

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 MAY 2011**

PRESENT: Councillors Ash, Mrs Blackmore, Mrs Parvin, Yates, Field, D Mortimer, Paterson and Fitzgerlad

1. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.

Resolved: That all items be web-cast.

2. Apologies.

Councillor Paulina Stockell sent her apologies.

3. Notification of Substitute Members.

Councillor Adrian Brindle attended the meeting as a substitute Member for Councillor Mrs Stockell.

4. Notification of Visiting Members.

There were no visiting Members.

5. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

It was resolved that:

- a) Councillor Annabelle Blackmore be appointed as Chairman for the municipal year 2011-12; and
- b) Councillor Mike Fitzgerald be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2011-12

6. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

There were no disclosures.

7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.

Resolved: that all items be taken in public as proposed

8. Minutes of the Meetings held on 12 April 2011 and 19 April 2011

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings held on 12 and 19 April 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

9. Work Programming Workshop

The Chairman introduced the Work Programming Workshop to the Committee. Members were informed that this was their opportunity to speak to the Officers present and to come up with ideas for the Committee's Work Programme for the coming year. The Committee then met with Officers to discuss their work and key priorities for the year.

After half an hour the Committee reconvened to discuss their ideas. Members added the following items to the list of suggested topics for the Work Programme:

LSP – and move to Locality Boards – Priorities of this Council and how they would feed in – To pass on to Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Neighbourhood action Planning – Focus on vulnerable and areas of deprivation. Set against Localism Bill - Where we are heading in longer terms – strengthen ties with communities (add to existing entry)

Communal Open Spaces – Jason Taylor to include Play Areas – Look at reducing? (add to original suggestion on same topic)

Youth and Community – Youth Forum, Switch Café and Youth Strategy.

Elderly – link to PCT and those living in their own homes, those with dementia.

Children – Demelza House. What do we have in Maidstone – in terms of relating to provisions already existing in Kent? How do we associate with providers in this area?

The Chairman then asked the Committee to go through the complete list of suggested topics and decide which could be considered for their two main reviews of the year and which topics could be addressed at one off Meetings. Members were also reminded that they would meet twice over the course of the year as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members discussed the CDRP protocols and established that a topic was usually set ahead of the meeting so that all those involved could be prepared and the topic set would be reviewed as widely as possible.

Members narrowed down their expansive list to three topics for major reviews:

- Neighbourhood Action Planning;
- Care of the elderly; and
- Waste Reduction (including Commercial Waste and the new Waste and Recycling Contract)

At this juncture a Member reminded the Committee of the Joint Health Scrutiny work that had been completed with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the recent meeting that had taken place at the Blackthorn Trust on Mental Health which was a follow up meeting to the Joint Review on Adult Mental Health Services.

Members decided that 'Care of the Elderly' was a topic that could be explored as a Joint Review topic with Tunbridge Wells which would then leave two major review topics.

The Committee discussed 'Air Quality' in relation to the Joint Sustainable Communities Act Working Group which had been established the previous Municipal Year. Councillors Paterson and Mortimer had been Members and expressed a need for this topic to be kept on the agenda. The group had looked at Air Quality in Maidstone and wanted to explore the possibility of a Low Emission Zone.

It was resolved that:

- a) The suggested topic 'Exploring Green Behaviours at Maidstone House' should be extended to include all council run buildings and passed to Management Team to investigate;
- b) The LDF topic should be passed to Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny to be included in their suggested topics;
- c) The topic 'Private Sector Housing enforcement' should be passed to the Housing Consultative Board for investigation to avoid duplication;
- d) A Joint 'Low Emission Zone' task and finish group should be created with Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Councillor Mortimer and Councillor Paterson put forward from Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- e) The 'Business Engagement' topic should be passed to Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny to be included in their suggested topics;
- f) The possibility of a Joint Review into Elderly Care should be explored with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council; and
- g) The topic 'Café Networking and Localism' should be passed to Angela Woodhouse, the lead on Localism and the work on this should be reported back to the Committee.

10. Future Work Programme

The Committee discussed their future work programme giving consideration to the Forward Plan, their role as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee and their topics for review.

It was resolved that:

- a) Neighbourhood Action Planning set against the Localism Bill and Waste Reduction, including commercial waste and the new waste and recycling contact should be the Committee's two main reviews for the year;
- b) Anti Social Behaviour and Domestic Violence should be the topics explored when the Committee meet as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- c) Youth Offending and Community Payback should be looked at as a 'one off meeting';
- d) Jason Taylor and the Cabinet Member should be invited to discuss the Bio Diversity Plan; and
- e) The Waste Review topic should be scoped for consideration at the next meeting.

11. Duration of Meeting

6.30 p.m. to 8.18 p.m.