

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 10 July 2025.

PRESENT: Mr J Baker, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Mr M Ellis, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr S Heaver, M J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms L Kemkaran, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Mr J Moreland, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr T Prater, Ms A Randall, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr D Sian, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr G Sturley, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Apologies for Absence
(Item 1)

The Democratic Services Manager reported apologies from Mr Barrett, Mr Black, Mr Chapman, Mr Lehmann, Mr Kennedy, Mr Mallon, Mr Taylor, Mr Truder, and Mr Webb.

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda
(Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2025 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 May 2025 be approved as a correct record.

4. Corporate Parenting Panel - Minutes for noting
(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel meeting on 18 February 2025 be noted.

5. Chairman's Announcements
(Item 5)

Birthday Honours List

- (1) The Chairman formally congratulated all those who received an Honour in His Majesty The King's Birthday Honours List which was announced in June.

Charities

- (2) The Chairman looked forward to supporting two local Kent based charities, SATEDA and the Young Lives Foundation, during his year as Chairman.
- (3) The Chairman invited Marylka Gowlland and Lauren Croud from SATEDA, and Stephen Gray from the Young Lives Foundation, to introduce their charities and provide a brief overview on how they provided support to women, children and young people in Kent.

6. Questions
(Item 6)

In accordance with Sections 14.15 to 14.22 of the Constitution, 16 questions were submitted by the deadline and 16 questions were put to the Executive. 9 questions were asked and replies given. A record of all questions and answers is available [online](#) with the papers for this meeting.

7. Report by Leader of the Council
(Item 7)

- (1) Ms Kemkaran referred to the last County Council meeting where she provided an introduction to the Administration's intentions to save money, and highlighted a number of propositions which would be brought forward over the coming months. The savings identified by the newly established cabinet portfolio, the Department of Local Government Efficiency (DOLGE) would be reflected in the Administration's forthcoming Strategic Statement.
- (2) The Leader proposed to cut Member Allowances by 5% and reallocate £202,500 into Member Grants. This would result in an extra £2,500 for each Councillor to spend in his or her division.

- (3) The Leader spoke about the Council's overall financial position. Since May the level of debt had reduced by approximately £16million and the Administration intended to reduce this further by March 2026. One of the largest areas of expenditure where the Leader would try to find savings was within Home to School Transport. She said a future increase in capital spending could be avoided by cancelling the Council's Net Zero renewable energy programme of property modifications, saving £32million over four years, as well as the vehicle fleet transition to electric vehicles which would save a further £7.5million by 2030. The Leader believed a saving of up to £180,000 could be made by cancelling membership subscriptions.
- (4) In relation to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) the Leader wrote to the Minister requesting that the deadline for a full business case be pushed back from November 2025 to March 2026. Although still awaiting an official response the verbal response had not been positive.
- (5) In the light of LGR, the Leader had reviewed previous decisions regarding the headquarters building in Maidstone and wished to stop the proposed sale of Sessions House. She said this would avoid borrowing £14million and mean a relatively small sum of money would be spent fixing immediate issues. Detailed proposals would come forward to future meetings. The coffee cart in Sessions House had been recommissioned and it was planned, long term, to make it available to the public for hire and generate revenue for the Council. The Leader referred to the limited office space and said she was working closely with the Chief Executive to implement an office repopulation plan. The projected figures indicated that by the end of this financial year office based capacity would have increased by 500 desks.
- (6) In relation to supporting businesses, the Leader was convening a twin event in the Autumn to highlight the importance of Eurostar services returning to Ashford and Ebbsfleet stations in Kent. The event would bring together local business owners, key service providers and local councillors and MPs to showcase what Kent had to offer. Ms Kemkaran was looking forward to working with the Employment Task Force to support people into work or training in Kent and Medway.
- (7) Savings would be made in integrated children's services by bringing children's care homes back in-house and the purchase of four properties. This would enable costs to be controlled whilst still protecting and caring for children in care. A saving of £1.5million would be made over two financial years from April 2026, and there was an opportunity to increase this by opening further facilities in future years. The Leader had written to the Home Secretary about insufficient funding for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who then became care leavers.
- (8) Turning to the county's roads, the Leader had written to the Minister to request that profit from the increase in toll charges at the Dartford Crossing be diverted to the Council's highways budget, considering Kent was the country's gateway to Europe. The £79.3million in the Council's capital

budget for roads and highways assets was more than £10million higher than last year, and the highest in four years. As well as tackling potholes the Council was doing large patch repairs to fill multiple potholes in one go.

- (9) Finally, the Leader commented that much progress had been made but there was still much more to do. She said she was determined to continue the upward trajectory and serve the people of Kent.
- (10) Mr Hook, Leader of the Opposition, commented on the importance of council meetings to discuss issues openly and make informed decisions, and said a verbal report was not adequate when it came to policy changes. Mr Hook referred to DOLGE and the absence of a written report to explain its purpose and direction. He commented on a pattern of behaviour that created false impressions and referred in particular to false claims about libraries. He said concerns should be put on a meeting agenda so that issues could be rationally explored in public and advised upon by the Council's expert officers.
- (11) Turning to Home to School Transport Mr Hook said this was an area where the Executive had caused concern amongst residents. He explained that Home to School Transport was for children who, for example, lived in villages with no school, lived in towns where schools were not close to where people lived, or for children with special needs or disabilities. Mr Hook said the Liberal Democrat Group had made suggestions for many years for more efficient models of delivering the scheme.
- (12) Regarding adult social care Mr Hook highlighted that residential nursing accounted for £235million of the annual KCC budget. He said a growth of 17% had been seen every year for the last eight years and he invited the Leader to explain the Administration's growth forecast of only 3%. Mr Hook explained there was £325million worth of social care contracts due for renewal before April 2026 and stressed that it was time for the Leader to take a close interest in adult social care.
- (13) Mr Hook was astonished that the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Cabinet Committee had still not met, and commented that the Council, alongside the 13 other councils in Kent, needed to play an active role in shaping proposals in time for the Government's November deadline. He questioned what analysis had been done and how the public would be involved.
- (14) On Net Zero Mr Hook said there was overwhelming evidence that climate change was a danger to everyone's future. He said Net Zero was a statutory obligation and was needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. He questioned why it was not on the agenda of the next Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee.
- (15) Regarding the future of Sessions House he said the Leader's comments were against previous advice received from officers and future plans should be publicly discussed in detail at a future committee meeting.

- (16) Mr Hood, on behalf of the Green Group, spoke about the the roles of the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the national Reform UK Party and that they should be distinct. He said for many years opposition members had highlighted the unacceptable costs of Home to School Transport and had been urging the Administration to consider alternative ways to manage it cost-effectively and efficiently.
- (17) Mr Hood made reference to the financial decline of the Council and said there had yet to be any significant changes to avert it. He referred to cancelled committee meetings and working groups, and changes to Cabinet Members since their appointment less than two months ago.
- (18) Regarding libraries, Mr Hood questioned whether the relevant Cabinet Member agreed with the previous Administration's Deputy Leader that Kent had too many libraries. He said his group believed that libraries were part of the fabric of communities and would fight strongly to protect them.
- (19) Turning to Net Zero he referred to the proposed spending cuts outlined by the Leader and commented that expenditure of this kind invariably resulted in long-term savings and improved resilience in the event of extreme weather events. He said modernising the Council's estate would bring long-term benefits and cut energy prices.
- (20) Mr Hood turned to devolution which he said was needed for Kent in areas such as public transport, reversing the skills gap, and transforming Kent's economy. He referred to the efficiencies that would be made by combining resources into larger councils but was against the idea of one person controlling an enormous budget with almost no scrutiny. He said it was imperative that engagement took place with the public and the case be made for a bespoke devolution settlement if that was the wish of Kent residents. The Green Group had previously promoted an assembly for Kent as the best option to deliver devolution and maintained that view. Mr Hood commented on the religious diversity in Kent and that every resident should be represented.
- (21) Mr Rayner, the Leader of the Conservative Group, commented that Sessions House was a significant financial black hole for the Council, and had been for some time. He referred to the previous Administration's intentions to address the matter and said he would be looking very carefully at the costs involved, when they were available, in continuing to run Sessions House.
- (22) The Conservative Group supported a reduction in capital debt as well as the ongoing arrangements regarding the Employment Task Force. Mr Rayner wished the Administration well in applying to the government for funding from the Dartford Crossing. He was pleased that the plans for Integrated Children's Services (which began under the previous Administration) continued, as well as capital gains tax support for farmers. Mr Rayner welcomed more detail on the Leader's Net Zero announcement and said he

would scrutinise the figures carefully when they were brought to the relevant committee.

- (23) Mr Brady, the Leader of the Labour Group, spoke about LGR and a more efficient form of local government in the form of one council being accountable for all services. He questioned whether the Administration had been told whether it should support devolution or be against it.
- (24) Regarding the sale of Sessions House Mr Brady said this was a soundbite without detail. He referred to the building as a money pit and said it would cost £27million to maintain the building over a 10 year period and that figure did not include modernisation or refurbishment.
- (25) Mr Brady stated that moving integrated residential care in-house was a Kent Labour Group proposal included in its 2025 alternative budget. He said Net Zero supported residents and businesses to save money and created demand for local jobs, attracted investment, reduced overall long-term costs to the Council and improved Kent residents' health.
- (26) Mr Brady commented on Home to School Transport which he said needed to be looked at with care and consideration so as not to worry children, parents and families. The Kent Labour Group proposed voluntary personal transport budgets in its alternative budget which was taken up by the last Administration and saved the Council £2million per year. The Labour Group also promoted working with schools on a school bus proposal which, along with independent travel training, produced savings. Mr Brady asked what the Administration was going to do.
- (27) Mr Brady referred to inaccurate statements about recruitment spend, working from home and the support given to Kent's looked after children, as well as inaccurate statements made in relation to libraries. He commented on recent changes within the Cabinet and criticised the leadership of the Administration whilst referencing the Nolan Principles of Public Life. Mr Brady expressed his disappointment, along with that of Kent residents', at the Leader's announcements.
- (28) Ms Kemkaran responded to points made by the Group Leaders. She agreed that meetings were important but emphasised that verbal reports were also important in developing ideas and policy. She disagreed with comments that people were losing confidence in Reform UK and explained that a recent poll had disputed that. The Leader responded to comments made about a LGR referendum and referred to the Brexit referendum in 2016 which had since been slowly overturned.
- (29) Regarding Sessions House, the Leader said she had been assured that the building could be made warm, welcoming and safe, and it would cost less than an office move to Invicta House. She said the facts and figures spoke for themselves.

- (30) Regarding Net Zero, the Office for Budget Responsibility had indicated that it was going to cost £830billion to implement and the Leader said the country, and the county of Kent, could not afford that. She stressed that residents did not want to pay for something that may or may not yield money in the future. People voted for Reform UK because the party had different ideas and promised to put residents' best interests first.
- (31) Finally, the Leader referred to recent press coverage regarding libraries and said she would report back to Members through the appropriate channels.
- (32) RESOLVED that the Leader's report be noted.

8. **Member Allowances Scheme** (Item 8)

- (1) Ms Kemkaran proposed, and Mr Collins seconded the motion that:

"The County Council is asked to:

- a) Note the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and
- b) Agree the Member's Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A, incorporating:
 - i. A reduction of 5% to the Basic Allowance.
 - ii. A reduction of 5% to the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance, with all other SRAs being reduced in accordance with the scheme.
 - iii. A reduction in 5% to the Dependent's Carers' Allowance.
 - iv. An increase in the allowance for Co-opted Members of the Governance and Audit Committee to £1,700, and an entitlement to the Carer's Allowance."

- 2) Mr Brady proposed and Ms Nolan seconded the following amendment:

"The County Council is asked to:

- a) Note the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and
- b) Agree the Member's Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A **(as amended)**, incorporating:
 - i A reduction of 5% to the Basic Allowance.
 - ii A reduction of ~~5%~~ **10%** to the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance, with all other SRAs being reduced in accordance with the scheme.
 - ~~iii A reduction in 5% to the Dependent's Carers' Allowance.~~
 - iv An increase in the allowance for Co-opted Members of the Governance and Audit Committee to £1,700, and an entitlement to the Carer's Allowance.
- c) **Recommend that the Member Remuneration Panel (MRP), as part of advising on the 4 year Allowances Scheme to be developed for 2026**

onwards, be asked to consider and report on the removal of Special Responsibility Allowances for Deputy Cabinet Committee members - on the basis that this role is discretionary, not replicated at other Kent Councils and they do not have the same formal responsibilities or accountabilities that other SRA recipients.”

- 3) Following the debate, the Chairman put the amended motion in paragraph 2 to the vote and the voting was as follows.

For (6)

Mr A Brady, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery, Ms C Nolan, Mr P Stepto

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Miss I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Ms A Randall, Mr D Sian, Mr G Sturley, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

Abstain (16)

Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean MBE, Mr M Ellis, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M J Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Mr N Williams

Motion lost.

- 4) Mr Hook proposed and Mr Streatfeild seconded the following amendment:

“The County Council is asked to:

- a) Note the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and
- b) Agree the Member’s Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A (**as amended**), incorporating:
 - i A reduction of 5% to the Basic Allowance.
 - ii A reduction of 5% to the Leader’s Special Responsibility Allowance, with all other SRAs being reduced in accordance with the scheme.
 - iii ~~A reduction in 5% to the~~ **As recommended by the Independent Review Panel, an adjustment of** Dependent’s Carers’ Allowance **from a maximum £13.47 per hour to a maximum £13.98 per hour, payable only on production of receipts.**

- iv An increase in the allowance for Co-opted Members of the Governance and Audit Committee to £1,700, and an entitlement to the Carer's Allowance.
 - c) Agree that all money saved from the reductions above to be applied to increase the Combined Members Grants fund available to all KCC members equally."
- 5) The proposer and seconder of the original motion agreed to the amendment, which became the substantive motion:

"The County Council is asked to:

 - a) Note the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and
 - b) Agree the Member's Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A (as amended), incorporating:
 - i A reduction of 5% to the Basic Allowance.
 - ii A reduction of 5% to the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance, with all other SRAs being reduced in accordance with the scheme.
 - iii As recommended by the Independent Review Panel, an adjustment of Dependent's Carers' Allowance from a maximum £13.47 per hour to a maximum £13.98 per hour, payable only on production of receipts.
 - iv An increase in the allowance for Co-opted Members of the Governance and Audit Committee to £1,700, and an entitlement to the Carer's Allowance.
 - c) Agree that all money saved from the reductions above to be applied to increase the Combined Members Grants fund available to all KCC members equally."
- 6) Mr Rayner proposed and Ms Russell seconded the following amendment:

"The County Council is asked to:

- a) Note the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and
- b) Agree the Member's Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A (as amended), incorporating:
 - i A reduction of 5% to the Basic Allowance.
 - ii A reduction of 5% to the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance, with all other SRAs being reduced in accordance with the scheme.
 - iii As recommended by the Independent Review Panel, an adjustment of Dependent's Carers' Allowance from a maximum £13.47 per hour to a maximum £13.98 per hour, payable only on production of receipts.
 - iv An increase in the allowance for Co-opted Members of the Governance and Audit Committee to £1,700, and an entitlement to the Carer's Allowance.

- c) Agree that all money saved from the reductions above to be applied to increase the Combined Members Grants fund available to all KCC members equally.
 - d) Recommend that the Member Remuneration Panel (MRP), as part of advising on the 4 year Scheme to be developed for 2026 onwards, be asked to consider and report on application of Basic Allowance reductions/penalties on the basis of attendance records (e.g. a 25% reduction where attendance falls below 75% of expected attendance).
- 7) Following the debate, the Chairman put the amended motion in paragraph 6 to the vote and the voting was as follows.

For (8)

Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Mr H Rayner, Ms C Russell, Mr P Stepto, Mr N Williams

Against (54)

Mr J Baker, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr M Brice, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Mr M Ellis, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Miss I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Ms A Randall, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr D Sian, Mr M J Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Mr G Sturley, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

Abstain (8)

Mr A Brady, Mrs T Dean MBE, Mr A J Hook, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr C Sefton

Motion lost.

- 8) Following the debate, the Chairman put the substantive motion (as amended) in paragraph 5 to the vote and the voting was as follows.

For (69)

Mr J Baker, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Mr M Ellis, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr S Heaver, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms L Kemkaran, Miss I

Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Mr J Moreland, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr T Prater, Ms A Randall, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr D Sian, Mr C Sefton, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Mr G Sturley, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

Against (0)

Abstain (1)

Mr C Burwash

Motion carried.

9) RESOLVED that Council:

- a) Notes the report of the Member Remuneration Panel and thank the Panel Members for their work; and
- b) Agrees the Member's Allowances Scheme for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A (as amended), incorporating:
 - i A reduction of 5% to the Basic Allowance.
 - ii A reduction of 5% to the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance, with all other SRAs being reduced in accordance with the scheme.
 - iii As recommended by the Independent Review Panel, an adjustment of Dependent's Carers' Allowance from a maximum £13.47 per hour to a maximum £13.98 per hour, payable only on production of receipts.
 - iv An increase in the allowance for Co-opted Members of the Governance and Audit Committee to £1,700, and an entitlement to the Carer's Allowance.
- c) Agrees that all money saved from the reductions above to be applied to increase the Combined Members Grants fund available to all KCC members equally.

9. Motions for Time Limited Debate

(Item 9)

The Chairman left the meeting and the Vice-Chairman took the Chair.

Motion for Time Limited Debate 1 – Preventing violence against women and girls

1) Mr Hood proposed, and Mr Jeffery seconded the motion that:

“This Council resolves the following:

1. Call on the Executive to develop a broader and comprehensive VAWG Strategy which should include the introduction of public awareness campaigns and bystander training to challenge problematic behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs. This strategy should outline concrete steps to increase the safety of women and girls, with a particular focus on vulnerable populations.
2. Promote a Women's Night-Time Safety Charter through effective working with District and Borough Councils and Kent Police. This activity should support engagement with local businesses, especially bars, pubs, and taxi services, encouraging them to commit to safer practices, including better training for staff and drivers to ensure women's safety.
3. Call on the Executive to work with the District and Borough Councils, via mechanisms such as the Kent Community Safety Partnership, to encourage the use of Licensing Tools to enhance the safety of women and girls across the whole of Kent. This includes implementing additional measures such as improved driver safety checks, the introduction of clear driver identification signage in taxis, and ensuring safe transportation options are readily available for women at night.
4. Call on the Executive and responsible Senior Officers to make women's safety central to our responses to planning applications as a statutory consultee. This should include ensuring that the safety of women and girls will be a key consideration in Kent Highways responses to planning applications, ensuring that public spaces are designed with safety in mind. This includes improved lighting, more accessible public transport routes, and the creation of safe public spaces that encourage women to feel comfortable and secure in all parts of Kent.
5. Agree an ongoing commitment to be a White Ribbon Accredited Organisation and agree to promote the opportunities for any Members to serve as a White Ribbon Champion.
6. Note a key White Ribbon UK message; that it is vital to promote the concept of men and boys working to end violence against women.
7. Recognise that this ongoing accreditation will demonstrate our commitment to tackling violence and abuse and fostering an inclusive culture of respect and equality in the community."

2) Mrs Dean proposed and Mr Hook seconded the following amendment:

"This Council resolves the following:

1. Call on the Executive to develop a broader and comprehensive VAWG Strategy which should include the introduction of public awareness campaigns and bystander training to challenge problematic behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs. This strategy should outline concrete steps to increase the safety of women and girls, with a particular focus on vulnerable populations.
2. Promote a Women's Night-Time Safety Charter through effective working with District and Borough Councils and Kent Police. This activity should support engagement with local businesses, especially

bars, pubs, and taxi services, encouraging them to commit to safer practices, including better training for staff and drivers to ensure women's safety.

3. Call on the Executive to work with the District and Borough Councils, via mechanisms such as the Kent Community Safety Partnership, to encourage the use of Licensing Tools to enhance the safety of women and girls across the whole of Kent. This includes implementing additional measures such as improved driver safety checks, the introduction of clear driver identification signage in taxis, and ensuring safe transportation options are readily available for women at night.
4. Call on the Executive and responsible Senior Officers to make women's safety central to our responses to planning applications as a statutory consultee. This should include ensuring that the safety of women and girls will be a key consideration in Kent Highways responses to planning applications, ensuring that public spaces are designed with safety in mind. This includes improved lighting, more accessible public transport routes, and the creation of safe public spaces that encourage women to feel comfortable and secure in all parts of Kent.
5. Agree an ongoing commitment to be a White Ribbon Accredited Organisation and agree to promote the opportunities for any Members to serve as a White Ribbon Champion.
6. Note a key White Ribbon UK message; that it is vital to promote the concept of men and boys working to end violence against women.
7. Recognise that this ongoing accreditation will demonstrate our commitment to tackling violence and abuse and fostering an inclusive culture of respect and equality in the community.
8. Investigate the process and setting up of a programme for school targeting boys and their attitudes to relationships and abuse."

- 3) The proposer and seconder of the original motion agreed to the amendment, which became the substantive motion:

"This Council resolves the following:

1. Call on the Executive to develop a broader and comprehensive VAWG Strategy which should include the introduction of public awareness campaigns and bystander training to challenge problematic behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs. This strategy should outline concrete steps to increase the safety of women and girls, with a particular focus on vulnerable populations.
2. Promote a Women's Night-Time Safety Charter through effective working with District and Borough Councils and Kent Police. This activity should support engagement with local businesses, especially bars, pubs, and taxi services, encouraging them to commit to safer practices, including better training for staff and drivers to ensure women's safety.
3. Call on the Executive to work with the District and Borough Councils, via mechanisms such as the Kent Community Safety Partnership, to

encourage the use of Licensing Tools to enhance the safety of women and girls across the whole of Kent. This includes implementing additional measures such as improved driver safety checks, the introduction of clear driver identification signage in taxis, and ensuring safe transportation options are readily available for women at night.

4. Call on the Executive and responsible Senior Officers to make women's safety central to our responses to planning applications as a statutory consultee. This should include ensuring that the safety of women and girls will be a key consideration in Kent Highways responses to planning applications, ensuring that public spaces are designed with safety in mind. This includes improved lighting, more accessible public transport routes, and the creation of safe public spaces that encourage women to feel comfortable and secure in all parts of Kent.
 5. Agree an ongoing commitment to be a White Ribbon Accredited Organisation and agree to promote the opportunities for any Members to serve as a White Ribbon Champion.
 6. Note a key White Ribbon UK message; that it is vital to promote the concept of men and boys working to end violence against women.
 7. Recognise that this ongoing accreditation will demonstrate our commitment to tackling violence and abuse and fostering an inclusive culture of respect and equality in the community.
 8. Investigate the process and setting up of a programme for school targeting boys and their attitudes to relationships and abuse."
- 4) Following the debate, the Vice-Chairman put the substantive motion (as amended) in paragraph 3 to the vote and the voting was as follows.

For (22)

Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr M Ellis, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr S Jeffery, Miss I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Ms C Nolan, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Mr N Wibberley

Against (41)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, M J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr P Osborne, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Ms A Randall, Mr D Sian, Mr G Sturley, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

Abstain (3)

Mr O Bradshaw, Mr J Defriend, Mr J Eustace

Motion Lost.

Motion for Time Limited Debate 2 – Improving KCC’s Blue Badge System

5) Mr Hook proposed, and Mr Streatfeild seconded the motion that:

“Council resolves to:

- a) Express its appreciation for the busy, hardworking team who deal with Blue Badge applications.
- b) Request that the application of the Blue Badge rules and the determination of Blue Badge applications should be as generous as possible to residents making Blue Badge applications, so far as the law permits.
- c) Request that a comprehensive report on the waiting times for Blue Badge applications and how this can be improved be provided to the appropriate Committee.
- d) Request that the Executive write on behalf of the Council to government asking for necessary changes to be made to legislation governing Blue Badges so that the three-year rule is abolished and, in particular, that cancer patients and other residents suffering from short-term compromised mobility may be supported with a Blue Badge.”

6) Mrs Morton proposed, and Mr Mulvihill seconded the following amendment:

“Council resolves to:

- a) Express its appreciation for the busy, hardworking team who deal with Blue Badge applications.
- b) Request that the application of the Blue Badge rules and the determination of Blue Badge applications ~~should be as generous as possible to residents making Blue Badge applications, so far as the law permits.~~ **continues to be carried out in full accordance with the specifications set down in law.**
- c) Request that a comprehensive report on the waiting times for Blue Badge applications and how this can be improved be provided to the appropriate Committee.
- d) Request that the **Leader and her** Executive **consider writing** on behalf of the Council to **the Department for Transport asking that the Equality Impact Assessment of the legislation governing Blue Badges be refreshed, and that if any amendments are made to include short-term use of a Blue Badge, a new ring-fenced grant be provided by the Department for Transport to support its implementation.** ~~government asking for necessary changes to be made to legislation governing Blue Badges so that the three-year rule is abolished and, in particular, that cancer patients and other residents suffering from short-term compromised mobility may be supported with a Blue Badge.~~

7) Following the debate, the Vice-Chairman put the amendment in paragraph 6 to the vote and the voting was as follows.

For (44)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Miss I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr P Osborne, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Ms A Randall, Mr H Rayner, Mr D Sian, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

Against (16)

Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr M Ellis, Mr P Evans, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr S Jeffery, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M J Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE

Abstain (5)

Mr A Brady, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr C Burwash, Ms C Nolan, Mr G Sturley

Motion carried.

8) The amended motion in paragraph 6 became the substantive motion:

“Council resolves to:

- a) Express its appreciation for the busy, hardworking team who deal with Blue Badge applications.
- b) Request that the application of the Blue Badge rules and the determination of Blue Badge applications continues to be carried out in full accordance with the specifications set down in law.
- c) Request that a comprehensive report on the waiting times for Blue Badge applications and how this can be improved be provided to the appropriate Committee.
- d) Request that the Leader and her Executive consider writing on behalf of the Council to the Department for Transport asking that the Equality Impact Assessment of the legislation governing Blue Badges be refreshed, and that if any amendments are made to include short-term use of a Blue Badge, a new ring-fenced grant be provided by the Department for Transport to support its implementation.”

9) The Vice-Chairman put the substantive motion (as amended) in paragraph 8 to the vote and the voting was as follows.

For (65)

Mr J Baker, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr B Collins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Mr M Ellis, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L

Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr S Jeffery, Ms L Kemkaran, Miss I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Mr J Moreland, Miss D Morton, Mr M Mulvihill, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr P Osborne, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr T Prater, Ms A Randall, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr D Sian, Mr C Sefton, Mr M J Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Mr G Sturley, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr R Waters, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Motion carried.

10) RESOLVED that:

Council resolves to:

- a) Express its appreciation for the busy, hardworking team who deal with Blue Badge applications.
- b) Request that the application of the Blue Badge rules and the determination of Blue Badge applications continues to be carried out in full accordance with the specifications set down in law.
- c) Request that a comprehensive report on the waiting times for Blue Badge applications and how this can be improved be provided to the appropriate Committee.
- d) Request that the Leader and her Executive consider writing on behalf of the Council to the Department for Transport asking that the Equality Impact Assessment of the legislation governing Blue Badges be refreshed, and that if any amendments are made to include short-term use of a Blue Badge, a new ring-fenced grant be provided by the Department for Transport to support its implementation.