

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2023

Present: Councillors Burton (Chairman), Cooper, Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Round, Russell, and S Webb

136. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies.

137. **URGENT ITEMS**

An urgent update had been published for Item 19 – Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals 2023/24, which reflected two significant updates since the agenda was published.

138. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

There were no Visiting Members.

139. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS OR OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members.

The Chief Executive disclosed an interest on behalf of all officers present on item 19 – Medium Term Financial Update and Performance Monitoring Report as the debate was likely to include consideration of the funding of officer's pay.

140. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

All Councillors disclosed that they had been lobbied on item 19 – Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals 2023/24 and item 20 – Maidstone Leisure Centre.

141. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

142. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2023**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

143. **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS**

There were none.

144. QUESTIONS FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS TO THE LEADER OR INDIVIDUAL LEAD MEMBER (AS APPROPRIATE)

There were none.

145. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE LEADER OR INDIVIDUAL LEAD MEMBER (AS APPROPRIATE)

There were none.

146. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE FOR RECONSIDERATION

There were none.

147. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were none.

148. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE BY ANOTHER COMMITTEE

There were none.

149. ANY MATTER RELATING TO A SERIOUS SERVICE FAILURE OF NUISANCE

There were none.

150. RECEIPT OF WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

There were none.

151. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

It was noted that the item 'Heather House and Royal British Legion Site' might not be going to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee on 14 March 2023 and be delayed, and that the decision on the 'Temporary Closure of the Kent Choice Housing Register' would likely be taken by the Lead Member.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan be noted.

152. STRATEGIC PLAN REFRESH 2023-28

RESOLVED:

1. That the feedback from the Policy Advisory Committees be noted; and
2. That the areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028, set out in Appendix A to the report be recommended to Council.

(See Record of the Recommendation to Council)

153. 3RD QUARTER FINANCIAL UPDATE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

RESOLVED: That

1. The Revenue position as at the end of Quarter 3 for 2022/23, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted;
2. The irrecoverable outstanding rent due of £25,152 from Chillington House be written off;
3. The Capital position at the end of Quarter 3 for 2022/23 be noted;
4. The Performance position as at Quarter 3 for 2022/23, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant issues have been identified, be noted;
5. The Risk Update, attached at Appendix 3 be noted;
6. The Recovery & Renewal Update, attached at Appendix 4 be noted;
7. The reallocation of Recovery and Renewal Funding for a number of projects as shown at 2.4 in the report be endorsed;
8. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund update, attached at Appendix 5 be noted; and
9. Officers be tasked to produce a report setting out the scope for a piece of work to enable us to have a better understanding of the current levels of and trends in economic activity and unemployment in the borough especially for young people (aged 18 to 24) and to identify the key questions and challenges that need to be addressed.

(See Record of Decision)

154. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24

RESOLVED: That

1. The outcome of consideration of budget proposals by the Policy Advisory Committees be noted;
2. The Budget Growth and Savings Proposals set out in Appendix A to the report be agreed;
3. The first £300,000 of 2023/24 unringfenced government grant be allocated for spatial policy and planmaking, with a further £400,000 transferred to the pay envelope for the staff budget, with the remaining balance transferred to the Housing Investment Fund, to be

used to subsidise the Council's Affordable Housing programme be agreed;

4. The updated Strategic Revenue Projection set out in Appendix B to the report, subject to amendment as appropriate arising out of recommendation three be agreed;
5. A £8.19 annual increase in Band D Council Tax for 2023/24 for recommendation to Council be agreed;
6. The Revised Estimates for 2022/23 and the Budget Estimates for 2023/24 set out in Appendix C, for recommendation to Council be agreed;
7. The Capital Programme set out at Appendix D for recommendation to Council be agreed;
8. The Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Capital Strategy set out in Appendix E to the report, for recommendation to Council be agreed;
9. The projected level of General Fund balances in Appendix F to the report exceeds the agreed minimum level of £4 million be noted;
10. The updated Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Appendix G to the report, subject to amendment as appropriate arising out of recommendation three be agreed;
11. Council be recommended the appropriate matters for decision to set a balanced budget for 2023/24 and the necessary level of Council Tax in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Localism Act 2011 including the decisions made above, and
12. The Council be recommended that it makes provision to implement with effect from 1 April 2024 the measures in the Regeneration and Levelling-up Bill to reduce the period before charging a Council Tax premium on empty property from two years to one and to charge a Council Tax premium on second homes.

(See Record of Recommendation to Council)

155. MAIDSTONE LEISURE CENTRE

RESOLVED: That

1. The option entitled 'minor practical improvements' be pursued;
2. Detailed plans for the minor practical improvements be developed and included in the tender documentation;

3. The capital sum of £2 million to deliver these works be identified in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and in the 2023/24 capital programme;
4. The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Lead Member for Leisure and Arts, to lead a procurement process and invite tenders for the delivery of the minor practical improvements;
5. After the completion of the tender process, delegated authority be given to the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services to enter into such contracts as required to complete the contract award and commence the minor practical improvements;
6. A contract extension with Maidstone Leisure Trust and Serco Leisure Ltd for the continued operation of the centre until 2031 be pursued by the Council; and
7. Feasibility work on the long-term future of the centre and all alternative options and provision be continued.

(See Record of Decision)

156. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.28 p.m.