

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Councillors D Burton, Clark, Cox, Field, Garten,
Mrs Grigg, Munford, Perry and Spooner

Also Present: Councillors McKay and Springett

52. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Parfitt-Reid and de Wiggondene Sheppard.

53. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

The following Substitute Members were present:

- Councillor Perry for Parfitt-Reid
- Councillor Spooner for de Wiggondene Sheppard.

54. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Chairman explained to the Committee that he had agreed to take an urgent update to Item 22. Town Centre Article 4 Direction – Options. The reason for urgency was that the update corrected references in the report to ensure accuracy.

55. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

The following Councillors were present as Visiting Members:

- Councillor Springett, who indicated that she wished to speak on Item 14. First Quarter Budget Monitoring Report and Item 15. Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 1 SPST.
- Councillor McKay, who indicated that he wished to speak on Item 14. First Quarter Budget Monitoring Report and Item 15. Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 1 SPST.

56. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

57. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All members disclosed that they had been lobbied on Item 21. Maidstone Community Infrastructure Levy Administration and Governance.

58. 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.

59. AMENDMENT TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman explained that in order to comprehensively consider Item 20. Reference from Council - Community Infrastructure Levy, it would be pragmatic to discuss the contents of Item 21. Maidstone Community Infrastructure Levy Administration and Governance beforehand.

RESOLVED: That Item 21. Maidstone Community Infrastructure Levy Administration and Governance be considered before Item 20. Reference from Council - Community Infrastructure Levy.

60. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

61. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

62. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

63. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

64. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - SPS&T

The Committee debated the role of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee Chairman in relation to Outside Bodies, as described in the Constitution.

Mr Sam Bailey, Democratic and Administration Services Manager, confirmed that the description of the Chairman's responsibilities had been referred to the Democracy Committee on 5th September 2018. The Democracy Committee had recommended to Council that the Constitution be amended to clarify that the Chairman was not required to sit on the board of Outside Bodies, as the nominated Council Representative was responsible for this. The amendment had not yet been considered by Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Councillor Clive English be nominated as the Council's representative on the Southern Rail Stakeholder Forum.
- 2) That the Chairman of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee continues to attend meetings of the Quality Bus Partnership, in addition to the Council's nominated representative, until the Constitution is amended.

Voting: Unanimous

65. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: That the Reports of Outside Bodies be noted.

66. FIRST QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Ms Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance, updated the Committee on the budget position at the end of the First Quarter. Ms Dunnet explained that while there was an overspend regarding parking services, there was an overall underspend. The Council was expected to remain within the agreed budget for the year.

Councillors Springett and McKay spoke on this item as Visiting Members.

In response to a question from a Visiting Member, Mr Rob Jarman, Head of Planning & Development, confirmed that recruitment was underway for a Conservation Officer. The risks associated with the position being vacant were acknowledged, however, Maidstone Borough Council was working with Historic England regarding a number of sites including Wren's Cross. Furthermore, the current situation was considered manageable due to the specialist knowledge that had been developed within current officer capacity.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the revenue position at the end of the first quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.
- 2) That the capital position at the end of the first quarter be noted.

67. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE QUARTER 1 SPST

Mr Jarman introduced the Key Performance Indicator Update. He confirmed that all KPIs demonstrated good progress, following the elimination of the backlog of planning applications.

The Committee suggested that the future Quarter 2 KPI Update be reviewed to confirm whether the trends had been sustained, with a view to updating the KPIs.

RESOLVED: That the summary of performance for Quarter 1 of 2018/19 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

68. EXTENSION OF THE SOUTH 3 RESIDENT PARKING ZONE

Mr Jeff Kitson, Parking Services Manager, outlined a proposal to extend the eligibility to park in the South 3 Resident Parking Zone. Mr Kitson explained that historically, there had been limited demand for parking from the properties concerned. A change in demography, however, meant that parking was now required.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr Kitson confirmed that as the change was to the eligibility to park in the South 3 Resident Parking Zone and not the size of the zone, it would not impact upon current infrastructure. Furthermore, charges for the new permits would negate the costs associated with the change.

RESOLVED: That the South 3 Resident Parking Zone is extended to include property numbers 2 to 12 College Road.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstentions – 1

69. VERBAL UPDATE - DRAFT SPORTS FACILITIES AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGIES

Mr Mark Egerton, Strategic Planning Manager, provided a verbal update on the Draft Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies. Mr Egerton informed the Committee that the reports had been well received by the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee on 4th September 2018. The following recommendations were made to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee by the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee:

- That the strategies that form part of the Council's evidence base be noted and the comments on the documents be referred to Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee for consideration prior to re-engagement with key stakeholders and all Ward Councillors;
- That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee are recommended to expedite the consultation with Ward Councillors on the draft Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies; and
- That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee are recommended to consider the accessibility and affordability of facilities in the borough.

Mr Mark Egerton responded to questions from the Committee, and outlined that:

- The recommendation to commence engagement with Ward Members earlier than originally planned was to ensure that there was sufficient time for their comments to be considered;
- The consultation with Ward Members was separate to the engagement with key stakeholders, but both consultations would close at the same time; and
- The accessibility and affordability of new facilities would need to be addressed by the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That ward members be consulted with ahead of the stakeholder consultation.
- 2) That a document outlining suggested changes by ward members be compiled and made publicly available.

Voting: Unanimous

70. SEVENOAKS DISTRICT DRAFT LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION JULY 2018

Miss Anna Houghton, Planning Policy Officer, introduced the report. Miss Houghton informed the Committee that, in addition to the points raised in the report, the key aspects of the Sevenoaks District Draft Local Plan were:

- That that the proposed housing strategy did not meet the required need;
- The proposal to introduce an Article 4 Direction to prevent further loss of office space;
- That Gypsy and Traveller need could be met within the District; and
- The plan proposed a financial requirement for affordable housing from small sites.

Following questions from the Committee, Officers responded that:

- The Maidstone Borough Council response to the consultation stipulated that Sevenoaks District Council would need to consider all options, including the use of Green Belt land; and
- The immediacy of the Article 4 Direction was not currently known, however, it was not a blanket Article 4 Direction and was focussed on specific sites.

RESOLVED: That the response to the Sevenoaks District Draft Local Plan Consultation July 2018 set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

71. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP) CONSULTATION

Miss Houghton informed the Committee that Kent County Council was required to update the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan every ten years. The updated plan was now subject to consultation.

The Committee noted that the response was in accordance with current Maidstone Borough Council policies.

Officers confirmed that:

- Of fifteen questions available to respond to, five were relevant to Maidstone Borough Council; and
- This was a general consultation, and therefore if any specific rights of way present a crime and disorder consideration, the appropriate place to do this was outside of the consultation.

RESOLVED: That the response to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan set out in paragraphs 1.6 to 1.13 of the report be agreed.

Voting: Unanimous

72. MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Mrs Tay Arnold explained that the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and the Regulations 123 List were approved by Full Council in 2017. Since previous reports had been considered by the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee, a streamlined process had been established and a refresher training session regarding CIL had been arranged for Members in September 2018.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mrs Arnold responded that:

- The appointment of two members of staff, in addition to careful project planning, meant that there was sufficient capacity to manage the CIL workload;
- Internal Audit had been engaged with, with a view to arranging a formal audit in the future;
- Following advice from the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee, a training session had been offered to all Parish Councils and all Members. An additional training session was

being prepared for February or March 2019 in advance of when Parish Councils were likely to receive the first payments;

- The review of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Regulation 123 List must be conducted simultaneously. This was to ensure that changes reflected new evidence bases and documentation as they emerged;
- A quarterly report to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee regarding the IDP was not feasible, however, suggestions for alternative review dates were welcomed;
- That the review of the IDP was underway, including planned stakeholder engagement, ahead of completion in October 2019; and
- The Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee was responsible for oversight of the overall CIL administration and governance process.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the administrative and engagement progress to date is noted.
- 2) That the proposed annual reporting process as proposed in paragraphs 1.34 to 1.40 is agreed.
- 3) That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee will review the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as and when additional significant evidence comes to light, but at a minimum of one year intervals.

Voting: Unanimous

73. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

The Chairman introduced the reference from Council and explained that the issues raised by the motion were due to be resolved at the Committee's meeting in January when the Community Infrastructure Levy Governance Arrangements were scheduled to be considered. Given the additional clarity received during the previous item, it was agreed that there was no need for further consideration of the reference by the committee.

RESOLVED: That the reference be noted.

74. TOWN CENTRE ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - OPTIONS

Mr Stuart Watson, Planning Officer (Strategic Planning), addressed the Committee. Mr Watson explained that there was sufficient evidence that a non-immediate Article 4 Direction was appropriate for; County Gate, County House, Medway Bridge House, 23-29 Albion Place, Sterling House,

Maidstone House, Romney House, Gail House, Kestrel House, Knightrider Chambers, 62 Earl Street, 66 Earl Street, 72 King Street and Clarendon Place. The Council recognised that further work could be undertaken to reduce the likelihood of intervention by the Secretary of State, if required.

The Committee debated the proposal and commented that:

- The Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan outlined that the development of housing units was to be achieved using office stock, which contradicted the Article 4 Direction; and
- The timing of the Article 4 Direction was not appropriate, and it should instead be included in the review of the Local Plan.

Mr William Cornall responded that there were broader issues that impacted on this decision, as greater control of office stock ensured for better quality homes that were of an appropriate size and included the provision of parking.

RESOLVED: That no Article 4 Directions should be taken forward for the Town Centre.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 1 Abstentions – 0

75. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.35 p.m.