

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 28 JUNE 2010

Present: Councillor Lusty (Chairman), and
Councillors Barned, Burton, Chittenden, English,
Field, Harwood, Horne, Marchant, Robertson, Thick
and J.A. Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Ash, FitzGerald, Mrs Gooch, Greer, Nelson-
Gracie, Paine, Mrs Robertson, Mrs Stockell and
Mrs Wilson

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Councillor Mrs Wilson substituted for Councillor Field until 6.20 pm when he took up his position on the Committee.

3. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Paine indicated his wish to speak on Items 9 – Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 February 2010 and 11 – Core Strategy Spatial Vision and Objectives.

Councillors Ash, FitzGerald, Mrs Gooch, Greer, Nelson-Gracie, Mrs Robertson, Mrs Stockell and Mrs Wilson were in attendance.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Lusty be elected Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

5. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Marchant be elected Vice Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

6. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

7. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of Lobbying.

8. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

9. MINUTES

Minute 50, point c, page 3 – Members felt that the report of the Assistant Director of Development and Community Services dated 1 April 2010 on the Maidstone Town Centre: Policy Directions for the Core Strategy did not reflect strongly enough the recommendations of the Group to the Cabinet Member that was set out in the Minutes.

Minute 52, point 1 on page 5 – A member commented that he thought at the last meeting it was agreed that agricultural land be included in the list of the aims of the draft Policy CS15 Green and Blue Infrastructure.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 February 2010 be agreed as a correct record and signed, subject to the following amendment:-

Item 52, point 1, page 5 – Add:-

“m) Notwithstanding national guidance, the Group stressed the importance of the preservation of high quality agricultural land.”

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION:-

1. That, with regard to Maidstone Town Centre: Policy Directions for the Core Strategy, further consideration be given to the inclusion of a “Village Quarter” in the area of Albion Place, Union Street and the A20 as set out in the Minutes of the Meeting of this Group held on 24 February 2010.
2. That the Recommendation previously made to the Cabinet Member regarding the development of a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Maidstone Borough, be amended to include the following aim under draft policy CS15:-

“m) Notwithstanding national guidance, the Group stressed the importance of the preservation of high quality agricultural land.”

10. APPOINTMENT OF POLITICAL GROUP SPOKESPERSONS

RESOLVED: That the Political Group Spokespersons be appointed as follows:-

Conservative – Councillor J A Wilson
Liberal Democrat – Councillor Harwood
Independent – Councillor Marchant

11. CORE STRATEGY SPATIAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Spatial Planning regarding the Core Strategy Spatial Vision and Objectives.

The Chairman stated that as there were a number of points to be discussed, he would address each one in turn:-

Strapline

There were a number of suggestions raised by Members and therefore the Chairman asked Members to submit all suggestions to the Democratic Services Officer so that a ballot could be taken at the next meeting.

Draft Vision

Each paragraph was dealt with in turn:

- 1.3.11 Agreed, subject to the wording being slightly amended to show that it refers to the whole Borough and not just the Town Centre.
- 1.3.12 Agreed, subject to the speech marks being removed to the words traditional and offers.
- 1.3.13 Agreed
- 1.3.14 Agreed
- 1.3.15 Agreed
- 1.3.16 Agreed, subject to the deletion of reference to the urban extension and the word "supported" replaced with "led" in the second sentence.
- 1.3.17 A suggestion to change the last sentence to "All New development will be mixed" was noted.
- 1.3.18 Agreed, subject to the last sentence being amended to read "Robust landscape protection policies will be developed to safeguard our locally significant and cherished landscape".
- 1.3.19 Agreed
- 1.3.20 Agreed, subject the word "local" being inserted after "... and sites for" and before "gypsy and traveller".
- 1.3.21 Agreed
- 1.3.22 Agreed
- 1.3.23 Agreed that the wording of the first paragraph be looked at again regarding tariffs and incentivisation. The bold text to read as follows:-

"By 2026 Maidstone will be a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community benefiting from an exceptional and unique urban and rural environment.

The core strategy will help in delivering sustainable growth and regeneration while protecting and enhancing the borough's built and natural assets. Regeneration will be prioritised and delivered at the urban area of the County town first to make best use of brownfield land, so

the release of greenfield sites, well related to existing urban areas, be phased in after 2016. Development will be led by a sustainable and integrated transport strategy, together with necessary strategic and local infrastructure.

The establishment of a multi-functional green and blue network of open spaces, rivers and water courses will safeguard biodiversity and define the urban character of Maidstone while offering access to the countryside, which will be valued in its own right. The character and identity of all rural villages will be maintained by directing suitable development and supporting infrastructure to the rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst.

Employment skills will be expanded to meet an improved and varied range of local jobs, and there will be a better balanced housing market to meet the community's needs. Development will be of high quality design, and constructed in a sustainable manner to respond to climate change and protect the environment and biodiversity."

Draft Objectives

- a) Agreed, subject to the deletion of the figures.
- b) 3rd bullet point delete the words "and serving the new urban extension"
- c) The speech marks to be removed from around the word offer.
- d) Agreed, subject to referral back to the comments made under the Draft Vision
- e) Agreed
- f) To be amended to read "To support new housing in the borough's smaller villages that is of a design, scale, character, tenure and location appropriate to the settlement and support the retention of services and facilities that meet a local need."
- g) To replace the word "particularly" in the second sentence to "including" and include the words "and distinctive local landscapes" after the words "Natural Beauty" in the third line.
- h) Agreed
- i) Agreed
- j) Agreed
- k) Add the word "local" before the word "needs" in the last line.
- l) Agreed

RESOLVED:

1. That the comments set out above on the spatial vision and objectives for the Core Strategy be included in the next draft, to be considered at the next meeting of the Group.

2. That a ballot be held at the next meeting of the Group to choose from members' suggestions a strapline for the Core Strategy to be submitted to the Democratic Services officer.

12. DURATION OF MEETING

6.00 pm to 7.30 pm.