
EASTERN AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held at The Alexander Centre, 17 Preston Street, Faversham ME13 8NZ on Thursday, 29 February 2024 from 7.00 pm - 7.56 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Charles Gibson, Kieran Golding, Alastair Gould, Carole Jackson, Ben J Martin, Hannah Perkin (Chair), Julien Speed and Terry Thompson.

NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: Parish/Town Councillors Josh Rowlands (Faversham Town Council (TC)) and Beverley Ferrell (Oare Parish Council (PC)).

NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES (Virtually): Parish Councillor Kevin Fraser (Doddington PC).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Janet Dart and Claire Stanbury.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Mike Henderson, Rich Lehmann and Claire Martin.

702 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

703 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

704 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 December 2023 (Minute Nos 531 – 542) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

705 FLOODING IN THE EASTERN AREA

Members noted the tracking report on flooding issues in the Eastern area, compiled by Councillor Charles Gibson, the Area Committee Member lead on flooding. Councillor Gibson advised that he had been in touch with Southern Water (SW) to see what they could do to assist with the issues raised and he hoped to bring a fuller update to the next Area Committee meeting.

Members were asked to continue to provide updates and information for the tracking report.

It was agreed to invite SW to a future Eastern Area Committee meeting.

706 PUBLIC FORUM

A resident said he was concerned that the earth bunds at the Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Faversham, could alter the hydrology of the area. Faversham Town Councillor Josh Rowlands advised that the matter was being discussed at the school's Governors meeting and Faversham Town Council would be able to provide an update after the meeting. It was agreed to add this issue to the Matters Arising report.

707 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members noted the progress on actions.

Installation of reconditioned play equipment at Whiting Crescent, Faversham - The Chair of the Eastern Area Committee to follow up with the Chair of the Community Committee to see if the matter could be considered at a future meeting.

708 SWALE LOCAL BUS FOCUS GROUP

Members noted the report.

Councillor Alastair Gould, the Eastern Area Committee representative on the Swale Local Bus Focus Group, said that although there were limitations to what the Focus Group could do, they were willing to engage. A Member asked if the Focus Group would be liaising with local schools. Councillor Gould agreed this would be a good idea and potentially something the Swale Youth Forum could be involved in.

709 SWALE TRAFFIC FORUM

The Policy & Engagement Officer introduced the report and said that the Policy & Resources Committee had approved the setting up of a multi-agency group called the Swale Traffic Forum (STF). The Forum would monitor the current programme of works and any future planned works and recommend interventions where and when appropriate.

The report set out the proposed membership of the STF which was to include one representative from each of the four Area Committees.

Councillor Charles Gibson nominated himself as the Eastern Area Committee representative of the STF. This was seconded by Councillor Lloyd Bowen and on being put to the vote was agreed.

As Councillor Gibson would not be available to attend the first meeting, it was agreed that Councillor Kieran Golding would attend on his behalf. Members agreed that if they had any issues they wished to be raised at the first meeting, they would email Councillors Gibson and Golding.

Resolved:

- 1) That Councillor Charles Gibson be the representative from the Eastern Area Committee to sit on the Swale Traffic Forum.***

710 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

Members asked why Faversham Foodbank was not on the list of organisations who delivered the scheme and what was the criteria for eligibility to receive support? The Policy & Engagement Officer was asked to find out and feed back to Members.

Members noted that the scheme had been successful but ceased at the end of March 2024 and no alternative funding had been identified so far. There were concerns about how people would cope once the Household Support Fund came to an end. It was agreed that the Chair would write on behalf of the Eastern Area Committee to Helen Whately MP to lobby the Government to continue the fund.

Post meeting note: It was announced at the Spring Budget that the Household Support Fund would be extended by six-months.

711 LOCAL ISSUES TO BE RAISED

Councillor Lloyd Bowen said that the planning application for Highsted Valley, Sittingbourne, had been lodged and he urged Members, Parish/Town Councillors and residents to view it on the Mid Kent Planning Portal.

Councillor Carole Jackson reported that there were still incidents of anti-social behaviour and said it was important to keep reporting them to the Police.

712 MATTERS REFERRED TO SERVICE COMMITTEE CHAIRS FOR CONSIDERATION

No issues were raised.

Chair

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel