

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 11 MARCH 2010**

Present: Councillor Mrs Hinder (Chairman), and
Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Field, Horne, Hotson,
Mrs Joy, Paine, Sams and Mrs Wilson

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mortimer.

48. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following substitution was noted:-

Councillor Mrs Joy for Councillor Mortimer

49. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

50. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Mrs Hinder declared a prejudicial interest in Item 11 – Appointment to Outside Bodies as she was one of the nominees for the Maidstone/Beauvais Twinning Association.

51. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor Paine declared that he had been lobbied with regard to Item 8 – Members Development Budget.

52. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the Items on the Agenda be taken in public as proposed.

53. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 January 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

54. MEMBERS DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

The Group considered the report of the Head of Human Resources setting out the Members Development Budget for 2010/11 and details of how the 2009/10 budget was spent.

Members discussed induction for new members and the Becoming A Councillor event. Members were informed that both of these events were being reviewed and Members requested that a report was brought to the Group following the review.

Members were informed that the training listed for Statutory Committees did include Substitute Members.

Concern was raised about only sending 1 Member to the Planning Summer School. Members felt this should be increased to 3 and were aware that in order to achieve this cuts would need to be made in the budget from Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet training.

Members felt it was very important that all information from any training must be disseminated to all Councillors.

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommended programme for Member Development for 2010/11 be agreed, subject to the following amendments:-
 - i) 3 Members to attend Planning Summer School
 - ii) The Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet budgets be reduced to accommodate the increase in cost of i) above.
2. That Members attending any training course must disseminate the information gained to all Members of the Council.
3. That the Democratic Services Manager prepares a report on the review of the Becoming A Councillor event and the induction programme for new Members.

55. TERMINATION OF APPEALS COMMITTEE

The Group considered the report of the Democratic Services Manager regarding deleting reference to the Appeals Committee in the Constitution.

RECOMMENDED TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE: That the Appeals Committee be disbanded with the reference to it in the Constitution being deleted and that this amendment to the Constitution be evaluated by Standards Committee prior to being submitted to Council for consideration.

56. WHOLE COUNCIL ELECTIONS - CONSULTATION OPTIONS

The Group considered the report of the Democratic Services Manager regarding the process for the delivery of the consultation with the whole electorate on a proposal to possibly change from elections by thirds to whole council elections every 4 years.

An addendum to the report of the Democratic Services Manager was circulated at the meeting which set out the formal proposal from ERS which had been received only the day before the meeting.

The Group were informed that the cost of the proposal from ERS could be covered from within existing budgets, if a general election was called on the same day as the Borough elections.

RESOLVED:

1. That the proposal from ERS, as set out in the Addendum to the report of the Democratic Services Manager, be agreed.
2. That a proof of the A4 leaflet setting out the advantages/ disadvantages of whole Council elections be approved by this Committee before publication.

57. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Group considered the report of the Democratic Services Manager regarding nominations to Outside Bodies.

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor Mrs Parvin be appointed as the Council's representative to the Cutbush and Corral Charities for a term of 4 years from 1 April 2010.
2. That Councillor Hotson be sent further information regarding the vacancy at Relate West and Mid Kent and that all Borough Councillors be requested to nominate a member of the public in their Ward who may wish to service on this Outside Body, should Councillor Hotson decide not to be appointed.

58. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Hotson be appointed Chairman for the consideration of the appointment to the Maidstone/Beauvais Twinning Association.

59. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Mrs Hinder left the meeting whilst the nominations to the Maidstone/Beauvais Twinning Association were considered.

RESOLVED: That Councillors Mrs Hinder, Sellar, Vizzard and Yates be appointed as the Council's representatives on the Maidstone/Beauvais Twinning Association for a period of 1 year from 1 April 2010.

60. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.58 p.m.