

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Date: Wednesday 19 July 2023

Time: 7.00 p.m. or at the conclusion of the extraordinary meeting of the Council, whichever is the later

Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Bartlett, Mrs Blackmore, Bryant, Burton, Cannon, Clark, Cleator, Coates, Conyard, Cooke, Cooper, Cox, Eagle, English, Forecast, Fort, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Harper, Harwood, Hastie, Hinder, Holmes, Jeffery, Jones, Joy, Khadka, Kimmance, Knatchbull, McKenna, Mortimer, Munford, Naghi, Newton (Mayor), Parfitt-Reid, Perry, Reid, Riordan, Mrs Robertson, Rose, Round, Russell, J Sams, T Sams, Spooner, Springett, M Thompson, S Thompson, Trzebinski, Webb, Wilby, D Wilkinson, J Wilkinson and T Wilkinson

AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Dispensations (if any)
3. Disclosures by Members and Officers
4. Disclosures of Lobbying
5. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information
6. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council held on 20 May 2023 1 - 5
7. Mayor's Announcements
8. Petitions
9. Question and Answer Session for Local Residents

Issued on Tuesday 11 July 2023

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

10. Questions from Members of the Council to the
 - (a) Leader of the Council
 - (b) Cabinet Members
 - (c) Chairmen of Decision-Making Committees
11. Current Issues - Report of the Leader of the Council, Response of the Group Leaders and Questions from Council Members
12. To consider any motion moved by the Leader of the Council in respect of the Administration's Programme for the Municipal Year 2023/24
13. Report of the Democracy and General Purposes Committee held on 21 June 2023 - Amendment to the Constitution 6 - 8
14. Notice of Motion - Rights of the River Medway and its Tributaries
Notice of the following motion has been given by Councillor Jeffery, seconded by Councillor Eagle:

Preamble

Our freshwater environments and waterways are facing numerous pressures from pollution, climate change, land management practices, development and amenity use.

It is clear that our environmental laws and regulations are failing to prevent the destruction of nature, often simply regulating the rate of destruction. At the same time there is an emerging global movement of governments recognising the Rights of Nature and in particular the rights of rivers.

Rights of Nature is a way of re-thinking our relationship with nature - from one of dominance to one of interdependency requiring a respectful, holistic and empathic approach. It can also act as a catalyst to shift our thinking from an extractive economy towards a regenerative economy. The idea of nature having rights is not new. Nature has rights. What is new is how we can intervene using a rights of nature lens to protect nature and to give the river a voice as a single entity, from source to sea.

We have extended rights to corporations globally – a company which is a wholly fictional entity has gained legal rights and is recognised as a legal entity distinct from its individual decision makers. If we can define a corporation as having the rights of personhood, then we can imagine a River having these personhood rights.

The Universal Declaration of River Rights establishes that all rivers shall possess, at minimum, the following fundamental rights:

- 1) The right to flow,
- 2) The right to perform essential functions within the river's ecosystem,
- 3) The right to be free from pollution,
- 4) The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers,
- 5) The right to native biodiversity, and
- 6) The right to regeneration and restoration.

We believe there is an opportunity to develop a River Medway Charter over the next 2 years which establishes the rights listed above.

It is therefore resolved that:

1. This Council acknowledges the growing global movement of 'rights of nature' as a framework for rethinking its relationship with the environment.
2. This Council believes that there is a case to be made for considering our interactions with our local waterways in the context of 'Rights of Rivers' and through which the health and wellbeing of the River Medway and its tributaries can be addressed.
3. This Council will work with the other councils along the Medway catchment to explore with local communities and relevant stakeholders the implementation of Rights of Rivers along the River Medway and its tributaries. This will involve working towards the production of a 'Declaration on the Rights of the River Medway and its tributaries' by relevant stakeholders for possible endorsement by the Council within 2 years.

15. Detling Parish Council - Appointment of Councillors - Section 91 (1) Order	9 - 14
16. Review of Allocation of Seats on Committees	15 - 20
17. Report of the Leader of the Council - Urgent Decisions taken by the Cabinet Between 19 April 2023 - 19 July 2023 (for information)	21 - 22

NOTE: IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 17 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989, ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES OUTSIDE THE USUAL POLITICAL BALANCE REQUIREMENTS MAY BE CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO AGENDA ITEM 16

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

In order to ask a question at this meeting in person or by remote means, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Monday 17 July 2023). You will need to provide the full text in writing.

If your question is accepted, you will be provided with instructions as to how you can access the meeting.

In order to make a statement in relation to an item on the agenda, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 4 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 4 p.m. on Monday 17 July 2023). You will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on.

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

To find out more about the work of the Council, please visit the [Council's Website](#).