

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2015

Present: Councillor J.A. Wilson (Chairman), and
Councillors Butler, Mrs Joy, D Mortimer, Sargeant and
Vizzard

62. THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER WHETHER ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA SHOULD BE WEB-CAST

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be webcast.

63. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors:

- Mrs Parvin;
- Round;
- Stockell; and,
- Munford.

64. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Butler was present as a substitute for Councillor Parvin.

65. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members present.

66. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Vizzard declared an other significant interest by virtue of the fact he was Chairman of AgeUK Maidstone, should the work of AgeUK be discussed in any detail during the meeting.

There were no other disclosures by members or officers.

67. 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.

68. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2014

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

69. A PROPOSED MODEL TO IDENTIFY LONELY AND ISOLATED OVER 65 YEAR OLD RESIDENTS OF MAIDSTONE (INCLUDES BEREAVEMENT SERVICES)

The Chairman introduced Sarah Shearsmith, Community Development Team Leader, who presented the report in the absence of Sarah Robson, Community Partnership Manager.

Ms Shearsmith ran through the main points in the report and explained the:

- Definition of Isolation;
- Definition of Loneliness;
- Maidstone age profile;
- Impact of an aging population;
- Outcomes Maidstone Borough Council are seeking; and,
- Next steps.

During discussion the committee raised the following points:

- A suggestion for the working party should include AgeUK, as an agency who was already providing many services to the elderly of the borough.
- Ward councillors were very aware of the support and activities available to the elderly in their ward and would be a good source of information to help identify where there were potential gaps in the services provided.
- The draft forms included in the report as Appendix C and D needed further work in terms of the wording to ensure respondents were fully aware of why they were being asked for the information.
- The main difficulty in finding lonely and isolated people was they were lonely and isolated because they were not necessarily engaging in the services on offer. The issue would be finding these people.
- It was suggested the Quality of Life survey (appendix D) could be mailed out with the election information due to go out for the elections in May 2015. This would deliver the survey to all residents of the borough.
- The Wards identified in the report were those with the highest population of over 65 year olds and not necessarily the highest number of lonely and isolated people.
- It was agreed that loneliness and isolation can affect any age group and was not just confined to the elderly. It was pointed out that the working group had acknowledged this when scoping the review. The working group had suggested the committee focus on a manageable area of the community to begin with and had identified

the over 65 year olds of the borough. The report suggested the evidence gathering exercise be piloted in High Street Ward.

- It was agreed the services that would eventually be provided as a result of this work would not be restricted to the over 65 year olds. It was envisaged interventions would include how to keep active in older age and would be open to all.

RESOLVED: that the committee noted the report and recommend that:

- a. The Community Development Team Leader investigate the possibility of the proposed Quality of Life survey (appendix D) being sent out to all borough residents with the mail shots going out on the run up to the General Election in May 2015.
- b. The Community Development Team Leader establish what services are already being provided by other agencies, such as, AgeUK, Voluntary Action Maidstone, Older Peoples' Forum, and ask these agencies for their help in identifying the 'unknown' lonely and isolated over 65 year old people of the borough,

70. ANNUAL REFRESH OF THE HEALTH INEQUALITIES ACTION PLAN

Sarah Shearsmith, Community Development Team Leader, presented the report and outlined the main achievements to date under each of the six priorities.

During discussion the committee raised the following points:

- Concern was raised as to whether the moving of the library to an out of town site had impacted on residents and encouraging children to read.
- It was confirmed older people were involved in helping younger people to read through the Beanstalk group. The group trained people to go into schools and assisted with children's reading.
- Maidstone Borough Council were not currently doing any work to promote minimum unit pricing for alcohol.
- The initiatives described in the report were all successful. Some health and wellbeing initiatives in the past had not been particularly successful but information was not readily available at the meeting.
- The smoking statistics shown of page 163 of the agenda did not include people who used 'e-cigarettes'.
- Referrals to the initiatives outlined in the report were received from local GPs, pharmacies other agencies and self-referrals.

- Maidstone Borough Council had teamed up with Tunbridge Wells and Swale Borough Councils to deliver the Kent Healthy Business Awards across mid Kent. So far 10 businesses in Maidstone; 2 in Swale and 4 in Tunbridge Wells had taken up the initiative. The initiative would run for one year and was led by Paul Kirrage.
- The Health MOT Roadshow was currently on Jubilee Square in Maidstone. It was agreed residents would find a list of dates and venues useful for where and when the roadshow would be held.
- It was agreed it would be useful to have information on the number and location of foodbanks in Maidstone borough.
- Although the report stated 231 registered for the Big Switch and 85% of them would save money, it was agreed it would be interesting to establish how many of those actually changed suppliers.
- Although the Walking for Health initiative looked to be successful, it was suggested it could be better publicised to agencies who refer clients to it.
- It was further reported a series of cycling forums were being established in the borough to promote the use of bicycles as a sustainable form of transport.
- It was reported that sustainable weight loss was more successful if the initiative included support for clients on a longer term basis – for example 12 to 18 months.
- Dementia Awareness training was arranged for local businesses on 21 January 2015 at Maidstone Museum. Details of times offered would be circulated.
- A request had been made to include awareness of the issues and difficulties sufferers of dementia have to deal with on a daily basis and how to identify and assist sufferers when they present themselves in shops and businesses etc.
- It was confirmed Kent County Council (KCC) would grant Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) £90,000 to deliver a healthy weight initiative.
- It was confirmed that when granting funding KCC gave MBC direction on the initiatives the money should be spent on. MBC aimed to add value to initiatives already in place.
- The committee congratulated the team on their results and thanked them for their hard work in achieving them.

RESOLVED: that the committee noted the annual refresh of the Health Inequalities Action Plan and recommended:

- a. The Community Development Team Leader investigate the impact the move of the library to its new location has had on residents;
- b. The Community Development Team Leader provide information to residents on where and when the Health MOT Roadshow will be during 2015;
- c. The Community Development Team Leader establish how many food banks are in operation in the Maidstone borough;
- d. The Community Development Team Leader investigate how many residents who registered with the Big Switch campaign actually switched providers.

71. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: that the committee noted the:

- a) Updated Future Work Programme and asked that the request to change the of date of the committees February meeting from 10th to 17th be avoided if at all possible.
- b) List for Forthcoming Decisions and recommended the Parks and Leisure Manager provide the committee with an update on the latest position with the Maidstone Play Strategy 2014.
- c) The SCRAIP update attached as appendix C.

72. DURATION OF MEETING

18:30hrs to 20:00hrs