

Council

Tuesday, 5 December 2023

7.30 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor, Gurdip Bungar

Councillors

Derek Ashenden	Lyn Milner
Helen Ashenden	Shane Mochrie-Cox
Ejaz Aslam	Emma Morley
Rajinder Atwal	Karina O'Malley
David Beattie	Leslie Pearton
John Burden	Tony Rana
Deborah Croxton	Christina Rolles
Lee Croxton	Lenny Rolles
Emma Elliott	Peter Scollard
Gary Harding	Benjamin Sizer
Jo Hart	Lauren Sullivan
Baljit Hayre	Ektaveen Thandi
Leslie Hills	Narinderjit Singh Thandi
Samir Jassal	Jenny Wallace
Gavin Larkins	Frank Wardle
Jordan Meade	Alison Williams
Alan Metcalf	

Stuart Bobby	Chief Executive
Nick Brown	Director (Environment) & Deputy Chief Executive
Jamie Izzard	Director (Communities & Inclusive Growth)
Vicky Nutley	Head of Legal Services
Simon Walsh	Head of Democratic Services
Andy Rayfield	Communications Manager
Charlie Simmonds	Committee Services Manager

48. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gurjit Bains, Dakota Dibben, Aaron Elliott, Daniel King and Alan Ridgers.

49. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17 October 2023 were signed by the Mayor.

50. Declarations of Interest

The Chief Executive advised that, in accordance with advice received from the Council's Monitoring Officer, Members only needed to declare interests which had not already been listed within their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form.

No declarations of interest were made.

51. 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.

52. 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 Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 25 October 2023
- Minutes of the Cabinet held on Monday, 6 November 2023
- Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Wednesday, 8 November 2023
- Minutes of the Licensing Committee held on Wednesday, 15 November 2023

53. Reserved Minutes

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox that:-

- The reserved Minute of Cabinet (Community Safety and Crime Update) held on Monday, 6 November 2023 be ratified and confirmed.

54. Update on Council Awards

The Council was presented with an update on the progress the Council had made in the submission of entries for awards schemes to date.

Over the past 18 months, the Council had been actively seeking to put forward submissions to the various awards that were open to public sector bodies. The Council had entered a total of 85 submissions and had been successful in a number of awards submissions; 7 winners, 15 finalists and 8 commendations.

The report was noted.

55. Review of the Constitution (Phase 2)

The Council was presented with proposed amendments to Annex 2 – Procedural Rules and Annex 3 – Codes of Practice and Protocols of the Constitution for formal approval and adoption.

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

1. approves the amendments to Annex 2 – Procedural Rules of the Constitution as set out in section two of the report and appendix one; and

2. approves the amendments to Annex 3 – Codes of Practice and Protocols of the Constitution as set out in section three of the report and appendix two subject to the following amendments, shown in bold, being made to Annex 3.9:-

2. *Member Training*

- 2.1 *It is **compulsory advisory** for Planning Committee Members and any Members attending the board as substitute to have undergone training. They **should not will not** be allowed to attend the Board as a voting Member unless such training has been undertaken within the last 2 years. Regular ‘refresher’ training will also be made available to Members, **Group Leaders can allow the member to take part in the meeting but may then require training of the individual to take place subsequently.***

3. *Delegated powers*

- 3.1 *Most planning applications are determined under delegated powers. These powers are outlined in Annex 1.13 of the Constitution.*
- 3.2 *Members have the opportunity to call-in applications to the Committee. Members should give **valid planning** reasons for their call-in, which will be included in the report. If possible, the Member calling in the application should attend committee.*

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

56. Dog Fouling - Public Space Protection Order

The Council was presented with a draft Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Dog Fouling for formal approval and adoption.

The current PSPO will expire on 31 January 2024. If renewed, the PSPO will be in place for a further three-year period with effect from 1 February 2024.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox that the Council:-

1. agrees to the extension of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for dog fouling for a further three-year period and instruct officers to proceed with implementing the same; and
2. agrees for the associated fixed penalty amount for the offence of failing to pick up after a dog to be increased from £75 to £100 with effect from the commencement of the new PSPO.

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

57. Review of Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003

The Council was apprised of the steps taken in reviewing the Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003.

Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 required licensing authorities to prepare and publish a statement of its licensing policy every five years. The policy must be published before the licensing authority carries out any licensing functions under the 2003 Act.

The current Statement of Licensing Policy was due to expire on 15 April 2024. If approved, the revised policy will be in place for a further five-year period with effect from 16 April 2024.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox that the Council:-

1. approves the revised Gravesham Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

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

58. Climate Change Annual Report

The Council was presented with the draft Climate Change Annual Report 2023 for consideration.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox that the Council:-

1. notes the progress of the Council during 2023 in developing its activity to deliver the Climate Change motion; and
2. approves the Annual Report set out at appendix two and gives delegated authority for any final amendments to be made by the Director (Corporate Services), in consultation with the Leader of the Executive.

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

The Council was informed that Joshua Arthur, the Council's Housing Energy and Sustainability Lead, had been named on the Climate Champions Power List at the Homes UK Unlock Net Zero Live event and was invited to take to the main stage to outline the Council's work towards decarbonising the Council's social housing stock, a project that had already earned numerous awards and high-profile coverage.

59. Members' Allowances Scheme

The Council received a report which requested that Members consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) relating to the Members' Allowances Scheme.

The Council paid tribute to the Panel Members for bringing the report forward.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox that the Council:-

1. has regard to and adopts the IRPs recommendations set out in appendix one of the report;
2. the new scheme be backdated to the start of the year (9 May 2023) when Councillors took up office (excluding special responsibility allowances which would be backdated from the date of appointment to that role);

3. adopts an annual indexation for the scheme (based on the average annual pay award for Gravesham Borough Council Staff) to be applicable for up to 4 years; and
4. in respect of the 'Special Cabinet Advisor, Commercial' position, the role to sit outside of the Cabinet.

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

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

No questions had been received.

61. To receive the Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor informed the Council of the extraordinary achievement of Gravesham students and their teacher at the COP28 Climate Change negotiations in Dubai.

On behalf of Northfleet Technology College, and as the sole UK finalists, Michael Jones and students Callum and James were awarded the prestigious Zayed Sustainability Prize. The award recognises their excellence in developing their nature reserve to develop a model of securing food security through ethical climate change activism. They plan to use the substantial prize fund to promote the introduction of their project in schools across the Borough and beyond.

Michael Jones was also announced as a winner in the International Climate Change Challenge Awards organised by Oxford University's Said Business School. The award was for his Model Lesson Plan which raised awareness and understanding of Climate Change and encouraged creative solutions.

The Council recorded their warmest congratulations to the College and to Michael and the students for their outstanding success, and for their inspiring plans for the future.

The Mayor invited Members to attend the following charity events:-

- Sunday Lunch at Cobham Hall on Sunday 11 February 2024; and
- his retirement Curry Night at The Woodville on Friday 10 May 2024.

The Mayor invited those present to join him in the Parlour for refreshments.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 20:11pm.