

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 17 JANUARY 2023

Attendees:

Committee Members:	Councillors Newton (Vice-Chairman) , Bartlett, Brindle, Conyard, Parfitt-Reid, Round, S Webb, Newton, Bartlett, Brindle, Fort, Rose, Young and Conyard
Lead Members:	Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement Lead Member for Environmental Services Lead Member for Housing and Health

98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor McKenna (Chairman), Khadka and R Webb.

99. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Conyard was present as a Substitute Member for Councillor Khadka.

100. URGENT ITEMS

Whilst it was not an urgent item, the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13 December 2022 which were circulated to the Committee were to be taken with Item 8 – Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13 December 2022 adjourned to 19 December 2022.

101. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Perry was in attendance as a Visiting Member for Item 15 – Medium Term Financial Strategy and Saving Proposals 2023/24 and Item 16 – Property acquisition for 1,000 affordable homes programme – Staplehurst Ward.

102. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

103. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

104. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all Items be taken in public unless any Member of the Committee wished to specifically refer to any of the information contained within ;

- Item 18 – Exempt Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19 December 2022,
- Item 19 – Exempt Appendices – Property acquisition for 1,000 affordable homes programme – Staplehurst Ward, or
- Item 20 – Exempt Appendices - Property acquisition for 1,000 affordable homes programme – Bridge Ward.

In which case the Committee would enter into closed session due to likely disclosure of exempt information.

105. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED: That:

1. The exempt Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19 December 2022,
2. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 December 2022 and;
3. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 December 2022 be approved as a correct and accurate record.

106. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

107. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from local residents.

108. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from the Members to the Chairman.

109. FORWARD PLAN RELATING TO THE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference be noted.

110. EQUALITIES POLICY AND ACTION PLAN - UPDATE

The report was introduced by the Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement. They explained that the progress of the Equalities Action Plan was reported to the Committee on an annual basis. The report outlined the responsibilities of the Council under the Equalities Act 2010. The Council's Equalities Policy includes three overarching objectives in place which are as an Employer, a Service Provider and a Community Leader.

It was explained that this was a light touch update to the current policy, which was developed with input from the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Officer Group. The new action plan addressed the financial climate and included poverty as an additional protected characteristic.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended:

1. To note the progress on the Equalities Objectives and Action Plan update at appendix 1 to the report and outlined at paragraph 2.6-2.11 in the report

2. To consider and recommend the proposed changes to the Equalities Policy as outlined at paragraph 2.17-2.21 in the report.
3. To consider and recommend the revised actions for the Equalities Action Plan as outlined at paragraph 2.22–2.29 in the report (appendix 3).
4. To consider and recommend the inclusion of Poverty as an additional protected characteristic as outlined at paragraph 2.33

111. STRATEGIC PLAN REFRESH 2023-28

The Lead Member for Housing and Health introduced the report and advised the Strategic Plan Refresh was focussed on updating the milestones for 2023-2028 as the Council responded to the National and Local environment. The changes to Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure reflected progress on the local plan and the importance of engagement. Safe Clean and Green had an increased emphasis on climate change and biodiversity, as well as a broadened action on open spaces to ensure promotion as well as enforcement.. A Thriving Place had been updated to raise the profile of the Town Centre Strategy investment. Homes and Communities reflects the commitment to deliver 1000 affordable homes and to reflect community resilience, partnership, working and those in financial crisis.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to approve the proposed refreshed areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028, set out in Appendix A, be approved.

112. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND SAVING PROPOSALS 2023/24

The Lead Member for Housing and Health introduced the report and advised the Strategic Plan Refresh was focussed on updating the milestones for 2023-2028 as the Council responded to the National and Local environment. The changes to Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure reflected progress on the local plan and the importance of engagement. Safe Clean and Green had an increased emphasis on climate change and biodiversity, as well as a broadened action on open spaces to ensure promotion as well as enforcement.. A Thriving Place had been updated to raise the profile of the Town Centre Strategy investment. Homes and Communities reflects the commitment to deliver 1000 affordable homes and to reflect community resilience, partnership, working and those in financial crisis.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to approve the proposed refreshed areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028, set out in Appendix A, be approved.

113. PROPERTY ACQUISITION FOR 1,000 AFFORDABLE HOMES PROGRAMME - STAPLEHURST WARD

The Lead Member for Housing and Health introduced the report and advised there would be a number of affordable housing units, with parking and a commercial space. The outline planning application for the site had been submitted, and the current owners of the site had agreed to sell to the Council.

In response to questions, the Committee were assured that there had been multi-agency working to ensure the pricing was correct.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended that:

1. The financial returns for the proposed acquisition as shown in Appendix 1, which is part 2 of the report, which support the Housing Development and Regeneration Investment Plan and the overall Development Strategy be approved.
2. The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement be granted delegated authority to:
 - a. Negotiate terms for the purchase of the site, for the sum as shown in the Exempt Appendix 1 of this report.
 - b. Procure and enter into all such deeds, agreements, contracts, and documents which may be required to facilitate the purchase of the site and the subsequent redevelopment works required to deliver the scheme referred to in this report. Including (but not limited to) any related appointments such as suitably qualified consultants and Contractor.
 - c. Subject to satisfactory conclusion of all due diligence, to negotiate and finalise and complete all legal formalities, deeds and agreements which may be required to facilitate the purchase.
3. The Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to appoint the solicitors required to negotiate and complete the necessary contract documentation, deeds and agreements associated with the purchase and construction works on the terms as agreed by the Director of Finance, Resources & Business Improvement.
4. Post completion of the procurement process, to employ the necessary consultants to progress the planning application. To appoint a contractor to bring forward for approval to this Committee a detailed project delivery and investment plan (prior to the development itself commencing)

114. PROPERTY ACQUISITION FOR 1000 HOMES PROGRAMME - BRIDGE WARD

The report was introduced by the Lead Member for Housing and Health, who explained there would be 19 units on brownfield sites close to the Town Centre. There was a full planning application in place for affordable rented units. The Council would consult with the developer to gain a S106 agreement.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended that:

1. The financial returns for the proposed acquisition as shown in Exempt Appendix 2 of the report, which supports the Housing Development and Regeneration Investment Plan and overall Development Strategy, be approved.
2. The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement be granted delegated authority to:

- a) Negotiate terms for the purchase of the proposed acquisition for the sum as shown in the Exempt Appendix 2 of this report.
 - b) Procure and enter into all such deeds, agreements, contracts and documents which may be required to facilitate the purchase of the site, and the subsequent redevelopment works required to deliver the scheme referred to in this report. Including (but not limited to) any related appointments such as a suitably qualified consultants and Contractor.
 - c) Subject to satisfactory conclusion of all due diligence to negotiate and finalise and complete all legal formalities, deeds and agreements which may be required to facilitate the purchase.
3. The Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to appoint Solicitors to negotiate and complete the necessary contract documentation, deeds and agreements associated with the purchase and construction works on the terms as agreed by the Director of Finance, Recourses & Business Improvement.
 4. Post completion of the procurement process to appoint a contractor, to bring forward for approval a detailed project delivery and investment plan (prior to the development itself commencing).

118. DURATION

6:30 p.m. until 7:19 p.m.