

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRACY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH
2023

Committee Members:	Councillor Cooper (Chairman), and Councillors Cooper, Joy, Bartlett, Mrs Blackmore, English, Perry, and Rose
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56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Cook
- Councillor Webb

57. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

58. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

59. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

It was noted that Councillor Derek Butler was present as a Visiting Member but did not register to speak.

60. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

61. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor Cooper stated that he had been lobbied on item number 15. Review of the Constitution.

Councillor English stated that he had been lobbied on item numbers 15 and 13. Review of the Constitution and Outside Body Appointment.

Councillor Blackmore stated that she had been lobbied on item 15. Review of the Constitution.

62. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION.

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

63. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 21 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

64. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

65. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

66. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN (IF ANY)

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

67. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

68. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENT - ROCHESTER BRIDGE TRUST

The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager updated the Committee on the Outside Body Appointment – Rochester Bridge Trust; stating that the Trust had contacted the Council to request renewal of the appointment. The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager also stated that councillors had been consulted and none had asked to be considered.

RESOLVED: That Derek Butler’s appointment to the Rochester Bridge Trust as the Council’s representative Trustee be renewed.

69. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES REVIEW 2023 - IRP COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTMENT

The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager introduced the report and explained that following the implementation of the new Governance arrangements and associated remuneration scheme Members allowances needed to be renewed. A panel needed to be appointed and the constitution required the Community Representative to be appointed by Council on the recommendation of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to appoint Derek Butler as the Community representative on the Independent Remuneration Panel for the Members’ Allowances Review 2023.

70. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance introduced the report and started off by thanking the working group for their tireless efforts going through the Constitution in detail. Democratic Services had created a list of things that were not working as well as they could be. The working group considered these each in turn and made appropriate changes.

The Chairman personally thanked all participants in the working group for their work and contributions towards the Review of the constitution. The Committee also noted that they felt the working group did an excellent job and that it represented an acceptable position to be in.

RESOLVED:

1. That the work programme for 2023/24 a review of the governance arrangements considering the reduction of Members in 2024
2. That the changes recommended to Council and proposed to the Constitution at Appendix B, be approved.
3. That the Monitoring Officer and Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance be delegated to make changes to the constitution to ensure the amendments are consistent and correct any errors, in consultation with the Chairman of Democracy and General Purposes Committee, prior to submission to Council.

71. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (PARISHES) - TIMETABLE AMENDMENT

The Democratic Services and Electoral Manager introduced the report and stated that with this being a significant review, there was not the required time and resources to go through it at the level required under the current timetable.

The Committee noted that time and attention was needed to ensure that the Community Governance Review was done to an acceptable level.

RESOLVED: That the amendment to the timetable set out at 2.1 in the report be agreed.

72. MEMBERS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES, ANNUAL REVIEW

The Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance introduced the report on the annual Review of Members access to information. The Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance noted that there had been a shift in the way reports were presented and that Part II items were now produced as appendices. This was done to ensure that more work was discussed in the public domain.

RESOLVED: That the annual review of Members' Access to Information be noted.

DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 6.52 p.m.