

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ACTING AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2023

Attendees:

Committee Members:	Councillors English (Chairman), Cannon, Brice, Conyard, Garten, Jeffery, Knatchbull, T Wilkinson and D Wilkinson
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99. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cleator and Hinder.

100. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor D Wilkinson was present as Substitute for Councillor Cleator.

101. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

102. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

103. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

104. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor English had been lobbied on Item 12 – Safety in the Town Centre Review.

105. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

106. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 February 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

107. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

108. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from Local Residents.

109. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

110. SAFETY IN THE TOWN CENTRE REVIEW

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and referenced the draft report produced on behalf of the Committee, that was attached at Appendix A to the report. The Committee were asked to agree the report for submission to the relevant decision-makers, subject to any required amendments. Two suggestions to strengthen recommendations two and eight were outlined.

During the discussion, two additional recommendations were requested to raise the issues relating to the dispersal of anti-social behaviour with the British Transport Police and Southeastern Railway, due to its impact to residents, and to provide the Committee with the information shared through the Town Centre Street Scene meetings, to ensure Members remained informed. Minor corrections would be made to recommendations six, seven and twelve.

Consideration was briefly given to whether the ongoing consultation on the town centre public spaces protection order (PSPO) should be referenced; however, it was felt that comments should be submitted through other more suitable means, with a request made for the PSPO being consulted upon to be made available to the Committee, given the Committee's Crime and Disorder function.

It was noted that the Committee intended to review the actions taken and publicised relating to environmental enforcement, as part of the separate but related enforcement review for the 2023/24 municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the report be agreed for submission to the relevant decision-makers, subject to:

The addition of:

1. The following text to the end of the paragraph in the 'Thanks to the Witnesses' section:
 - a. 'and for the work they have undertaken to improve Town Centre Safety'.
2. A recommended action for the information provided to Town Centre Ward Members at the Town Centre Street Scene Meetings relating to safety in the town centre also be circulated to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny, acting as the Crime and Disorder Committee;
3. A recommended action for the British Transport Police and Southeastern Railways to be reminded that the displacement of anti-social behaviour from the town centre to the wider areas would be better managed if train tickets were checked on a regular basis;

The amendment of:

4. Recommendation two, to read '*to organise an annual community safety partnership event, with all partners in attendance*'.
5. Recommendation eight, to read '*to provide Members with the contact details for the various reporting mechanisms outlined in cluster contact sheets*'; and
6. Recommendation twelve, to read '*That the questions contained within the annual survey on town centre safety be reviewed, to ensure that the questions contained be used to conduct a benchmarking exercise, for future measurement*'.

Note: Councillor Brice joined the meeting at 6.45 p.m. and stated that she did not have any disclosures of lobbying, but that she was the council's representative on the One Maidstone BID Advisory Board.

111. VOTE OF THANKS

The Committee thanked the Democratic Services Officer for her work in supporting the review.

112. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 6.59 p.m.