

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE ON 27 FEBRUARY 2013

Present: Councillor Nelson-Gracie (The Mayor) and
Councillors Ash, Barned, Beerling, Black,
Mrs Blackmore, Brindle, Burton, Butler, Collins, Cox,
Cuming, Daley, English, Garland, Mrs Gibson,
Mrs Gooch, Greer, Ms Griffin, Mrs Grigg, Harwood,
Mrs Hinder, Hogg, Hotson, Mrs Joy, Lusty, McKay,
McLoughlin, Moriarty, B Mortimer, D Mortimer, Moss,
Munford, Newton, Paine, Parvin, Mrs Parvin,
Paterson, Pickett, Mrs Ring, Ross, Sams, Mrs Stockell,
Thick, Vizzard, Watson, de Wiggondene, J.A. Wilson,
Mrs Wilson and Yates

97. **MINUTE'S SILENCE**

The Council stood in silence for one minute in memory of Mrs Brioni Armytage, a former Member of the Council, and Lady Wells, the wife of Sir John Wells (a former Member of Parliament for Maidstone and a Freeman of the Borough), both of whom had died recently.

98. **PRAYERS**

Prayers were said by the Reverend Canon Chris Morgan-Jones.

99. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Chittenden, Mrs Robertson, Springett and Warner.

100. **DISPENSATIONS**

There were no applications for dispensations.

101. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

The Chief Executive, on behalf of herself and all other members of staff present, disclosed an interest in the report of the Member and Employment and Development Panel relating to the Pay Policy Statement.

102. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

103. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

104. MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2013

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Borough Council held on 4 February 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed.

105. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that:-

- He wished to remind Members of forthcoming events, including the Mayor's Murder Mystery Evening on 1 March 2013 and the Charity Spring Ball on 6 April 2013. He would like to thank Members for their continued support.
- A briefing session for Members on the impact of the Government's welfare reforms had been arranged to take place on 5 March 2013. He would like to take the opportunity to urge all Members to attend this important briefing.

106. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

107. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question to the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

Mrs Joan Langrick asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services:-

My question is regarding the possibility of cancelling the broadband link to the CCTV camera in Senacre Square. Personally, I must admit I find the idea of removing a broadband connection from an area which is well known to the Police not only troubling, but puzzling. For it would appear that while this is being considered, several Councillors are claiming for their own broadband connections, when 80% of households already have internet access. This is at a combined annual cost of almost £5,000 a year which is far in excess of the sum required for the protection we need in this area. It just doesn't make sense.

I have lived in Senacre for fifteen years, and quite a large percentage of residents are elderly. Because many of us experience difficulty in getting around, particularly during the winter months, shopping locally is, for the majority of us, a necessity. However, vandals have targeted our grocers over many years and it wasn't until a broadband link to a CCTV camera in the Square was installed 10 years ago that the situation was finally

brought under control. This, of course, undoubtedly proves the necessity of having a camera there at all times. For those who would argue that evidence is needed before a camera is provided I would point out that whenever a camera is absent vandalism occurs, as shown by the following illustration.

Last year because our CCTV camera was not working the same problems flared up yet again, so much so that a mobile camera was supplied by the Community Safety Unit. As this had an immediate effect it undoubtedly proves yet again the necessity of having a camera in that area.

Because Senacre is not a Parish we are not given the opportunity to purchase our own camera and so have to rely on Maidstone Council to keep us safe in what is so obviously an unsafe area. This is particularly frustrating as the majority of us want to live an independent life in our homes for as long as possible, and this must surely include our being able to shop in safety in our local area.

So, finally, could I please ask the Council to review its policy regarding Councillors claiming for broadband services? This will then enable money to be released in order to provide a broadband connection in Senacre Square and reassure residents our safety is being taken seriously by our elected authorities.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services responded to the question.

Councillor Mrs Wilson, the Leader of the Opposition, and Councillor Mrs Gooch, the Leader of the Independent Group, then responded to the question.

To listen to the responses to this question, please follow this link:-

<http://webcasts.umcdn.com/mbc027/interface>

108. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Question to the Leader of the Council

Councillor McKay asked the following question of the Leader of the Council:-

Would the Leader support Maidstone Borough Council adopting the principle of the living wage for all its employees? The living wage (currently £7.45) is a level of pay, above the minimum wage, currently set by the Living Wage Foundation and updated annually.

The Leader of the Council responded to the question.

To listen to the response to this question, please follow this link:-

<http://webcasts.umcdn.com/mbc027/interface>

109. CURRENT ISSUES - REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL,
RESPONSE OF THE GROUP LEADERS AND QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL
MEMBERS

There was no report from the Leader of the Council on this occasion.

110. REPORT OF THE CABINET HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2013 - REFRESH OF
THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-14

It was moved by Councillor Garland, seconded by Councillor Hotson, that the recommendations of the Cabinet relating to the refreshed Strategic Plan 2013-14 be approved.

RESOLVED:

1. That the refreshed Strategic Plan 2013-14, attached as Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be approved.
2. That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make minor amendments to the document as required.

111. REPORT OF THE CABINET HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2013 - BUDGET
STRATEGY 2013/14 ONWARDS

Before calling upon Councillor Garland to move the recommendations of the Cabinet relating to the Budget Strategy 2013/14 onwards, the Mayor reminded Members that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.4, each Group Leader could speak for up to ten minutes when moving his/her Group's budget proposals.

It was moved by Councillor Garland, seconded by Councillor Hotson, that the recommendations of the Cabinet relating to the Budget Strategy 2013/14 onwards be approved subject to the amendment of paragraphs 15 (c), (d) and (f) to refer to paragraph 15 rather than 13 and paragraph 17 to refer to paragraphs 15 (d) and 16 rather than 13 (d) and 14.

Amendment moved by Councillor Mrs Wilson, seconded by Councillor Harwood:-

That paragraph 4 of the recommendations (as amended) be amended as follows:-

That subject to the disaggregation of the Parks budget so that Mote Park as a strategic park has a cost centre of its own separate from the general parks cost centre, the revenue estimates for 2013/14 incorporating the growth and savings items, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be agreed.

That an additional paragraph be added to the recommendations (as amended) to be numbered 18 as follows:-

That the Capital Programme beyond 2013/14 be debated at full Council when the detailed information to enable prioritisation of the content of the Capital Programme is fully available.

AMENDMENT CARRIED

The substantive motion was then put to the vote.

SUBSTANTIVE MOTION CARRIED

RESOLVED:

1. That the revised revenue estimates for 2012/13, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet (circulated separately), be agreed.
2. That the minimum level of General Fund Balances be set at £2m for 2013/14.
3. That the proposed Council Tax of £226.62 at Band D for 2013/14 be agreed.
4. That subject to the disaggregation of the Parks budget so that Mote Park as a strategic park has a cost centre of its own separate from the general parks cost centre, the revenue estimates for 2013/14 incorporating the growth and savings items, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be agreed.
5. That the Statement of Reserves and Balances, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be agreed.
6. That the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be agreed.
7. That the funding of the Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be agreed.
8. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be agreed.
9. That the Medium Term Financial Projection, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Cabinet, be endorsed as the basis for future financial planning.
10. That it be noted that, at the meeting of the General Purposes Group on 19 December 2012, the Group calculated the Council's Council Tax Base for the year 2013/14, in accordance with Regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as 55,155.1 being the amount calculated in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base)

Regulations 1992.

11. That it be noted that, at the meeting of the General Purposes Group on 30 January 2013, the Group approved the values for the business rates yield in accordance with the principles of the Government's guidance for the form NNDR1. The yield approved was £54,915,542 and this information has been provided to the Government and major preceptors.
12. That it be noted that, as detailed in Appendix B, the Council Tax Base for each of the Parish Areas, calculated in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, are the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a special item relates (Parish precepts).
13. That the distribution of Local Council Tax Support funding to Parish Councils, as set out in Appendix C, be approved.
14. That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2013/14 (excluding Parish precepts) be calculated as £12,498,993.
15. That the following amounts now be calculated by the Council for the year 2013/14 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011:-
 - (a) £79,052,734 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) £65,365,967 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £13,686,767 being the amount by which the aggregate at 15(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 15(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) £248.15 being the amount at 15(c) above (Item R), all divided by the figure stated at 10 above (Item T in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act), 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).

- (e) £1,187,774 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix B).
- (f) £226.62 being the amount at 15(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 15(e) above by the Tax Base given in 10 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.

16. That it be noted that for the year 2013/14 Kent County Council, the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner and the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation Bands</u>	<u>KCC</u> <u>£</u>	<u>KPCC</u> <u>£</u>	<u>KMFRA</u> <u>£</u>
A	698.52	94.31	45.30
B	814.94	110.03	52.85
C	931.36	125.75	60.40
D	1,047.78	141.47	67.95
E	1,280.62	172.91	83.05
F	1,513.46	204.35	98.15
G	1,746.30	235.78	113.25
H	2,095.56	282.94	135.90

17. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 15 (d) and 16 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets out in Appendix D, the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwellings shown.
18. That the Capital Programme beyond 2013/14 be debated at full Council when the detailed information to enable prioritisation of the content of the Capital Programme is fully available.
112. REPORT OF THE CABINET HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2013 - TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14

It was moved by Councillor Garland, seconded by Councillor Hotson, that the recommendation of the Cabinet relating to the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14, as set out in the report of the Cabinet, be adopted.

113. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND LEISURE SERVICES - MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2013-2018

It was moved by Councillor J A Wilson, seconded by Councillor Mrs Stockell, that the recommendation of the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services relating to the new Maidstone Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-2018 be approved.

RESOLVED: That the new Maidstone Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-2018, attached as Appendix A to the record of recommendation of the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, be endorsed.

114. REPORT OF THE MEMBER AND EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2013 - PAY POLICY STATEMENT

It was moved by Councillor Lusty, seconded by Councillor Garland, that the recommendations of the Member and Employment and Development Panel relating to the Pay Policy Statement be approved.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Pay Policy Statement, attached as Appendix B to the report of the Member and Employment and Development Panel, be approved.
2. That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to update the Pay Policy Statement with the pay figures at the end of the financial year, prior to publication.

115. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES - MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

It was moved by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor Paine, that the recommendations contained in the report of the Head of Democratic Services relating to Members' Allowances be approved.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following clause relating to Broadband Allowance be included in the Members' Allowances Scheme as a new paragraph 11:-

Councillors are entitled to claim for the actual cost of their broadband service, up to a maximum of £23.49 per month. A copy of the Internet Service Provider's ("ISP") invoice must be supplied to the Payroll Department in May every year in order to continue to receive the allowance and should there be a change of provider, a copy of the new invoice must be sent to the Payroll Department informing them of the change of supplier and, if appropriate, the associated monthly and yearly cost thereafter.

2. That Schedule 1 of the Members' Allowances Scheme be amended as follows:-

Delete: Group Leaders Allowance;

Add: Leader of the Opposition (minimum of 10 Councillors) (25% of Leader's Allowance) £5,831;

Group Leader (minimum of 5 Councillors) (10% of Leader's Allowance) £2,331.

116. APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR SELECT 2013/14

It was moved by Councillor Daley, seconded by Councillor Paine, supported by Councillor Mrs Gooch and:-

RESOLVED: That Councillor Clive English be appointed as Mayor Select for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

117. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR SELECT 2013/14

It was moved by Councillor Garland, seconded by Councillor Mrs Joy, supported by Councillor Mrs Gooch and:-

RESOLVED: That Councillor Richard Thick be appointed as Deputy Mayor Select for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

118. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.35 p.m.