

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**13 NOVEMBER 2018**

**(7:30 pm - 9:05 pm)**

The Mayor (Councillor Thay Thayalan)  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Olivia Boulton)

Councillors

Zain Abbas	Lesley Heap
Sushila Abraham	Alison Holt
* Stephanie Archer	* Jason Hughes
* Roy Arora	Caroline Kerr
* Kim Bailey	Andreas Kirsch
Tricia Bamford	Katrina Lidbetter
* Rowena Bass	Rebekah Moll
Mark Beynon	* Maria Netley
Fiona Boulton	Munir Ravalia
Tim Cobbett	Dave Ryder-Mills
* David Cunningham	Anita Schaper
Emily Davey	Malcolm Self
* Kevin Davis	* Nicola Sheppard
Lorraine Dunstone	Chris Stuart
Mark Durrant	Sharron Falchikov-Sumner
* Simon Edwards	John Sweeney
Sam Foulder-Hughes	* Margaret Thompson
* Ed Fram	Jon Tolley
Hilary Gander	Olly Wehring
* Ian George	Diane White
Dennis Goodship	Annette Wookey
Liz Green	Yogan Yoganathan
Jaesung Ha	Sharon Young

\* Absent

**50. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephanie Archer (on maternity leave), Roy Arora, Rowena Bass, Kim Bailey, David Cunningham, Kevin Davis, Ed Fram, Ian George, Simon Edwards, Jason Hughes, Maria Netley, Nicola Sheppard, and Margaret Thompson.

**51. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**52. State of the Borough Debate**

**Appendix A**

The main part of the evening was devoted to the annual State of the Borough Debate, the theme of which was '**Brexit – What will be the impact on our borough?**'

The Mayor, Councillor Thay Thayalan, in opening the meeting, explained that one of the main purposes for the annual State of the Borough Debate is to allow more participation by members of the public than would be permitted at ordinary Council meetings and this is provided for under Standing Orders. The Mayor indicated that he would be exercising his discretion under Standing Order 10(12) to allow more than 10 speeches across both the public and councillors on the debate and he would use his discretion as Chair to time-limit the overall debate in order to close the meeting by about 10:15pm.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Liz Green, welcomed everyone to the event and explained that the State of the Borough Debates provide an opportunity for external speakers who have experience in a particular area to participate in the Council meeting; Councillor Green was therefore delighted to welcome Professor Jill Schofield, Dean and Pro Vice Chancellor of Kingston University, who would be chairing a panel of speakers from a range of perspectives for a Question and Answer session which would form the first part of the evening.

Councillor Green went on to explain that when the State of the Borough Debates had been re-introduced, it was envisaged that a single theme would be picked on a strategic issue which is relevant to the people who live in the borough and has aspects of long-term significance for the Council and from which motions could arise which may enact new Council policy. The topic of Brexit was one of potentially major strategic significance for local services, including Council services, and a briefing paper had been provided (attached at Appendix A in the Council agenda papers) which set out some of the ways in which the borough may be affected. Attached at Annex 1 to that paper was a Motion for debate during the second half of the evening – members of the public would be welcome to contribute to this debate, but the formal vote on the Motion would be taken only by elected Members of the Council.

Professor Schofield invited the Panel to introduce themselves and to speak for a few minutes on their particular area of interest. The Panel comprised:

- Mathewe Bennett, Wilmott Dixon (construction industry)
- Abi Fisher, Youth Council (young people)
- David Randall, Canbury Works (small to medium-sized local businesses)
- Sarah Olney, former MP for Richmond Park (2017)
- Oliver Turnbull, IT and marketing company (international business)
- Patricia Turner, CEO Kingston Voluntary Action (voluntary sector and funding)

Questions to the Panel were raised by the following: Marilyn Mason, Susannah Horwood (submitted in her absence), David Crump, William Harrison, Mike Butcher, Andrew Mackinlay, Claudia Peto, Caroline Cheales, and Councillor David Ryder-Mills.

Responses to questions concerning potential impact on supply of medicines and on the use by the Police of the European arrest warrant were provided in statements which had been sent in advance by Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group and Kingston Police respectively.

Following the Panel's discussion of the questions, Professor Schofield summed up some of the themes which had emerged and made some concluding comments, including:

- the importance of developing skills in our young people and workforce – some sectors have become over-reliant on cheap labour from abroad and will now need to be more innovative to succeed economically – necessity may become the mother of invention (in the same way as Australia and New Zealand developed new approaches when the UK joined the EU).
- it is likely that the value of the pound will have an impact on investment in the UK and on business decisions, for example relating to the property market and construction industry - and some financial services are already planning relocation to EU locations; otherwise, there is a strong sense of uncertainty about the potential impacts of Brexit (on, for example, supply of goods, ease of travel and the Northern Ireland border) because the details of the agreement are not yet known.

At the request of the Mayor, the Council agreed to adjourn from 8:55pm – 9:15pm for a refreshment break.

On reconvening, the Mayor invited members of the public to speak - and the following contributed to the debate: Andrew Mackinlay (former MP and councillor and currently an advisor to HM Governor of Gibraltar, particularly in relation to Brexit), Javed Rafiq (Kingston Race and Equalities Council), Marilyn Mason (Kingston Environment Forum), David Crump, Mike Siegel and Martin Farrell.

The Mayor then opened the Councillors' debate:

- (1) The following Motion was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Liz Green, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Malcolm Self:

### **Liberal Democrat Administration Motion: A People's Vote**

This Council notes:

- Two years have passed since the vote to leave the European Union, yet there seems to be no likelihood of a deal in the immediate future
- 61% of Kingston residents voted to remain in the European Union in the referendum
- Polling has shown that over half of 'Leave' voters believe that the result of negotiations will be a 'bad deal for Britain'
- The uncertainty for the millions of UK citizens in the EU and EU citizens in the UK, including the thousands of EU-born Kingston residents who make up over 10% of the population in wards including Coombe Hill, Grove, Norbiton & St Mark's
- Kingston Hospital has warned that Brexit could 'break the NHS', with vital equipment becoming less accessible and computer services facing glitches
- The warnings from companies such as Airbus, BMW and Jaguar Land Rover about possible job losses due to Brexit
- A vote on the final deal of any negotiation to leave the European Union has previously been supported by prominent Brexiteers such as Jacob Rees-Mogg, David Davis and John Redwood.

This Council believes:

- The current government has deliberately prioritised the unity of the Conservative Party over the best interests of the country
- Leaving the European Union without even a bare bones deal would be catastrophic for the UK economy, particularly harming the poorest in society
- A disorderly exit from the European Union could be a backwards step in terms of peace in Northern Ireland, and will lead to worsening relations between the UK and a number of its key allies.

This Council resolves:

- To support the right of the people of the United Kingdom to vote on whether to accept the deal negotiated by the government, or whether to revoke Article 50 and remain within the European Union
- To write to request that Zac Goldsmith MP join Sir Edward Davey MP in supporting a people's vote
- To write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government under the Sustainable Communities Act (2007) to ask that all departmental information and analysis pertaining to the impacts of Brexit on Kingston be handed over to the Council administration
- To ask the Finance & Contracts Committee to set up and agree arrangements for a working group with a purview to:
  - (i) examine the impacts of Brexit on Kingston
  - (ii) propose measures the Council could take to mitigate effects on residents and businesses
  - (iii) explore powers which could be devolved directly from the European Union to Local Authorities.

(2) The following members spoke on the Motion: Councillors Zain Abbas, Mark Durrant, Sharon Young, Katrina Lidbetter, Tim Cobbett, and Jon Tolley.

(3) After the Councillors' contributions, the above Motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

The Mayor, in closing the meeting, thanked Professor Schofield, the panellists and all others who had participated and attended.

Signed.....Date.....

The Mayor