

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25  
NOVEMBER 2008**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Yates (Chairman), Butler, Daley, Field, Mrs Gooch, Hinder, Mrs Hinder, Verrall and F Wilson.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Mrs Blackmore and Chittenden.

**72. Web- Casting**

**Resolved:** That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

**73. Notification of Substitute Members**

It was noted that Councillors Mrs Hinder and F Wilson were substituting for Councillors Mrs Blackmore and Chittenden respectively.

**74. Notification of Visiting Members**

There were no visiting Members.

**75. Disclosures by Members and Officers**

There were no disclosures.

**76. Exempt Items**

**Resolved:** That all items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

**77. Minutes**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2008 be agreed as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

**78. Radio One Big Weekend- Lessons Learnt**

The Chairman welcomed the Deputy Chief Executive, Trevor Gasson and the Head of Communications, Roger Adley to the meeting. Following an introduction from each witness outlining the lessons learnt from the Radio One Big Weekend, the Committee discussed the following:

- The idea to bid for the Radio One Big Weekend. Members were pleased that a member of staff had felt able to make

the suggestion to host the event and that the idea had been followed up on. They also hoped that further opportunities would be identified;

- The lead up to the event, including the instructed secrecy once the BBC had advised the Council that Maidstone had been chosen to host the event. It was also noted that officers had since advised the BCC that they felt that the host organisation should be given more notice, highlighting that they had only been notified at the end of December 2007;
- The BBC's organisation for the event, including an elaboration on the opportunity provided by hosting the event and the inability for the Council to replicate a similar event. It was explained that the BBC had been responsible for the erection of the compound and everything in it, whereas the Council was responsible for everything outside of the compound, for example parking, access, road safety and transport;
- The funding of the Radio One Big Weekend, including the BBC's and the Council's contributions. It was noted that the Council had used its Economic Development Budget for 2007/08 to fund the event;
- The benefits of the Big Weekend to local businesses, residents and the Council, including the estimated value of the economic benefits to the local economy, Preston University had suggested £1.3 million when they hosted the event, and the national and international promotion of Maidstone, estimated figures ranged between £100,000 and £20 million;
- The structures that were put in place to aid the planning of the event, including the partnership working structures from an early stage. Four work-streams were created, including the multi agency Safety Advisory Group, which had since become a permanent group and was utilised for the Kent County Show and the River Festival;
- The requirement for a new temporary license in view of the large number of event goers and the provision of alcohol;
- Communication with residents and the leisure centre to minimise possible interruptions and discuss concerns;
- The assurance given by the Council to restore Mote Park in the event of any damage. A Member noted that Mote Park's football pitch needed rolling following damage caused by the event and Mr Gasson agreed to talk to Environmental Services to ensure that they were aware of this;
- Ticket allocations. With upwards of 500,000 people likely to apply for 30,000 the officer had anticipated and worked to minimise disappointment locally about the allocation. The Council insisted that the allocation was heavily weighted to Maidstone and Kent residents and the BBC met their obligations;
- The significant contribution of members of staff, for which Members expressed their gratitude ;

- The possibility for future events. Members considered that residents may not be as tolerant of regular large events in Mote Park and therefore events of a similar scale should be undertaken on an ad-hoc basis. Members noted that Leeds Castle no longer organised big events and instead offered the use of their grounds and Members felt that this method could be adopted with regards to Mote Park;
- The possibility of using the re-cap on Radio 1 of the Maidstone event in the lead up to the announcement of the 2009 host to promote the Maidstone Music Project; and
- The impact of the hot weather on the footfall to Maidstone town centre during the Big Weekend.

The Committee congratulated Mr Gasson and Mr Adley on the success of the Radio One Big Weekend.

The Web cast from this session is available at <http://clients.westminster-digital.co.uk/maidstone/archive.aspx> (00.02.00 to 01.24.10).

**Resolved: That**

- a) A letter be sent to all staff involved in the lead up to the Radio One Big Weekend to express the Committee's gratitude for their hard work;
- b) The damage to Mote Park's football pitches be addressed as necessary;
- c) The opportunities to enhance Maidstone's exposure and to locally promote the Maidstone Music project during the re-cap of Maidstone's event on Radio 1, in the lead up to the announcement of the Big Weekend's 2009 host be explored;
- d) It be ensured that mechanisms are in place to enable the Council to bid for future events and that the Council continue to actively explore future opportunities that present themselves; and
- e) The Safety Advisory Group should continue.

**79. Future Work Programme 2008-09**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that the Director of the British Toilet Association would be in attendance at its next meeting.

**Resolved:** That the future work programme be noted.

**80. Duration of the Meeting**

6:30pm to 7.55pm.