

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Communities, Housing and Environment Committee

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER
2018**

Present: Councillors M Burton, Garten, Joy, D Mortimer
(Chairman), Powell, Purle, Mrs Robertson, Rose and
Webb

Also Present: Councillor Round

103. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

104. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

105. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

106. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Round was present as a Visiting Member, and indicated his intention to speak on Item 12. Presentations of Outside Bodies.

107. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

108. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillors Burton, Rose and Mortimer stated that they had been lobbied on Item 18. Heather House.

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

RESOLVED: That the Exempt Appendix to Item 18. Heather House be considered in private, as proposed, due to the likely disclosure of exempt information.

110. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

111. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

112. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

There were no questions from members of the public.

113. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

114. PRESENTATIONS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Round and Mr Keith Harrison, Chief Executive of Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK), addressed the Committee regarding the work of ACRK. Mr Harrison outlined that the organisation supported communities through various projects. These ranged from assisting residents to overcome barriers when accessing services, to enabling affordable housing in rural communities and promoting social enterprise. Furthermore, a Coffee Caravan had proved an effective means of tackling isolation by providing an informal opportunity for residents to meet up. It was stated that the work performed by the organisation was not limited to rural residents, and the work was equally applicable to urban areas.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr Harrison stated that:

- Funding was provided by 33 contributors, with the largest funder being the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Furthermore, funding was provided by eight District and Borough Councils in Kent, although recent funding from Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) had ceased in 2017.
- A new partnership project was scheduled to commence in January 2019, which aimed to promote community owned businesses.

The Committee noted that there was a Council Representative vacancy for ACRK, and stated that nominations for this position would be welcomed.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

115. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: That the Reports of Outside Bodies be noted.

116. REFERENCE FROM LICENSING COMMITTEE - STATEMENT OF LICENSING PRINCIPLES FOR GAMBLING ACT 2005 2019-2022

Mr John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services, informed the Committee that the Statement of Licensing Principles for Gambling Act 2005 2019-2022 was a statutory policy that required approval by Full Council. The policy had been amended following a consultation period, and had been debated by the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee recommend the amended Statement of Principles to Council (as attached at Appendix B) for adoption.

Voting: Unanimous

117. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE QUARTER 2 CHE

Mr Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement, stated that most Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were on target. The exception was the housing prevention indicator. This was the result of a new, narrower, definition of housing prevention which had not yet been reflected in the target set for the KPI.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mrs Jennifer Shepherd, Head of Environment and Public Realm, stated that:

- The KPI "Percentage of reports of littering attended to" did not have a target as there was currently no baseline data available.
- The percentage of fly tips resulting in enforcement action was currently very high, but the figure was not likely to be sustainable. This was because the number of fly tips resulting in enforcement action was subject to a degree of luck. Despite investment in cameras and data analysis, cameras needed to be in the right place at the right time.

RESOLVED: That the summary of performance for Quarter 2 of 2018/19 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

118. 2ND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Mr Green informed the Committee that the revenue position was broadly positive and that there was a projected underspend of £290,000 for the Committee. Funds allocated to Homelessness Prevention were expected to be spent in the current financial year, while Grounds Maintenance commercial activity had also been successful. The capital budget had slipped, and expenditure was now scheduled for the next financial year. The budget for the acquisition of property, to provide temporary accommodation, was expected to be spent by the end of the year. This would reduce future temporary accommodation costs for the Council.

Mr Littlemore addressed the Committee, and stated that food safety was within the remit of the Environmental Health Shared Service. However, a report outlining the action taken to address food safety issues, originally

considered by the Committee on 16 October 2018, could be recirculated to Members.

RESOLVED: That

1. The revenue position at the end of the second quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.
2. The capital position at the end of the second quarter be noted.

119. KENT JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (KJMWMS)

Mrs Shepherd outlined that the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS) was set by the Kent Resource Partnership. This was designed to ensure waste was managed effectively in Kent. The KJMWMS complemented other MBC strategies, and focussed on ensuring that waste was largely kept within Kent.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mrs Shepherd stated that treating waste locally was positive, as it ensured that residents could be engaged in the process. This in turn promoted further recycling. Furthermore, through engagement with housing developers to shape future developments, recycling could become a fundamental part of a community.

RESOLVED: That the refreshed Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 is adopted.

Voting: Unanimous

120. HEATHER HOUSE

Mr William Cornall, Director of Regeneration & Place, explained to the Committee that a comprehensive redevelopment of Heather House would cost an estimated £2.4m. Mr Cornall stated that the success of this project depended upon the level of engagement with prospective partners, as it was not feasible for this project to be a solely led by MBC. The future management and stewardship of the facility would also need to be considered, as voluntary sector stewardship had the potential to unlock additional funding streams. The risk to a comprehensive redevelopment was that the level of potential partnership engagement was currently unknown, and that following a procurement process the funding gap may still be too large to make a redevelopment financially viable.

Mrs Harris addressed the Committee to make a statement with regard to Heather House.

The Committee commented that:

- The procurement process should ensure that the option to repair the current facility remains open.

- The current users of Heather House should not be without facilities during a redevelopment of the hall, and there was a need to ensure for continuity of service.
- It was important to understand the potential client group for a redeveloped facility. A clear understanding of the available provision in the area would therefore be beneficial.
- Any work undertaken should ensure that the facility was sustainable. Short-term solutions were not appropriate, as this compromised the long-term quality of facilities for the community.
- Early engagement with potential users and residents would ensure that buy-in was secured, momentum was maintained and that the outcome of the work met the needs of residents.

RESOLVED: That

1. An assessment of pre-existing provision in the immediately accessible area be undertaken.
2. A procurement process be undertaken to identify a suitable partner, or partners, to contribute to the design, investment and management of the new facility.
3. A report be submitted to the Committee outlining high level findings from the procurement process and the exact subsidy required from Maidstone Borough Council to complete a comprehensive redevelopment.
4. Early engagement with potential users and residents be commenced, to establish potential future uses and uptake at the centre.

Voting: Unanimous

121. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.13 p.m.