

Council

Tuesday, 17 December 2019

7.45 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr Gurdip Ram Bungar
The Deputy Mayor, Cllr John Caller

Councillors:	Derek Ashenden	Lyn Milner
	Helen Ashenden	Shane Mochrie-Cox
	Ejaz Aslam	Emma Morley
	Gurjit Kaur Bains	Elizabeth Mulheran
	John Burden	Leslie Pearton
	Colin Caller	Anthony Pritchard
	Harold Craske	Tony Rana
	Lee Croxton	Tony Rice
	Dakota Dibben	Christina Rolles
	Aaron Elliott	Lenny Rolles
	Brian Francis	Gurbax Singh
	Sarah Gow	Narinderjit Singh Thandi
	Gary Harding	Lauren Sullivan
	Baljit Hayre	Steve Thompson
	Leslie Hills	Denise Tiran
	Nirmal Khabra	Jenny Wallace
	Bob Lane	Frank Wardle
	Jordan Meade	

David Hughes	Chief Executive
Stuart Bobby	Director (Corporate Services)
Nick Brown	Director (Housing & Operations)
Kevin Burbidge	Director (Planning & Development)
Melanie Norris	Director (Communities)
Jan Guyler	Head of Legal Services, Medway Council
Andy Rayfield	Communications Manager
Carlie Simmonds	Committee Services Manager
Lauren Wallis	Committee Services Officer

50. Councillor Helen Ashenden

Following the Westcourt By-Election on 17 October 2019, the Mayor welcomed Councillor Helen Ashenden to the meeting.

51. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Conrad Broadley, Emma Elliott, Leslie Hoskins, Diane Marsh, Alan Ridgers, Brian Sangha and Peter Scollard.

52. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8 October 2019 were signed by the Mayor.

53. Declaration of Interest

Cllr John Burden declared an interest in relation to agenda item 10 - Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Housing Association as he is a Trustee of the Association. Cllr Burden left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

Cllr Colin Caller declared an interest in relation to agenda item 10 - Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Housing Association as he is a Family Trustee of the Association. Cllr Caller left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

Cllr Tony Pritchard declared an interest in relation to agenda item 10 - Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Housing Association as he is a Trustee of the Association. Cllr Pritchard left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

54. To answer any questions received from members of the public of which notice has been given under Council Procedure Rule 13

No questions had been received.

55. Minutes of Committees

Motions that proceedings, reports and recommendations of Committees, except those reserved under Council Procedure 5.2(6) as referred to below be received and adopted and where applicable the Orders made by them be ratified and confirmed were duly proposed, seconded and resolved in each case.

- Minutes of the Cabinet held on Monday 7 October 2019
- Minutes of the Overview Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 17 October 2019
- Minutes of the Licensing Committee held on Tuesday 5 November 2019
- Minutes of the Cabinet held on Monday 11 November 2019
- Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Wednesday 13 November 2019
- Minutes of the Cabinet held on Monday 2 December 2019

56. Reserved Minutes

There were no reserved minutes.

57. Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

The Council was presented with the recommendation of the Appointments Panel that was constituted to consider the appointment of a successor to the present Chief Executive when he retires on 31 March 2020.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Jordan Meade that:-

the Council confirms the appointment of Mr Stuart John Bobby to the post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service of Gravesham Borough Council with effect from 1 April 2020.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

Note: The Director (Corporate Services) left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

58. Climate Change Motion

In response to the Climate Change motion passed in June 2019, the Council was presented with the Council's planned activity and future reporting procedures.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Lee Croxton that:-

1. Full Council endorses the draft Climate Change Action Plan for the Council; and
2. an annual reporting process to Full Council be established to detail the progress made by the Corporate Working Group in implementing the Action Plan.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

59. Proposal for a Local Authority Trading Company

The Council was presented with a proposal for the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company (the Holding Company), which had previously been discussed at Cabinet and recommended for Full Council consideration. Specifically to:-

- seek approval for the establishment of a Local Authority Trading company (with Subsidiaries to follow);
- seek approval of the draft Business Case template, which will be used to seek approval for creation of future trading subsidiaries of the Holding Company, and to outline the activities of those subsidiary companies; and
- seek approval to amend the Council's Constitution and Contract Procedure Rules to ensure that the Council continues to have robust contract management arrangements in place.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Lenny Rolles that:-

1. the formation of the Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) Holding company as detailed in the report be endorsed;
2. the Council reserves the right to be a shareholder of any LATCo subsidiary and this shall be included in any governance agreement between the Council and LATCo (through the Memorandum of Association (MOA)); and
3. delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer to confirm and register the name of the company and take all necessary practical, legal and financial actions necessary in relation to the creation of the LATCo and development of the relevant governance framework in order to enable the effective operation of that company and associated subsidiaries and subject to any necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution being brought back to Full Council for approval.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

The Council thanked officers for the work that has been undertaken to date.

60. Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Housing Association

The Council was advised that the Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Housing Association (the Charity) had approached the Council seeking the potential for the Council to grant a long term loan to the Charity. Such a loan would provide the Charity with access to borrowing which would be used to fund development of housing at their site at Cross Lane West and provide a long term investment income stream to the Council.

It was moved by Cllr Lee Croxton and seconded by Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox that:-

1. responsibility be delegated to the Director (Corporate Services)(in the role of S151 Officer), in consultation with the Deputy Leader, Lead Member for Housing, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to negotiate and agree the final terms of any loan and enter into the necessary associated legal agreements on behalf of the Council;
2. approval be provided for the necessary updates to be made to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement to reflect that the Non-Specified Investments time duration for term deposits with unrated counterparties is increased to 50 years, as per the potential loan arrangement with the Charity; and
3. an amount of £2m be added to the approved capital programme for 2019/20 for the purpose of providing long term funding up to that defined level to Elizabeth Huggins Cottages Charity Housing Association as a means of enabling the Charity to provide additional social housing in Gravesham.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

Note: Councillors John Burden, Colin Caller and Tony Pritchard left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

61. Representation of Political Groups on Committees/Appointments to Committees

The Council reviewed the representation of Political Groups on Committees following the Westcourt By-Election held on 17 October 2019.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Lee Croxton that:-

- Appointments Board
Cllr Helen Ashenden to fill the additional seat.
- Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Helen Ashenden to fill the additional seat.
Cllr Derek Ashenden to replace Cllr Gurjit Bains.

- Licensing Committee
Cllr Helen Ashenden to replace Cllr John Caller.
- Regulatory Board
Cllr Harold Craske to retain his seat on the Regulatory Board.
- Finance and Audit Committee
Cllr Elizabeth Mulheran to fill the vacancy.
- Overview Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Emma Morley to fill the vacancy.
- Standards Committee
Cllr Emma Morley to fill the vacancy.
- Community and Leisure Cabinet Committee
Cllr Helen Ashenden to replace Cllr Gurjit Bains.
- Operational Services Cabinet Committee
Cllr Peter Scollard to fill the vacancy.
Cllr Gary Harding to replace Cllr Alan Ridgers.
- Performance and Administration Cabinet Committee
Cllr Elizabeth Mulheran to replace Cllr Peter Scollard.
Cllr Helen Ashenden to replace Cllr Gurjit Bains.
- Strategic Environment Cabinet Committee
Cllr Alan Ridgers to replace Cllr Gary Harding.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

62. Appointment to Outside Body (Elizabeth Huggins' Cottages Charity)

Resolved that Mr David Hurley be appointed as a representative trustee for a four year term to the Elizabeth Huggins' Cottages Charity.

63. Notice of Motion

Motion One

It was moved by Cllr Jordan Meade and seconded by Cllr John Burden that:-

This Council supports the Social Mobility Pledge and resolves to request that Gravesend Borough Council becomes a Social Mobility Pledge accredited employer.

This Council further acknowledges that improving social mobility is a priority that requires a coordinated, multi-agency approach.

Consequently, this Council resolves that the Executive will adhere to the principles of the Social Mobility Pledge and work with Members and external partners to improve social mobility across the Borough.

The Social Mobility Pledge:

Partnership

We will partner with schools or colleges to provide coaching through quality careers advice, enrichment experience and/or mentoring to people from disadvantaged backgrounds or circumstances.

Access

We will provide structured work experience and/or apprenticeships opportunities to people from disadvantaged backgrounds or circumstances.

Recruitment

We will adopt open employee recruitment practices which promote a level playing field for people from disadvantaged backgrounds or circumstances.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

Motion Two

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Jordan Meade that:-

This Council firmly condemns the potential loss of the Springhead 'Walk in Centre' and resolutely believes the new 'Urgent Treatment Centre' should be sited at Gravesend town centre.

This Council is further resolved that to place the new centre at Darent Valley Hospital would cause particular problems for the elderly and those residents unable to drive.

Gravesend town centre provides adequate road, rail and bus links and following the recent consultation, the Council strongly urges the Clinical Commissioning Group to decide accordingly.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried unanimously.

The Council paid tribute to the continuous work of NHS staff particularly during the Christmas and New Year period.

64. To consider questions from Members of the Council of which notice has been given under Council Procedure Rule 14.

No questions had been received.

65. To receive the Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked all those that had attended the Remembrance Sunday services and Christmas Light switch on which were well attended.

The Mayor advised that he had attended the St Nicholas Day Parade which had been organised by the Romani Slovak Czech Community. The Mayor invited Councillors to support this event in future years.

The Mayor wished everyone a Merry Christmas and invited those present to join him in the Parlour for refreshments.

Close of Meeting

The meeting ended at 9.05pm