

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the

## MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL



Date: Wednesday 17 September 2014

Time: 6.30 p.m.

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,  
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Thick (The Mayor), Ash, Black,  
Mrs Blackmore, Burton, Butler,  
Chittenden, Collins, Cox, Cuming,  
Daley, Edwards-Daem, Ells, English,  
Fissenden, Garland, Mrs Gooch, Greer,  
Mrs Grigg, Harper, Harwood,  
Mrs Hinder, Hogg, Mrs Joy, Long,  
McKay, McLoughlin, Moriarty,  
B Mortimer, D Mortimer, Munford,  
Naghi, Newton, Paine, Parvin,  
Mrs Parvin, Paterson, Perry, Pickett,  
Powell, Mrs Ring, Mrs Robertson,  
Ross, Round, Sams, Sargeant,  
Springett, Mrs Stockell, Vizzard,  
B Watson, P Watson, de Wiggondene,  
Willis, J.A. Wilson and Mrs Wilson

Continued Over/:

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**Issued on 9 September 2014**

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEBBIE SNOOK on 01622 602030**. To find out more about the work of the Council, please visit [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)

*Alison Broom*

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,  
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ**

1. Prayers
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Dispensations (if any)
4. Disclosures by Members and Officers
5. Disclosures of Lobbying
6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.
7. Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough Council held on 23 July 2014 1 - 8
8. Mayor's Announcements
9. Petitions
  - (1) Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We, the undersigned, being either residents, working in, or having an association with Lenham, call upon Maidstone Borough Council to stop its decision to consider Lenham as being a suitable Parish to accommodate 1500 homes.

We believe that, what to all intent and purposes is creating another village size development within the Parish, would have a devastating effect on the local community.

We call upon Maidstone Borough Council to have a fair and even dispersal policy for housing throughout the Borough.
  - (2) Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

This petition is organised by residents of Headcorn

No to irresponsible building and urbanisation in Headcorn; ignoring local voters and contradicting the neighbourhood plan, ignoring the inadequate road infrastructure and road capacity, ignoring the adverse impact of traffic on village life and residents' safety, ignoring inadequate sewer capacity, ignoring serious flood risk, ignoring that the school is oversubscribed and promoting the destruction of village life.
10. Question and Answer Session for Members of the Public

11. Questions from Members of the Council to the
  - (a) Leader of the Council
  - (b) Cabinet Members
  - (c) Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Committees
  - (d) Chairmen of other Committees
12. Current Issues - Report of the Leader of the Council, Response of the Group Leaders and Questions from Council Members
13. Joint Report of the Licensing Committee and the Licensing Act 2003 Committee held on 4 August 2014 - Proposed Amalgamation of the Licensing Committee and Licensing Act 2003 Committee 9
14. Oral Report of the Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 9 September 2014 (if any)
15. Oral Report of the Cabinet to be held on 10 September 2014 (if any)
16. Oral Report of the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 15 September 2014 (if any)
17. Oral Report of the Audit Committee to be held on 15 September 2014 (if any)
18. Oral Report of the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 16 September 2014 (if any)
19. Notice of the following Motion has been given by Councillor Harper:

Over-Development of Inner Maidstone

Pressures for development exist all over the town and Borough of Maidstone. There are considerable concerns by residents of Fant Ward about the conversion of houses to multiple occupancy properties. The concerns relate to issues such as over density, overcrowding, lack of amenity space, problems of parking where small terraced houses are sub divided and general environmental impact.

At the July 2014 Council meeting Mr Elliot Dean asked a question on the over-development of Inner Maidstone and all the Council Groups agreed that this was a matter of concern.

The Council notes these concerns and requests that this issue be addressed in the Local Plan. For these purposes "Inner Maidstone" can be defined as Fant, High Street, Bridge and North Wards. Policies should be prepared to prevent or discourage conversion of housing to multiple occupancies in areas of already high population density. The Council requests that the Officers report back progress to the next meeting.

20. Notice of the following Motion has been given by Councillor Harper:

Cycling Safety and the Gyratory System

The Council notes the proposal by Kent County Council to redevelop the gyratory system around the two Medway bridges; it also notes that it is proposed to remove the current cycle track over St Peters Bridge. The gyratory system in its current format is a major deterrent to the development of cycling in Maidstone. This Council requests Kent County Council to ensure that any redevelopment of the gyratory system incorporates measures to improve the safety of cycling in the town centre. A report on progress should be made to the next Council Meeting.

21. Notice of the following Motion has been given by Councillor Harper:

Bedroom Tax

The impact of Welfare Reforms around social housing tenants with the so called additional living space over a quota (the Bedroom Tax) is socially and morally divisive and unfair. It seeks to punish the poor and families with members with disabilities through withdrawing housing benefit. The impact is being felt throughout the UK and in Maidstone. Increasing numbers of families are as a result of these changes either being forced to move to smaller accommodation, often outside the community they live in, and where their social networks and support are, or are threatened with facing eviction.

In Maidstone at the same time there are tenants who independently want to downsize their social housing needs who are effectively being blocked by the requirement to go into a competitive bidding process for available accommodation.

This Council resolves to:

1. Review the Housing Allocation Policy to give social housing tenants who voluntarily want to downsize accommodation, priority to move to smaller accommodation, thus freeing up larger properties for families.
2. Do all it can within the Council's legal powers to minimise the impact of the Bedroom Tax on families where there may be short term absences and also people with disabilities where additional bedrooms may be required due to a person's disabilities.
3. Actively campaign to seek a change in national legislation to repeal the Bedroom Tax.
4. Report back to the next Council meeting on the implementation of measures 1 – 3 above.

22. Notice of the following Motion has been given by Councillor Hogg:

Whole Council Elections

This Council believes that we should always give our residents value for their money. Residents should also have confidence that their vote counts for something by giving it maximum impact at election time.

This Council also believes that turnout at Borough Council elections is currently low, and part of that apathy is due to having elections every single year.

The Council notes that when the public were asked back in 2011, approximately 22,900 people (71% of the overall vote) requested that we move away from electing Councillors in thirds, and move to one election every 4 years.

Therefore, Maidstone Borough Council should honour the wishes of our residents and move to 4 yearly Borough elections. This will encourage the people of the Borough to get involved and will reduce the amount of taxpayers' money spent running elections every year, potentially saving the residents of this Borough up to £200,000 which in return could be spent on maintaining services for our residents or helping to carry out a project in the Borough so to improve our County Town for them.

23. Notice of the following Motion has been given by Councillors Mrs Wilson, Harwood, Chittenden, Mrs Grigg, Paterson, D Mortimer, B Mortimer and Pickett:

Change to Governance Arrangements

In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, this Council believes that a modernised committee system would be an appropriate system of governance for Maidstone and hereby resolves to introduce this system from the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

In order to bring forward a full and detailed scheme of committee governance, the Council authorises all Group Leaders (as defined in the updated Widdecombe report 2005) or their nominated representative to meet and discuss proposals to implement the Council's decision and report back to Full Council for final decision at the scheduled meeting on 10 December 2014.

24. Report of the Head of Policy and Communications - Review of Allocation of Seats on Committees

25. Appointment of the following Committees:
- (a) Overview and Scrutiny Committees:
    - Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services
    - Economic and Commercial Development
    - Planning, Transport and Development
    - Community, Environment and Housing
  - (b) Planning Committee
  - (c) Licensing Committee and Licensing Act 2003 Committee  
OR Licensing Committee
  - (d) Member and Employment and Development Panel
  - (e) Joint Transportation Board
  - (f) General Purposes Group
  - (g) Standards Committee
  - (h) Planning Referrals Committee
  - (i) Audit Committee

26. Report of the Chief Executive - Appointment of Monitoring Officer

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**NOTICE IS GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 17 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989 THAT ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES OUTSIDE THE USUAL POLITICAL BALANCE REQUIREMENTS MAY BE CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO AGENDA ITEMS 23 AND 24 .**