

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, LEISURE AND ARTS POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2023

Present:

Committee Members:	Councillor Forecast (Chairman) and Councillors Eagle, Fort, Mrs Gooch, Harper, Hastie, Hinder, Naghi and T Wilkinson
Lead Members:	Councillor Russell (Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts)

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Bryant.

7. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Hastie was substituting for Councillor Bryant.

8. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman said that he intended to take the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023 and the Forward Plan relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference as urgent items to enable them to be considered before the next meeting.

9. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

10. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman said that he intended to take item 9 (Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023) and item 10 (Forward Plan Relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference) before item 8 (4th Quarter Financial Update and Performance Monitoring Report) to enable the procedural matters to be dealt with before the main item of business.

11. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

12. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

13. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

14. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 30 May 2023 to 30 September 2023 in so far as it related to its terms of reference.

In response to questions:

Councillor Russell, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts explained that:

- The terms of reference of the Committee derived from her portfolio which now included items such as the Communication and Engagement Strategy, Parish Charter, Financial Inclusion and the Community Grants Policy. The Economic Development Strategy, formerly part of the Leader's portfolio, had now transferred to the Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development and Deputy Leader and would be considered by the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee. The Forward Plan would reflect these changes in responsibilities.
- In terms of the Museum Accreditation Scheme, there were no plans to let the Museum's accredited status lapse, so she did not consider a report on that to be warranted.

The Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement advised the Committee that work was underway in relation to the future use of the Archbishop's Palace, but it had still to be decided which Policy Advisory Committee or Committees the matter would be reported to prior to consideration by the Cabinet. The Cabinet Member concurred that it was important to seek non-executive Members' input and that could be by way of a joint meeting of more than one Policy Advisory Committee or the submission of a report to more than one Policy Advisory Committee if appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan relating to the Committee's terms of reference be noted.

16. 4TH QUARTER FINANCIAL UPDATE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts introduced a report setting out the financial and performance position for the services reporting into the Committee as at 31 March 2023 (Quarter 4). It was noted that:

- Following changes to the Cabinet portfolios, the remits of the Policy Advisory Committees had been amended, and a new Key Performance Indicator (KPI) set was proposed for this Committee for the financial year 2023/24.
- The report also included updates on progress against the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan and projects funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

In response to questions, the Cabinet Member/Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement explained that:

- In terms of the positive variance in relation to Lockmeadow landlord costs and Lockmeadow Complex, there was a shortfall in rental income from tenants, but this was offset by significant underspends against the professional services and repairs and maintenance budgets.
- Cost centres described as sections were staffing budgets.
- Festivals and events had performed better than budgeted, doing well on income with lower expenditure.
- The Leisure Centre was now trading normally following the pandemic and it was hoped that the adverse variance would disappear.
- Two units at Lockmeadow had been vacated recently and were being marketed actively with a view to new tenants being found.
- Regarding the overspend in relation to the Mote Park Visitor Centre, although it was not a large project, it was a bespoke design with specialist requirements and issues were encountered during construction. Lessons had been learned for future projects. There was a need to balance delivering quality facilities and achieving best value.

During the discussion:

- The Cabinet Member undertook to arrange for a briefing note on the background to the Recovery and Renewal Action Plan to be circulated to all Members of the Committee and the Senior Business Analyst undertook to investigate whether an additional KPI could be formulated around arts events.
- It was suggested and agreed that an additional KPI was required to monitor the performance of the market at Lockmeadow which, despite investment, was under achieving.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Revenue position as at the end of Quarter 4 for 2022/23, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.
2. That the Capital position at the end of Quarter 4 be noted.
3. That the Performance position as at Quarter 4 for 2022/23 be noted.
4. **TO RECOMMEND to the CABINET:** That the proposed new KPIs for 2023/24 be approved together with an additional KPI to monitor the performance of the market at Lockmeadow.
5. That the Recovery and Renewal Update, attached at Appendix 3 to the report, be noted.

6. That the UK Shared Prosperity Fund update, attached at Appendix 4 to the report, be noted.

17. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.20 p.m.