

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 APRIL 2012**

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Blackmore (Chairman)
Councillors Butler, FitzGerald, D Mortimer, Mrs Parvin,
Paterson, Yates and Hinder

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

It was resolved that all items be webcast.

141. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Wilson, Mrs Stockell and Field.

142. Notification of Substitute Members.

Councillor Butler attended as a Substitute Member for Councillor Mrs Stockell.

143. Notification of Visiting Members.

There were no Visiting Members.

144. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

There were no Disclosures.

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

It was agreed that all items should be taken in public as proposed.

146. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed.

147. Amendment to Order of Business

The Chairman proposed that the meeting should include an additional URGENT ITEM: 'Neighbourhood Action Planning review report'. The minutes of the meeting on Neighbourhood Action Planning were included in the agenda, along with the recommendations made. The Chairman felt that the Committee could strengthen the recommendations made by using

the meeting to agree the structure of a short report. Members agreed but some felt that their contributions could have been greater had there been time to prepare. The Chairman explained that all the information needed was in the agenda papers and it should be seen as an opportunity to improve on the work already undertaken.

Resolved: That Neighbourhood Action Planning should be taken as an URGENT ITEM as the next item on the agenda.

148. URGENT ITEM: Neighbourhood Action Planning Review draft report

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and the recommendations made. The Committee agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that a short report with a Chairman's Summary and recommendations would be an appropriate report structure for a short report. In addition there should be an evidence pack containing the minutes of the meetings, the Planning for Real methodology and the Park Wood Neighbourhood Action Plan 2010-2015.

The Committee considered, in turn, the wording and impact of each of the recommendations made at the previous meeting. The Committee had looked specifically at Park Wood when considering Neighbourhood Action Planning but it was evaluating the pilot project at Park Wood on the basis of it being rolled out to other areas in the borough. The recommendations made were specific to Park Wood but Members felt that their findings should be considered by the Council on a wider basis in some cases. It was agreed that specific names should be removed from the recommendations and specific examples or points of reference such as 'Heather House' should be placed into a wider context.

The Committee discussed the regeneration of Park Wood and the recommendations made around this issue. This topic had been discussed in detail at the previous meeting as Golding Homes had informed Members that the Planning for Real process had provided a starting point for its engagement with residents. It was felt that the inclusion of recommendations made as a result of the discussion on regeneration in Park Wood was important as it would have an effect on the rest of the borough as residents from Park Wood were moved to other areas.

Members felt that their recommendations should include the importance of the involvement of children in the Planning for Real Process. The success of the involvement of children from Bellwood school in the making of the model of the area which was the starting point for the pilot project had resonated with Members at the previous meeting.

It was felt that the finances involved with Neighbourhood Action Planning remained a grey area. Maidstone Borough Council had secured funding of £50,000 for the pilot project in Park Wood. Its future role could be one of facilitator, assisting residents groups in accessing funding available from other sources. Regardless of the Council's role it was agreed that funding would be a primary consideration when the next Neighbourhood Action

Planning project was considered and a recommendation was worded by the Committee to ensure that Council addressed this.

It was resolved that:

- a) The Neighbourhood Action Planning short report should be structured around the following recommendations:
 - § That the Community Halls Audit report is taken to the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to address the possibility of communities running facilities similar to Heather House in Park Wood;
 - § That assistance be given by the Community Development Team to Park Wood residents in the production of their residents' newsletter;
 - § That the financial implications of extending Planning for Real across other wards of the borough be undertaken before decisions are finalised;
 - § That case studies be used to convey the successes achieved in Park Wood when delivering Neighbourhood Action Planning in other areas of the borough. Established residents' groups in Park Wood should be encouraged to share their experiences with others;
 - § That the involvement of children in the creation of the 3D model which forms part of the Planning for Real methodology should be the starting point for any future Neighbourhood Action Planning;
 - § That the priorities arising from the Planning for Real process take into account residents' needs and the priorities of the partners involved;
 - § That Golding Homes and residents from Park Wood are invited to Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to address the issues that arose regarding the regeneration of Park Wood; and
 - § That clarification is required for residents on how they can access new properties in Park Wood.
- b) The Chairman should provide the Scrutiny Officer with an introductory summary to the report;
- c) The report be circulated to the Committee via email for approval; and

- d) Following the Committee's approval of the report, the report is submitted to the appropriate Cabinet Member and external bodies.

149. Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review draft report

The Committee considered the draft report. Members were pleased with the structure of the report. It was felt it was shorter and more succinct than previous reports.

The Committee considered the report and made some adjustments to the wording of the report for ease of read. It was felt that the graph depicting recycling rate (2004-2011), figure 1 on page 4 of the report should be changed to show a percentage figure on the y axes.

On page 5 of the document the Committee discussed the paragraph on glass recycling. It was decided that further clarification was needed on the recycling of glass as part of the new waste contract. It was felt that a recommendation should be added to ensure that there was continued engagement with residents on changes to recycling.

On page 6 of the report, under the 'Freighter Service and Bulky Collection' section, Members considered householder's difficulties in recycling large garden waste. It was felt that the Freighter Service was utilised by those who could not access Household Recycling Centres. The Freighter Service did not collect garden waste and the fortnightly garden waste collection service offered by the Council did not provide a facility for this either. It was felt that this finding should be highlighted in the report. A Member who had spoken to residents about the Freighter Service felt it should also be noted in the report that a good number of users were aware and made use of charitable collections for white goods and furniture.

It was decided that two further recommendations should be added to the report to strengthen statements made within the report. The Committee agreed that the first should be added under the recommendations made regarding Waste Reduction and the second was to highlight the importance of recycling Plastics as the report stressed the viewpoint that Plastics were 'an untapped raw material' to Councils.

It was resolved that:

- a) The following recommendations should be added to the report:
- That residents' are kept informed about the progress of recycling developments in the borough during the lifetime of the waste contract
 - That flexible and cost effective options in relation to the use of new technologies and changes to collectables should be included in the terms of the new waste contract. It should also include a proactive clause for partners to explore opportunities in the market.

- That during the course of the 10 year waste contract Maidstone Borough Council takes a lead role in developing a partnership with other Kent authorities to achieve best value for money in the collection and selling of plastics
- b) That the wording in the section 'Freighter Collection and Bulky Collection' should be amended to reflect the discussion that took place;
- c) The graph shown at Figure 1 in the report should be altered to show a percentage figure on the y axes;
- d) All changes to the wording of the report, as discussed, should be made by the Scrutiny Officer;
- e) The Chairman should meet with the Scrutiny Officer to agree the changes to the report;
- f) The report should be circulated to Members via email for final approval; and
- g) Following the agreed amendments being made to the report, the Committee approves the report for submission to the appropriate Cabinet Member and external bodies.

150. Work Programming 2012-13

The Committee considered the Work Programme for the next Municipal Year. Members put forward the following topics for review in 2012-13:

- Town Centre Economy/Night Time Economy;
- Road Closures;
- Securing Water Supplies/Climate Change;
- The Value of the Arts (Arts and Culture);
- CCTV (revisited); and
- Trial speed increase on the M20 to 80mph.

151. Duration of Meeting

6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.