

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER
2016**

Present: Councillor Pickett (Chairman), and
Councillors Ells, Fort, Mrs Hinder, Lewins, Naghi,
Revell and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Newton

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

72. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

73. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Newton was in attendance as an observer.

74. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

75. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

76. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed.

77. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

78. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

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

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

80. HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17

RESOLVED: That the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee Work Programme 2016-17 be noted.

81. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - STRATEGIC PLAN PERFORMANCE UPDATE QUARTER 2 FOR HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

The Policy and Information Manager introduced the report setting out the progress of key strategies, plans and performance indicators within the committee's remit during quarter 2. Two performance indicators had been achieved, and of the two that had missed target there was a trend towards improvement.

In response to questions it was explained that:

- A new visitor information point was to be placed in the museum in the old reception area and Members expressed an interest in knowing how many visitors attended specifically for this service. The Head of Commercial and Economic Development agreed to ask museum staff to keep a record of this.
- A Member queried why the closure of the museum on a Monday had substantially affected footfall, as historically low footfall on that day was the justification for the closure. The Head of Commercial and Economic Development advised that school visits that would have been undertaken on a Monday now took place between Tuesday and Friday. Where a school could not accommodate a change in day, Monday visits were made by the education programme staff directly to the school. Arts Council funding had been granted which allowed the education programme to continue to 31 March 2017.
- Surveying undertaken at the Leisure Centre had identified that visitor satisfaction was below target, with the café area contributing to this result. Serco as the contracted provider of the service would take action to address this issue. The Director of Regeneration and Place advised that he had met with the centre managers and had discussed whether the results of the survey were affected by the method of collecting data and the size of the sample taken, and ways to improve surveying going forward.
- A survey of Parish Councils had returned a result of 38% satisfaction with communication from MBC. This had been reported to the Community Partnerships and Resilience Manager who would incorporate this into his work on the Parish Charter and the role of the Parish Liaison Officer.

RESOLVED:

1. That the summary of performance for Quarter 2 of 2016/17 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and corporate strategies and plans be noted.
2. That the progress of the Strategic Plan Action Plans at appendix II to the report of the Head of Policy and Communications be noted.
3. That it be noted where complete data was not available.
4. That the performance of Key Performance Indicators from Quarter 1 of 2016/17 for which data was not available at Policy and Resources Committee on 26 July 2016 be noted.

For – 8

Against – 0

Abstain – 0

82. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT - SECOND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2016/17

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the report providing an overview of the revenue budget and outturn for the second quarter of 2016/17, and highlighting financial matters which may have a material impact on the medium term financial strategy or the balance sheet.

It was explained that:

- The Mote Park café had not generated its target revenue and had a projected shortfall of £125K. This was due to teething problems from which lessons had been learned.
- The crematorium service was projected to come in at £100K over target due, amongst other things, to increased memorial purchases.

With regard to the overall forecast across the council it was stated that:

- At the end of the first quarter an overspend of £250K was projected, due largely to an overspend on temporary accommodation. The overall overspend was now projected to reach nearly £500K by the end of the financial year.
- Underspends within service areas and windfalls would be utilised to offset the overspend where possible.
- The Council had a budget gap of £4M to find over a five year period. The Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee oversaw services with a net budget of approximately £4.8M. The Council's net budget was approximately £20M. Applied equally the committee would be looking to make savings of 20%.

During discussion the committee was informed that a public budget consultation had been undertaken, the results of which would inform

proposals for savings. It was anticipated that the results and proposals would be presented to committee in January 2017.

RESOLVED: That 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.

83. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - PUBLIC REALM DESIGN GUIDE AND PUBLIC ART POLICY

The Local Economy Project Officer presented the Public Realm Design Guide (including Street Furniture Guidance) and Public Art Policy. An urgent update report was also presented which included amendments to the Street Furniture Guidance, and an amended recommendation with regard to the Public Art Policy.

In response to questions it was explained that the movement of pedestrians through different areas would be encouraged thorough the use of themes and materials. Bollards would be used to guide vehicles around obstacles. The Bridges gyratory work that was in progress incorporated improved pedestrian crossings.

During discussion the committee proposed the following amendments:

Public Realm Design Guide

- P26, Responding to Maidstone’s heritage, paragraph two:
 - First sentence to read ‘They should include references to’;
 - First bullet point to read ‘Eminent people who have resided and/or worked in the borough and have had an impact on the local, national or world stage’.

Public Art Policy

- Front cover, amend title from ‘Public Art Guidance’ to ‘Public Art Policy’
- P4, Commission timeframes, opening sentences to read as follows:

“A permanent artwork will be designed to last indefinitely but not less than 10 years. Maintenance will have to be factored into the commissioning process to allow the artwork to withstand the timeframe. A semi-permanent commission will be designed to last up to 10 years.”
- P4, Themes, first bullet point to read ‘Eminent people who have resided and/or worked in the borough and have had an impact on the local, national or world stage’.

Street Furniture Guidance

As per the urgent update report and with the following changes:

- P4, Guidance, new paragraph 2:
 - The Local Economy Officer was asked to confirm whether there was a RAL reference for the gold colour used on town centre street furniture and to insert if identified, and to confirm whether the paint used on metal would be water-based.
 - Final sentence of paragraph to read: "Any deviation from this standard will be agreed with MBC's Street Scene Operations Manager, and the Conservation Officer."
 - All job titles to be updated and standardised across the guidance.

The Chairman requested that the finalised documents be circulated to the committee for reference.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Public Realm Design Guide, attached as appendix 1 of the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development, and as amended by committee be adopted.

For – 8 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

2. That the Public Art Policy, attached as appendix 2 and as amended by committee, be adopted.

For – 8 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

3. That the Street Furniture Guidelines, attached at appendix 3 and as amended by the urgent update report and by committee, be adopted.

For – 8 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

4. That it be agreed that the Public Art Policy be presented to Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to adopt as a Material Consideration for Planning purposes, and that authority be delegated to the Head of Commercial and Economic Development, in consultation with the Chairman of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee and the Chairman of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, to insert a section into the Policy setting out the basis for Material Consideration.

For – 8 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

84. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.39 p.m.