

Ashford Borough Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Ashford Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **21st February 2019**.

Present:

Her Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr. Mrs J E Blanford (Chairman);

Cllrs. Barrett, Bartlett, Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Bradford, Buchanan, Burgess, Chilton, Clarkson, Clokie, Dehnel, Mrs Dyer, Farrell, Feacey, Galpin, Heyes, Hicks, W Howard, Howard-Smith, Iliffe, Knowles, Koowaree, Link, Macpherson, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Ovenden, Pickering, Shorter, Smith, Suddards, Waters, Mrs Webb, Wedgbury, White.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting Members remained standing in respect of the late Archibald James Hoad who was the Borough Council Member for Rolvenden (including Newenden) from 1983 to 2003 and Mayor in 1994/95 and 2000/01. The Reverend Aldis then said prayers.

Her Worshipful the Mayor advised that Agenda Item 11 – Adoption of the Local Plan to 2030 – had been moved to the last item on the Agenda to allow for all other business to be cleared before consideration of that item.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Aaby, Mrs Heyes, Krause.

Also Present:

Chief Executive, Director of Law and Governance, Director of Finance and Economy, Director of Place and Space, Head of Legal and Democracy, Head of Finance, Planning Policy Manager, Principal Solicitor (Strategic Development), Senior Accountant, Member Services Manager (Operational),

333 Exempt or Confidential Items

The Deputy Mayor asked whether any items should be dealt with in private because of the likely disclosure of Exempt or Confidential information. There were none.

334 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Miss Martin	Made a Voluntary Announcement as her Mother would qualify as a potential Honorary Alderman.	338(b)

335 Minutes

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Relf, a local resident had registered to speak on this item. He referred to Minute No. 276 of the last meeting when he had last spoken and said that whilst he had never mentioned the word 'Chilmington' at the meeting, this had been recorded in the minutes. He also said the response he had got back at the last meeting was 'waffle'. Industrial dumping and fly tipping, which continued around the Chilmington Caravan Site, even with people driving through the site to dump at the back, was a recordable crime and punishable by a £50,000 fine and five years in prison. Therefore he considered installing cameras met the criteria required for their use. He considered that would never happen because there was collusion to paint a completely different picture to reality because of the major development next door. Also, on the Portfolio Holder's patch there were surveillance cameras operating, covering either way up a private footpath and he wondered whether permission had been sought. In addition, not 72 hours after the last Council meeting, he said that the quality of the air was being affected by commercial burning again coming from the back of Chilmington Caravan Site which had occurred on and off for years on the Mayor's patch.

Councillor Bradford, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing advised that at the last meeting he had updated Mr Relf of the actions the Council was taking around the management of the Chilmington Traveller Site. Housing Services had and would continue to take any relevant actions regarding fly tipping and any other relevant matters on the Council owned Chilmington Traveller Site. They would shortly be installing steel fencing across some of the perimeter of the site to cut off transit routes that could be used for fly tipping. They also carried out regular weekly site inspections to ensure there was a regular Council presence on the site. They worked closely with their partners at Kent Police and other relevant agencies to carry out enforcement on the site when appropriate and offered guidance to residents. He also talked about the use of covert surveillance cameras and the rules that were in place governing their use. That was not to say they would not use them, but there were stringent processes in place to prevent the use of covert surveillance. The use of cameras to which Mr Relf referred was different as these were overt cameras. There were less restrictions on their use as it had to be made clear to the public through signage that the cameras were present and their actions could be filmed. Needless to say this was a deterrent but unfortunately tended to mean that problems simply moved elsewhere. Mr Relf mentioned the impact on Air Quality and he hoped he would be pleased to see that there was a report on Air Quality due at the next Cabinet meeting. This report would have a list of actions that the Council would be taking and encouraging its partners to support, that would help to improve the levels of air quality in the Borough.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 13th December 2018 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

336 Announcements

(a) The Mayor

The Mayor advised that she had attended fewer engagements since Christmas, but up until then life had been very hectic. Since then there had been The Blessing of the Seas at Margate with the Bishop of Dover and the Head of the Greek Orthodox Church. Fortunately the day had not been too cold and the child launched in to the sea had survived satisfactorily! The Travelodge next to the Picture House had been opened and another pantomime had been attended – this time Peter Pan in Beaver Road. She had held a dinner and musical evening at London Beach Hotel and attended a dinner organised by the Chairman of KCC – Mike Angell. She had also been invited to two separate WI events and she thought it was good to support an organisation who did so much to improve life in the villages. The Smarden WI were celebrating their 100th centenary and Woodchurch, whilst involving her with Morris Dancers, celebrated environmental issues with a children's fancy dress event and were looking at additional recycling of items such as toothpaste tubes which she considered the Council should look at to enhance its own recycling. She had also planted a liquid amber tree in North Park, the first of an avenue close to the Civic Centre. In the coming weeks she would be doing more work with the local Primary Schools, encouraging litter picking - litter was one of the major problems in Borough. This coming Saturday she would be attending the Great Chart and Singleton Snowpup unveiling at the Singleton Environment Centre, which she was sure would be a great attraction.

The Mayor said that as they approached the Local Authority elections, she knew she would have to balance activities with being in purdah, however there were already several interesting activities in the diary and she wanted to again thank those kind people who continued to accompany her on engagements – she very much enjoyed their company. Finally, she wanted to mention a couple of dates for diaries. Firstly she was hosting a final dinner at London Beach on Saturday 11th May and she hoped for a good response from Members and others. They would be entertained by Natalie Ward – an excellent performer. On the 8th May she had arranged a private visit to the Big Cats Sanctuary at Smarden. This would include tea and coffee on arrival, a light lunch and the opportunity for those winning the raffle to hand feed the lions and tigers. Numbers were limited so Members should contact her PA Donna if they wished to attend. Also in May would be another visit to Mike Bax's farm in Shadoxhurst. Last time they had experienced colourful wildflower meadows, alive with a multitude of insects including butterflies and this time, during a spring evening, they would be entertained not only with drinks, but also the sight of barn owls and the sound of nightingales – an event not to be missed by any country lover.

(b) Leader of the Council

The Leader said that he would like to take a few moments to update colleagues on some recent developments of note. With Brexit continuing to dominate the national press headlines, Members would recall that he had set out details of the Council's own preparations in a Leader's Briefing in December. Since then the Government had announced it was allocating additional funds to Local Authorities in Kent to help meet the costs of planning for the UK's exit from the EU. Along with other Councils, Ashford was given a total of £34,000 to be spent over two years. Since then Ashford had been lobbying for even more Government money to help pay for the considerable costs of preparing for a "no deal" Brexit, and he was pleased to inform

Members that the previous day he had received a letter from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, James Brokenshire, advising that Ashford was being allocated an extra £136,000. The Minister had said that this additional money was coming to Ashford in recognition of a number of issues, including the strategic importance of its location in the Channel Corridor. This extra support was most welcome and would be put to good use in building Ashford's resilience against the potential damaging impacts of a No Deal Brexit.

The Council's next Cabinet meeting in March would be presented with a cycling strategy report which promised to help deliver on this Administration's wider aspiration to improve the health, wellbeing and fitness of its residents. Accessible Ashford would see the Council seeking to implement a joined-up set of projects including cycling, walking and public transport improvements, thereby helping to control congestion, encourage healthy lifestyles and tackle air pollution. Talking of major new projects which were in the early stages of planning, the Leader said he was happy to reveal that the Council were in discussions with a number of potential partners to make more use of a fantastic asset in the Borough, namely the Royal Military Canal. This was an exciting scheme with an aim to recognise and promote the importance of the rich heritage of the Canal, encourage ecological improvements and to promote a greater use of the existing footpaths and cycleways running through Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe and Rother to Rye in the east. This would be delivered in conjunction with the Environment Agency, Folkestone and Hythe District Council and Rother District Council, all joining up to work together. A feasibility study, funded by the Marsh Millions scheme had now been completed, and more details of the plans for the Royal Military Canal were due to be presented to the Cabinet meeting in June.

The Leader said that Members would be aware of the lively debate that continued to surround the provision of a theatre in Ashford. He wanted to tell colleagues that the Council was currently sharing the emerging ideas for the former Mecca Bingo site at an exhibition in the Ashford Gateway. The Mecca site and the adjacent Vicarage Lane Car Park presented a unique opportunity to drive forward the Council's collective objectives for the town centre, which would bring more people into the High Street and provide better facilities for residents. They were aware of the interest many local people had expressed in having a theatre, however the potential cost of converting this building, added to the fact that former cinemas did not tend to make good theatres, had led them to look at other potential uses for this space. He wanted to assure Members that the Council continued to examine other possible town centre sites that would be suitable for the development of a reasonably sized theatre, together with an art gallery, museum and conference centre. One such option they were considering was on land owned by the Council in Elwick Road, adjacent to the Elwick Place cinema, hotel and leisure complex.

While the Council's focus was on creating a brighter future for its Borough and for the people who lived there, they must never forget Ashford's history and heritage and they were looking to celebrate that by introducing the Ashford Heritage Plaque Scheme, similar in concept to the well-known Blue Plaque scheme. This initiative set out to identify and enhance important heritage assets and to celebrate past Ashford history and to foster civic pride across the Borough. He was personally opening a small apartment block at the old pumping station in Pluckley Road, which had been dedicated to an Ashford man who was one of the inventors of the water pump, Henry Harrison. More details of the Ashford Heritage Plaque scheme would be announced shortly but he wanted to place on record his thanks to Councillor Mike Bennett,

Portfolio Holder for Culture, and a team of dedicated officers who had been working hard behind the scenes to examine and bring proposals forward to be considered. Talking about Ashford's proud heritage brought the Leader on to today's edition of the Kentish Express newspaper. He was very interested to have read a feature about Croford Coachbuilders when they occupied premises in Dover Place, near what was now the International Railway Station. This site of course was about to be redeveloped as Ashford's latest food and drink destination, with a performance space and start-up units for local businesses. Named The Coachworks in honour of Croford's time on the site, the Council was investing in this project in partnership with Carl Turner Architects. Carl was one of Britain's brightest and most creative architects with an impressive pedigree of developing award-winning urban regeneration schemes in London and beyond, and he had totally committed himself to what they were striving to achieve in Ashford – just that past week he had been filmed in Dover Place as Ashford's newest “storyteller” in the big blue and white chair. The Coachworks may be termed a “meanwhile use” and be seen as a fixed term scheme, but if it successful – as he fully expected it to be – then its future use in the heart of Ashford's Commercial Quarter was likely to be assured.

Finally, the Leader advised that colleagues may have seen press reports about the Further Education (FE) Commissioner and Hadlow College, which ran Ashford College. For obvious reasons he did not wish to comment on any details included in those reports but he did want to say that he had had very helpful discussions with the FE Commissioner who had assured him that he was pleased with how Ashford College was being run and it was doing very well. Earlier that day he and the Chief Executive had also met the interim principal of Ashford College. It was very clear to him that the College would continue to thrive and that they remained committed to building phase 1A. What was also clear was that the Council's prudent approach to the financing of the first phase of building at Ashford College had been vindicated. The money they had loaned to help ensure the project was delivered was only converted to a grant once they had evidence that the building was successfully completed and delivered. This prudent approach to future funding would continue when the Hadlow Group brought forward phase 1A, and he looked forward to the day when this was delivered for the benefit of young people in the Borough. The College was doing some fantastic work and he considered that must continue.

337 Licensing and Health and Safety Committee – 15th January 2019

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee held on the 15th January 2019 be approved and adopted.

338 Cabinet – 10th January and 14th February 2019

(a) Cabinet – 10th January 2019

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 10th January 2019 be received and noted.

(b) Cabinet – 14th February 2019

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Ledger of Shadoxhurst Parish Council had applied to speak on these Minutes. He advised that he wanted to refer to Minute No. 325 – Solar Farm Project. He said this was a very important project and the Borough Council was prepared to make a very significant financial contribution. The initial feeling from residents' comments was that there was likely to be more support than objections for the project, but Shadoxhurst Parish Council felt very disappointed that Ashford Borough Council chose neither to inform them nor involve them. Learning about this important project through the media after the Cabinet decision was made suggested a lack of trust and certainly a wish not to communicate with them. The Parish Council had recently held a drop-in event about two major pre-application consultations and this project could have been added to the list for residents to consider and make comments. This was about having the courtesy to inform them about something really significant in their Parish and it would have been appreciated to have been told, even if had been under the realm of strict confidentiality.

Councillor Galpin, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property, thanked Mr Ledger for bringing this to the Council's attention. It was obviously always their intention to communicate well with all residents. This was an important potential project, but as such, like any other potential applicant, the Council had to go through a comprehensive consultation process in preparation for planning. The communication of the intention could easily have been done by Ward Members and he would recommend that be done regularly. He assured that the Council would keep the Parish Council updated as the consultation proceeded.

Resolved:

- That (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th February 2019 be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 319, 320, 323, 324, 325 and 326.**
- (ii) Minute Nos. 319, 323, 324, 325 and 326 be approved and adopted.**
- (iii) the recommendations in Minute No. 320 be deferred for consideration as part of the agenda item dealing with the Budget and Council Tax Resolutions 2019/20.**

339 Council Tax 2019/20 Resolutions and General Fund Budget and Minute Number 320

The Mayor drew attention to the tabled papers which included amended resolutions.

The Leader of the Council proposed

“That the budget recommendations as set out in Minute No. 320 of the Cabinet and the formal Council Tax resolutions for 2019/20 as included in the tabled papers be approved”

This was seconded.

The Leader also advised that in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.4A a recorded vote was required to be taken on the budget recommendations and any amendments moved and seconded during the debate.

The Mayor then invited the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report on that Committee's scrutiny of the Cabinet's initial budget proposals. Councillor Chilton said this year the scrutiny of the budget had been undertaken in a slightly different form. The Task Group had been very ably and competently Chaired by Councillor Paul Bartlett and the risks had been thoroughly scrutinised concluding that the budget was deliverable. He wanted to particularly thank the Officers who had attended some extensive meetings and for accommodating those who, for health or other reasons, were unable to be present. It had been an interesting experience undertaking a conference call in to the budget meetings and whilst it had not always gone to plan, it had worked reasonably well. A number of risks and pressures to the Authority had been highlighted within their report, notably on the Planning Department, but the Task Group fulfilled its job and found the budget to be achievable.

Councillor Miss Martin also wanted to thank Officers who had been supportive and helpful in allowing some Members to conduct the meetings via conference call. This was a progressive and forward thinking move for the Council.

A recorded vote was then taken on the motion and the Members voted as follows: -

For: Councillors Barrett, Bartlett, Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Bradford, Buchanan, Burgess, Clarkson, Clokie, Dehnel, Mrs Dyer, Feacey, Galpin, Heyes, Hicks, W Howard, Howard-Smith, Iliffe, Knowles, Koowaree, Link, Macpherson, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Ovenden, Pickering, Shorter, Smith, Waters, Mrs Webb, Wedgbury, White.

Votes For 35

Against: Councillors Chilton, Farrell, Suddards,

Votes Against 3

Abstentions: None

Abstentions 0

Resolved:

That (i) the Budget for 2019/20 as recommended by the Cabinet in Minute No. 320 be approved.

(ii) the formal Council Tax resolutions set out below be approved.

(iii) in the year beginning 1st April 2019, Ashford Borough Council has exercised its power to anticipate a precept and therefore shall on behalf of the new Kennington Community Council, and in consultation with the Shadow Community Council Group, levy a supplement to the Council Tax at an appropriate rate equivalent to £25 for a Band D property, as if the new Parish Council had issued a precept to the Borough Council.

(iv) in the year beginning 1st April 2019, Ashford Borough Council has exercised its power to anticipate a precept and therefore shall on behalf of the new South Willesborough and Newtown Community

Council, and in consultation with the Shadow Community Council Group, levy a supplement to the Council Tax at an appropriate rate equivalent to £36.03 for a Band D property, as if the new Parish Council had issued a precept to the Borough Council.

It be noted that on **6th December 2018** the Cabinet calculated:

- a) The Council Tax Base 2019/20 for the whole Council area as **46,500** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] and,
 - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached **Table A**.
2. that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2019/20 (excluding Parish precepts) is **£7,556,280 (Tables F and G)**.
 3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2019/20 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

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|-----|-------------|--|
| (a) | 101,169,169 | being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils. |
| (b) | 91,560,090 | being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. |
| (c) | 9,609,079 | being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act). |
| (d) | 206.65 | being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).(Table C) |
| (e) | 2,052,799 | being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Table B). |
| (f) | 162.50 | being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.(Tables D and E) |

Table A

Part of the Council's area (i.e. tax base for parished areas – Band D equivalent properties).

PARISH	LOCAL TAX BASE		PARISH	LOCAL TAX BASE
Aldington & Bonnington	621.23		Little Chart	131.31
Appledore	351.84		Mersham and Sevington	1255.50
Bethersden	721.90		Molash	108.19
Biddenden	1,119.36		Newenden	97.45
Bilsington	150.09		Orlestone	658.79
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	1,049.95		Pluckley	489.24
Brabourne	602.00		Rolvenden	677.09
Brook	166.28		Ruckinge	350.53
Challock	472.88		Shadoxhurst	526.44
Charing	1,351.14		Smarden	641.31
Chilham	751.17		Smeeth	371.91
Crundale (PM)	94.46		South Willesborough & Newtown	1,435.93
Egerton	508.40		Stanhope	793.23
Godmersham	171.93		Stone	204.67
Great Chart with Singleton	2,541.34		Tenterden (TC)	3,638.89
Hastingleigh	116.81		Warehorne	153.90
High Halden	779.47		Westwell	508.13
Hothfield	289.95		Wittersham	548.36
Kenardington	109.53		Woodchurch	837.82
Kennington	3,866.64		Wye with Hinxhill	1,038.09
Kingsnorth	4,358.78			

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Table B**Parish Council Precepts**

PARISH	Parish Precept		PARISH	Parish Precept
Aldington & Bonnington	30,764.00		Little Chart	6,100.00
Appledore	26,000.00		Mersham and Sevington	19,500.00
Bethersden	29,300.00		Molash	4,000.00
Biddenden	53,877.92		Newenden	4,975.00
Bilsington	4,405.00		Orlestone	20,272.00
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	26,280.00		Pluckley	47,124.00
Brabourne	40,000.00		Rolvenden	37,194.00
Brook	7,800.00		Ruckinge	10,000.00
Challock	17,745.00		Shadoxhurst	18,000.00
Charing	113,825.00		Smarden	29,640.00
Chilham	29,088.00		Smeeth	23,738.00
Crundale (PM)	800.00		South Willesborough & Newtown	52,812.00
Egerton	18,418.00		Stanhope	16,158.00
Godmersham	5,420.00		Stone	5,500.00
Great Chart with Singleton	206,399.00		Tenterden (TC)	573,757.00
Hastingleigh	3,500.00		Warehorne	4,650.00
High Halden	33,054.00		Westwell	24,367.00
Hothfield	9,500.00		Wittersham	25,005.00
Kenardington	5,180.00		Woodchurch	24,800.00
Kennington	97,175.00		Wye with Hinxhill	99,176.00
Kingsnorth	247,500.00			

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Table C

BILLING AUTHORITY SHARE OF COUNCIL TAX 2019/20

PARISH	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
Aldington & Bonnington	141.34	164.91	188.46	212.02	259.13	306.25	353.36	424.04
Appledore	157.60	183.87	210.13	236.40	288.93	341.46	394.00	472.80
Bethersden	135.39	157.96	180.52	203.09	248.22	293.35	338.48	406.18
Biddenden	140.42	163.82	187.22	210.63	257.44	304.24	351.05	421.26
Bilsington	127.90	149.22	170.53	191.85	234.48	277.11	319.75	383.70
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	125.02	145.86	166.69	187.53	229.20	270.87	312.55	375.06
Brabourne	152.62	178.07	203.50	228.94	279.81	330.69	381.56	457.88
Brook	139.60	162.88	186.14	209.41	255.94	302.48	349.01	418.82
Challock	133.35	155.58	177.80	200.03	244.48	288.93	333.38	400.06
Charing	164.49	191.91	219.32	246.74	301.57	356.40	411.23	493.48
Chilham	134.14	156.51	178.86	201.22	245.93	290.65	335.36	402.44
Crundale (PM)	113.98	132.98	151.97	170.97	208.96	246.95	284.95	341.94
Egerton	132.48	154.57	176.64	198.73	242.89	287.05	331.21	397.46
Godmersham	129.34	150.91	172.46	194.02	237.13	280.25	323.36	388.04
Great Chart with Singleton	162.48	189.56	216.64	243.72	297.88	352.04	406.20	487.44
Hastingleigh	128.30	149.69	171.07	192.46	235.23	278.00	320.76	384.92
High Halden	136.60	159.38	182.14	204.91	250.44	295.98	341.51	409.82
Hothfield	130.17	151.87	173.56	195.26	238.65	282.04	325.43	390.52
Kenardington	139.86	163.17	186.48	209.79	256.41	303.03	349.65	419.58
Kennington	125.00	145.83	166.66	187.50	229.17	270.83	312.50	375.00
Kingsnorth	146.18	170.55	194.91	219.28	268.01	316.74	365.46	438.56
Little Chart	139.30	162.53	185.74	208.96	255.39	301.83	348.26	417.92
Mersham and Sevington	118.68	138.47	158.24	178.03	217.59	257.15	296.71	356.06
Molash	132.98	155.14	177.30	199.47	243.80	288.12	332.45	398.94
Newenden	142.36	166.10	189.82	213.55	261.00	308.46	355.91	427.10
Orlestone	128.84	150.32	171.79	193.27	236.22	279.17	322.11	386.54
Pluckley	172.54	201.31	230.06	258.82	316.33	373.85	431.36	517.64
Rolvenden	144.95	169.11	193.27	217.43	265.75	314.06	362.38	434.86
Ruckinge	127.35	148.58	169.80	191.03	233.48	275.93	318.38	382.06
Shadoxhurst	131.12	152.98	174.83	196.69	240.40	284.11	327.81	393.38
Smarden	139.14	162.34	185.52	208.72	255.10	301.48	347.86	417.44
Smeeth	150.88	176.04	201.18	226.33	276.62	326.92	377.21	452.66
South Willesborough & Newton	132.35	154.41	176.47	198.53	242.65	286.76	330.88	397.06
Stanhope	121.91	142.23	162.55	182.87	223.51	264.14	304.78	365.74
Stone	126.24	147.29	168.32	189.37	231.45	273.53	315.61	378.74
Tenterden (TC)	213.44	249.02	284.59	320.17	391.32	462.47	533.61	640.34
Warehorne	128.48	149.89	171.30	192.72	235.55	278.37	321.20	385.44
Westwell	140.30	163.68	187.06	210.45	257.22	303.98	350.75	420.90
Wittersham	138.73	161.86	184.97	208.10	254.34	300.59	346.83	416.20
Woodchurch	128.06	149.41	170.75	192.10	234.79	277.48	320.16	384.20
Wye with Hinxhill	172.02	200.70	229.36	258.04	315.38	372.72	430.06	516.08
Unparished Area	108.33	126.39	144.44	162.50	198.61	234.72	270.83	325.00

Table D

Council Tax Charge per Band

PARISH	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
Aldington & Bonnington	1,188.23	1,386.28	1,584.31	1,782.35	2,178.42	2,574.50	2,970.58	3,564.70
Appledore	1,204.49	1,405.24	1,605.98	1,806.73	2,208.22	2,609.71	3,011.22	3,613.46
Bethersden	1,182.28	1,379.33	1,576.37	1,773.42	2,167.51	2,561.60	2,955.70	3,546.84
Biddenden	1,187.31	1,385.19	1,583.07	1,780.96	2,176.73	2,572.49	2,968.27	3,561.92
Bilsington	1,174.79	1,370.59	1,566.38	1,762.18	2,153.77	2,545.36	2,936.97	3,524.36
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	1,171.91	1,367.23	1,562.54	1,757.86	2,148.49	2,539.12	2,929.77	3,515.72
Brabourne	1,199.51	1,399.44	1,599.35	1,799.27	2,199.10	2,598.94	2,998.78	3,598.54
Brook	1,186.49	1,384.25	1,581.99	1,779.74	2,175.23	2,570.73	2,966.23	3,559.48
Challock	1,180.24	1,376.95	1,573.65	1,770.36	2,163.77	2,557.18	2,950.60	3,540.72
Charing	1,211.38	1,413.28	1,615.17	1,817.07	2,220.86	2,624.65	3,028.45	3,634.14
Chilham	1,181.03	1,377.88	1,574.71	1,771.55	2,165.22	2,558.90	2,952.58	3,543.10
Crundale (PM)	1,160.87	1,354.35	1,547.82	1,741.30	2,128.25	2,515.20	2,902.17	3,482.60
Egerton	1,179.37	1,375.94	1,572.49	1,769.06	2,162.18	2,555.30	2,948.43	3,538.12
Godmersham	1,176.23	1,372.28	1,568.31	1,764.35	2,156.42	2,548.50	2,940.58	3,528.70
Great Chart with Singleton	1,209.37	1,410.93	1,612.49	1,814.05	2,217.17	2,620.29	3,023.42	3,628.10
Hastingleigh	1,175.19	1,371.06	1,566.92	1,762.79	2,154.52	2,546.25	2,937.98	3,525.58
High Halden	1,183.49	1,380.75	1,577.99	1,775.24	2,169.73	2,564.23	2,958.73	3,550.48
Hothfield	1,177.06	1,373.24	1,569.41	1,765.59	2,157.94	2,550.29	2,942.65	3,531.18
Kenardington	1,186.75	1,384.54	1,582.33	1,780.12	2,175.70	2,571.28	2,966.87	3,560.24
Kennington	1,171.89	1,367.20	1,562.51	1,757.83	2,148.46	2,539.08	2,929.72	3,515.66
Kingsnorth	1,193.07	1,391.92	1,590.76	1,789.61	2,187.30	2,584.99	2,982.68	3,579.22
Little Chart	1,186.19	1,383.90	1,581.59	1,779.29	2,174.68	2,570.08	2,965.48	3,558.58
Mersham and Sevington	1,165.57	1,359.84	1,554.09	1,748.36	2,136.88	2,525.40	2,913.93	3,496.72
Molash	1,179.87	1,376.51	1,573.15	1,769.80	2,163.09	2,556.37	2,949.67	3,539.60
Newenden	1,189.25	1,387.47	1,585.67	1,783.88	2,180.29	2,576.71	2,973.13	3,567.76
Orlestone	1,175.73	1,371.69	1,567.64	1,763.60	2,155.51	2,547.42	2,939.33	3,527.20
Pluckley	1,219.43	1,422.68	1,625.91	1,829.15	2,235.62	2,642.10	3,048.58	3,658.30
Rolvenden	1,191.84	1,390.48	1,589.12	1,787.76	2,185.04	2,582.31	2,979.60	3,575.52
Ruckinge	1,174.24	1,369.95	1,565.65	1,761.36	2,152.77	2,544.18	2,935.60	3,522.72
Shadoxhurst	1,178.01	1,374.35	1,570.68	1,767.02	2,159.69	2,552.36	2,945.03	3,534.04
Smarden	1,186.03	1,383.71	1,581.37	1,779.05	2,174.39	2,569.73	2,965.08	3,558.10
Smeeth	1,197.77	1,397.41	1,597.03	1,796.66	2,195.91	2,595.17	2,994.43	3,593.32
South Willesborough	1,179.24	1,375.78	1,572.32	1,768.86	2,161.94	2,555.01	2,948.10	3,537.72
Stanhope	1,168.80	1,363.60	1,558.40	1,753.20	2,142.80	2,532.39	2,922.00	3,506.40
Stone	1,173.13	1,368.66	1,564.17	1,759.70	2,150.74	2,541.78	2,932.83	3,519.40
Tenterden (TC)	1,260.33	1,470.39	1,680.44	1,890.50	2,310.61	2,730.72	3,150.83	3,781.00
Warehorne	1,175.37	1,371.26	1,567.15	1,763.05	2,154.84	2,546.62	2,938.42	3,526.10
Westwell	1,187.19	1,385.05	1,582.91	1,780.78	2,176.51	2,572.23	2,967.97	3,561.56
Wittersham	1,185.62	1,383.23	1,580.82	1,778.43	2,173.63	2,568.84	2,964.05	3,556.86
Woodchurch	1,174.95	1,370.78	1,566.60	1,762.43	2,154.08	2,545.73	2,937.38	3,524.86
Wye with Hinxhill	1,218.91	1,422.07	1,625.21	1,828.37	2,234.67	2,640.97	3,047.28	3,656.74
Unparished Area	1,155.22	1,347.76	1,540.29	1,732.83	2,117.90	2,502.97	2,888.05	3,465.66

Table E

Breakdown of Council Tax per authority

Authority	Precept/Demand		2019/2020 Band D	Change over 2018/2019	
	£	%	£	£	%
Ashford Borough Council	7,556,250.00	9.14%	162.5	5	3.17%
Kent County Council	60,423,030.00	73.13%	1299.42	61.74	4.99%
Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent	8,981,475.00	10.87%	193.15	24.00	14.19%
Kent and Medway Fire Authority	3,615,840.00	4.38%	77.76	2.25	2.98%
Parish Councils	2,052,798.92	2.48%	44.15	12.27	38.49%

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Table F

CALCULATION OF THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT AND COUNCIL TAX AT BAND D		
	£	£
Gross Expenditure - General Fund	70,727,420	
Gross Expenditure - HRA	28,388,950	
Parish Precepts	<u>2,052,799</u>	101,169,169
Less Gross Income	(83,884,630)	(83,884,630)
		<hr/>
NET EXPENDITURE		17,284,539
New Homes Bonus	(2,954,410)	
Retained Business Rates and S31 Grants	<u>(4,721,050)</u>	(7,675,460)
		<hr/>
BUDGET REQUIREMENT		9,609,079
Less Parish Precepts		(2,052,799)
		<hr/>
Council Tax Requirement		<u><u>7,556,280</u></u>
Council Tax Base		46,500
Band 'D' Council Tax		162.50
Average including Parishes		206.65

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Table G

REVENUE BUDGET				
SERVICE SUMMARY				
Actuals 2017/18 £	Budget 2018/19 £	Projected Outturn 2018/19 £	Service	Budget 2019/20 £
1,281,734	1,218,170	1,193,210	Corporate Policy, Economic Development & Communications	1,328,560
1,425,945	1,414,090	1,544,084	Legal & Democratic Services	1,352,760
1,660,794	1,787,440	1,766,562	Planning	2,120,500
4,609,305	3,668,940	3,624,495	Finance & IT	3,852,960
19,732	105,010	102,170	HR & Customer Services	140,070
1,136,195	689,780	903,713	Housing General Fund Services	964,100
442,206	569,470	493,868	Community Safety and Wellbeing	(292,700)
4,724,330	5,186,090	5,035,930	Environmental & Land Management	5,254,840
(1,406,789)	(1,570,900)	(1,313,937)	Corporate Property & Projects	(2,290,400)
3,325,684	3,246,060	3,273,550	Culture	3,295,240
17,219,136	16,314,150	16,623,645	Service Expenditure	15,725,930
(2,897,466)	(3,387,820)	(3,441,870)	Capital Charges & Net Interest	(2,492,440)
249,629	256,250	256,250	Levies	259,130
2,347,782	1,228,180	1,228,180	Contribution to Balances	1,739,120
16,919,081	14,410,760	14,666,205	ABC Budget Requirement	15,231,740
			Income	
(710,713)	0	0	Government Grant	0
(5,292,227)	(4,537,670)	(4,537,670)	Retained Business Rates and S31 Grants	(4,721,050)
(3,401,256)	(2,478,400)	(2,478,400)	New Homes Bonus	(2,954,410)
(7,495,797)	(7,394,690)	(7,394,690)	Council Tax	(7,556,280)
19,088	0	255,445		0

340 Programme of Meetings 2019/20 and 2020/21

Resolved:

That the Programme of Meetings for 2019/20 and 2020/21 as appended to these Minutes be adopted.

341 Questions by Members of which Notice Had Been Given

(a) **Question from Councillor Miss Martin to Councillor Clokie, Portfolio Holder for Planning**

“Whilst I support the adoption of the Ashford Local Plan as important to ensure a clear blueprint for Ashford and to ward off speculative and aggressive approaches by developers, I ask the Portfolio Holder to explain the relevance of the recent village confines exercise when deciding where development may be appropriate. Does the Ashford Local Plan use the confines as a tool which will determine that development outside the defined area will not be permitted?”

Reply by Councillor Clokie

“Reference to the ‘built-up confines’ of settlements has played a part in adopted planning policies for many years. This has been referred to by a written definition in successive Local Plans and the same is the case in the new Local Plan. However, this can sometimes lead to ambiguity in terms of where the built up confines of a settlement lie on the ground and so the benefit of the current village confines exercise will be to provide more clarity for residents and applicants, as well as Officers and Members, as to where the confines are accepted as being located. In the case of those villages listed only in Policy HOU3a, new residential development outside the built up confines of those villages would not normally be acceptable in principle unless one of the criteria mentioned in Policy HOU5 applied (e.g. a replacement dwelling).

Supplementary Question by Councillor Miss Martin

“Policy HOU3a lists villages such as Ruckinge as suitable for development but the recent confines exercise defines only the area known as Lower Ruckinge as suitable for development. What guarantee can I take back to residents of the area of Upper Ruckinge that Policy HOU3a will not be utilised to permit development in this area? Will the Portfolio Holder confirm that such areas such as Upper Ruckinge and Stone Street Green, Aldington, which are outside the defined confines, will be exempt in the Ashford Local Plan from development?”

Reply by Councillor Clokie

“I think the Councillor has answered the question really. Have you been to Ruckinge? Can you imagine development of an estate of houses up there? I certainly can’t and I think that is the point. We do take every application on its merits and its location and it is extremely unlikely that Ruckinge would come in to any development plan”.

Comment by Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council

“Just for clarification here, the confines exercise actually goes back to my predecessor Councillor Peter Wood’s Leadership and this Council passed a resolution that the 50 recommendations in a review of planning should be implemented. Confines of a village were never defined on any map and of course there was always a subjective view as to whether something was in the confines of a village or not. The idea of the confines exercise was to allow Villages and Parishes to have some kind of organic growth. They should be driving the confines of their Villages and I think that is the case. That is where this arose from and the fact that we had an outstanding instruction from this Council to carry out that exercise meant that I thought we should endeavour to complete it towards the end of this Administration.”

Supplementary Question by Councillor Bell

“I remember the gestation of this initiative many years ago, never mind the Ashford Local Plan, and the confines can certainly be used by the Planning Committee and the Planning Officers when judging planning applications.

Many years ago we had issues when houses would be built slightly outside a village, I can think of one in my own Ward where the Planning Officers said it was within the confines of the village, we took it to Planning Committee who rejected it and the notion that it was outside the confines was then backed by the Inspector at appeal. Having the confines drawn around the village will make that process a lot slicker and easier and more transparent and understood. So could the Portfolio Holder accept my thanks for putting confines in place?"

Reply by Councillor Clokie

"I will accept those thanks and I will just add that the new framework coming out of Government seems to change things regularly and one doesn't quite know whether the confines argument would hold good or not, but as far as we are concerned as a Planning Authority we would respect them and go on from there."

(b) Question from Councillor Michael to Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council

"I ask the Leader whether current planning decisions are driven by fear of ABC failing its five year land supply because recent questionable planning applications seem to suggest this through Officer and Leader vocal support for them. In one case the Leader defended the tenement blocks for the Woolgrowers site and the high density of dwellings, adding that if building upwards was denied then more land would be needed to build outwards. A look at the Panorama and what is taking place there, illustrates how buildings of this nature can utterly destroy the Townscape. So why support more of these gruesome buildings? Other examples to highlight questionable support are the ill-conceived Lenacre Farm and Ashford Hockey Club proposals. So the question arises as to whether dwelling numbers now overrule all other crucial development considerations because five year land supply is blindly driving matters?"

Reply by Councillor Clarkson

"As Councillor Michael will be well aware, the question of housing land supply is actually a critical factor for all Local Authorities. The implications of an Authority not being able to demonstrate an adequate land supply was all too graphically illustrated in the Borough recently with the aggressive and speculative proposals from Gladman for hundreds of new houses in three different villages, Brabourne, Biddenden and my own village, Charing. Huge amounts of time and energy, not to mention resources, went towards fighting off these proposals and we were ultimately successful precisely because we were able to show that we had a deliverable five year housing land supply. So, it is surprising that Cllr Michael seems to suggest that we should not take the five year supply situation that seriously, but to not do so would be a serious dereliction of duty to our electorate. That does not mean, of course, that housing numbers should trump all other matters when it comes to assessing schemes but having a five year land supply enables us to be much more particular about the sites which are granted planning permission and those we want to refuse (and successfully defend). Panorama has been mentioned and the development that is being built now and I must declare that

whilst I was personally in favour of the Panorama building, I was not in favour of the blocks being built and I think we have to be very careful and selective about what we do allow. Given Cllr Michael's well known stance on new greenfield housing developments, it is equally surprising that he should now also question the need for new residential development in the town centre on brownfield sites. Additional residential development in the town centre will not only bring more life and activity to the area but also means fewer sites elsewhere will be needed to meet the Borough's housing requirements – most likely the type of greenfield sites that he wishes to preserve. By implying that we can afford to turn down both and still hope to retain the same level of control we enjoy over new development that our Local Plan provides, is actually wishful thinking."

Supplementary Question by Councillor Michael

"I would first of all like to say that I did not say the five year land supply was not important, I acknowledge that it is very important and I think maybe the Leader has missed the point I am making. I do agree with some of the things he has said, it would be stupid of me not to, but my point is that when we look at development, I ask the Leader can he give me an assurance that we are not clouding our thoughts and we thoroughly vet applications to make sure they address all potential arising outcomes and that they are worthy in every sense of that meaning? I think that the applications I have referred to lacked a lot of vetting and came before the Planning Committee without, I think, proper due diligence meaning we have to defer them or throw them out."

Reply by Councillor Clarkson

"Our Planning Committee I believe has 18 Members on it, which is a broad cross section of elected colleagues, and I do think in fairness the Committee is at times very critical of Planning Officers and that is what we are there for – to scrutinise plans on behalf of our residents and make sure our Officers do a diligent job, which by and large they do. We have turned down a number of applications and that is why we have spent several hundred thousand pounds fighting appeals. But we have to be realistic and we have to rely on planning laws and rules and we cannot consider what is not relevant. I can give Councillor Michael an assurance that this Authority takes planning matters very seriously, which is why it has space standards even better than the Government, which were introduced before they did, as well as codes for design panels which many other Authorities do not have in order to get design right. So I agree with Councillor Michael that we need to pursue and look at everything very critically to make sure we only pass what we believe to be right and proper for our Borough. I accept that readily"

(c) Question from Councillor Michael to Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council

"The Town is seeing an unprecedented growth in blocks of flats and with more being planned. I call upon the Leader to explain the rationale behind this extraordinary growth in flat blocks as opposed to houses, and why there is a predilection for so many one bedroom flats given their limitations and adverse impact on the social wellbeing of occupants?"

Reply by Councillor Clarkson

“Councillor Michael is overlooking the fact that there has been significant development of new houses around the town centre. For example at Godinton Way, Powergen South and Associate House. But in the heart of our town centre, just like any other growing town centre, it is of course the fact that many smaller households, often without children, choose to live in flatted schemes. By encouraging relatively high density developments in the town centre we can make best use of these sites and capitalise on the ready access that residents will enjoy to jobs, schools, shops, services and public transport in the town centre. These flatted developments bring extra residents who spend money in our town centre and help to enhance its vitality; but they also limit the need for development elsewhere in less suitable, environmentally-sensitive locations. I do not accept Councillor Michael’s rather outdated notions about flats and the sweeping generalisations he makes about one bed flats in particular. Well-designed, contemporary apartment schemes, which offer a mix of sizes of flats to cater for the different needs of residents, and meet the Ashford space standards pioneered by this Council, can provide very comfortable, convenient and attractive homes for young people building their careers and wanting to own a home of their own. A town centre flat can be a marvellous opportunity to get onto the first rung of the housing ladder, something I support and I’m sure many in this Chamber do too. When one looks at the facts there is a healthy balance of homes being created catering for all needs from studio flats to three bedroom flats and houses. Take Victoria Way, for example, where most of the new residential development in our town centre is taking place where studios and one bedroom units are significantly out-numbered by bigger homes being created in apartments and houses. 43% studios and one bedroom units, 57% two and three bed roomed. So they are not being swamped and outweighed, there are more of the two and three bed roomed units.”

Supplementary Question by Councillor Michael

“I thank the Leader for his response but I wanted to bring attention to the fact that residents in one bedroom flats say they largely live behind closed doors, not knowing their neighbours, because there is no communal space for residents. They also have no social life because they cannot entertain people overnight or at weekends because they have no accommodation for them to stay. So it is a pretty soulless existence for them. I ask the Leader that when looking at these one bedroom flats, do they serve the needs, aspirations, communal aspects and quality of life for residents and he should try and seek the views of residents. If that has not been done in the past, should that be done now?”

Reply by Councillor Clarkson

“I take note of Councillor Michael’s statement and am happy to talk to him outside of this meeting.”

Supplementary Question by Councillor Heyes

"I would like to ask the Leader if he shares my concerns, as I have some of the same concerns as Councillor Michael about the proliferation of one and two bedroom flats in Ashford? It is particularly escalating in the last couple of years and there is no doubt about it in mind that there are social consequences connected with these. I just think there are so many that it's not desirable. I have great concerns about what is happening to Ashford and I think if you look at social media there are a lot of people who share our concerns about this proliferation of flats."

Supplementary Question by Councillor Galpin

"I would like to ask the Leader if he shares my view that flats would not be built were there not a demand both in the marketplace and from developers?"

Reply by Councillor Clarkson

"Well I agree with both Councillor Heyes and Councillor Galpin there. I think we do have to guard against a proliferation, but my earlier remarks showed that there are areas where this is not so. Like everything else we need to keep our eye on the ball and be mindful of that but as Councillor Galpin says we do have to live within some degree of market forces and we cannot dictate to developers. We also have to be careful about asking for large flats in the town centre and doing a bit of social engineering, which I'm sure colleagues from across the Chamber may have something to say about. We have to strike a balance, we have to be cautious and we have to be careful and I think we have to make sure we cater for the needs of our population and influence developers where we can, as we have done in the past. Planning Officers have been able to make changes to the mix of tenure and I am far from complacent on these matters. There is a market for these otherwise they would not be built, but our space standards help matters and we are using a lot of brownfield sites which we would be heavily criticised if we did not use those first, as that is always the cry."

(d) Question from Councillor Michael to Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council

"The purchase of the Odeon offers this Council an incredible opportunity to deliver something innovative and spectacular for the Town. But on seeing the lacklustre proposal reported in the KM I ask the Leader why the rush? Given the prominence of the site can the Leader inform Members how many Planning Consultants were briefed to submit proposals and to state the reason Ash Sakula Architects' submission was deemed to be the best?"

Reply by Councillor Clarkson

"I am delighted to answer Councillor Michael's question. Having purchased the former Odeon cinema site last summer the Council moved quickly to bring in design and place-making experts to generate ideas on how best the site could be used to help regenerate the town centre and link the heart of the town to the Station and the growing business district in the Commercial Quarter. This opportunity was put to tender to encourage the widest possible

response and 15 architectural and design practices responded. These 15 were short-listed to six and Ash Sakula selected. The work produced by the architects was shared with councillors at presentations and the Town Centre Conference and greeted with enthusiasm. I am surprised that Councillor Michael is so willing to dismiss a scheme which potentially offers so much: - a new community use venue in the function room above the cinema foyer in the part of the building which is being retained; a new outdoor square which can be used for a variety of events and performances to help animate our town centre; studios and living space for people working in the arts and creative industries; a stunning new view of the magnificent east end of St Mary's Church and better pedestrian routes to the churchyard; a great route linking our Station and commercial area to the High Street through an attractive green space at Vicarage Fields; and attractive new homes, houses and apartments, in a central location helping to bring more vitality and life to the town centre. I could go on but I know time is pressing. There is currently a consultation underway online and an exhibition at the Gateway of these design ideas and I would encourage everyone interested to view those and feedback their comments. Finally, I would like to comment on the widely held view that the town needs a theatre. We had that debate and received a petition a little while ago in this Chamber. I totally agree with that view. The town has grown to a size, as our consultants explained, that makes it ripe for a theatre. As the town grows so does the need for a theatre and for a variety of reasons the Odeon site is simply not practical for that use. But I am committed to fully exploring, with colleagues, alternative sites in the town for a theatre as part of a wider entertainment complex. In March the Cabinet will be considering a plan of action for our town centre that proposes significant investment in a range of projects. I hope Cabinet will approve a suitable plan, including the commitment to explore all the potential sites where a theatre could be built in the town centre, along with full testing of the viability of the project with a robust business plan. I did already mention in my earlier address the possibility of Elwick Place which looks very promising and will be explored properly and reported back to colleagues accordingly."

342 Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030 – Inspector's Report and Proposed Adoption of the Plan

Her Worshipful the Mayor directed Members attention to the Supplementary Paper from the Head of Planning Policy. She also advised that some further documents had been tabled that evening. The Director of Law and Governance advised that under this item there were two issues to consider – firstly the speaker from Shadoxhurst Parish Council who had registered to speak in relation to a particular Policy in the Local Plan, which he suggested be dealt with first, before he gave further explanation to the second issue which was the papers that had been tabled.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Ledger of Shadoxhurst Parish Council spoke on this item. He advised the Parish Council had written to the Planning Policy Officer in January to request that Shadoxhurst was removed from the HOU5 list of settlements. Sadly this had been refused and so they had come before Members this evening for a last ditch attempt at a reprieve. The Planning Inspectors had given the Council the necessary freedom to change the list to get it right and the decision they proposed tonight did not jeopardise the Local Plan, it simply corrected something very simple on page 233. Parish Council Members and residents were concerned

that the Policy HOU5 did not give sufficient protection for Ashford to say no to unsuitable developments in their village. Contrary to myths put about by some, Shadoxhurst did not say no to everything, but they were passionate that their residents should have protection from the wrong type of houses in the wrong places. He said there was no doubt that Shadoxhurst was being targeted for development due to its proximity to Ashford and Chilmington. A survey last month had given 100% backing for the village to stay rural and with 99% for retaining green spaces and keeping a green buffer from Ashford's growth. He also wanted to quote the Head of Planning's reports on two applications that came before Planning Committee Members just last year – the first Farley Close for 21 houses and the second Delcroft for 12 houses – and strangely identical wording was used for both. *"The fact that the proposed development complies with the relevant criteria contained in emerging Policy HOU5 and other relevant policies in the current Plan is a significant material consideration, as such I recommend that Planning Permission should be granted"*. For the first at Farley Close, the Planning Committee Members had overturned the Officer recommendation and unanimously refused it, the second, Delcroft, was granted, but only with the Chairman's casting vote as members were split. So, Shadoxhurst Parish Council was very worried that Policy HOU5 criteria was used by Officers to agree to these developments when both they and, crucially the Planning Committee Members on the night, saw that there were clear flaws and conflicts with this Policy. With HOU5 being used as a reason to refuse, the Appellant was now of course using the Officer's words for their own purpose in pursuing an appeal at Farley Close. Mr Ledger said that they were also very worried about the cumulative effects of growth and asked if their little village could please be given some protection for the life of the new Local Plan. They considered that the best protection was simply to remove Shadoxhurst from the list of settlements in Policy HOU5 – they were the least sustainable of any of those settlements. He asked Members to propose and support that amendment.

The Leader of the Council said he would like to thank Mr Ledger for his comments but for the reasons set out by the Planning Policy Manager in his letter of response, which was before Members this evening, explained the reasons why the Local Plan should be adopted on the basis of the recommendations made by the Inspector. That included listing Shadoxhurst as a settlement under Policy HOU5 of the Plan. However, as he had made clear in this Chamber previously, this Council was always willing to listen to and work with local communities to see how best their concerns could be addressed. Where there were ways in which local factors could help to shape it, or how development could take place in an area, then they would be happy to do that – and if necessary, adopt local guidance to achieve that. Of course, the neighbourhood planning route was also available to any Parish Council seeking to take the lead in the planning of their areas as had been the case in several parts of the Borough. Of course, this Council had held a debate recently when one of his colleagues, Councillor Miss Martin, had raised an issue relating to a landscape protection policy and the Council gave an undertaking, which was agreed, to look again at how this sensitive area could be addressed in the future. Not all villages were the same - they differed in topography, heritage assets, road networks and he had already suggested that the planners introduce supplementary planning guidance to guide that Policy sensitively and sympathetically for differing villages, and he hoped that would happen in the coming months once the Local Plan had been adopted. The Leader therefore moved that no changes be made to the Local Plan document at this stage.

This was seconded.

Councillor Hicks said that she agreed with many of Mr Ledger's sentiments. In looking at the wording of the Policy it could be argued that Shadoxhurst should be excluded from the list. The Parish Council had held an exhibition of all the existing and potential development sites in the village and there was a massive response – she had never seen so many people in the Village Hall. At that meeting residents had had the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and the overwhelming response was that Shadoxhurst should remain rural. Mr Ledger had already mentioned the 100% in favour. These were the very recent views of Shadoxhurst residents and she hoped that when the next Local Plan was being prepared those views would be taken in to account and she very much welcomed the Leader's pledge to introduce supplementary planning guidance to deal with these issues.

Councillor Miss Martin said she wanted to thank the Leader for reiterating that this would be revisited in the coming months and to offer some support to Shadoxhurst with whom she had worked very closely. The Leader's pledge was very welcome, but she hoped this would be the opportunity for a new Administration as there was a lot of concern and upset amongst residents about what was happening in the rural areas. People were not anti-development but they were very concerned that they had no mechanisms within the current planning policies in Ashford Borough Council to not have to have a massive battle every single time an issue arose in their village or area. Places like Shadoxhurst and Aldington had experienced unprecedented amounts of development and she had produced a fact sheet some two years ago which showed that Aldington had had far more development than Tenterden which was actually a secondary development area in the current plan. So, it definitely was not about blindly stopping development, but just having policies that were fit for purpose and gave people in the rural areas the opportunity to live in an environment they had chosen to live in – dark skies, peace and quiet and not constant building everywhere.

Councillor Michael said he understood resident anxiety over their inclusion in HOU5 which responded to Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Shadoxhurst could face a higher than anticipated level of windfall development than other villages and that was the point that Mr Ledger had made.

A vote was then taken and it was agreed that no changes be made to the Local Plan in response to the representations from Shadoxhurst Parish Council.

The Director of Law and Governance advised that there was a second tabled paper to consider this evening in relation to Policy S11a of the Local Plan. Regrettably it had been necessary to provide a late paper in response to representations that had been made in the last few days in relation to the Bombardier Site at Leacon Road, Ashford and a threatened legal challenge. Each Member had been provided with a five page document, as agreed by the Leader, to provide additional advice and information in relation to this matter. Officers had taken Counsel's advice and the nature of the advice was set out in the paper along with some revised recommendations. There were also some appendices to that paper which had been left at the end of each row of seats for Members to be able to refer to if necessary. He apologised for the late nature of the papers. The Council was under a duty to respond to the late representations of the landowner and Members did need advice so it was therefore unavoidable on this occasion.

The Mayor proposed to give the Council 5-10 minutes reading time to digest those

additional papers. This was agreed.

Following the necessary reading period the Leader of the Council moved the revised recommendations with the addition of the Portfolio Holder for Planning being included in the delegated authority under recommendation (iii) to allow Members to have an influence.

This was seconded.

Councillor Clokie said that as Portfolio Holder for Planning he wanted to emphasise that this was the most important planning statement for the Council and would be in place until 2030 unless replaced by a future Council. One of the problems in recent years had been the ability to win developer led appeals and the Council would now, as a result of a sound land supply, be able to determine where development should be, rather than being at the mercy of the appeal inspectors. The Council would decide where and what, not developers. The Plan also reaffirmed Ashford's planning policies as pointed out by the Leader, which were designated to ensure that development was carried out to Ashford's standards for space and build. He wanted to take the opportunity of thanking the Planning Policy Manager and his team for the hard work they had put in to achieving this sound Borough Plan and coupled that with thanks for the patience and effort of elected colleagues without which this Local Plan could not and would not have been produced. It was about ten years since he personally had stood in this Chamber and moved adoption of the Core Strategy for Ashford which set in motion the building of 30,000 homes and 29,000 jobs in 30 years. This was the trigger for inward investment of some £300m worth of infrastructure which included the remodelling of Stanhope. This initiative had been followed through by his friend and successor Councillor Clarkson who had encouraged inward investment and Council investment of at least a further £500m and rising. The Council was doing well. He had not hesitation in asking colleagues to support the motion and approve the Ashford Borough Local Plan to 2030.

Councillor Bartlett said that turning back to the tabled paper, he wanted to speak in favour of Officer's efforts to retain the railway sidings for railway use. There were strong proposals for Ashford to improve rail services including Thameslink services from Maidstone and the rolling stock needed to be located somewhere. It was also worthwhile reminding colleagues that the railway sidings at Sevington were empty for many years and it was only very recently that Network Rail had brought these back in to active use. Had Ashford lost that site in the intervening period when those sidings had not been used then that opportunity would have been lost. He was therefore supportive of the Officer's recommendations on the Bombardier site.

Councillor Miss Martin said as a point of order on the tabled papers, she understood their necessity but would just ask Officers to bear in mind that some Members had disabilities and were not as able to read those papers as others.

Councillor Wedgbury said it was also important to remember that this Plan had been to the Inspector, with a long inspection process prior to coming to the Council this evening. So it was disappointing to receive such a late challenge at this stage, after the Inspector had made their recommendations. It was important to adopt the Plan this evening to protect the Borough and its residents.

Councillor Farrell said that while the focus this evening had been the adoption of the Local Plan he wanted to draw Members attention to what took place once

development came forward. A previous Chief Executive had written to key stakeholders in his ward informing them that the Council would forego Section 106 contributions to enable development to come forward. These contributions were vital in supporting current communities as well as new ones created through planned development. He asked the Leader or Portfolio Holder to confirm whether this was an isolated case or whether similar agreements would be a feature of sites for development within the new Local Plan. The Leader responded that he had no knowledge of this but he had taken it on board and would be happy to discuss it outside of this meeting.

Councillor Macpherson said that this did appear to be a contentious issue and he was unsure about rushing to a conclusion this evening. He asked if this should be something that was discussed further, between the parties involved, rather than being resolved at a Full Council meeting?

Councillor Michael said that the Inspector's report at Paragraphs 117 – 118 exactly supported the advice of the Planning Policy Manager which stated that there was nothing unsound about the approach so he could not see any problems with the recommendations.

Resolved:

- That (i) the Inspectors' Report and the appended set of recommended Main Modifications to the Local Plan 2030 be endorsed.**
- (ii) having considered the Tabled Papers containing information and advice regarding Policy S11a – Former Bombardier Works, adopt the Local Plan 2030 as part of the Development Plan for the borough subject to the Inspectors' Main Modifications and subject to such other additional modifications that do not (taken together) materially affect the Policies as the Head of Planning Policy considers are required in order to ensure that the final text is up-to-date, clear and correct.**
- (iii) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning Policy (on an ongoing basis), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to update and publish the Policies Map to reflect the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 and any other relevant matters that in his opinion should be shown on it.**
- (iv) no changes be made to the Local Plan in response to the representations from Shadoxhurst Parish Council.**
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DATES OF MEETINGS MAY 2019 - MAY 2021

Meetings are usually held at the Civic Centre and start at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated

MAY 2019

W 1
Th 2 **ABC Elections**
F 3

M 6 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 7
W 8
Th 9
F 10

M 13
Tu 14
W 15
Th 16
F 17

M 20
Tu 21
W 22
Th 23 Selection & CR
F 24

M 27 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 28
W 29
Th 30 Council
F 31

JUNE 2019

M 3
Tu 4
W 5 Planning
Th 6
F 7

M 10
Tu 11 Joint Transportation
W 12
Th 13 Cabinet
F 14

M 17
Tu 18 Audit
W 19
Th 20
F 21

M 24
T 25 O&S
W 26
Th 27 JCC 2.30pm
F 28

JULY 2019

M 1
Tu 2
W 3 Planning
Th 4
F 5

M 8
Tu 9
W 10
Th 11 Cabinet

F 12

M 15
Tu 16 Audit
W 17
Th 18 Council
F 19

M 22
Tu 23 O&S
W 24
Th 25
F 26

M 29
T 30
W 31 Planning

AUGUST 2019

Th 1
F 2

M 5 TEB 10am
Tu 6
W 7
Th 8 Cabinet
F 9

M 12
Tu 13
W 14
Th 15
F 16

M 19
Tu 20
W 21
Th 22
F 23

M 26 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 27 O&S
W 28
Th 29 JCC 2.30pm
F 30

SEPTEMBER 2019

M 2
Tu 3
W 4 Planning
Th 5
F 6

M 9
Tu 10 Joint Transportation
W 11
Th 12 Cabinet
F 13

M 16
Tu 17
W 18
Th 19
F 20

M 23
Tu 24 O&S

W 25
Th 26 Audit
F 27

M 30

OCTOBER 2019

Tu 1
W 2 Planning
Th 3
F 4

M 7
Tu 8
W 9
Th 10 Cabinet
F 11

M 14
Tu 15
W 16
Th 17 Council
F 18

M 21
Tu 22 O&S
W 23
Th 24
F 25

M 28
Tu 29
W 30
Th 31 JCC 2.30pm

NOVEMBER 2019

F 1

M 4
Tu 5
W 6 Planning
Th 7
F 8

M 11 TEB 10am
Tu 12
W 13
Th 14 Cabinet
F 15

M 18
Tu 19
W 20
Th 21
F 22

M 25
Tu 26 O&S
W 27
Th 28
F 29

DECEMBER 2019

M 2
Tu 3 Audit
W 4
Th 5 Cabinet
F 6

M 9
Tu 10 Joint Transportation
W 11 Planning
Th 12 Council
F 13

M 16
Tu 17 O&S
W 18
Th 19 JCC 2.30pm
F 20

M 23
Tu 24
W 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**
Th 26 **BOXING DAY**
F 27 OFFICES CLOSED

M 30
Tu 31

JANUARY 2020

W 1 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Th 2
F 3

M 6
Tu 7
W 8
Th 9
F 10

M 13
Tu 14
W 15
Th 16 Cabinet
F 17

M 20
Tu 21 Licensing & H&S 10am
W 22 Planning
Th 23
F 24

M 27
Tu 28 O&S
W 29
Th 30
F 31

FEBRUARY 2020

M 3 Standards
Tu 4
W 5
Th 6
F 7

M 10 TEB 10am
Tu 11
W 12
Th 13 Cabinet
F 14

M 17
Tu 18
W 19 Planning
Th 20 Council (C Tax)
F 21

M 24
Tu 25 O&S
W 25
Th 27 JCC 2.30pm
F 28

MARCH 2020

M 2
Tu 3
W 4
Th 5
F 6

M 9
Tu 10 Joint Transportation
W 11
Th 12 Cabinet
F 13

M 16
Tu 17 Audit
W 18 Planning
Th 19
F 20

M 23
Tu 24 O&S
W 25
Th 26
F 27

M 30
Tu 31

APRIL 2020

W 1
Th 2 Cabinet
F 3

M 6
Tu 7
W 8
Th 9
F 10

GOOD FRIDAY

M 13
Tu 14
W 15
Th 16 Council
F 17

M 20
Tu 21
W 22 Planning
Th 23
F 24

M 27
Tu 28 O&S
W 29
Th 30 JCC 2.30pm

MAY 2020

F 1

M 4
Tu 5 **BANK HOLIDAY**
W 6 Selection & CR
Th 7
F 8

M 11 TEB 10am
Tu 12
W 13
Th 14 Cabinet
F 15

M 18
Tu 19
W 20 Planning
Th 21 Council
F 22

M 25 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 26 O&S
W 27
Th 28
F 29

KEY

O&S - Overview and Scrutiny
JCC - Joint Consultative Committee

 School Holidays

MAY 2020

F 1

M 4 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 5 Selection & CR
 W 6
 Th 7
 F 8

M 11 TEB 10am
 Tu 12
 W 13
 Th 14 Cabinet
 F 15

M 18
 Tu 19
 W 20 Planning
 Th 21 Council
 F 22

M 25 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 26 O&S
 W 27
 Th 28
 F 29

JUNE 2020

M 1
 Tu 2
 W 3
 Th 4
 F 5

M 8
 Tu 9 Joint Transportation
 W 10
 Th 11 Cabinet
 F 12

M 15
 Tu 16 Audit
 W 17 Planning
 Th 18
 F 19

M 22
 T 23 O&S
 W 24
 Th 25 JCC 2.30pm
 F 26

M 29
 Tu 30

JULY 2020

W 1
 Th 2
 F 3

M 6
 Tu 7
 W 8
 Th 9 Cabinet
 F 10

M 13
 Tu 14 Audit
 W 15 Planning
 Th 16 Council
 F 17

M 20
 Tu 21
 W 22
 Th 23
 F 24

M 27
 T 28 O&S
 W 29
 Th 30
 F 31

AUGUST 2020

M 3
 Tu 4
 W 5
 Th 6
 F 7

M 10 TEB 10am
 Tu 11
 W 12
 Th 13 Cabinet
 F 14

M 17
 Tu 18
 W 19 Planning
 Th 20
 F 21

M 24
 Tu 25 O&S
 W 26
 Th 27 JCC 2.30pm
 F 28

SEPTEMBER 2020

SEPTEMBER 2020

Tu 1
 W 2
 Th 3
 F 4

M 7
 Tu 8 Joint Transportation
 W 9
 Th 10 Cabinet
 F 11

M 14
 Tu 15
 W 16 Planning
 Th 17
 F 18

M 21
 Tu 22 O&S
 W 23
 Th 24
 F 25

M 28

Tu 29 Audit
 W 30

OCTOBER 2020

Th 1
 F 2

M 5
 Tu 6
 W 7
 Th 8 Cabinet
 F 9

M 12
 Tu 13
 W 14 Planning
 Th 15 Council
 F 16

M 19
 Tu 20
 W 21
 Th 22
 F 23

M 26
 Tu 27 O&S
 W 28
 Th 29 JCC 2.30pm
 F 30

NOVEMBER 2020

M 2
 Tu 3
 W 4
 Th 5
 F 6

M 9 TEB 10am
 Tu 10
 W 11
 Th 12 Cabinet
 F 13

M 16
 Tu 17
 W 18 Planning
 Th 19
 F 20

M 23
 Tu 24 O&S
 W 25
 Th 26
 F 27

M 30

DECEMBER 2020

Tu 1 Audit
W 2
Th 3 Cabinet
F 4

M 7
Tu 8 Joint Transportation
W 9
Th 10 Council
F 11

M 14
Tu 15
W 16 Planning
Th 17 JCC 2.30pm
F 18

M 21
Tu 22 O&S
W 23
Th 24 OFFICES CLOSED
F 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**

M 28 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 29
W 30
Th 31

JANUARY 2021

F 1 **BANK HOLIDAY**

M 4
Tu 5
W 6
Th 7
F 8

M 11
Tu 12
W 13
Th 14 Cabinet
F 15

M 18
Tu 19 Licensing & H&S 10am
W 20 Planning
Th 21
F 22

M 25 Standards
Tu 26 O&S
W 27
Th 28
F 29

FEBRUARY 2021

M 1
Tu 2
W 3
Th 4
F 5

M 8 TEB 10am
Tu 9
W 10
Th 11 Cabinet
F 12

M 15
Tu 16
W 17 Planning
Th 18 Council (C Tax)
F 19

M 22
Tu 23 O&S
W 24
Th 25 JCC 2.30pm
F 26

MARCH 2021

M 1
Tu 2
W 3
Th 4
F 5

M 8
Tu 9 Joint Transportation
W 10
Th 11 Cabinet
F 12

M 15
Tu 16 Audit
W 17 Planning
Th 18
F 19

M 22
Tu 23 O&S
W 24
Th 25
F 26

M 29
Tu 30
W 31

APRIL 2021

Th 1
F 2 **GOOD FRIDAY**

M 5 **EASTER MONDAY**
Tu 6

W 7
Th 8 Cabinet
F 9

M 12
Tu 13
W 14
Th 15 Council
F 16

M 19
Tu 20
W 21 Planning
Th 22
F 23

M 26
Tu 27 O&S
W 28
Th 29 JCC 2.30pm
F 30

MAY 2021

M 3 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 4 Selection & CR
W 5

Th 6 **KCC Elections**
F 7

M 10 TEB 10am
Tu 11
W 12
Th 13 Cabinet
F 14

M 17
Tu 18
W 19 Planning
Th 20 Council
F 21

M 24
Tu 25 O&S
W 26
Th 27
F 28

M 31 **BANK HOLIDAY**

KEY

O&S - Overview and Scrutiny
JCC - Joint Consultative Committee

 School Holidays