

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 10th February 2022 at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Morrow (Chair), Wren* (Vice-Chair), Allen, Black, Blackwell, Bloore, Botten, Bourne, Caulcott, Cooper*, Crane, Davies, Dennis*, Duck, Elias, Farr, Gaffney, Gillman, Gray*, Groves, Hammond, Langton, Lee, Lockwood, Mansfield, Mills, Moore, O'Driscoll, Prew, Pursehouse, Ridge, Sayer, Shiner, Stamp, Steeds, Swann, C.White and N.White

** participated via Zoom and could not vote*

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Connolly, Flower, Jones and North

264. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 16TH DECEMBER 2021

These minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

265. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked everyone who would be supporting his St Valentine's dinner and dance on the following evening at Bletchingley Golf Club, including those who had donated raffle prizes in lieu of attendance.

The next civic fundraising events would be:

- a concert on Saturday, 19th March at the Oxted United Reformed Church, Oxted with performers from the Robert Bouffler Music Trust; and
- a Caterham Food Bank meal and quiz on Saturday, 24th April at the Westway Centre, Caterham

The Chair also advised that an e-mail would be sent to all Members on the 11th February to confirm the amended committee dates during the forthcoming cycle of meetings.

266. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Botten advised that he would leave the Chamber for the duration of any discussion about the Westway Centre in connection with the budget setting process for 2022/23. (At the Council meeting on 16th December 2021, he had declared a non-pecuniary interest regarding the fact that he was a founder trustee of the Westway Centre). No such discussion took place.

Councillor Pursehouse advised that would not participate in any discussion regarding the level of rents for Council garages in connection with the Housing Revenue Account budget setting process for 2022/23. (At the Housing Committee meeting on 25th January 2022, he had declared a pecuniary interest on the basis that he rented Council garages on behalf of three community organisations in Warlingham). No such discussion took place.

267. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

Questions were dealt with from Councillors O'Driscoll and Moore. The questions and responses are set out in Appendix A.

268. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED – that the reports of the following meetings be received, and the recommendations therein be adopted:

Planning Committee - 9th December 2021

Planning Policy Committee - 5th January 2022

Strategy & Resources Committee - 11th January 2022

Planning Committee - 13th January 2022

Community Services Committee - 18th January 2022

Planning Policy Committee - 20th January 2022

Housing Committee - 25th January 2022

Audit & Scrutiny Committee - 27th January 2022 (including the acceptance of PSAA's invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors for five financial years from 1st April 2023 – the Council was advised that this should have been presented as a recommendation from the Audit & Scrutiny Committee as opposed to a resolved item)

Strategy & Resources Committee - 1st February 2022

Minute 257 – 2022/23 final budget and 2023/24 Medium Term Financial Strategy

Recommendations A to M had been supplemented by an additional recommendation N, published earlier in the day, to enable the Council to set its budget and Council Tax requirements in the statutory format. The additional recommendation N was presented in light of the Council Tax precepts recently determined by Surrey County Council and the Surrey Police & Crime Commissioner.

Councillor Steeds, seconded by Councillor Ridge, moved the following amendment to Recommendation H (additional words shown in italics):

“the final budget envelopes for each Committee for 2022/23 as at tranche 1 (Appendices I and J) be approved, *subject to additional Tranche 3 savings of £3k, held in corporate items, to be identified in order to offset a reduced increase in plot fees for the Meadowside mobile homes park from 4.1% to 2%*”

In accordance with Standing Order 13(4) Councillor Steeds requested that the above amendment be the subject of a recorded vote. This was supported by the requisite number of Councillors under Standing Order 13(4). The result of the vote was:

For

Councillors Black, Bloore, Duck, Elias, Gaffney, Groves, Hammond, Mansfield, Morrow, O'Driscoll, Prew, Ridge and Steeds (13)

Against

Councillors Allen, Blackwell, Bourne, Crane, Davies, Farr, Gillman, Langton, Lockwood, Moore, Mills, Pursehouse, Sayer, Shiner, Stamp, Swann, C.White, and N.White (18)

Abstain

Councillors Botten, Caulcott and Lee (3)

The proposed amendment to recommendation H was therefore lost.

Recommendations A to N, as per the original recommendations A to M in Minute 257, plus the additional recommendation N as referred to above, were the subject of a single recorded vote in accordance with Standing Order 13(5). The result of the vote was:

For

Councillors Black, Blackwell, Bloore, Botton, Bourne, Caulcott, Crane, Davies, Duck, Elias, Farr, Gaffney, Gillman, Groves, Hammond, Langton, Lee, Lockwood, Mansfield, Moore, Morrow, Mills, Prew, Pursehouse, Ridge, Sayer, Shiner, Stamp, Steeds, Swann, C.White and N.White (32).

Against

Councillor Allen (1).

Rising 9.31 pm

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COUNCIL – 10TH FEBRUARY 2022 – SO 30 QUESTIONS

Question from Councillor O'Driscoll

“Residents have brought to my attention that, for several days in recent weeks, there have been power cuts in Whyteleafe. This has caused traffic lights to fail and homes and businesses to be left without lighting and in some cases heating as well. Local residents and I feel this is unacceptable.

What steps can this Council take to address fixing this with UK Power Networks?”

Response from Councillor Sayer (as Leader of the Council)

Although the Council has no authority over energy companies, I will arrange for a letter to be sent from this Council to UK Power Networks expressing the concerns of residents and local councillors and requesting information about the cause of the problems and the steps being taken to rectify them. It might also be useful if individual councillors also wrote to UK Power Networks to back up the message.

Question from Councillor Moore

“As a civil penalty for offences under the Housing Act 2004 is to be determined by taking into account 'harm caused to the tenant' does this civil option allow for compensation to be apportioned to the tenant for such harm?”

Response from Councillor Pursehouse (as Chair of the Housing Committee)

In short, the answer is no. The assessment of harm or risk of harm to the tenant is only used by the officers in determining the level of civil penalty. Under the section of the legislation relating to civil penalties, there is no recourse for the tenant to claim compensation.

However, the tenant may make an application for a Rent Repayment Order, a form of compensation, where the landlord has committed certain offences. Further information can be provided about this or the officer concerned can contact you directly.

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