

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, duly convened and held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS, at 6.45 pm on Wednesday, 4 October 2023

PRESENT:

The Mayor Councillor Hugh Patterson (Chair)
Councillors Pope (Vice-Chair), Allen, Atkins, Barrass, Barrington-King, Bland, Brice, Britcher-Allan, Chapelard, Dawlings, Ellis, Fairweather, Fitzsimmons, Goodship, Hall, Hayward, Knight, Le Page, Lewis, Lidstone, March, McMillan, Moon, Morton, Neville, Ms Palmer, Pound, Roberts, Rogers, Rutland, Sankey, Wakeman, Warne, White, Francis, Wormington, Curry, O'Connell, Wilkinson, Munday, Sharratt, Osborne and Webster

IN ATTENDANCE: William Benson (Chief Executive) and Claudette Valmond (Head of Legal Partnership and Interim Monitoring Officer)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

FC33/22 Apologies were received from Councillors: Hill, Holden, Johnson and Opara.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 5 JULY 2023

FC34/22 Councillor Barras requested that the minutes reflect a wording change.

RESOLVED –

1. That FC22/22 be amended to replace the word Answer with Question
2. That subject to the above amendment the minutes of the meeting dated 5 July be approved as a correct record.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

FC35/22 Cllr Warne declared an interest in Agenda item 7, Cranbrook, and Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Warne explained that she was Chairman of the Steering Group and therefore will not participate in the discussion.

Cllr Warne left the chamber whilst the application was discussed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- FC36/22 **The Leader Announced: Councillor Chapelard**
- Provided Full Council with an update on the Corporate Plan and thanked the 1500 residents who took part in the borough-wide survey over the summer.
 - Putting the feedback from the councillor convention and the borough-wide survey together there are 5 emerging corporate priorities:

1. Climate Action
2. Our Environment
3. Sustainable Growth
4. Vibrant Economy
5. Community Wellbeing

- The next step of drawing up the Corporate Plan, was set out in an email to councillors over the weekend and it is hoped councillors will contribute.

The Portfolio Holder of Finance and Performance: Councillor Hall

- Advised that on 29 Sept TWBC received a clean audit on its 2022/23 accounts, which have been signed off and published by the statutory deadline.
- This achievement has been achieved by Tunbridge Wells as the first and only Council in Kent to achieve this deadline.
- Thanks were given to the finance team and Officers whose dedication and hard work would not have made this possible.

Portfolio Holder for Communities and Deputy Leader: Councillor Warne

- Sunday 10 September Volunteers Thank You Tea Party was held at the Assembly Hall Theatre.
- Allowing the council to show their appreciation to 21 Charities and honoured 57 voluntary service organisations took part in the tea party celebrations and were entertained by the Tunbridge Wells Orpheus Male Voice Choir, This is Us Dance Company and Lucy Andrena an Egyptian Style dancer.
- Thanks were also given to Dawn Sanford MBE from Nourish and Jeremy Kimmel from the Amelia, along with thanks to fellow Council Members who attended including Deputy Mayor and Mayoress.

Portfolio Holder of Environmental Services: Councillor Ellen Neville

- Advised Full Council that there would be a Gen Z Youth Debate taking place in the Council Chamber on the 10 October
- Children between the ages of 15 and 19 who go to school in the borough, in total 24 Students from Oakley, Skinners Kent Academy, and Mascalls would be debating three hypothetical topics, with members of the Council and the Deputy Mayor.

Portfolio Holder of Sport, Leisure, and Health: Councillor Wilkinson

- RTW in Bloom team travelled to The Royal Horticultural Society Gardens at Wisley and were awarded the Small City of the Year 2023 award.
- Parks, Churchyards, Nature Reserve and Commons also received awards, many of them Gold.
- An event was held at the Assembly Hall theatre where the In Bloom team celebrated residents, schools, community

- organisations and businesses that help make our town beautiful.
Thanks was expressed to all involved in making this a successful event all round.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

FC37/22 The Mayor advised that no questions from members of the public had been received under Council Procedure Rule 8.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

FC38/22 The Mayor advised that no questions from members of the Council had been received under Council Procedure Rule 10.

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

FC39/22 Councillor Wormington Moved and Councillor Britcher-Allen seconded the recommendation set out in the report on the agenda.

Thanks was given to all involved in helping bring this to fruition.

The Mayor took a vote by Affirmation

RESOLVED:

1. That Full Council agrees to the proposed Polling districts and polling places as set in the report

CRANBROOK & SISSINGHURST NDP

FC40/22 Councillor Pound moved and Councillor Chapelard Seconded the recommendations set out in the report.

It was noted that Cranbrook and Sissinghurst had a turnout of 25.5%, of whom 92.7% voted yes to the referendum.

Councillor Warne declared an interest in this item and left the Chamber whilst discussions took place, due to her position as Chairman of the Steering group.

Councillor Warne expressed her thanks to the following people who helped shape the NP policy. TWBC Planning Officers, Parish Council, June Bell, Annie Hopper, Liz Daley, Marion Cranmer, Annie Hatcher, Matthew Vaughan, Jeremy Boxall, and to Cllrs, Lee Hatcher and Garry Pethurst.

The Mayor took a vote by Affirmation.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Development Plan (CSNDP) be formally 'made' (adopted) and become part of the statutory Development Plan for the area with immediate effect, following a favourable

local referendum result.

2. The Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Development Plan post-referendum Decision Statement at **Appendix A** be published; and
3. The Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Development Plan SEA Adoption Statement be drafted and published after the NDP is 'made.'

Councillor Warne Re-joined

PADDOCK WOOD NDP

FC41/22 Councillor Pound moved and Councillor Warne Seconded the recommendations set out in the report.

It was noted that Paddock Wood had a turnout of 17.7%, of whom 75.57% voted yes to the referendum.

Debate:

- Clarification was requested regarding applications submitted after the adoption of the NP would be follow the same scrutiny as those submitted prior.
- It was suggested that this was not the forum for such a Q&A session.
- It was confirmed that a NP comes into force as part of the local planning authority's statutory development plan once approved at referendum.

The Mayor took a vote by Affirmation.

RESOLVED:

This report makes the following recommendations to Full Council:

1. That the Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan (PWNDP) be formally 'made' (adopted) and become part of the statutory Development Plan for Paddock Wood parish with immediate effect, following a favourable local referendum result.
2. The Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan post-referendum Decision Statement at **Appendix A** be published; and

The Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Development Plan SEA Adoption Statement be drafted and published after the NDP is 'made.'

PEMBURY NDP

FC42/22 Councillor Pound moved and Councillor Warne Seconded the recommendations set out in the report.

It was noted that Pembury had a turnout of 22.3%, of whom 83.6% voted yes to the referendum

The Mayor took a vote by Affirmation

RESOLVED -

1. That the Pembury Neighbourhood Development Plan (PNDP) be formally 'made' (adopted) and become part of the statutory Development Plan for Pembury Parish with immediate effect, following a favourable local referendum result;
2. The Pembury Neighbourhood Development Plan post-referendum Decision Statement at **Appendix A** be published; and
3. The Pembury Neighbourhood Development Plan SEA Adoption Statement be drafted and published after the NDP is 'made'.

CHANGES TO APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

FC43/22 Councillor Chapelard moved the Councillor Warne seconded the recommendations set out in the report on the agenda.

The Mayor advised of the following change, Councillor Moon advised that he was no longer a member for the Independents for Tunbridge Wells (IFTW).

The Mayor advised that under the constitution rule the IFTW party will cease to be a political group. and Councillor, Moon, Hayward and Atkins would be regarded as three separate independent members.

The Mayor advised of the following changes:

- Councillor Fitzsimmons has stepped down as Cabinet Member and will be replaced by Councillor Wilkinson
- Councillor Wilkinson will no longer sit on Overview & Scrutiny Committee as she is now a Cabinet member
- Councillor Hayward is now a member of the Planning Policy Working group
- Councillor Moon will take a vacant Independent seat on Planning and he will no longer sit on Finance and Government
- Councillor Holden has resigned his seat on Finance and Governance
- Councillor Britcher-Allan will step down as Vice Chair on Planning..
- Councillor Atkins will resume his position as Chair on Licensing Committee.

The Mayor to a vote by Affirmation

RESOLVED – the following changes

1. That the allocation of seats to Committees (political balance), as set out at paragraph 3.7 of the report, be approved.
2. That the appointments to Committees, nominated by Group Leaders, including the Chairmanships and Vice-Chairmanships of the Committees as set out at appendix A to the report, be approved.

URGENT BUSINESS

FC44/22 There was no urgent business.

COMMON SEAL OF THE COUNCIL

FC45/22 **RESOLVED** – That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to any contract, minute, notice or other document arising out of the minutes or pursuant to any delegation, authority or power conferred by the Council.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

FC46/22 The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 13 December 2023.

NOTES:

The meeting concluded at Time Not Specified.