

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL duly convened and held on Thursday, 4th January 2024 at 7.00 pm in The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Canterbury

Present: Councillor Jean Butcher (Lord Mayor)

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

427 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Simon Warley and Joe Howes.

428 Declaration of Councillors' Interests

Councillors Baldock, Dixey, Carnac 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.

429 Petitions or questions from the public

There were no petitions or questions from the public for the meeting.

430 Announcements

The Lord Mayor announced the recent death of former councillor and Lord Mayor (2002) Mary Jeffries, who passed away on 26th December. Deputy Leader Michael Dixey also said a few words in memory of the former councillor.

The Lord Mayor then announced that the council would be holding its first Civic Service at the Cathedral on 6 February at 5.30pm. The service was open to the public and thanks were extended to the Dean of Canterbury and his team for providing this for the City. All councillors should have received their invitations before Christmas.

The Leader remarked that six months had now passed since the new administration had come into place, and thanked the senior management team and all the council's officers for their hard work and support during this period of significant learning. He

also thanked the residents of the district for trusting the Labour / LibDem coalition to lead the Council, and all his fellow councillors for their hard work and positive cooperation.

The Head of Paid Service, Tricia Marshall, announced that, under s91 of the LGA 1972, she has used her delegated powers to appoint temporary councillors to the Womenswold Parish Council to ensure it is quorate and able to conduct business.

The appointees were Councillors Mike Sole and Lee Castle, and former councillors Georgina Glover, Valerie Kenny and Pat Todd. They had been appointed initially for six months. During that period it was hoped that new permanent members would be elected or co-opted to the parish council.

The Deputy Leader and Leader recorded their thanks to those councillors and former councillors for stepping in.

431 **Recommendations to Full Council from Cabinet**

1. Draft General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25 and Financial Outlook

Councillor Baldock proposed, Councillor Dixey seconded, and when put to a vote it was

RESOLVED

- that the Capital Programme for the current year be amended as shown in Appendix 3.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (31): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Turnbull, Wheeler.

Against (1): Councillor J Stockley

Abstained (5): Councillors Carnac, Jones, I Stockley, Thomas, Watkins

2. The Creation of a New City Public Space Protection Order - following consultation

The councillors debated the proposal.

An Amendment to replace point 3 'No begging' with 'No begging with antisocial behaviour' was proposed, seconded, and when put to the vote, FELL.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (8): Councillors Bland, Brady, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, Jupe, Old, D Smith

Against (26): Baldock, Bothwell, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones, McKenzie, Mellish, Nolan, Prentice, Ricketts, N Smith, Sole, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Abstained (3): Councillors Carr-Ellis, Castle, Moses

An Amendment to replace point 3 'No begging' with wording taken from the previous PSPO, which referred to 'Persistently begs. Persistently begging involves begging on more than one occasion and includes all passive and active methods used to receive alms' was proposed, seconded, and when put to the vote, AGREED.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (31): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Turnbull, Wheeler.

Against (1): Councillor J Stockley

Abstained (5): Councillors Carnac, Jones, I Stockley, Thomas, Watkins

The councillors then further debated the proposal.

A proposal to take each of the items in the proposal one by one, rather than en bloc, was made, seconded and when put to the vote, FELL.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (12): Councillors Buckman, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, A Harvey, L Harvey, Jones, McKenzie, Moses, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Watkins

Against (24): Councillors Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, Hazelton, Jupe, Mellish, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Turnbull, Wheeler

Abstained (1): Councillor Butcher

Councillor Baldock then proposed, and Councillor Dixey seconded, the proposal as amended, and when put to the vote it was

RESOLVED:

- The adoption of a new city PSPO, which includes the following activities:

1. Someone drinking in public areas causing alarm, harassment or distress
2. Shouting, swearing or causing other alarm, distress or harassment to others - whether in the area or living nearby
3. Persistent begging
4. Urinating or defecating in any public place
5. Graffitiing, fly posting and affixing notices, pictures or signs to property without the owner's permission
6. The anti-social behaviour of delivery riders:
 - Aggressive driving/riding
 - Dangerous manoeuvres
 - Excessive noise
 - Danger to other road users (including pedestrians)
 - Damage or risk of damage to private property
 - Harassment of individuals from vehicles

Record of voting:

For the proposal (19): Baldock, Bland, Brady, Castle, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, Hazelton, Jupe, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, D Smith, Sole

Against (9): Councillors Carnac, L Harvey, Jones, I Stockley, J Stockley, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler

Abstained (9): Councillors Bothwell, Buckman, Butcher, Carr-Ellis, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, A Harvey, McKenzie, N Smith

432 **Recommendations from other committees**

432.1 **Community Governance Review in the unparished area of Whitstable**

An amendment, that there be added a second Conservative group representative on the Task and Finish Advisory Group, was proposed, seconded and, by general assent, AGREED.

Councillor James Flanagan then proposed, Councillor Alister Brady seconded and when put to the vote it was

RESOLVED:

1. That a Community Governance Review be conducted, in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, and the timetable and terms of reference set out in the appendices to the report be approved;
2. That the Head of Corporate Governance, in consultation with the Head of Paid Service, be authorised to take all necessary steps in relation to the review;
3. That a Task and Finish Advisory Group be appointed to consider the review and make recommendations to the Council, comprising eight councillors (three Labour, two LibDem, two Conservative and one Green Party).
4. Consideration to be given to a third meeting venue to ensure that the priorities of residents in different parts of Whitstable be taken into account.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (37): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, I Stockley, J Stockley, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Against (0): none

Abstained (0): none

432.2 **Polling District Review**

Councillor James Flanagan proposed, Councillor Alister Brady seconded and when put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

1. That the changes to polling districts and places as set out in section 4 of the report be agreed.

2. That subject to incorporating the changes in 1 above, that the Council agree the polling districts and places set out in Appendix 2.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (37): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish,

Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, I Stockley, J Stockley, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Against (0): none

Abstained (0): none

433 **Setting the Council Tax Base and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25**

Councillor Alan Baldock proposed, Councillor Michael Dixey seconded, and when put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

That Council:

1. Determine that for the financial year 2024/25, the empty homes discount for properties unoccupied and unfurnished ('Class C' properties) remains at 0%, so that Council Tax will be payable in full on these properties.
2. Approve the District's Council Tax Base for 2024/25 as 53,348.27 and the tax base for the towns and parishes in the Council's administrative area, as set out in the table at Appendix 2.
3. Determines the "Long Term Empty Premium" for properties that have been left empty and substantially unfurnished:
 - (a) for periods of 1 year but less than 5 years, a Long Term Empty premium to be charged at 100%; and
 - (b) for periods of 5 years but less than 10 years, a Long Term Empty premium to be charged at 200%; and
 - (c) for periods of 10 years or more a Long Term Empty premium to be charged at 300%.
4. Formally approves the discontinuation of the council Tax 'Class D' discount, for properties undergoing structural alteration and/or major repair, effective from 1 April 2024.
5. Formally approves the CTRS as set out in this report, effective from 1 April 2024.
6. Formally approves the application of the 100% Council Tax premium on properties empty for 1 year but less than 5 years, applicable from 1 April 2024, in line with the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023.
7. Formally approves the application of a 100% Council Tax premium on properties that are unoccupied and furnished, often referred to as 'second homes' ('Class B' properties), applicable from 1 April 2025, in line with the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (36): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones,, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, I Stockley, J Stockley, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Against (0): none

Abstained (1): Councillor Jupe

434 **Councillor questions**

(a) Councillor Keith Bothwell asked the following question:

As a preface to my question, I would like to say that in my experience, this council's officers are always helpful, considerate and highly competent. In the months since I was elected I have been most impressed by their capabilities and professionalism.

However, I do feel that I am sometimes working in the dark, because I do not have a measure of the staff who work here - I am not aware of the full range of talents employed by Canterbury City Council.

Wanting to know more about the council's capabilities and skills, I have requested previously to see a list of staff with their respective roles et cetera but this has not been forthcoming. The response given is that this is not yet available because staff are leaving and arriving and that therefore the staff list is not up-to-date. However, this will always be the case – there will never be a complete and accurate list of staff in any organisation of this size.

My question is: Will a staff list, including respective departments, roles, and responsibilities, be made available to councillors at any stage soon?

Councillor Mike Sole, the Cabinet Member for Finance, replied as follows:

Can I start by endorsing your comments about the capabilities and professionalism of our staff? They are a credit to the organisation. I would also like to take the opportunity to acknowledge how staff at every level have adapted to the new administration, its priorities and ethos, and the challenges that a change in so many councillors brings.

I sympathise with this question. As councillors we receive emails from residents on hundreds of different issues, and there are hundreds of council officers with thousands of responsibilities between them. Knowing how to get information and swiftly resolve issues is essential.

All councillors should be aware officers provided all councillors with a comprehensive guide to services as part of the induction programme. The guide provides details of the services provided and explains how to raise issues.

Councillors are encouraged to use dedicated email addresses, as shown on the cover of this guide, which are closely monitored by our teams to ensure correspondence is tracked, monitored and responded to as quickly as possible in order to help our residents. As a reminder there is a dedicated email for Waste Issues, and everything Canenco related, and another for Service issues, which includes housing.

Dedicated rather than individual email addresses increases resilience, and every part of the team is willing to help.

As you mentioned in the question, in a large organisation, where staff change, there are either short or long-term absences, and responsibilities and roles change from time to time, any staff directory would be out of date on the day that it was published. The current approach negates the need for a comprehensive staff directory and

ensures queries are routed appropriately.

If you wish to know more about the roles performed by the officers within any particular department then the service directors and heads of service are always available and willing to talk to you and any councillors, and within the guide to services document there is a detailed list of the responsibilities of the senior staff.

If councillors ever experience any issues with receiving prompt replies when using the dedicated service email addresses, please let me know.

Finally, I have requested that a reminder of those service email addresses and a link to the guide to services are sent out again to councillors.

There will not be an additional staff list published for councillors.

(b) Councillor Rachel Carnac asked the following question:

Has the land for the revised layout for the A2 slip road at Wincheap, which includes the Park & Ride, been transferred to KCC? Is this administration committed to delivering the new offslip and any changes that may be required to the park and ride?

Councillor Alex Ricketts, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Movement and Rural Development, answered as follows:

Committee resolved in 2017 to transfer to KCC and Highways England an appropriate parcel of land at the Wincheap Park and Ride to facilitate the delivery of the previously designed off slip scheme. A delegation was also made to officers to make minor changes to the land transfer.

That scheme of 2017 was withdrawn following concerns from Highways England over the design of the off slip. Therefore, in answer to the question of whether the land has been transferred, no it hasn't.

Regarding the second part of your questions, as to whether we remain committed to it: well, the current Local Plan and the draft Local Plan both contain an off slip. I don't want to second-guess the work of the Local Plan Working Group, but should that also contain an A2 off slip, which I think is very likely, then obviously the council would be committed to delivering that.

There are several plans that have been submitted, and this is where it gets slightly complicated, in that the council has two roles here; 1 - we're the planning authority that has to agree any of those plans, and 2 - we're also the landowner. So there will be two separate decisions, one by the planning authority - either the planning committee or by officer decision under delegated powers. Should the planning permission be agreed, the council would have to consider the land requirement needs of the new design and what impact that would have on park and ride spaces, and that might then come back to councillors again in terms of the land disposal and we'd probably go back through that same process that we went through in 2017.

Councillor Carnac then asked one supplementary question as follows: There has been speculation in the local press about this recently, and this has caused angst to many people. So I wanted to ask for a commitment that we would carefully consider the impact of any changed land request, with special focus on the implications for the Park & Ride and the River Stour.

Councillor Ricketts responded that the council would consider the issue very seriously. It would probably be a planning decision. It was unlikely the Council would decide to build on water meadows, but he couldn't pre-judge. Both the river and the Park & Ride, a pillar of the Transport Strategy, were very important and all considerations would be taken into account. The A2 slip off remained a very important issue.

(c) Councillor Robert Jones asked the following question:

Our windmill in Herne and Broomfield, which is several hundred years old, is under threat of being sold off as Kent County Council looks to give up ownership and therefore responsibility for it, along with the rest of the mills in Kent.

Can I ask our Council heritage team if they will work with the friends of the mill in whatever way possible to ensure we keep and maintain our very important heritage asset.

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

Yes, the financial pit that Kent County Council finds itself in means the windmills, youth services and indeed county hall itself are all being sold off by KCC to try to raise funds to fill those coffers.

The Friends of Herne Mill group has nominated it as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). That has now been considered by our senior officers and, as of 18 December, Herne Mill is listed as an ACV. This is a way of community groups protecting assets from being sold.

So if the owner decides to sell, they have to notify us and we would then notify local organisations. If a community interest group or a charity puts in an expression of interest, the sale has to pause for six months, to give it time to raise the money to acquire the asset.

As you know, KCC is currently consulting on its proposal to sell eight windmills across the county. The consultation, if people wish to express their views, closes on 26 January.

Of course, as the Cabinet Member for Heritage, I would give full support to a community group that wishes to preserve the mill, a key part of our economic heritage, a key learning resource and geographical marker. I'd be very happy to meet with such a group, and I hope that you might set up that meeting for me so we can progress this further.

Councillor Jones responded that yes, he would set up that meeting.

(d) With the Lord Mayor's permission, Councillor Rachel Carnac read out the following question on behalf of Councillor Joe Howes, who had given apologies:

I have been contacted by many residents in my ward who currently opt into the garden waste service, but are now considering opting out due to the change in payment methods. Can I ask the Leader to explain how those unwilling to make card payments for security reasons will be able to pay.

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

The council has always provided alternative payment methods for the garden waste service for those unwilling or unable to use card payments or without internet access. These options are unaffected by the move away from direct debits to card payments.

To discuss alternative payment options residents can call the Bins and Waste team on 01227 947860. We will make sure that alternative payment options are picked up in any future comms on garden waste subscriptions and we make it more accessible. We at Cabinet were reassured by the team that those methods of payment would be available for years to come for those that need them. Card payments represent a more secure method of collecting payments, but that doesn't mean that they will be the only way people can pay for services.

Councillor Carnac then asked that, in addition to sending out that information in letters to residents, that relevant information be added to other communications, posters etc so that the alternative payments phone number was more widely known.

Councillor Charlotte Cornell replied that a review of communications around waste and recycling was currently underway and that the alternative methods of payment would be highlighted front and centre on the new website. She also said that she would make sure all councillors were sent the phone number and list of payment method options in the next week or so.

435 Notices of Motion

435.1 Notice of Motion regarding Homelessness & Temporary Accommodation

Councillor Rachel Carnac (in Councillor Howes' absence) proposed, and Councillor Robert Jones seconded, the following Motion

The council welcomes the Conservative government's announcement in the Autumn Statement that it will increase Local Housing Allowance rates to cover 30% of local market rents, along with an additional £120m to combat homelessness across the UK.

But as we know there are significant ongoing challenges in ensuring that everyone can live in a home that meets their current and future needs – challenges that encompass availability, affordability, security, and quality.

Government data published in July 2023 shows that more than 104,000 households were in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2023 – the highest figures since records began in 1998.

Almost daily we hear from families living in cramped and inappropriate accommodation in Canterbury district. Young parents sofa surfing with their children or having to share beds with their youngest children because there just isn't enough room. We are hearing that the nearest temporary accommodation being offered to single people is now in the northeast of England – too far from friends and family.

This council shares the collective national ambition to tackle local housing challenges and create great places for current and future generations. Housing consistently appears in the top ten priorities for British residents. It is mentioned as a key issue almost three times as frequently by 18 to 34 year-olds than older age groups.

We all know that bringing our social housing service back in-house came at a significant cost as we are trying to make up for years of under-investment. While the council's housing team has worked extremely hard and delivered real improvements in a short time, we believe that there are other actions this council must take to tackle the shortage of temporary accommodation and to help those in our community who have given up hope of ever having a suitable place to live that they can call home.

1/ As Canterbury City Council prepares to put its Local Plan back out to Section 18 consultation early this year, this council must resolve to ensure that it contributes to the delivery of homelessness prevention schemes and providing an adequate housing supply for the district through producing and delivering on an up-to-date Local Plan in late 2025/early 2026. The Local Plan must not be delayed any further and this council's priority must be to deliver new homes and affordable housing for local people.

2/ Licensed caravan parks are used as temporary accommodation and provide a very helpful stop-gap locally. However, Canterbury City Council only licenses sites for 10 months of the year. We ask that we resolve to change this policy and license sites for 12 months to allow accommodation to be used all year around. We suggest this scheme is reviewed annually. This would remove the uncertainty for many people who are living in caravans on licensed sites and take the pressure off the council from the short-term uptick in homelessness during the closure periods.

3/ That the council takes a tougher approach to allowing unlicensed caravan sites to be used as temporary accommodation. As a council we should not be allowing families to live on sites that do not meet safety standards and where basic amenities are not provided. We should not be encouraging such accommodation by paying council tax and housing benefit to unlicensed site owners. The council should be using enforcement and other pertinent powers to ensure that any caravan that is used for temporary accommodation is on a licensed site.

4/ The findings of the Older Persons Working Group must be considered very seriously and a decision on implementation taken as swiftly as possible. This piece of work is already delayed.

5/ A councillor workshop or working group (to follow on from the Older Persons Working Group) is established to focus on tackling homelessness in the district and improve provision of temporary accommodation. As a council we need cross-party working to resolve what can be done locally and what we need to lobby government to do, including:

a/ ensuring the council is bidding on every available funding pot from the government for homelessness, temporary accommodation and affordable housing;

b/ working with local developers and landlords to identify available and empty housing that can be used for temporary and permanent accommodation;
c/ asking the government to roll-out five-year local housing deals to all areas of the country that want them by 2025;
d/ asking the government to provide a long-term rent deal for council landlords to allow a longer period of annual rent increases for a minimum period of at least 10 years, providing certainty for investment. This should include flexibility for councils to address the historic anomalies in their rents as a result of the ending of the rent convergence policy in 2015.

The Lord Mayor indicated that the Motion would be referred to Cabinet without debate, so that a report could be prepared by the officers.

The Leader and the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Pip Hazelton, gave an initial response and confirmed that the Motion would be referred to Cabinet as it contained issues outside the Council's existing policy and budget framework.

435.2 **Herne Bay Seafront Regeneration 2024**

Councillor Rachel Carnac proposed, and Councillor Dan Watkins seconded, the following Motion

Council recognises the important role Whitstable Harbour Board has played in ensuring the success of the harbour and the impact that has had on the rest of the town. It is now a top destination in Britain. The Canterbury Tales of England Board has been fundamental in ensuring that Canterbury City Council had a masterplan that formed the basis for it securing Levelling-Up Bid Funding of just under £20m. The strategic partnership board supports the design, delivery and oversight of the Canterbury's Tales of England masterplan, and "provides strategic input and advice into the development of bids, including establishing and producing evidence-based insight into the needs of the city that ensures continued growth and prosperity".

We call on this council to recognise that Herne Bay would benefit from a similar driving force and strategic board to give impetus and foresight to regeneration of its seaside heritage assets from Studd Hill to Reculver, just as Whitstable Harbour Board has delivered for Whitstable and as the Canterbury, Tales of England Board is now for the city. The seafront is to Herne Bay as the harbour is to Whitstable: vital, historic and economically important. It is the town's focal point providing the magnet for visitors, investment and regeneration that benefits the whole town.

Herne Bay's seafront needs significant investment to restore its faded glory and to encourage visitors to stay longer and see it return as a holiday destination. It has all the ingredients for success, but it needs oversight, promotion, focus and drive to find the investment and then ensure work is carried out. It demands its own masterplan with Canterbury City Council as the accountable body – similar to the way the boards in Whitstable and Canterbury are run.

The town has many fantastic hard-working volunteers and groups involved in different aspects of town life – much as Whitstable and Canterbury do too – but it is

unrealistic and unreasonable for council to believe that these groups have the means to raise the millions in investment required to undertake the capital projects required on the seafront.

Council notes that Herne Bay was not awarded any funding through the government's Levelling-Up funding scheme. Nor has the council been successful in attracting other grant funding either through The Towns Fund or The Community Ownership Fund. We are therefore disappointed that the £40,000 voted through by cabinet a few months ago was not invested in undertaking the further research into how to upgrade our coastal assets which was not only necessary to make a fresh LUF bid, but indeed is required for any other bids for public monies to be successful. This clearly demonstrates a lack of oversight and a rudderless approach to Herne Bay.

Even where we were successful in getting funding, scheme implementation has been shockingly slow. Last year, the council was successfully awarded £250,000 from the Brownfield Land Release Fund to demolish the Tivoli site in 2023. It was important to get work under way quickly in order to ensure the existent planning application for regeneration of the site was still applicable. Council notes that this work has still not been undertaken despite assurances that it would be in the first half of 2023.

The pier has £300,000 earmarked in the capital budget for much-needed repairs. This work should no longer be delayed. The historic Clocktower is missing a hand, has weeds growing out of it which is compromising the structure, and is suffering from rainwater ingress. The investment needed for the King's Hall and the Bandstand is well documented, but they will both fade and fail unless action is taken urgently. In addition, the statues of Barnes Wallace and of Amy Johnson are in need of repair. The toilets at St George's and in the Bandstand are a disgrace plus there isn't a Changing Places facility along the seafront. The toilet building at Hampton is crying out for a great regeneration scheme – just look at the location! The slopes from Hampton to Reculver are looking forlorn with broken steps, railings and a lack of grounds maintenance blighting what again should be heritage assets. This is far too much work and far too ambitious for existing voluntary groups in Herne Bay, such as the Coastal Community Team to take on. Although they do their best to undertake small schemes in Herne Bay, they would be the first to admit this needs an overarching board that can take a strategic view to drive the regeneration and improvement that is needed.

We propose that a similar scheme to the successful board models run in both Whitstable and more recently in Canterbury should be rolled out in Herne Bay. This should be made up of cross-party members, relevant officers, and independent experts who would be able to advise, guide and inform on the regeneration of Herne Bay's heritage assets and historic seafront from Studd Hill to Reculver. Primarily, providing the design, delivery and oversight which will ensure Herne Bay's continued growth and prosperity.

We propose that the £40,000 that was not utilised to rework a Herne Bay bid in round 3 of the government's Levelling-Up Fund (and that was agreed by cabinet) should be repurposed to establish a Herne Bay Seaside Board from April 2024.

The Lord Mayor indicated that this motion would be referred to Cabinet without debate.

The Leader then deferred to the Cabinet Member for the Coast, Councillor Chris Cornell, who gave an initial response.

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

Councillor Alan Baldock proposed, Councillor Michael Dixey seconded, and when put to a vote it was

RESOLVED

to approve the changes to membership of committees and sub-committees as contained within the agenda, and additionally to approve the membership of the Governance Review (CGR) Task and Finish Advisory Group as follows:

Councillors Chris Cornell, Harry McKenzie, Naomi Smith, Michael Dixey, Peter Old, Clare Turnbull, Ian Stockley and Rachel Carnac.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (37): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, I Stockley, J Stockley, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Against (0): none

Abstained (0): none

437 Council minutes

Councillor Baldock proposed, Councillor Dixey seconded, and when put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the previous meetings be confirmed as a true record.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (36): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, I Stockley, J Stockley, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Against (0): none

Abstained (1): Councillor A Harvey

438 **To receive the following minutes of the meetings specified**

The Head of Paid Service indicated that the minutes would be dealt with in turn and that the Lord Mayor would first invite the relevant Chair to propose the receipt of the minutes and to ask for a seconder for the proposal.

She explained that the purpose of this item was to formally receive each set of minutes and respond to any questions arising from those minutes, and that councillors were not voting on whether they are a true record of each meeting; that was for the relevant committee to decide.

She also said that in future, if a meeting was cancelled, it would be listed here together with the reason for the cancellation.

(a) Audit Committee - 4 October 2023 -

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 - 6 November 2023 -

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.

(c) Cabinet - 4 December 2023 -

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.

(d) Cabinet Committee - 30 November 2023 -

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.

(e) Overview & Scrutiny - 21 November 2023 -

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.

(f) Planning Committee - 17 October 2023 -

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

(g) Scrutiny Sub Committee - 22 November 2023 - Cllr Carnac

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

(h) Standards Committee - 21 November 2023 -

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

(i) Whitstable Harbour Board - 13 October 2023 -

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

Additionally, the Lord Mayor stated that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee, 13 December 2023, had been published in the Agenda Supplement. The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Flanagan to propose these minutes, and Councillor Brady to second, and the minutes were therefore AGREED by general assent.

439 To receive any notices of urgent decisions made by the Head of Paid Service under delegation

There were no notices of urgent decisions made by the Head of Paid Service to report.

440 Any other urgent business to be dealt with on the night

The Lord Mayor referred to the supplement to the agenda, Item 14 - any other business to be dealt with on the night - Report to Council, Non-attendance by Councillor.

Councillor Alan Baldock proposed, Councillor Michael Dixey seconded and when put to a vote it was

RESOLVED

That Council:

- approve the reason for non-attendance and grant an extension to the six month period of non-attendance allowed, up to the next Full Council meeting on 22nd February 2024.

Record of voting:

For the proposal (37): Baldock, Bland, Bothwell, Brady, Buckman, Butcher, Carnac, Carr-Ellis, Castle, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Dixey, Edwards, Flanagan, Franklin, A Harvey, L Harvey, Hazelton, Jones, Jupe, McKenzie, Mellish, Moses, Nolan, Old, Prentice, Ricketts, I Stockley, J Stockley, D Smith, N Smith, Sole, Thomas, Turnbull, Watkins, Wheeler.

Against (0): none

Abstained (0): none

441 Exclusion of press and public

This was not required.

442 Any other urgent business to be dealt with under exempt provisions

This item was not required.