

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 20 MAY 2008**

PRESENT: Councillors Bradshaw, Mrs Gibson, Hotson, Marshall, Mrs Marshall, Mortimer, Parr, Mrs Stockell and F Wilson.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Horne.

1. Notification of Substitute Members

It was noted that Councillor Mrs Gibson was substituting for Councillor Horne.

2. Notification of Visiting Members

It was noted that Councillors Ash, Butler, Vizzard and Ms Williams.

3. Disclosures by Members and Officers

There were no disclosures.

4. Exempt Items

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

5. Election of Chairman

Following the election of Councillor Mrs Stockell, Councillor F Wilson expressed her disappointment that the Committee would not be chaired by the opposition party, which she believed would be in the best democratic interests of the Council. This had been discussed in recent years, and opposition chairing had taken place during most previous years. Councillor Wilson emphasised that this was not a statement against Councillor Mrs Stockell, who she believed to be an excellent chair.

Resolved: That Councillor Mrs Stockell be elected as Chairman of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2008-09 Municipal Year.

6. Election of Vice-Chairman

Resolved: That Councillor Horne be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2008-09 Municipal Year.

7. Proposed Amendment to the Schedule of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings

The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to a report on the agenda proposing swapping the meeting dates of the Corporate Services and Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs). This had been proposed as the Corporate Services OSCs at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells met on the same night, which caused difficulties when the Overview and Scrutiny Partnership Manager was required at both meetings. Additionally, the lead officers for the Committees currently had a meeting every other week, which made taking two consecutive weeks of annual leave a difficulty as there was then less continuity in support for the Committees.

A Councillor stated that a change to meeting dates would cause difficulties in their attendance at parish council meetings, and therefore the Committee agreed that the meeting dates should stay the same.

With regard to the issue of the Overview and Scrutiny Partnership Manager being required at meetings at both Councils, Members suggested that where this occurred, Maidstone should take priority as the Manager was the employee of Maidstone, rather than Tunbridge Wells. Members suggested a detailed look into the resourcing of overview and scrutiny at both Councils would be useful. A Member also highlighted that while partnerships were generally a positive way forward for the Council, they needed to be about improvements in service, rather than just savings.

Resolved: That

- a) The meeting dates of the Corporate Services and Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees remain as listed in the Council Diary; and
- b) The Overview and Scrutiny Teams at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells conduct a detailed review of the resourcing of Overview and Scrutiny at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils and report back to the Committee.

8. Duration of the Meeting

6:00 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.