

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 29 JUNE 2021

Present: Councillors Joy, McKenna, Mortimer, Munford, Perry, Purle, D Rose (Chairman), M Rose and Young

28. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bartlett and Newton.

29. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Councillor Perry was present as a Substitute Member for Councillor Bartlett, and Councillor Munford was present as a Substitute Member for Councillor Newton.

30. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

31. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

There were no Visiting Members.

32. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

33. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

34. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

35. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 JUNE 2021**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed.

36. **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

37. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

38. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

39. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

It was noted that a Reference had been received from the Policy and Resources Committee to ask the Committee to review the No Mow May Scheme, which would be added to the Work Programme for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

40. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports of Outside Bodies, however two vacancies for Trustees at the Howard de Walden Centre were noted, with one expression of interest received from a relevant Ward Councillor. The second vacancy would be advertised to all Members.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

41. 4TH QUARTER FINANCIAL UPDATE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2020/21

The Head of Finance introduced the budget monitoring report and noted that the annual accounts had not yet been audited, and so figures should be treated as provisional. Within the revenue budget for the Committee, a favourable variance of £589,000 was reported which was largely due to significant increases of income for both the Crematorium and the garden waste services.

The Council had a total underspend of £1.2 million which was largely a result of the government funding received to support with the impact of the pandemic. However, it was highlighted that these were one-off sums and so would not strengthen the longer-term financial position of the Council.

Within the capital budget, the main areas of expenditure were the developments at Brunswick Street and Union Street, and the purchase of Springfield Mill.

The Senior Business Analyst introduced the performance monitoring report, outlining that four of the fifteen key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Committee did not reach their targets. It was noted that three KPIs had missed their target by more than 10%: Contamination – tonnage per month rejected; percentage of successful relief duty outcomes; and

number of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) brought to compliance by private rented sector licensing (bi-annual KPI).

Contamination: tonnage per month rejected had consistently missed its target throughout the year, which was partially attributed to the increase in household waste and recycling due to more residents working from home, and therefore increasing the risk of contamination. A plan of work had been scheduled by the Waste Team to improve contamination. It was explained that the percentage of successful relief duty outcomes remained above the national average, and the annual target for the number of HMOs brought to compliance was met despite the target being missed in quarters three and four.

In response to questions, the Head of Housing and Community Services advised that the Council's KPIs related to homelessness activity could be measured against the national statistics retrospectively, however consideration would need to be given to ensure that comparisons were made on a like for like basis and took account of a local area's specificities.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Revenue position as at the end of Quarter 4 for 2020/21, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted;
2. The Capital position at the end of Quarter 4 be noted; and
3. The Performance position as at Quarter 4 for 2020/21, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant issues have been identified, be noted.

42. ACCESS TO SERVICES REVIEW MEMBERSHIP

The Senior Policy and Engagement Officer introduced the report, explaining that there were two vacancies on the Access to Services Task and Finish Panel following the elections. It was deemed an appropriate time for new membership as the panel were still at the stage of learning and evidence-gathering.

Current Members of the panel expressed positive views of the work being carried out as part of the review.

RESOLVED: That Councillors McKenna and Young be appointed to the Access to Services Task and Finish Panel.

43. REFRESH OF THE COUNCIL'S TENANCY STRATEGY

The Head of Housing and Community Services introduced the report following consultation with local housing providers. As requested by the Committee, the policy included information for tenants with pets, and

feedback confirmed that the proposed Tenancy Strategy did not conflict with that of the local housing providers.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Tenancy Strategy 2021-26, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be adopted; and
2. The secure tenancy agreement, as attached at Appendix C to the report, be approved for use by the Housing Service.

44. DURATION OF MEETING

6.53pm to 7.27pm.