

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2017

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

117. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Revell and Mrs Stockell.

118. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The following Substitute Members were noted:

Councillor M Burton for Councillor Mrs Stockell
Councillor Garten for Councillor Revell

119. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Chairman stated that he had agreed to take the revised Committee Work Programme as an urgent update as there had been a few changes to the document since it was published.

120. **CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman proposed that Agenda Item 13 – Maidstone Area Arts Partnership Update be taken in advance of Agenda Item 12 - Report of the Director of Finance and Business Improvement on Third Quarter Budget Monitoring.

RESOLVED: That the change to the order of business be noted.

121. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

There were no Visiting Members.

122. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

123. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

124. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

125. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

126. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

127. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

128. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee was advised that an additional item had since been added which was for Disposal of Land at Hayle Place.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development advised that a report on the land adjacent to Maidstone United Football Ground would not come forward to the Committee before the end of the municipal year but she would check and advise the Member outside of the meeting when it would be coming to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

129. MAIDSTONE AREA ARTS PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Ken Scott from Maidstone Area Arts Partnership gave a presentation on the Arts, Culture and Heritage in the Voluntary and Community Sector.

The presentation set out the ambitions of Maidstone Area Arts Partnership and the next steps.

The Committee thanked Mr Scott for his informative and interesting presentation and asked that a copy of the slides be circulated to all Members of the Council for their information.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

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

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented a report on the Third Quarter Budget Monitoring for 2016/17.

The Committee noted that there was an increase in the projected adverse variance from Quarter 2 to Quarter 3. This was mainly due to the expected £197,000 overspend for Mote Park Café.

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement advised that steps had been taken to mitigate the situation and a third party operator would be sought to operate the Café. However, for the interim period it was proposed that the current in-house operator would continue to run it until the end of the Summer season.

In response to questions from Members, the following points were noted:-

- The Council was confident that an operator would come forward from the open market who would be willing to take over the Café. The current provider would still be able to submit an in-house bid.
- That the Council had not considered closing the Café as it provided a service to visitors to Mote Park and it would have incurred redundancy costs.

The Committee was disappointed to note the projected loss for the Café and requested that Officers provided a monthly update to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman in order that they are kept fully apprised of the situation.

In response to a question from a Member about the projected loss for the Leisure Centre, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement advised that this was due to unrealised budget savings as negotiations with the energy provider had taken longer than expected.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revenue position at the end of the third quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position where significant variances have been identified be noted; and
2. That Officers be requested to provide a monthly update on the financial position of the Mote Park Café to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

131. DURATION OF MEETING

7.15 p.m. to 8.20 p.m.