

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democracy Committee

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER
2016**

Present: Councillor Boughton (Chairman), and Councillors Fissenden, Mrs Joy, Lewins, Newton, Prendergast, Revell, Mrs Ring and Vizzard.

21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Hinder.

Councillor Revell arrived at the meeting at 10:10am.

22. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Prendergast was present as a substitute for Councillor Hinder.

23. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members in attendance.

24. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Legal advice to Committee Members was there was no requirement for them to disclose their membership of outside bodies for agenda item 8.

25. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

26. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED:

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

27. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 JULY 2016

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - OUTSIDE BODY REVIEW CONTINUATION

The Democratic Service Officer presented the report and highlighted some changes since publication, as follows:

- Paragraph 2.4.6 – Kent Downs AONB Advisory Committee to be removed from the list as the Council currently had an obligation to administer its meetings and Vinters Valley Park Trust to be removed from the list as the Council was named as a trustee as part of the Charities Commission Scheme.
- Update to Appendix B – the following organisations are supported by the Council through a legal agreement:
 - Bentliff Wing Trust – Trust Deed showing – the Mayor was ex-officio and two Council members as Nominative Trustees
 - Cutbush and Corral – Charities Commission Scheme showing – 2 Council and 2 Public members with full responsibility as Committee Members
 - Howard de Walden Centre – Charities Commission Scheme showing – 2 Council Trustees
 - Rochester Bridges Trust – Charities Commission Nominated Member
 - Vinters Valley Trust – Charities Commission – 1 Council Trustee

Members were informed the content of the report was based on information available at the time of writing and may not reflect the historical reasons for Council support for each outside body.

During discussion the following points were raised by the Committee:

- A request was made for the number of responses received for the survey of Councillors on outside bodies.
- The number of vacancies for outside body membership was a concern, although it was not clear if this was due to Councillors' other commitments.
- For outside bodies where the decision was made to withdraw Council support (ie not nominate a Member to the outside body), Councillors could still be a member of an outside body as an individual, they just would not be nominated by the Council.
- For outside bodies where the decision was made to withdraw Council support would be notified by letter with a date when support would be withdrawn to enable the outside body to make representation for the support to remain.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee recommends to Council that Maidstone Borough Council continues support for those outside bodies on which it has representation as a result of legislation, a previous agreement (eg named on a charity's trust) and Kent wide protocol or stated in the Constitution.
2. That formal involvement in the following outside bodies be ceased:
 - Kent County Council Youth Advisory Group
 - Kent County Council Youth and Community Charity
 - Kent Playing Fields Association
 - Maidstone Cycling Forum
 - Maidstone Street Pastors
 - Maidstone YMCA
 - Medway Valley Line Steering Group
 - PATROLAJC
 - Relate West and Mid Kent
3. The Council be recommended to link the remaining outside bodies with the relevant Service Committee.
4. That Council be recommended to change responsibility for agreeing appointments to outside bodies from the Democracy Committee to the relevant, linked, Service Committee.
5. That Council be recommended to amend the terms of reference of the relevant Service Committees to reflect their responsibility for the appointment of Members to the relevant outside bodies.
6. That Council be recommended to amend the terms of reference for the relevant Service Committees to contain a requirement for the outside body Members to report to the Service Committee on a regular basis, eg quarterly.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

29. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - CHANGE OF DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE MEETING DAYS AND TIME FOR 2016/7 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report.

The Chairman informed the Committee that an initial scoping meeting for four yearly elections had taken place involving himself, the Vice Chairman and Officers. Further meetings would be taking place and the Committee would be updated on progress at future meetings.

It was requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Report on the Council changing to four yearly elections dated 2010 be circulated to all Committee Members.

It was asked that it be noted that changes to the regular date and time of meetings should be made at the beginning of the Municipal year. Membership of the Democracy Committee with daytime meetings had always been an option for Councillors who were unable to attend evening meetings. It was also stated that there were some Councillors who would prefer the day and timing of this Committee be in an evening so those who work could chose to be a member.

RESOLVED:

That the Democracy Committee's Work Programme for 2016 – 2017 be noted.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 0 Abstentions – 0

That the Committee meeting dates for January and March 2017 be changed to Wednesday 11 January 2017 and Wednesday 8 March 2017 to start at 6:30pm.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 1 Abstentions – 0

30. DURATION OF MEETING

10:00am to 10:33am