

Extraordinary Overview Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 27 October 2020

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Jordan Meade (Chair)

Cllr Steve Thompson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Conrad Broadley
Leslie Hills
Emma Morley
Elizabeth Mulheran
Alan Ridgers
Christina Rolles
Peter Scollard

Also in
attendance: Cllr John Burden, Leader of the Council.

Simon Walsh Service Manager (Communities)
Chris Wakeford Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny)

18. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

19. Minutes

The Chair reminded the Committee that it was agreed at Full Council on 6 October 2020 that the Overview Scrutiny minutes of 17 September 2020 be amended in relation to declarations of interest made at the meeting. The amendment would be made in full consultation with the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Cllr Steve Thompson.

Cllr Conrad Broadley addressed the Committee and amended his declaration of interest as detailed below:

Cllr Conrad Broadley declared an 'other interest' in Item 5. The Re-starting of the Maritime Strategy Scrutiny Review in that he is a member of the following river organisations:

*Trustee, Director and Secretary of Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust (Voluntary Position)
Chairman of Broadness Cruising Club (Voluntary Position)
Chairman of Dartford and Crayford Creek Restoration Trust (Voluntary Position)
Member of Gravesend Sailing Club
Founder Member of both Dartford and Crayford Creek Restoration Trust and Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust*

Cllr Broadley also stated that he owns the following vessels:

- *27ft yacht, 1964 model*
- *1955 Simmonds Speedboat*
- *1960s Freeman Cabin Cruiser*
- *2 inflatable dinghies / tenders*
- *13ft open deck boat which he has donated to Dartford and Crayford Creek*
- *A boat which he allows use of in Northfleet harbour*
- *8ft Tender boat*
- *6.5ft Tender boat*

The Chair confirmed he will sign the amended minutes of the meeting of the Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 17 September 2020, outside of the meeting.

20. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Conrad Broadley declared an 'other interest' in Item 5. Maritime Scrutiny Review Sub-Committee in that he is a member of the following river organisations:

Trustee, Director and Secretary of Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust (Voluntary Position)
Chairman of Broadness Cruising Club (Voluntary Position)
Chairman of Dartford and Crayford Creek Restoration Trust (Voluntary Position)
Member of Gravesend Sailing Club
Founder Member of both Dartford and Crayford Creek Restoration Trust and Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust

Cllr Broadley also stated that he owns the following vessels:

- 27ft yacht, 1964 model
- 1955 Simmonds Speedboat
- 1960s Freeman Cabin Cruiser
- 2 inflatable dinghies / tenders
- 13ft open deck boat which he has donated to Dartford and Crayford Creek
- A boat which he allows use of in Northfleet harbour
- 8ft Tender boat
- 6.5ft Tender boat

Cllr Jordan Meade declared an 'other interest' in Item 5. Maritime Scrutiny Review Sub-Committee in that he is a National Trustee of the Maritime Volunteer Service.

21. Maritime Scrutiny Review Sub-Committee

The Vice-Chair, Cllr Steve Thompson explained that he, along with Cllr Elizabeth Mulheran and Cllr Christina Rolles, had called the Extraordinary Overview Scrutiny Committee in order to discuss the composition and political representation on the Maritime Scrutiny Review Sub-Committee as the Chair and Vice-Chair were unable to agree on this matter outside of the meeting.

It was moved by the Vice-Chair, Cllr Steve Thompson and seconded by the Chair, Cllr Jordan Meade that:-

The Committee reaffirm the non-political status of scrutiny and the desire to keep party politics out of the scrutiny process.

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

The Committee discussed a recent post that had been made on Facebook by Cllr Broadley. Some Members felt that the post was misleading and politicised the issue. Several Members felt that Cllr Broadley should issue a public apology to the Labour Group.

Cllr Broadley explained to the Committee that he felt he had been denied the opportunity to talk about heritage sites in the Borough.

Following a comment made by Cllr Broadley regarding Cllr John Burden's position on the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Board; Cllr Burden, Leader of the Council clarified that both he and Cllr Lauren Sullivan are not appointed members of the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Board. They do attend meetings of the Board but have no voting rights.

The Vice-Chair highlighted correspondence between himself and the Chair regarding Cllr Broadley which occurred prior to the Facebook post. The Vice-Chair had requested the removal of Cllr Broadley from the Maritime Strategy Review Sub-Committee due to the contents of his declaration at the meeting of the Committee on 17 September 2020, which the Vice-Chair felt could bring any subsequent report from the Sub-Committee into disrepute. The Vice-Chair, however, felt that Cllr Broadley should be invited to give evidence as an expert witness. The Chair initially disagreed with the Vice-Chair before seeking advice from the Monitoring Officer, following the advice; the Chair decided that the best course of action was to remove Cllr Broadley from the Sub-Committee and invite him to give evidence as an expert witness to the Sub-Committee instead.

Cllr Broadley acknowledged the series of events and reasons that led to the request to remove him from the Sub-Committee and explained that he would amend his Facebook post to reflect this.

The Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee Members highlighted the value Cllr Broadley would provide to the Maritime Strategy Scrutiny Review if he decided to provide evidence as an expert witness.

It was moved by the Chair, Cllr Jordan Meade that:-

Cllr Conrad Broadley be replaced on the Maritime Strategy Review Sub-Committee by Cllr Leslie Hills and any further decisions on the membership of the review Sub-Committee will be taken by the Chair in full consultation with the Vice-Chair and that the Maritime Strategy Review proceed with the same timetable agreed by the Committee on 17 September 2020; completion by the end of November 2020 with a report to Cabinet thereafter.

The Vice-Chair, Cllr Steve Thompson advised the Committee that he could not second the motion and moved that there be a vote on this matter.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be defeated by 5 votes to 4.

It was moved by the Vice-Chair, Cllr Steve Thompson and seconded by Cllr Peter Scollard that:-

Cllr Conrad Broadley be replaced on the Maritime Strategy Review Sub-Committee by Cllr Elizabeth Mulheran and any further decisions on the membership of the review Sub-Committee will be taken by the Chair in full consultation with the Vice-Chair and that the Maritime Strategy Review proceed with the same timetable agreed by the Committee on 17 September 2020; completion by the end of November 2020 with a report to Cabinet thereafter.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried by 5 votes to 4.

The Chair expressed his disappointment with this outcome and asked the Vice-Chair to clarify if it was his intention to retain the political balance on future reviews.

The Vice-Chair advised that the decision on the political balance of future reviews could be deferred to another time.

Resolved that:

- the Overview Scrutiny Committee agreed that Cllr Conrad Broadley be replaced on the Maritime Strategy Review Sub-Committee by Cllr Elizabeth Mulheran and any further decisions on the membership of the review Sub-Committee will be taken by the Chair in full consultation with the Vice-Chair; and
- the Maritime Strategy Review proceed with the same timetable agreed by the Committee on 17 September 2020; completion by the end of November 2020 with a report to Cabinet thereafter.

Please note: Cllr John Burden, Leader of the Council spoke with the leave of the Chair on this item

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.34 pm