

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES (PART I) OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY
27 JANUARY 2016

Present: **Councillor Mrs Wilson (Chairman), and
Councillors Ash, Mrs Blackmore, Chittenden,
Mrs Gooch, Mrs Joy, McKay, McLoughlin, Naghi, Perry,
Mrs Ring, Round, Sargeant and Mrs Stockell**

Also Present: **Councillor Burton**

135. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillors Brice, Cox, Garland, Munford and Ross.

136. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Perry was substituting for Councillor Brice, Councillor Ash was substituting for Councillor Garland, Councillor Mrs Gooch was substituting for Councillor Munford and Councillor Mrs Ring was substituting for Councillor Ross.

137. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman advised that she intended to take the revised Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Policy and Communications as an urgent update.

138. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Burton indicated that he was observing the meeting but reserved his right to speak on any item.

139. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

140. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

141. EXEMPT ITEMS

That the item on Part II of the agenda be taken in private as proposed.

142. MINUTES (PART I) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the Minutes (Part I) of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

143. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

145. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-20 REFRESH

Members considered the report of the Head of Policy and Communications relating to the Strategic Plan 2015-20 Refresh.

The Director of Planning and Development gave a presentation to the Committee on the major projects being progressed over the next 5 years which would deliver growth to the town.

It was noted that the five Transformational projects were:-

1. Reinvigorating Maidstone Town Centre
2. Kent Medical Campus – Enterprise Zone
3. Mote Park Enhancement
4. New high quality housing developments in and around the Town Centre
5. Major improvements to transport infrastructure

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Planning and Development advised that:-

- He was confident there was enough suitable business space within the town centre for small/medium businesses
- The works on the Tovil to Allington Toll Path are moving ahead. However, as Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council had withdrawn funding for their part, negotiations are continuing with KCC to see if they would take this over.
- The delay to the Brunswick Street car park project had been due to options put forward proving not to be viable. However, Officers are confident that other avenues being pursued would result in this project progressing.
- He was confident that Officers had the necessary competencies to take forward all the projects that the Council was pursuing and that he would be giving a full and proper handover before he leaves the

Authority at the end of February.

- The Economic Strategy would support the rural areas as well as the urban area, citing the implementation of superfast broadband as an example.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the projects under the priority action areas and whether there was anything missing relevant to the Committee were considered; and

Voting: For: 8 Against: 3 Abstentions: 3

- 2) That the action plan, milestones and outcomes attached as a revised Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Policy and Communications be agreed.

Voting: For: 11 Against: 2 Abstentions: 1

146. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/17 ONWARDS - UPDATE

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 Onwards – Final Review which sets out the impact of the Government’s provisional financial settlement on the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Committee wished to give their vote of thanks to the Head of Finance and Resources and all the other Heads of Service who had worked very hard to make sense of the provisional financial settlement and find the appropriate savings.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the impact of the provisional local government finance settlement on the Council’s medium term financial strategy be noted;

Voting; For: 14 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

- 2) That the additional savings and efficiencies, as set out in Appendix B to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed; and

Voting: For: 14 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

- 3) That the potential efficiency plan for the period to 2020/21, as set out in Appendix D to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources for inclusion in the medium term financial strategy, be agreed.

Voting: For: 13 Against: 1 Abstentions: 0

147. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS - CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 Onwards – Capital Programme which dealt with the amount and allocation of capital resources for the delivery of the objectives of the strategic plan and other key strategies.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the strategy’s principles, as set out in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.12 to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, with the following amendment to paragraph 2.12 b): delete the words “Cabinet Member for Corporate Services” and insert in place of those words “Policy and Resources Committee” be agreed;
- 2) That the capital funding projection, as set out in Appendix B to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed;
- 3) That the capital programme 2016/17 onwards, as set out in Appendix C to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed; and
- 4) That in agreeing recommendations 2 and 3 above, the Committee noted that it would set a prudential borrowing limit of £38,475,000 over the period of the programme which would be recommended to Council as part of the Treasury Management Strategy 2016/17 by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

Voting: For: 14 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

148. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reason specified, having applied the public interest test:-

Head of Schedule 12 A and Brief Description

Minutes (Part II) of the meeting held on 16 December 2015

Paragraph 3 – Information re financial/business affairs

Report of the Head of Finance and Resources – To consider a property acquisition

Paragraph 3 – Information re financial/business affairs

149. MINUTES (PART II) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the Minutes (Part II) of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

150. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - TO CONSIDER A PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Members considered the exempt report of the Head of Finance and Resources which sought approval for the freehold acquisition of a town centre site.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the draft Heads of Terms, as set out in Appendix 1 to the exempt report of the Head of Finance and Resources, for a freehold acquisition be agreed;
- 2) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Finance and Resources to conclude negotiations with the owner; and
- 3) That the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to complete the purchase on the terms as agreed by the Head of Finance and Resources.

Voting: For: 14 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

151. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.