

# TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL



## *Council Agenda*

MINUTES AND REPORTS  
SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON  
Thursday, 20th April, 2023

David Ford  
*Chief Executive*



12 April 2023

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Council on **Thursday, 20th April, 2023 at 7:30pm.**

Yours faithfully,

David Ford  
**Chief Executive**

To: All Members of the Tandridge District Council

## **AGENDA**

- 1. To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 9th February 2023**  
(Pages 7 - 14)
- 2. Chair's Announcements**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter:

- i) any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs); and / or
- ii) other interests arising under the Code of Conduct in respect of any item(s) of business being considered at the meeting.

Anyone with a DPI must, unless a dispensation has been granted, withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the relevant item of business. If in doubt, advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer or her staff prior to the meeting.

- 4. To deal with any questions submitted under Standing Order 30**
  - i) questions from residents and others working or studying in the District; and
  - ii) questions from Councillors
- 5. To receive and consider the reports of Committees**
  - 5.1 Planning Committee - 2 February 2023 (Pages 15 - 20)
  - 5.2 Audit & Scrutiny Committee - 23 February 2023 (Pages 21 - 26)

- 5.3 Planning Committee - 2 March 2023 (Pages 27 - 28)
- 5.4 Community Services Committee - 9 March 2023 (Pages 29 - 32)
- 5.5 Housing Committee - 16 March 2023 (Pages 33 - 38)
- 5.6 Planning Policy Committee - 23 March 2023 (Pages 39 - 50)
- 5.7 Strategy & Resources - 30 March 2023 (Pages 51 - 58)
- 5.8 Audit & Scrutiny Committee - 4 April 2023 (Pages 59 - 66)

## **6. Motion submitted by Councillor North under Standing Order 7**

*On 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022, when the Strategy & Resources Committee asked Full Council to vote on the electoral cycle, scant information was provided resulting in many Councillors not understanding the full implications of the chosen electoral cycle on the size and combination of populations in a district ward. Many Councillors were unaware of the criteria beyond the ward Councillor numbers and were not briefed about these other criteria in the 2009 Act, nor the difficulty of achieving them.*

*In addition, the public consultation on electoral arrangements was also woefully insufficient, and only 217 people in the District (a 0.3% response rate of the current 65,461 electors) responded to this poorly communicated consultation, evidencing the vast lack of awareness. The consultation also did not explain the implications of electoral cycle change, something which would have vastly influenced both the outcome and the participation.*

*The view at that vote was that 3-year cycles would be less disruptive for TDC. However, the recent ward boundary review process has highlighted that trying to apportion 3 councillors across newly constructed wards meant that very little consideration was given to one of the three key boundary commission criteria i.e.: ward patterns should – as far as possible – reflect community interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable.*

*By taking a vote on the electoral cycle at Full Council, Councillors have, inadvertently, agreed to putting in place a ward boundary system that is undemocratic for residents and doesn't serve their best interests. Changing the ward pattern for the sake of the electoral cycle weakens the democratic process more than it strengthens it. The political cycle should be reconsidered in light of the importance of ward needs, rather than the reverse. In particular, it is important for convenient and effective local democracy that smaller settlements retain their Councillors.*

*Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) recently faced much the same issue and asked the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to suspend the consultation, whilst they consulted.*

*I therefore move that:*

- i) the Council's previous decision to retain elections by thirds, as opposed to whole council elections every four years, be reconsidered by the Strategy & Resources Committee on 29th June 2023*
- ii) should that Committee consider whole council elections to be preferable in order that the Council can maintain single and double member wards, the legal process be followed culminating in the matter being determined at an extraordinary meeting of the Council shortly thereafter*
- iii) in the meantime, the Council request the LGBCE to suspend their consultation*

**7. Any urgent business**

To deal with any other item(s) which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.