

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL duly convened and held on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 7.00 pm in The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Canterbury

Present: Councillor Jean Butcher (Lord Mayor)

Councillor Baldock, Councillor Bland, Councillor Brady, Councillor Buckman, Councillor Carr-Ellis, Councillor Charlotte Cornell, Councillor Chris Cornell, Councillor Dawkins, Councillor Dixey, Councillor Flanagan, Councillor Franklin, Councillor A Harvey, Councillor L Harvey, Councillor Hazelton, Councillor Howes, Councillor Jones, Councillor Jupe, Councillor McKenzie, Councillor Mellish, Councillor Moses, Councillor Old, Councillor Prentice, Councillor Ricketts, Councillor D Smith, Councillor N Smith, Councillor Sole, Councillor I Stockley, Councillor J Stockley, Councillor Thomas, Councillor Turnbull, Councillor Warley, Councillor Watkins and Councillor Wheeler

714. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pat Edwards, Connie Nolan, Lee Castle, Keith Bothwell and Rachel Carnac. There was also an apology for lateness from Councillor Roben Franklin.

715. Declaration of councillors' interests

Councillors Baldock, Dixey, Howes and Turnbull each made a statement that any declarations of interests by councillors in their respective groups that were recorded in the minutes presented to the meeting were deemed to be declared again by any of those councillors present at the meeting.

There were no further declarations.

716. Petitions or questions from the public

There were no petitions or questions from the public.

717. Announcements

The Lord Mayor noted the sad death of Honorary Alderman Robert "Bob" Bright, who passed away on 14th March. He served between 2003-2015 in Heron and Greenhill wards, for the Liberal Democrats and then for the Conservative group.

Councillor Sole noted his thanks, which were echoed by the Leader, Councillor Baldock, on behalf of the Council, for the work done by former city council councillors Pat Todd, Georgina Glover and Valerie Kenny, who alongside Councillor Sole and Councillor Castle, had agreed to be appointed as interim councillors to Womenswold Parish Council early in the current municipal year, when that council found itself in the position of having no sitting councillors and no clerk. The interim councillors had since appointed a locum parish clerk, and a full complement of new councillors had now been recruited, thanks to the hard work, encouragement and wealth of experience of the interim councillors.

There were no other announcements from other cabinet members or officers.

718. Community Governance Review in Westbere & Hersden – revised timetable

Councillor Sole proposed, Councillor Baldock seconded, and it was

RESOLVED:

that the revised timetable and consultation plan for the Westbere and Hersden Community Governance Review be adopted.

Record of voting:

For the vote (33): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Flanagan, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Howes, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Warley and Wheeler.

Against the vote (0):

Abstained (0):

719. Recommendations to Full Council from Cabinet

(a) Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy for 2024/25

Councillor Baldock proposed and Councillor Dixey seconded the recommendation from Cabinet 25th March 2024 concerning the Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy for 2024/25 and it was

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Treasury Management Strategy including the Minimum Revenue Provision policy for 2024/25 be approved.
- b) that the attached Capital Strategy for 2024/25 be approved.
- c) that the attached Investment strategy for 2024/25 be approved.

Record of voting:

For the vote (32): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Flanagan, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Howes, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Turnbull, Watkins, Warley and Wheeler.

Against the vote (0):

Abstained (1): Councillor Thomas

(b) Proposed Dog Control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) 2024

Councillor Baldock proposed and Councillor Dixey seconded the recommendation from Cabinet 25th March 2024 concerning the adoption of a new Dog Control PSPO 2024 and it was

RESOLVED:

1. To adopt the new Dog Control PSPO 2024 as set out in Appendix D of the Cabinet report of 25th March 2024, which included requirements relating to:

- Dog fouling
- Dog on lead of no more than two metres as per locations listed in Schedule 1 of Appendix D
- Direction given to place dog on lead
- Dog exclusion as per locations listed in Schedule 2 of Appendix D

2. To include the new site of Bridge Recreation Ground as a dog exclusion area (as set out in Schedule 2 of Appendix D)

3. To attach site maps to locations listed in Section 2 of this report, to ensure boundaries and areas that restrictions apply are clear.

4. To NOT include in the new order:

4.1 Dog lead restrictions at the following sites:

- a. Paths of the Riverside Walk
- b. The public footpath within Whitstable Cemetery Whitstable

4.2 Dog exclusion at the following sites:

- Play area The Maltings, Enclosed, Littlebourne
- Play area Black Griffin Lane, Canterbury
- Sturry Road Community Park Garden Area, Northgate

4.3 The requirement of a person in charge of a dog on land to which the order applies, to produce (if asked to do so by an officer) a suitable means to pick up, remove and appropriately dispose of dog faeces

Record of voting:

For the vote (32): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Flanagan, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Howes, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Warley and Wheeler.

Against the vote (0):

Abstained (1): Councillor N Smith

[Councillor Roben Franklin arrived in the chamber at this point.]

720. Recommendations to the Full Council from Committees and Boards

(a) Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 Annual report

Councillor Brady proposed and Councillor D Smith seconded the recommendation from Audit Committee 13th March 2024 relating to the RIPA policy and the annual report and it was

RESOLVED:

- a) That the updated RIPA Policy document be adopted.
- b) That the annual report was received and noted.

Record of voting:

For the vote (34): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Howes, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Warley and Wheeler.

Against the vote (0):

Abstained (0):

b) Updates to the Constitution - April 2024

Councillor Baldock proposed and Councillor Ricketts seconded the recommendations from the Governance Committee of 11 April 2024 and it was

RESOLVED

1) That the proposed amendments to the Whitstable Harbour Board (WHB) governance arrangements set out in the proposals below be adopted, to take effect from the annual meeting in May 2024 -

- a) That the WHB becomes a committee of Council and not Cabinet.
- b) That WHB maintains a 10-year (not five-year) plan of quay maintenance and provides this annually to the Council.
- c) That the WHB agree a 10-year strategic plan and develop a business plan to identify cost implications to the Council throughout this period.
- d) That proposals for a ring-fenced reserve for quay maintenance are referred directly to the Service Director for Finance and Procurement to consider the financial implications on the wider council budget. These implications will be fed into the future budget-setting process.
- e) That the WHB would receive a copy of the budget submission for the Harbour and the agreed budget – in order to ensure we have sufficient funds to complete works.
- f) That the designated officer will annually ensure flexibility and discretion is given to the Lead Officer of the Harbour in the budget setting process, to achieve the strategic goals, in line with the delegations set out in the Constitution.
- g) That the WHB will have full discretion on the formation of ‘task and finish groups’ (previously referred to as working groups) subject to officer capacity being available.
- h) That clarification will be sought as to whether the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will need amending were the byelaw to be amended/repealed
- i) The size of the WHB change to 5 councillors and 4 independent members, in line with the Department for Transport’s Ports Good Governance Guidance, with political balance retained and a councillor appointed as chair.

j) Additionally, that the Memorandum of Understanding, once agreed with Cabinet, be incorporated into the Terms of Reference of the Board.

k) That an advisory note be added to the terms of reference that where possible no more than two Board members should also be Cabinet members.

2) That the following changes to the Petition Scheme are adopted -

a) acceptance of e-petitions from third party sites

b) an initial response by the Leader or nominee at Council to petitions referred to Cabinet

3) To amend the carers allowance in the Members Allowance Scheme to pay the real Living Wage, irrespective of the age of the carer.

NOTED -

4) The amendments made by the Head of Legal Services under delegation F28.

Record of voting:

For the vote (34): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Howes, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Warley and Wheeler.

Against the vote (0):

Abstained (0):

(c) Whitstable CGR Consultation results

Councillor Flanagan proposed, and Councillor Brady seconded the recommendations from the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 16th April 2024 relating to the Whitstable community governance review consultation results.

The councillors debated the motion, and it was

RESOLVED

1. That feedback be sought on the following draft recommendations -

- Based on the findings of the consultation, the advisory group has not recommended an alternative boundary for a smaller town council.
- Instead, it recommends a qualitative approach inviting comments, opinion and evidence which supports or disproves the following four propositions:
 - *i. That a parishing of the whole CT5 area does not represent the interest of the community given the lack of public support.*

- *ii. That the splitting of wards in Gorrell will damage community cohesion by forcing only some in an area to pay for largely shared services and resources.*
- *iii. That a smaller parished area covering Harbour & Tankerton lacks community cohesion given the lack of public support and distinct unique identity of both settlements, therefore is not recommended.*
- *iv. That a smaller parished area covering Harbour & Tankerton will neither be effective or convenient in achieving the original aims of the petition to create a single 'voice for Whitstable' and incapable of delivering the range of projects presented by the petitioning organisation.*

2. That feedback is obtained through written representations using the means set out in the report.

3. That the revised timetable be approved

Record of voting:

For the vote (31): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Flanagan, Franklin, L Harvey, Hazelton, Howes, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Warley and Wheeler.

Against the vote (2): Councillors Turnbull, Wheeler

Abstained (1): Councillor A Harvey

721. Councillor questions

i) Councillor Jones asked the following question:

The previous administration was rightly criticised for its zoning plan as it meant that residents would not be able to access certain parts of the city in motor vehicles to force them onto the ring road or to create a modal shift.

In the current transport strategy, it states: 13.6 Some point closures or bus-gates at selected locations in residential neighbourhoods may be needed to prevent the minor streets that form through routes from being used as bypasses to avoid the ring road.

Does this mean that there will be some areas of the city that residents will no longer be able to drive through? Is this zoning by another method?

The Leader, Councillor Alan Baldock, replied as follows:

I'm delighted to answer the question. I'm very glad you agree with me that it was right to bin the previous draft transport strategy. The new draft transport strategy is very much part of the new draft Local Plan. We welcome the observations made and hope to offer some clarity – indeed, this reflects the

spirit of this consultation period, that we should be clarifying everything we can. Modal filters, which you refer to, are included in the draft transport strategy in recognition that it may, at some point in the future, be necessary to remove through traffic from some residential areas. This is very different to the Canterbury Circulation Plan that was previously consulted on as part of the Conservative plan.

Potentially closing off a very small number of residential 'rat-runs' to improve the environment would only happen if there was strong support from the local community. Many times you've read in the local media about that happening, for good and for bad. This is considered a potential medium-term (5-10 years) action in the draft transport strategy that is currently out for consultation. Any changes to roads, layouts and restrictions, are Kent County Council (KCC) decisions to take.

ii) Councillor I Stockley asked the following question:

Can I ask, how many parking acts have been recorded at the Sturry Park and Ride site since it re-opened, and how much money each of these acts currently costing our district, both financially and in terms of increased pollution as a result of Canterbury City Council running a nearly empty bus service into the heart of our city?

Councillor Alex Ricketts, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Movement and Rural Development, made his response as follows:

The number of vehicles using Sturry Road Park and Ride on week 1 was 483, and in week 2 was 587, a significant increase which we hope will continue.

In terms of the detailed data, we will be reporting to Scrutiny Sub-Committee in September. At the moment, it is too early to tell in terms of financial data, but one point I should make is that it is not only those who park in the Park & Ride who use the bus service. In fact, if you use the service you will see that people are getting on all the way in and out of the city. So that also has to be considered as part of the full appraisal of its success, as we get to that September period, as was agreed at the previous Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting in February.

Councillor I Stockley then asked a supplementary question: was Councillor Ricketts aware that one of the main reasons stated for reopening the Sturry Road Park & Ride was to enable students at Christchurch University to use it. However, in an attempt to reduce its carbon footprint, the university had announced that it was to ask students to come into the university on fewer days. This might negatively impact use?

Councillor Ricketts responded that the Council continued to work very closely with the university and that any efforts they made to reduce congestion in the city was very welcome.

iii) Councillor Watkins asked the following question:

A Local Plan is likely the most significant document we will create in our time

as city councillors, so when one goes to consultation, it is our duty to provide the public with all relevant information relating to the future plan, so that they are able to fully understand the implications and give their feedback accordingly.

At the Joint Transportation Board (JTB) meeting on 19th March, we discussed the Local Plan and Transport Strategy, and I pointed out that we had not included the transport modelling document that a Local Plan should contain. It shows future flows of traffic that would arise on our highways as a result of the proposed development contained in the Local Plan. As such it is a critical document to consider when forming views on whether the Local Plan is a good idea or not. Officers at JTB confirmed it is not ideal for the public consultation to have the transport modelling omitted, but that the work was delayed.

I am a little bemused as to how the Council could develop a draft Local Plan without this crucial information on traffic volumes, given that housing development and transport are so closely linked. However, my question is how do you intend to release the transport modelling into the public domain and to get the public's feedback on that - and the wider implications for the Local Plan - given the current consultation will have closed by then?

The Leader, Councillor Alan Baldock, replied as follows:

Happy to answer regarding the transport modelling. But first I'll address Councillor Watkin's initial lack of awareness of the development in Blean, he seemed worried about it in the question that was submitted in writing. Perhaps it was our omission for not making sure he was aware of that, but I have noted that the information he required was indeed in the Local Plan consultation press release, the consultation page itself, the covering report to Cabinet, the draft Local Plan itself and the evidence documents all explicitly mention the proposal for homes on land to the north of the University of Kent.

Regarding the transport modelling, while it would be ideal to have all modelling available at the time of the consultation going live, this isn't always the case. In this instance, Kent County Council (KCC) are not currently able to model bus-led interventions, even though a bus-led approach is the direction of government policy and indeed KCC policy, likewise.

Undeterred, Canterbury City Council is developing a bus-led strategy and doing the work on the benefits of that approach, as those benefits are recognised by both central government and KCC.

In fact, at the early public engagement stage we are at, the regulation 18 stage, the level of detail that the Council has already provided is more than what is actually required and rarely do other councils provide anything different.

The development that eventually may come forward through the adopted Local Plan sometime in the future will need to comply with the associated Transport Strategy. If this is the future shape of the Transport Strategy, that's what we want to seek through consultation. The principle of a bus-led and

active travel-led strategy is what we are keen to seek views on at this stage of the process.

Councillor Watkins then asked a supplementary question; when would the transport analysis come forward? Traffic would dictate how busy our roads were. When that modelling came forward, how would the Council put that into the public domain and ask people their views on it?

Councillor Baldock replied that if and when KCC provided the modelling that had been requested, it would be published, made freely available, and consulted upon.

iv) Councillor A Harvey asked the following question:

What is the highest daily number of cars using the Sturry Road Park & Ride since April 1st, 2024, please?

Councillor Alex Ricketts, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Movement and Rural Development, made his response as follows:

The highest figure so far since 1st April 2024 has been 119 daily uses. This is higher than many of the days before the site's closure.

v) Councillor Howes asked the following question:

Could the Leader please inform us what percentage of existing customers signed up to renew their green waste subscription now that payment is no longer being taken by direct debit?

Councillor Charlotte Cornell, Cabinet Member for Heritage, Open Space and Waste and Recycling responded as follows:

Bearing in mind the cost of living crisis, the legacy of last year's industrial action, and the very wet and boggy spring this year, I wonder what percentage you'll find encouraging or not? Currently, 23,300 (just over 92% of last year's total) have signed up for green waste collections. We expect this number to keep on rising too, as we didn't start taking subscriptions until March this year, and usually we start the process in January. We're still confident that this was the best way to adapt our systems, because it gives us confidence in who we are collecting from. I'd like to offer my thanks to the team who dealt calmly and efficiently with everyone who called in to make alternative payment arrangements.

Councillor Howes then asked a supplementary question as follows: How many people have paid by cheque? There was a worry about sending cheques in – and how cost-effective is that?

Councillor Charlotte Cornell responded that she did not have the exact figures in front of her, but when she last caught up with the team about three weeks previously, it was between 50 and 100 people who were paying by cheque, and indeed cash. Although the system for cashing a cheque was not particularly cost effective, the Council was still supportive of enabling

residents to do that.

722. Notices of Motion

a) Councillor Naomi Smith proposed, and Councillor Keji Moses seconded, the following Motion:

Research this year by End Furniture Poverty found that 1.2 million UK adults are living without flooring in their home, of whom almost two-thirds – or 760,000 adults – are social housing tenants”. (Inside Housing 20/1/2024)

<https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/insight/the-case-for-flooring-to-be-included-when-social-homes-are-let-83666>

On re-lets often the existing floor covering is removed due to health and safety concerns. This will often leave bare concrete floors and floorboards. The lack of floor covering means that homes are cold and draughty leading to higher fuel bills. Not having adequate floor coverings can also create a noise nuisance to neighbours.

In the Inside Housing report, they used the example of Thirteen Housing in the North East who having piloted a scheme, that either provided the existing floor coverings cleaned or new where appropriate, the cost benefits more than stood up.

“In 2018, Thirteen piloted an enhanced standard for empty homes and applied it to 100 properties. It found that those tenancies performed markedly better across key metrics such as re-lets, arrears and reported repairs. On exploration, Thirteen found that flooring and paintwork were the most valued elements, so rolled that out as standard across its portfolio”.

Wales has passed regulations that all new social housing lets must come with floor covering included. We are pleased to say that this will be the case with the new Council homes coming soon in Canterbury.

The cost of moving into a new home from Temporary Accommodation or fleeing domestic abuse can be financially crippling on our most vulnerable. UC Loans can only go so far and floor coverings are often the last priority over a cooker, fridge and a washing machine.

We should be able to offer tenants a warm cosy home. Providing carpet and vinyl flooring can go a long way towards that aim.

We ask that our that Cabinet consider conducting a pilot;

- € Keep existing floor coverings (cleaned where appropriate using local companies)
- € Provide new floor covering throughout the property when existing can't be re-used
- € Assess if the pilot is positive for our tenants, our housing stock and our Housing Revenue Account.

- € Explore how Social Landlords in the district could be required to provide floor covering throughout, on all new lets.

The Lord Mayor indicated that the Motion would be referred to Cabinet without debate.

Councillor Pip Hazelton, the Cabinet Member for Housing, then gave a brief initial response, stating that a Task and Finish Group would be set up to look into whether a pilot could be undertaken.

b) Councillor Dan Smith proposed, and Councillor Jupe seconded, the following Motion:

This council supports the concept of a land bridge for the Wilder Blean Woods Complex. The land bridge is needed over the A2 to facilitate the contiguous connection of these two areas of the Blean, over the roadblock caused by the A2, to allow movement of animals such as deer across the wider Blean area.

In supporting this concept this council agrees, without any commitment to incur costs, to work with the appropriate organisations to facilitate a connection from South Blean [Chartham Hatch\Lower Harbledown] with the RSPB managed Church Woods area of West Blean [Rough Common\Upper Harbledown\Blean].

The Lord Mayor indicated that the Motion would be referred to Cabinet without debate.

Councillor Mel Dawkins, the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity, then gave an initial response, welcoming the Motion.

723. Changes to memberships of committees and sub-committees for the remainder of the council year

Councillor Baldock proposed and Councillor Dixey seconded the changes to memberships of committees for the remainder of the council year, as set out in the agenda, and they were agreed by general assent.

724. Council Minutes

Councillor Baldock proposed, and Councillor Dixey seconded, the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, and they were agreed by general assent.

725. To receive the following minutes of the meetings specified

a. Audit Committee – 13 March 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Brady and seconded by Councillor D Smith and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

b. Cabinet - 11th March and 25th March 2024

[Councillor Dixey requested that his name be added to the list of attendees on the front page of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 11th March.]

It was proposed by Councillor Baldock and seconded by Councillor Dixey and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meetings be received.

c. Cabinet Committee – 20th February 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Carr-Ellis and seconded by Councillor Jupe and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

d. General Purposes Committee – 16th April 2024 [not 16th February as stated in the printed agenda]

It was proposed by Councillor Flanagan and seconded by Councillor Brady and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

e. Governance Committee – 11 April February 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Baldock and seconded by Councillor Dixey and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

f. Joint Transportation Board – 30 January and 19 March 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Ricketts and seconded by Councillor Watkins and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meetings be received.

g. Licensing Sub Committee - 17 January 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Bland and seconded by Councillor Buckman and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

h. Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 29 February 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Prentice and seconded by Councillor Flanagan and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

i. Planning Committee – 6 February, 5 March and 2 April 2024

It was proposed by Councillor D Smith and seconded by Councillor Prentice and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meetings be received.

j. Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 28 February 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Turnbull and seconded by Councillor Howes and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

k. Whitstable Harbour Board - 15 March 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Chris Cornell and seconded by Councillor Dixey and AGREED by general assent that the minutes of the above meeting be received.

726. Programme of meetings for 2024/25

Councillor Baldock proposed and Councillor Dixey seconded the approval and adoption of a revised programme of meetings for 2024/25 as set out in the agenda.

It was AGREED by general assent to approve the adoption of the revised programme of meetings for 2024/25.

727. Notices of urgent decisions made by the Head of Paid Service under delegation

No urgent decisions had been taken by the Head of Paid Service under delegation.

728. Any other urgent business to be dealt with on the night

There was no business under this item.

The meeting closed at 20:10.