

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2014

Present: Councillor Mrs Blackmore (Chairman), and
Councillors Burton, Greer, McLoughlin, Perry and
Mrs Ring

Also Present: Councillors Chittenden, Derek Mortimer and
Newton

76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

77. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman stated that in her opinion Agenda Item 8 which related to a Petition concerning the Loose Valley Conservation Area should be taken as an urgent item.

78. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Derek Mortimer attended the meeting to present a Petition relating to the Loose Valley Conservation Area.

Councillor Chittenden attended the meeting as an observer but indicated his interest in Agenda Item 9.

Councillor Newton attended the meeting as an observer but indicated his interest in Agenda Item 9.

79. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

80. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All Cabinet Members stated that they had been lobbied in regard to Agenda Item 13 – Budget Strategy 2015-16 Onwards Revenue specifically relating to Appendix B (Parish Precepts), although Councillor Mrs Ring indicated that she had only been lobbied at Full Council.

81. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That Agenda Item 15 be taken in private as proposed.

82. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2014

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

The Chief Executive, by way of an update to the minutes relating to Minute Item 73 – Report of the Head of Policy and Communications – Mid Year Strategic Plan Performance Update 2014/15 gave an update on the performance of the Planning Shared Service.

It was noted that since the new arrangements were introduced in June 2014 performance has been improving, for example:-

Planning Application Validations - during December validations have been completed within 6/8 days (dependent on the type of application), the target is 5 days.

Outcomes for determination of Planning Applications:-

2 nd Quarter	-	80% Majors
	-	50% Minors
	-	70% Other

New Planning Enforcement Cases – Quarter 2 – 50% were acknowledged within one day. December figures are showing 80%.

21 days for action and inspection – 97% in Quarter 2, December figures are showing 100%

Appeals Success – Quarter 2 – 60%
December – just over 60%

Members acknowledged the progress to date and asked for this to be a regular agenda item in order that performance can be closely assessed.

83. PETITION

Councillor Derek Mortimer presented a Petition on behalf of local residents who live on the edge of the Loose Valley, which is an area known for its beauty and special landscaping.

Councillor Mortimer made reference to the following:

- * any new development within the Loose Valley Conservation Area would have an impact on bio-diversity and ecology and therefore there was a need to create a buffer for the Valley from development;
- * an area within Hayle Park has recently been established as a Nature Reserve;
- * there are already major traffic problems along the Loose Road and

poor air quality hotspots, any further development would have a major impact on the already congested roads;

- * Neighbourhood Plans have been produced by Tovil Parish Council and the North Loose Residents Association which all ask for no development within the conservation area;

The Chairman thanked Councillor Mortimer for presenting his petition and advised that all comments and representations made on the Local Plan would be taken into account. She advised him that the Planning, Transport & Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be receiving a report on the potential sites for development at its meeting on 20th January 2015 and would be making recommendations to a Special Cabinet Meeting on 28th January 2015.

84. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - MOTION - WATERSIDE PARK - 14/501895 (J8) DECISION

Cabinet considered a Reference from Council in relation to a motion put forward by Councillor Harper which made reference to the impact on employment opportunities that the decision to refuse planning permission for the Waterside Park Junction 8 site has had.

RESOLVED: Cabinet considered and responded to the Motion from Council which made reference to employment opportunities in Maidstone. It was noted that the draft Economic Development Strategy was out for consultation and the results would not be made available until the end of January 2015. They would then be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committees and recommendations would be made to Cabinet on 11 February 2015.

85. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND COMMUNITIES - COUNCIL TAX 2015 16 COLLECTION FUND ADJUSTMENTS

Members considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities relating to the 2015-16 Collection Fund Adjustment.

DECISION MADE:

- (a) That the council tax projection detailed in the report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities be agreed and as a result the distribution of the surplus set out in paragraph 1.4.5 of the report be agreed as follows:

Preceptor	£
Maidstone Borough Council	302,209
Kent County Council	1,270,007
Kent Police Authority	171,465
Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority	82,354
Total	1,826,034

- (b) That the business rates projection detailed in the report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities be agreed and as a result noted the distribution of the surplus set out in paragraph 1.5.4 of the report as follows:

Preceptor	£
Central Government (50%)	35,545
Maidstone Borough Council (40%)	28,436
Kent County Council (9%)	6,398
Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority (1%)	711
Total	71,089

For further information regarding this decision, please follow this link:
<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=886>

86. REPORT OF THE CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM - BUDGET STRATEGY 2015 16 ONWARDS - FEES & CHARGES

Members considered the report of Corporate Leadership Team relating to the Budget Strategy 2015-16 Onwards – Fees and Charges.

It was noted that the 2015-16 Estimate relating to Recycling and Refuse Collection in the table set out in paragraph 1.3.8 of the report should read £810,060.

Following an enquiry from a Member enquiring if there was scope to waive some charges when the Planning Service does not meet its target objectives in terms of processing planning applications, it was agreed that the Head of Planning and Development be asked to give his comments to the Cabinet Member concerned.

DECISION MADE:

That:

- (a) the proposed fees and charges for 2015/16 totalling an additional £76,300 as set out in Appendix A to the Report of the Head of Finance and Resources be approved;
- (b) the proposed changes to income budgets that occur as a consequence of the proposed fees and charges as set out in paragraph 1.3.8 to the report be approved; and
- (c) Officers be instructed to give further consideration to the charges and budgets for the parking and the development management services and report back to Cabinet in February on options that provide additional income from these services.

For further information regarding this decision, please follow this link:
<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=887>

87. REPORT OF CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM - BUDGET STRATEGY 2015 16 ONWARDS - CAPITAL

Members considered the report of Corporate Leadership Team relating to the Budget Strategy 2015-16 Onwards – Capital.

DECISION MADE:

That approval for consultation is given to:

- (a) the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy for capital, as set out in Appendix B to the report of Corporate Leadership Team;
- (b) the capital funding projection set out in Appendix C to the report; and
- (c) the proposed capital programme 2014/15 onwards set out in Appendix D to the report.

For further information regarding this decision, please follow this link:
<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=888>

88. REPORT OF CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM - BUDGET STRATEGY 2015 16 ONWARDS - REVENUE

Members considered the report of Corporate Leadership Team relating to the Budget Strategy 2015-16 Onwards – Revenue.

DECISION MADE:

That:

- (a) the provisional allocation of the local council tax support funding be agreed as set out in Appendix B to the report of Corporate Leadership Team and be notified to parish councils along with their tax base;
- (b) the revised strategic revenue projection be agreed as detailed in Appendix A to the report which incorporates the changes outlined in sections 1.7 to 1.9 of the report and amended to include £0.16m contribution to temporary accommodation costs in the housing service, resourced by an equivalent reduction in the local plan budget within planning policy be agreed;
- (c) the proposed savings as set out in Appendix C to the report be agreed;
- (d) the proposed use of earmarked reserves and the allocation of the general fund balances be agreed as set out in Appendix D to the report as amended to include an allocation to planning policy

for a maximum sum of £0.48m to allow for the completion of the local plan over a three year period;

- (e) the outcome from the completed consultation exercise and the impact on the budget strategy as set out in 1.13 to the report be noted; and
- (f) the work of the budget working group and formally consult Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the decisions arising from this report be noted.

For further information regarding this decision, please follow this link:

<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=891>

89. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE - DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2015/2020

Members considered the Report of the Chief Executive relating to the Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

DECISION MADE:

That the Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2020 be approved for consultation with Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to approval for submission to Council on 25 February 2015.

For further information regarding this decision, please follow this link:

<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=893>

90. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND SHARED SERVICE - ENTERPRISE HUB

Members considered the report of the Director of Environment and Shared Service relating to the Enterprise Hub.

DECISION MADE:

That:

- (a) expenditure up to the sum as set out in the Exempt Report of the Director of Environment and Shared Services to establish an enterprise hub on the first floor terrace of Maidstone House be agreed;
- (b) delegated authority is given to the Director of Environment and Shared Services to negotiate changes to the council's lease of the Gateway with the landlord, Capital and Regional to enable the enterprise hub to be delivered;

- (c) delegated authority is given to the Director of Environment and Shared Services to recommend the appointment of a contractor to the Head of Finance and Resources, selected via tender, for the refurbishment works;
- (d) delegated authority is given to the Director of Environment and Shared Services to make changes to the design, project programme and budget to ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget;
- (e) an initial progress report is presented after nine months of operation and a full review undertaken after 18 months into the success and progress of the Enterprise Hub; and
- (f) the Economic Development Unit in conjunction with the Property & Procurement Manager continues to look for suitable land and/or buildings for longer term Enterprise Hub solutions and subject to the review in (e) above, report back with fully costed options as appropriate.

For further information regarding this decision, please follow this link:

<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=894>

91. DURATION OF MEETING

6.38 p.m. to 8.40 p.m.