

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE REGENERATION & ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28 JUNE 2011**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Cuming, Black, Burton (Chairman),  
English, Mrs Joy, Ross, Springett and Newton

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

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

**14. Apologies.**

Councillor Beerling sent his apologies.

**15. Notification of Substitute Members.**

There were no substitute members.

**16. Notification of Visiting Members.**

There were no visiting members.

**17. Disclosures by Members and Officers:**

There were none.

**18. 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.

**19. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2011**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2011 be agreed as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

**20. Air Quality Review Group - working group with Communities OSC**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer explained to the Committee that in the last Municipal Year, a working group had been established to review the sustainable communities act and how it could be used to address air quality issues in the Borough. As air quality falls within Communities and transport falls within the Regeneration and Economic Development it was advised that two Members from Regeneration and Economic Development

would join Councillors Paterson and D Mortimer to form the working group which would meet during the day on a monthly basis.

Councillors Cuming and Burton motioned that they would be keen to join Councillors Paterson and Mortimer, but requested that sufficient notice of meeting times would be provided. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer confirmed that a series of meetings would be established prior to commencing.

**Resolved:** That Councillors Burton and Cuming join Councillors Paterson and Mortimer to form the Air Quality Working Group.

## **21. Transport Congestion Review**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer requested that the Committee review the scope on the agenda for the transport review to ensure it reflected the aims and wishes of the Committee.

The Committee considered the desired outcomes, and established five key points they wished to achieve:

1. To identify how to unlock the congestion and capacity of traffic in Maidstone town, by using best practice techniques investigating Chelmsford and other local neighbouring towns;
2. To investigate the consideration given to new developments by the planning authority in relation to traffic volume and road maintenance;
3. To look at the future as modern technology using electric cars will not solve the traffic congestion;
4. To establish ways to educate the residents to promote car sharing and public transport; and
5. To make recommendations as appropriate.

The Committee also considered witnesses that could provide information for the review and expressed that a representative from an electric car manufacturers would be beneficial as well as David Hall, Head of Transport & Development at Kent County Council and County Councillor Malcolm Robertson.

The Chairman informed the Committee that a Parking Strategy was being devised as part of the Core Strategy, and therefore some information may take longer than anticipated.

A Member suggested that the rail network may be useful to investigate as there could be potential to encourage residents to use public transport.

The Committee agreed with the Overview and Scrutiny Officer's suggestion that the community be engaged with the review via A4 posters in taxi's and buses and requested that extra copies were made for Parish Councils to display.

The Committee agreed to visit Godstone Traffic Control Centre and Chelmsford Council as a close County Town to investigate methods of best practice. Members also suggested that the Committee take the 101 bus to Chatham, a local neighbouring town who had recently changed its road network, with the view to experience any difficulties residents may have and by meeting with Medway Council to explore what obstacles they had to overcome which resulted in the changing of the road network.

**Resolved:** That

- a) the following outcomes be agreed for the review of transport and congestion:
  - 1. To identify how to unlock the congestion and capacity of traffic in Maidstone town, by using best practice techniques investigating Chelmsford and other local neighbouring towns;
  - 2. To investigate the consideration given to new developments by the planning authority in relation to traffic volume and road maintenance;
  - 3. To look at the future as modern technology using electric cars will not solve the traffic congestion;
  - 4. To establish ways to educate the residents to promote car sharing and public transport; and
  - 5. To make recommendations as appropriate.
  
- b) the Overview and Scrutiny Officer arranges A4 posters for public engagement; and
  
- c) that the Committee takes part in the following activities as part of the transport review:
  - a) Visit to Medway Council via bus on Tuesday 12 July;
  - b) A trip to Godstone traffic centre and Chelmsford City Council, returning to Maidstone on 20 July 2011.

## **22. Future Work Programme**

The Committee considered the future work programme. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that this was flexible, allowing for witnesses to attend as required and updated the Committee with regards to the agenda for the following two meetings.

**Resolved:** That the LSP thematic quarter update would be provided in written format at the next meeting, and that the meeting dated 23 August 2011 would be held in the Museum, following the completed building works.

## **23. Duration of meeting**

6.30pm to 7.40pm.