

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Communities, Housing and Environment Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2015

Present: Councillor Mrs Ring (Chairman), and
Councillors Hemsley, D Mortimer, Newton, Perry,
Mrs Robertson, Webb, Webster and J.A. Wilson

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Parvin.

59. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Hemsley substituted for Councillor Mrs Parvin.

60. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

61. URGENT ITEM

The Chairman stated that in her opinion the Committee should take the appointment of a Housing Member Champion as an Urgent Item because of impending meetings requiring representation to support the work of the Committee. This would be taken as the last item on the agenda.

62. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by members or officers.

63. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

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

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

65. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2015.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

66. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions.

68. REPORT OF HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - KCC STREET LIGHTS CONSULTATION

Roger Adley, Communications Manager, introduced the Report of the Head of Policy and Communications – KCC Street Lights consultation. It was explained that Kent County Council (KCC) was switching to LED street lights and sought views on street lighting options across Kent.

The Committee considered comments received from Councillors and Heads of Service and the Council's response.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee supports Option 1, Part Night Lighting – 'what we have at the moment' - subject to:
 - Maintaining the current summer and winter hours of operation
 - Maintaining the current all night operation in:
 - busy main roads;
 - town centres;
 - places where the police say it may lead to more crimes;
 - places with sheltered housing and where vulnerable people live;
 - places with emergency services, hospitals and nursing homes;
 - pedestrian crossings, subways and alleyways that go to an all-night lit road;
 - where there are speed humps, roundabouts and traffic islands;
 - roads that have local authority or police CCTV cameras; and
 - footpaths that may have or might be unsafe next to roads.
 - All night lighting being extended to areas where there is high public demand for it, and in densely populated urban areas on the outskirts of Maidstone, and in rural areas where there are train stations or other transport or employment hubs.

For: 5

Against: 3

Abstentions: 1

2. That the Committee support the dimming of lights between Midnight and 5am to reduce light pollution and save energy. It does not support dimming lights at other times because of the needs of commuters and shift workers.

For: 5

Against: 1

Abstentions: 3

3. That the Committee requests that KCC undertakes ongoing monitoring of the statistical linkage between accidents and reduced/dimmed lighting – particularly in the pre-dawn period in winter months, and reviews lighting arrangements accordingly.

For: 9

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

69. REPORT OF HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS

Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources introduced the report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016/17 onwards which set out the draft plans of the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

The Communities, Housing and Environment Committee had met on an informal basis to consider options for saving and growth pressures. The proposals for savings considered were set out at Appendix A to the report for the Committee to formally approve for inclusion on the MTFS.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee agrees to submit the proposals set out in Appendix A to the Policy & Resources Committee for inclusion in the savings proposals for the medium term financial strategy 2016/17 onwards.

For: 9

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

2. That the Committee identifies the issues set out in paragraph 2.6 c) of the Report of the Head of Finance & Resources - Medium Term Financial Strategy as requiring additional consideration by officers.

For: 9

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

70. REPORT OF HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - SECOND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING

Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources introduced the Second Quarter Budget Monitoring 2015/16 report. The information presented was specifically for the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee and the service areas within its areas of responsibility.

It was highlighted in the course of the discussion that the predicted outturn figures showed a likely adverse variance of £190,000 however this would be tempered by a number of smaller, positive variances.

RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the revenue budget position as at September 2015 and the predicted outturn to 31 March 2016.

71. REPORT OF HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER FOR TOWN CENTRE

John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services introduced the Public Spaces Protection Order for Town Centre report. A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was part of the new tools and powers introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. The purpose of the act was to give local authorities and other bodies more effective powers to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The report set out the Council's proposal to consult on the introduction of a PSPO.

The PSPO would give the Council greater powers in relation to dealing with ASB in public spaces within the town centre.

During the course of the discussion the following points were made:

- If challenged the PSPO needed to demonstrate an ongoing issue and meet the two conditions as set out at paragraph 2.8 of the report. A PSPO could be introduced to address specific issues in other areas of the borough where there was an evidential need;
- The consultation would be borough wide and a response could be made online via the Council's website;
- The PSPO, as proposed, would come back to the Committee for formal adoption in 2016; and
- The appropriate method for addressing the issue of retailer's selling high strength alcohol was through licencing and the Council's 'Reduce the Strength' campaign.

The Committee agreed that the third recommendation, as set out in the report, should be deleted as it simply stated the Committee's responsibilities going forward.

RESOLVED:

1. That, in principle, the Committee agrees to proceed with public consultation on the implementation of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). See Appendix 1 for proposed PSPO location map and boundaries, which incorporates the town centre (High Street ward), Whatman Park (Bridge) and Riverside (Fant, South and Tovil) areas.

For: 5

Against: 4

Abstentions: 0

2. That the Borough Council commences an 8 week public consultation from 30 November 2015 be agreed.

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

72. REFERENCE FROM HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE - DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee considered the reference from the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee. The Destination Management Plan Task and Finish Group sought confirmation of the Committee's approved representatives to be co-opted onto any of the Task and Finish groups when required for specific tasks relating to Community, Housing and Environment Committee's remit or decisions. The Committee agreed that Councillor Newton and Councillor Perry should be the Committee's representatives. Councillor Perry's role as Member Champion for Parishes was noted in relation to this role.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Newton and Councillor Perry be the Committee's representatives for the Destination Management Plan Task and Finish Group.

73. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

The Committee considered the reference from Council which set out the recommendation from Council in relation to the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014-15.

The Committee had already considered the topics highlighted in the report as part of its Work Programming.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

74. REPORT OF HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - INFORMATION REPORT: THE COST OF THE MAIDSTONE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY.

John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services introduced the report on the Cost of the Maidstone Night Time Economy which was an updated version of the report received by the Committee at its previous meeting. It was highlighted that the CCTV figure provided was a weekly figure rather than a daily figure.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

75. URGENT ITEM - APPOINTMENT OF HOUSING MEMBER CHAMPION

The Committee considered the appointment of a Housing Member Champion because of impending meetings requiring a representative of the Committee. It was agreed that the role should be fulfilled by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee be appointed as the Member Champion for Housing.

76. DURATION OF MEETING

8.00pm to 8.56pm