

HAWKINGE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

20th April 2022

Minutes of the Hawkinge Annual Town Council meeting held on 20th April 2022

Councillor Phillip Martin, Town Mayor was in the chair.

Present: Councillors Ross Clark, David Godfrey, Chris Johnson, Stuart Peal, Les Palliser, Dick Pascoe,

In attendance: Mrs Sam Wills, Town Clerk

There were 15-20 members of the public present

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the guests and members of the local community.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: Steve Cook, Richard Moffatt, Peter Roy, Nabin Siwa

MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 21 April 2021 were submitted and approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

REPORT OF THE TOWN MAYOR OF HAWKINGE

The Town Mayor presented his report, copy attached **Appendix 1**.

REPORT OF KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Kent County Councillor Susan Carey delivered her annual report, copy attached **Appendix 2**.

REPORT OF FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

The report of the District Councillors was presented by District Councillor Stuart Peal, copy attached **Appendix 3**.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Questions raised to Councillor Susan Carey, Kent County Councillor

Q. Why is Hawkinge coming under the banner for Ashford:

A. Hawkinge Town will still be under the authority of Folkestone & Hythe District Council. The administration under Ashford will create another seat at parliament with another MP a very welcome addition for the area, it will create more investment for Kent and Hawkinge: everyone should embrace the idea not fear it.

Questions raised to Councillor Stuart Peal Folkestone & Hythe District Councillor

Q. With Hawkinge population getting bigger and litter picks a regular thing is there a possibility of having a dedicated road sweepers like they do in Folkestone and Hythe:

A. Veolia are responsible for cleaning the streets, there is a profiling process of when the streets need cleaning. If the streets aren't being cleaned report it to FHDC as the same with litter bins. There is no specific person allocated to an area. There are issues with dustbins not getting collected regularly which all boroughs suffer, the residents of Hawkinge have been doing litter picks for many years, it can be a great way of spending family time together and doing something positive within the community.

Questions raised to Councillor Susan Carey, Kent County Councillor

Q. There seems to be a fly tipping problem in Hawkinge predominately household waste which seems to have been made worse by the current booking system, is there a solution that the council can find to help combat this:

A. KCC collect and weigh any fly tipping then it would go to household recycling. The figures indicate the tonnage of fly tipping is steady and have not increased due to the current booking system. We could look for an option for possibility installing covert cameras to combat this problem.

Questions raised to Councillor Stuart Peall, Folkestone & Hythe District Councillor

Q. Will children's play area's be properly monitored in Hawkinge:

A. There is a plan to hand over to the Town Council from the District Council. There is some good quality open space within Hawkinge. Some play area's need updating and improved with some repairs and general maintenance. Hawkinge Town Council will be looking into finding new funding and the master planning working group will be meeting shortly to discuss.

Jenny Preston thanked Hawkinge Town Council for the award of a grant to support the improvements to the Scout Hut.

Glynn Hibbert Thanked the staff from Folkestone Sports Centre, who are working hard to improve facilities within the Hawkinge Community Centre including a Gym along with wheelchair basketball which would be a fantastic addition for the local community.

Ben Potter personally thanked Councillor Philip Martin for the grant funding for a Basketball Hoop.

APPENDIX ONE

Town Mayor's Report to the Hawkinge Annual Town Meeting

Held: Wednesday 20 April 2022

2021/22 has been another year disrupted by the Covid-19 Crisis, still being effectively in lockdown into the Summer and after some welcome easing being restricted again for Christmas. However, through these difficult times we have remained busy and productive.

As Mayor there has been a welcome return to the Civic calendar and I have attended functions, both here in Hawkinge and within the local area. We have been able to promote Hawkinge and all the wonderful things the town has to offer.

We have held two charity fundraising events during the past year, and I would like to thank all those who have supported me. We have managed to raise a total of £1,490.

The Town Council continues to support the Hawkinge Community Centre and this year we have installed a fascia under the roof of the gable end. This will make the outdoor area accessible from the atrium into a usable space which we hope to make the most of in the coming Summer celebrations for the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

Unfortunately, the Annual Carol Concert organised in conjunction with the Hawkinge Baptist Church and supported by the Shepway Brass Band was cancelled again this year again due to the Covid-19 crisis.

However we were able to go ahead with the Christmas Lights switch on which was very well attended. Our newly planted living Christmas Tree looked fantastic and will bring many more years of joy to the community as we all watch it grow.

Our thanks go to Reverend Ali Boddington and her team for working so hard to make the Christmas Tree Lighting such a success (and to Santa for giving out all those presents)! A much needed splash of Christmas cheer to the residents of Hawkinge and we look forward to resuming the usual Carol Concert in the future.

The Town Council also continues to work with its different partners, the Hawkinge Allotment Society, Hawkinge Baptist Church, Hawkinge Village Hall and many others to keep providing facilities for the residents of Hawkinge.

We continue to work with our local PSCOs Dan Mills and Nick Hazel, and our Community Warden Jan Henry.

The Town Council signed the Armed Forces Covenant on 17 March to demonstrate our continued support for those in the Hawkinge community who served in the Armed Forces and their families.

I would like to thank my Deputy Cllr Les Palliser, my fellow Town Councillors, our County Councillor Susan Carey and my fellow District Councillors: David Godfrey, Stuart Peall for all their hard work on behalf of Hawkinge Council over the past twelve months. This is greatly appreciated.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Town Clerk, Sam for keeping the Council's business moving

forward through difficult circumstances and for her support throughout the year.

Thank You

Not Peer Reviewed

It has been another busy year at FHDC... both highly challenging, and rewarding.

Probably our most challenging was the waste contract last year. Veolia decided to make changes across both FHDC & Dover districts to routes, collection processes, crew distribution and other parts of the service. As you know, this led to significant problems, which were then exacerbated by the “pingdemic” that led to their request to suspend some services. We agreed, reluctantly, to suspend the garden waste service for 10 weeks – which has meant a discount for those renewing the service this year. We had to suspend garden waste to ensure the continuation of the other key services – household waste and recycling collections, and street cleansing.

As a result of the problems caused by Veolia’s changes, we have instigated challenges under the contract clauses and continue a process of negotiation for recompense. We will move to a full legal process if we need to.

Veolia are now back on track, and being carefully managed, as evidenced by the clean up of the truck load of building waste dumped on Church Hill in February. Officers of the council are still investigating to find the culprits – we have had several successful prosecutions in the last year and will also prosecute where we have sufficient evidence.

On another positive note, we have made massive strides in taking back control of our housing stock across the district. This is led by Cllr Godfrey – who can add some words....

£2m for social housing decarbonisation

800 long term empty properties brought back to use

We have had the challenge of covid to continue to deal with – setting up and supporting hubs and providing financial support as fast as possible to businesses. We also provided 2 of the vital vax centres at council offices and Folca.

Key areas of focus for the council continue to include the ongoing development of Prince’s Parade to provide housing and swimming pool for the Hythe area, and the plans for Otterpool Park – a garden town for the future which will take the pressure of growth off Hawkinge’s shoulders. We are looking to be as close to net zero as possible here as you would expect. Further areas for development or redevelopment include Ship Street in Folkestone, and Biggins wood for example.

Development is a key issue for the DC, and we now have 2 vital policies in place, supported by government Inspectors – the latest is the Core Strategy Review which sets out the amount, type and location of development that is required to meet future needs to 2037. Again, this helps protect Hawkinge and the area from further development at this time.

A number of initiatives are in place to support our environmental plans – we have highlighted grants for green homes, and developed a district wide carbon plan, amongst others.

FHDC are rolling out 94 charging points for electric vehicles across the district.

Finally, we are currently supporting Ukrainians and their hosts, providing information, reviewing properties and support for other necessary issues. Topics covered include welfare and finance,

emergency food, health (including mental health), education and other assistance for children and young people, sports and leisure, and housing.

We have access to ward budgets and have used these as follows:

SNP

WARD BUDGET 2021/22 £3000

Date	£ Spent	Description	£ Balance
26/07/21	£207.80	For Young People	£2,792.20
25/01/22	£580	Elham Primary School	£2,212.20
25/01/22	£566.08	Elham Primary School	£1,646.12
21/02/22	£153.64	Play for Elham	£1,492.48
14/03/22	£1,492.48	Play for Elham	£0

DG

WARD BUDGET 2021/22 £3000

Date	£ Spent	Description	£ Balance
30/06/21	£900.00	For Young People	£2,100.00
03/11/21	£500.00	St Nicholas	£1,600.00
28/02/22	£1,298.00	Battle of Britain Museum Trust Ltd	£302.00
01/02/22	£302	Hawkinge Village Hall	0.00

PM

WARD BUDGETS 21/22 £3000

Date	£ Spent	Description	£ Balance
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23/02/22	£1,350.00	Cheriton Scouts	£1,650
21/02/22	£499.99	Folkestone Arrows	£1,150.01
22/03/22	£786	Kent Association for the Blind	363.53
24/03/22	363.53	Play for Elham	£0

I am sure I have missed some key events so any comments from other district councillors?

2021/22 Annual Report from Susan Carey Member for Elham Valley, Kent County Council Hawkinge and Swingfield edition

I am pleased to report that Kent returned a Conservative majority in the Kent County Council elections on 06 May 2021 (60 Conservatives out of 80 places). Our own election here in Elham Valley was postponed until 17 June following the sudden death of the Labour candidate. I was re-elected on this date with just over half the votes cast. My thanks to all those who voted.

The last year has continued to be dominated by Covid-19 and its effects on our health and economy. KCC has worked closely with the NHS, the district councils, the voluntary sector and other partners on measures to encourage vaccination uptake, testing for Covid, tracking contacts, supporting the vulnerable and offering help where needed. **KentTogether** is our 24/7 online and telephone service where people can turn to for help and **Release the Pressure** is our long-standing helpline for those facing stress.

As we have emerged from Covid-19 restrictions there has been a surge in demand for social care and for Special Education Needs assessments. This has placed considerable financial pressures on KCC's budget and has meant we have had to reduce some of our discretionary services such as the level of subsidy for the Kent Travel Saver (although those on low incomes are unaffected) and subsidies for uneconomic bus services.

At KCC I have a particular responsibility for our Environment work and am pleased to report that many of the projects I have been leading have had the added benefit of reducing costs by reducing energy use. In March 2021 KCC won a major grant from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for projects that had to be delivered by April 2022. The most significant of these was the purchase of a 21MW solar park which will reduce our energy use by 30% and also reduce our annual energy costs by around £760,000 a year for the next 40 years.

KCC's Plan Tree Strategy is currently out for consultation and proposes the establishment of an extra 1.5 million trees in Kent. Here in Hawkinge I was pleased to use my KCC Member Grant to plant two special trees in Canterbury Road. One is a replacement tree for the one remembering Paige Brown who tragically died in 2008 when just four years old. The other is to commemorate former Hawkinge councillor and Town Mayor John Heasman. Paige's tree has pink blossoms and John's purple blossoms.

My Environment brief also covers waste disposal - the 12 district councils in Kent collect the waste, KCC disposes of the collected waste and runs the Household Waste Recycling Centres. KCC has been able to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill to just 0.2% (this is asbestos which must by law be deep buried). What can't be recycled is turned into energy at an incinerator in Allington, Kent. Last year we held a consultation on whether to keep the booking system for the HWRCs that was introduced during Covid-19. There

was a clear margin in favour of keeping the booking system (available both online and at our call centre) and by the end of April same day bookings were introduced at all 18 HWRCs. Recycling rates are up at our HWRCs and we are opening a 19th site in Allington on 09 May.

The disruption to our local road network and people's lives whenever there is disruption to Cross Channel traffic has become intolerable. KCC does not control the ports or the motorways but Kent Highways is part of the Kent Resilience Forum together with National Highways, Kent Police and other public sector partners. We continue to lobby the Government on this as it is a national problem requiring a national response.

A similar issue is that of the continued high level of illegal entries into Kent by those seeking asylum. Adults and families are dispersed around the country but other local authorities must volunteer to take any under 18 year olds who arrive on their own. This has led to unsustainable burdens on KCC in dealing with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and twice in the last year we have had to declare we were unable to safely accept any more meaning we were in breach of our statutory duty. This has led to a temporary compulsory dispersal scheme to other local authorities around the country. This does not resolve the underlying problem but has relieved some of the immediate burden for Kent.

The invasion of Ukraine in February has been another crisis where local government has been expected to respond swiftly. Information for both Kent residents and Ukrainian refugees can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/ukraine Queries about the Ukraine Families Scheme can be emailed to Ukraine@kent.gov.uk or by calling the dedicated helpline 03000 412424 which has a translation service. As of 13 April 2,064 Ukrainian refugees have been matched with 824 sponsor households in Kent. As with Covid-19 we are working closely with the District Councils, the voluntary sector and other public sector partners to provide the necessary support.

I have been pleased to direct my KCC Member Grant and the special Covid Recovery Grant to organisations in Hawkinge and Swingfield. As well as two commemorative trees, £2,000 went to Hawkinge Football Club for works to their building, £2,000 to the Churchill School and £1,000 to Selsted School for toys and sports equipment for the children. £3,500 went to fund weightlifting equipment that can be used by both able bodied and disabled users for the gym at the Hawkinge Community Centre. I also allocated £1,000 to Folkestone & Hythe District Council for the purchase of litterpicking equipment to the benefit of the whole district but not least the public spirited volunteers who turn out for the monthly litterpicks in Hawkinge.

April 2022