

DARTFORD

BOROUGH COUNCIL



Summons and Agenda

Monday 25 July 2022

S. Martin

Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services
Friday 15 July 2022

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DARTFORD

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1DR

To: All Members of the Dartford Borough Council

A meeting of the Council will be held on:

Date: Monday 25 July 2022

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Civic Centre, Dartford

The Agenda is set out below:

A G E N D A

1. **Prayers: Reverend Kenneth Clark**

2. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interest from Members including the terms(s) of the Grant of Dispensation (if any) by the Audit Board or the Chief Officer & Director of Corporate Services.

4. **Minutes**

(Pages 1 - 12)

To approve as an accurate record the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the General Assembly of the Council held on 11 May 2022.

5. **Mayor's Announcements**

6. **Leader's Announcements**

To receive announcements from the Leader of the Council

7. **Questions from Political Group Leaders**

To consider any questions (from the Political Group Leaders) to the Leader/Cabinet submitted in accordance with Standing Order 14.

8. Motions

To consider the following motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 10:

(1) Motion submitted by the Shadow Leader of the Council, Councillor K J Grehan

This council notes that:

- The term night-time economy is used to describe a wide range of activities from a trip to the theatre or a family meal to a night out at a club.
- Night-time economies are an important part of our towns and cities and are estimated to bring in over £60 billion to the UK economy every year.
- The vast majority of people enjoy a night out safely and sensibly. However, the night-time economy can be associated with issues, predominantly around alcohol fuelled violence and crime and anti-social behaviour which often result in negative perceptions. Latest statistics from 2016 showing that in over half of all violent incidents, the victim believed the perpetrator to be under the influence of alcohol.
- Alcohol was identified as a major driver of crime in the Government's Modern Crime Prevention Strategy (MCPS), published in 2016. As well as including a number of proposals for additional tools for councils to better manage problem areas at the local level, the strategy focused on partnership working.
- Dartford town centre had experienced some issues with alcohol related anti-social behaviour, and suffered from negative perceptions in the past with the town having a narrow, alcohol-led offer. Now, with many new restaurants in the town there is an opportunity for the town to become a place of choice for visitors from elsewhere.

This council further notes that:

- Drink spiking is when someone puts drugs or alcohol into a person's drink without their knowledge or consent. It can include putting alcohol into a non-alcoholic drink, adding extra alcohol to an alcoholic drink or slipping prescription or illegal drugs (such as tranquillisers, amphetamines or GHB—also called liquid ecstasy) into an alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink. It can be difficult to tell whether a drink has been spiked, as substances used for spiking usually have

no taste, odour or colour.

- Needle spiking (sometimes referred to as injection spiking) is where someone surreptitiously injects, with a hypodermic needle, (or other form of administration e.g. combi-pen) a victim with a substance.
- There was a sudden increase in the number of spiking incidents across the country in October 2021 and reports of a new form that involved individuals being spiked with a needle.
- Police data show that 93% of needle spiking incidents where a venue was recorded occurred in the evening and night-time economy, most frequently in pubs and clubs.
- Nightlife Crew is being offered to local authorities and BIDs, through a 'train the trainer' course delivered by Drinkaware. Delegates who successfully complete the course are then accredited by Drinkaware to deliver the training in their areas, incorporating it into their existing night-time safety initiatives.
- The Covid pandemic has resulted in around 850,000 18-year-olds coming of age without having experience of the night-time economy.

This council resolves to:

- Aid that all staff working at licenced premises to be given compulsory safeguarding training, and this be a requirement that licensing authorities consider when approving licencing.
- Call on the Home Office to increase education and awareness about spiking and welcome its considering whether a specific new offence of spiking is required.
- Set up a Night Time Economy Task Force included an aim to achieve Purple Flag, an accreditation recognising a well-managed night-time economy. This prompted a greater focus on the town at night.
- Set up a scheme awarding bars etc for safety.

(2) Motion submitted by the Shadow Leader of the Council, Councillor K J Grehan

This Council Meeting notes:

- The detrimental impact that violence against women and

girls (VAWG) by men has on individual women, their dependents, their communities and society as a whole.

- ONS figures show that almost one in three women aged 16-59 will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, that two women a week in England and Wales are killed by a current or former partner, that over half a million women are raped or sexually assaulted each year. YouGov poll shows that a third of girls have experienced sexual harassment in schools; 80% of women of all ages have been sexually harassed in public.
- According to the British Crime Survey and other government data, victims disproportionately come from those groups which already experience inequality and additional challenges in our society. Women from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, deaf and disabled women, and LGBT+ women are even more likely to experience harassment, discrimination and abuse. Women from diverse backgrounds experience abuse differently and male power is used against them differently.
- Women living in poverty are particularly vulnerable to experiencing violence and face disproportionate challenges in accessing the necessary support to make them safe. Lack of access to secure housing, precarious employment, difficulty accessing social security and poverty work to keep women in abusive situations.

This Council Meeting further notes that:

- That male violence against women and girls is part of a broader culture of misogyny in society.
- Perpetrators of serious violence usually have a history of inflicting abuse and harassment against other women and girls. Tackling violence against women and girls means dismantling this culture.
- The seeds of violent behaviour are often sown at a young age and if the right interventions are not made in time then the problem continues to perpetuate.
- The current conviction rate for rape is 1.3% and the average time for those that make it to Court take an average of 1000 days from the report being made and the verdict. A justice system that allows one of the most heinous crimes to be effectively decriminalised is not fit for

purpose. Sustained cuts to all elements of the justice system, as well as institutional misogyny, mean that crimes against women and girls that are reported are not effectively investigated by the police. The decision to fail to resource this work is a political choice.

- Women from all communities have specific needs. Agencies that serve diverse communities have a responsibility to educate their service providers about the people they are designated to protect and not rely on standard White-British customs as the norm. Sistah Space is a community-based non-profit initiative created to bridge the gap in domestic abuse services for African heritage women and girls have identified that many relevant agencies have a severe knowledge gap when it comes to the black community and its domestic violence victims and it is important that the professionals designated to deliver assistance and aid all areas of our community who may be in crisis are required to be fully trained in cultural competency, so misunderstandings do not lead to life threatening situations.
- White Ribbon UK is the leading charity with a mission to end male violence against women and part of the global White Ribbon movement which arose from a campaign started by men in Canada in 2004.
- White Ribbon Day is marked annually on 25th November, the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women, by encouraging men and boys to pledge never to take part in, condone or stay silent about violence against women and to make this by wearing a white ribbon on the day.
- White Ribbon UK operate a system of male Ambassadors, female Champions and Youth Advocates, as well as having specific materials to support primary and secondary schools, all with the aim of encouraging men to take the pledge and help to eradicate male violence against women.

This Council Meeting believes male violence against women can never be condoned and Dartford Borough Council should do everything in its power to ensure all women are safe. As part of this, the council should facilitate and encourage participation by councillors, staff and schools in the White Ribbon Campaign.

This Council Meeting therefore resolves to:

- encourage all male Councillors to take the White Ribbon pledge, never to take part in, condone or stay silent about violence against women.

- undertake the steps necessary to achieve White Ribbon accreditation, joining the large number of public sector bodies which have already done so; and
- as part of this, appoint a male Councillor as an Ambassador; mark White Ribbon Day on 25th November each year and encourage participation among council staff and local primary and secondary schools.
- For mandatory Cultural Competency training that accounts for the cultural nuances and barriers, colloquialisms, languages and customs that make up the diverse black community for all Dartford Borough Council staff and councillors.
- Call for increased investment in the whole justice system when it comes to VAWG
- To promote the Our Streets Now campaign to make street harassment a crime, and encourage all elected members, and residents to sign their petition.
- Call on the government to ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combatting VAWG, to ratify the International Labour Organisation's No.190, recognising the right of everyone to work free from gender-based violence and harassment and to make street harassment a criminal offence.

9. **Urgent Items**

The Mayor will announce his decision as to whether there are any urgent items.

To consider any reports to the General Assembly of Council by other Committees, Boards, Panels and Officers.

10. **References from other Committees (if any)**

11. **Work Plan for the General Assembly of the Council 2022/23** (Pages 13 - 16)

To consider the Work Plan for the General Assembly of the Council for 2022/23.

12. **Interim Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2022** (Pages 17 - 26)

To consider the outcome of the Interim Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2022 and to approve the proposed electoral arrangements.

13. **Community Governance Review - Swanscombe Town Ward** (Pages 27 - 40)

To consider the conduction of a Community Governance Review in Swanscombe Town ward and possible amendments to the boundaries of the Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet borough wards.

14. **Filling Parish/Town Councillor Vacancies after Ordinary Elections and where a Parish/Town Council is Inquorate**

This report is 'to follow'.

15. **Declaration of Casual Vacancy - Councillor Failure to attend Meetings** (Pages 41 - 42)

To consider the appropriate action to take when a Member fails to attend a meeting for six consecutive months and to recommend accordingly.

16. **Playground Refurbishment Programme 2022/23** (Pages 43 - 46)

To consider the Playground Refurbishment Programme 2022/23.

17. **Capital Programme including Prudential Indicators Outturn 2021/22** (Pages 47 - 62)

To consider the outturn for the Capital Programme 2021/22 and Prudential Indicators.

18. **Capital Monitoring 2022/23**

This item is 'to follow'.

19. **Appointment of Non-Voting Independent Member to the Audit Board** (Pages 63 - 66)

To appoint a non-voting Independent Member to the Audit Board.

20. **Pay Policy Statement 2022-23 - Amendment - Shared Cost AVC** (Pages 67 - 80)

To consider amendments to the Pay Policy Statement 2022-23.

21. **Reserved Minutes** (Pages 81 - 136)

To consider any of the minutes of the following Cabinet meetings reserved in accordance with Standing Order 16:

- (a) for full debate by Political Groups on the Council;
- (b) by Ward Members.

Cabinet

9 December 2021
27 January 2022
24 February 2022
24 March 2022
21 April 2022
26 May 2022
23 June 2022

Sarah Martin
Chief Officer &
Director of Corporate Services