL (APPENDIX D)

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 (30), Labour Group (11) and the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association (3).

RESOLVED:

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

18. TO ADOPT THE RULES FOR SUBSTITUTION FOR COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND PANELS (APPENDIX E)

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 Appendix E to the Agenda, be adopted.

19. TO ANNOUNCE THE STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR GROUP AND THE ALLOCATIONS/DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES (APPENDIX F)

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.

20. TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL (APPENDIX G)

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.

21. 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 (APPENDICES H(I) TO V(II))

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 subject to the amendments notified to Members in the circulated errata sheet, 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 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) subject to the amendments notified to Members in the circulated errata sheet to the agenda, be noted.
- (4) 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(ii) subject to the amendments notified to Members in the circulated errata sheet.to the agenda be agreed.

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- (5) That the Terms of Reference for the Cabinet Advisory Panels, and the Joint Transportation Board set out in Appendices V(i), and (ii) and subject to the amendments notified to Members in the circulated errata sheet to the agenda respectively, be agreed.

22. TO AGREE THE CALENDAR OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2014/15 AND TO NOTE THE PROVISIONAL CALENDAR FOR 2015/16 (APPENDIX W)

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.

23. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENTS OF COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES BY EXTERNAL BODIES, AND TO OUTSIDE BODIES WHERE THE TERM OF OFFICE EXCEEDS ONE YEAR (APPENDIX X)

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.

24. TO APPOINT COUNCILLORS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND TO LIAISON GROUPS (APPENDICES Y AND Z)

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 2014/15 set out in Appendix Y to the agenda be adopted.

(2) That the appointments of Councillor representatives to liaison groups for 2014/15 set out in Appendix Z to the agenda be adopted.

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

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

MAYOR

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