

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH,  
DUNSTABLE**

**ON MONDAY 24 JUNE 2019**

Present: Councillors Sid Abbott (Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Deputy Town Mayor), Wendy Bater, Lisa Bird, Matthew Brennan, Mark Cant, Alan Corkhill, Philip Crawley, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Peter Hollick, Gloria Martin, Cameron Restall, and Lee Roberts

In Attendance: Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Kelley Hallam (Office Administrator), Michele Markus (Mayoral and Democratic Services Officer) and Lucy Salim (Head of Finance and Support Services)

Apologies: Councillor Gladys Sanders

Public: 3

**116 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held 13 May 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

**117 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no specific declarations of interest.

**118 TOWN MAYOR'S REMARKS**

The Town Mayor referred to the report detailing his attendances at a variety of events since being elected. He reminded Members that he would be holding his first charity event on 29 June and hoped they would all be there to support him.

**119 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions put to the meeting.

**120 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 16**

There were no questions put to the meeting.

**121 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 13 May and 3 June 2019 be received.

**122 GROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 13 May and 10 June 2019 be received.

**123 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13 May and 17 June 2019 be received.

**124 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019**

The Council considered the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2019 for submission to the auditor, in compliance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (S1 2015/234)

The Return comprises 4 sections:

a) The Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/2019 was received and the Council noted that the relevant part of the Annual Return had been completed, assigning positive assurances in all areas. This had been completed on 14 June 2018 and in support of the assurances, the final update report was also submitted, confirming that no significant issues had arisen from the Internal Auditor's review work this year.

b) The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) acknowledged the Council's responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. The Statement was evidenced by the Internal Audit Programme, the Internal Audit Reports throughout the year and the final Internal Audit Report referred to above. Other evidence included budgetary control reports submitted to the Accounts Sub-Committee and quarterly Financial Monitoring reports submitted to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive also produced a Corporate Risk Log each year which was reviewed by Council with the Annual Report.

c) Accounting Statements – The Council's statutory accounts had now been prepared by the Council's Consultant Accountant in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 on the basis of an income and expenditure account and a statement of balances in accordance with, and in the form specified in the Annual Return required by proper practice as a "smaller relevant body".

The accounts had been prepared in the form of the Annual Return, a copy of which had been received by Members, together with supporting financial statements, which were not subject to audit but provided background information to the figures declared in the Annual Return.

The Head of Community Services presented a summary of the Council's financial performance for the year.

Members noted that the notice for Exercise of Public Rights would be published on 25 June 2019.

- RESOLVED:** i) that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/2019 be noted
- ii) that the Annual Governance Statement 2018/2019 at Section 1 of the Annual Return be completed in the affirmative and the Town Mayor and Head of Community Services be authorised to sign accordingly
- ii) that the Accounting Statements 2018/2019 at Section 2 of the Annual Return be approved and the Town Mayor be authorised to sign accordingly
- iii) that the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2019 be approved for submission to the auditor.

**Action: Head of Finance and Support Services**

## **125 ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019 AND REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Head of Community Services presented the Annual Report for 2018/2019 which would be published on the Council's website and made available at other usual public distribution outlets. The document provided an evidence source to residents as to the quality of services provided by the Council, as well as being an important planning tool for the organisation to ensure it could demonstrate continuous service improvement.

The format for the Annual Report was the same as agreed for last year's report and included a summary of the Council's activities and achievements over the last year, illustrated as "A Year in Dunstable". Section 4 set out how the Council is performing in relation to its stated aims contained within the Corporate Plan, the objectives for which are from the Corporate Plan adopted in December 2016. Also included was a report on the annual outturn for the Council's adopted performance indicators.

The Corporate Risk Log had been updated and Members noted that the main identified areas of strategic risk remained as income generation and property management. Income generation had been identified as high risk because of the current economic downturn and property management arrangements had been identified as high risk due to the high cost of maintaining Council property which included listed buildings.

Members noted the reviewed Council's Health and Safety and the Environment and Sustainability Policies.

- RESOLVED:** i) that the Annual Report 2018/2019 be approved
- ii) that the improvements to the Council's governance arrangements be noted
- iii) that the Corporate Risk Log be noted
- iv) that the Council's Health and Safety Policy be approved
- v) that the Council's Environment and Sustainability Policy be approved.

**Action: Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

**126 NOMINATIONS FOR REPRESENTATION ON CHARITIES**

The Town Mayor asked Members if they would like to nominate themselves as a Town Council representative for Dunstable Charities; Chews Foundation and Poor's Land Charity. There were four vacant positions outstanding.

**RESOLVED:** i) that Councillors Alan Corkhill and Kenson Gurney would be representatives on the Chews Foundation.

ii) that Councillors Peter Hollick and Liz Jones would be representatives on the Poor's Land Charity.