

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 15 JANUARY  
2013**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mrs Blackmore (Chairman), Brindle,  
Mrs Joy, D Mortimer, McLoughlin, Munford,  
Mrs Parvin, Vizzard and de Wiggondene

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

It was resolved that all items be web-cast.

**68. Apologies.**

There were no apologies for absence.

**69. Notification of Substitute Members.**

There were no Substitute Members.

**70. Notification of Visiting Members.**

There were no Visiting Members.

**71. Disclosures by Members and Officers.**

There were no disclosures.

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

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

**73. Minutes of the meetings held on 20 November 2012 and 21 November 2012.**

It was resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on 20 November and 21 November 2012 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed.

**74. Proposal for Community Halls in Maidstone.**

Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships manager provided an overview of the report and proposal for community halls. She explained that an audit of community halls had been undertaken across the borough to establish who was responsible for their running. Members were informed that they

were then mapped to enable the future planning and provision of community halls from section 106 agreements and community infrastructure levy contributions (CILs). The Committee were asked to consider community halls under the control of Maidstone Borough Council and the potential for community asset transfer, including the draft procedure and paperwork for facilitating this as part of the consultation.

Members queried who had been consulted as part of the consultation and what the responses had been, requesting that this information be circulated to the Committee.

The Committee felt that the practicalities checklist, on page 4 of the 'Community Asset Transfer and Expressions of Interest Form', should include an asbestos check and section 5, 'What skills does your group/organisation have', on page 7 of the document should be bigger so that all relevant information could be included.

In response to Members' questions it was clarified that Heather House and Fant Hall had been identified in the audit of community halls as being under the control of the borough. The Committee was informed that the pilot Park Wood neighbourhood action plan/Planning for real process had identified interest by a residents group in taking over the running of Heather House.

The Committee requested the following information:

- Information relating to Heather House from the pilot Park Wood neighbourhood action plan/Planning for Real process;
- Usage figures for Heather House and Fant Hall; who uses the facility and how often?; and
- Details of who would be involved in the asset transfer working group.

**It was recommended that:**

- a) The practicalities checklist on page 4 of the Community Asset Transfer and Expressions of Interest Form should include an asbestos check;
- b) The results of the consultation on Community Halls and clarification on who was consulted be provided to the Committee;
- c) Section 5, What skills does your group/organisation have, on page 7 of the document should be made bigger so that all relevant information could be included;
- d) The proposal for community halls in Maidstone be approved by this Committee going forward; and
- e) The following information be provided:
  - i. Information relating to Heather House from the Park Wood neighbourhood action plan/Planning for Real process
  - ii. Usage figures Heather House and Fant Hall; who uses the facility and how often?; and
  - iii. Details of who would be involved in the asset transfer working group.

## **75. Maidstone Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-2018.**

Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager provided an overview of the Community Safety Partnership Plan. It was explained that it was a five year plan, underpinned by the strategic assessment undertaken. The Plan set out 4 priorities for Maidstone:

- Antisocial behaviour;
- Domestic Abuse;
- Road Safety (killed or seriously injured); and
- Reducing reoffending.

In response to Members questions it was explained that the biggest issue currently being faced was funding. It was estimated that funding for 2013/14 would be similar to the last, but much reduced, Home Office allocation of £46,000. Reference was made to the recent Police Crime Commissioners election and the plan's role in demonstrating what was important for Maidstone.

It was noted by the Committee that the plan was much shorter and more succinct than its predecessors. It was explained that Community Safety Partnership Plan was the most read plan by residents. Members recommended that the strategic assessment be circulated to it, to provide a background to the plan.

The Committee considered section five of the plan which set out a series of actions through which the priorities supporting the Community Safety Plan would be delivered. The action plan included the lead agencies responsible for delivering the outcomes. Two members of the Committee, involved with two of the lead agencies listed, expressed that they had no prior knowledge of their agency's commitment to the actions listed. This raised questions about communication between the Safer Maidstone Partnership (SMP) and the agencies involved. It was clarified that SMP was a statutory body and representatives from lead agencies had agreed the plan and signed it off. It was agreed that the minutes of the last two meetings of the SMP would be circulated to the Committee to help allay any concerns.

The Committee felt that a visit to the Community Safety Unit at Maidstone House which housed a number of agencies would be beneficial to its role.

### **It was resolved that:**

- a) The strategic assessment be circulated to the Committee to provide a background to the Maidstone Community Safety Partnership Plan 2013-2018;
- b) The minutes of the last two meetings of the SMP be circulated to the Committee; and
- c) A visit to the Community Safety Unit at Maidstone House be arranged for Members.

## **76. Future Work Programme.**

The Committee considered its future work programme and the list of forthcoming decisions.

It was agreed that at its next meeting the Committee would meet as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee, inviting the Police Crime Commissioner and other relevant partners to discuss the priorities for Maidstone as set out in the Safer Maidstone Partnership's five year plan.

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## **77. Duration of Meeting.**

6.30 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.