

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Economic and Commercial Development Overview & Scrutiny
Committee**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 DECEMBER
2014**

Present: Councillor Paterson (Chairman), and
Councillors Butler, Cuming, Powell, Round and
Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Hogg and Ross

89. THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER WHETHER ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA SHOULD BE WEBCAST

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be webcast.

90. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from Councillors Harper, Hinder and Fissenden. Councillor Hogg sent apologies for lateness.

91. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Round was present as a substitute for Councillor Hinder. Councillor Ross was present as a substitute for Councillor Hogg, until Councillor Hogg arrived at 18:34.

92. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

93. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

94. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED: That items on Part II of the agenda be taken in private as proposed.

95. MINUTES (PART I) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2014

RESOLVED: That the minutes (part I) of the meeting held on 25 November 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

96. DRAFT TWILIGHT ECONOMY REVIEW REPORT

The Chairman introduced the draft Twilight Economy Review Report. Following the introduction Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer, explained that this was the first draft of the Twilight Economy Review Report and it was being presented to the committee for suggested changes to the wording of the text and recommendations.

The following changes were suggested by the committee:

- A new recommendation inserted after Recommendation 4, expanding upon the theme of a 'champion' for the Twilight Economy;
- The section on achieving BID status should be more robust, with a greater emphasis on how impressed the committee were with the Canterbury Connected BID;
- It was mentioned that the Planning Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee had visited a different BID (in Croydon) and had been impressed with the initiative. The committee felt this should be mentioned in the report;
- The section on achieving BID status should make it clear that achieving BID status would provide a boost not just to the Twilight Economy, but all Maidstone Town Centre businesses;
- Recommendation 5 should read 'investigate costs and possibility'; and
- There should be a separate recommendation after recommendation 7 to refer the issue of the interaction between Park and Ride sites and local bus services in the evening to the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration in the Integrated Transport Strategy.

Mr Bailey explained to the committee that he had conducted some research on local bus services serving Park and Ride sites in the evening, and the only service he could find that served a park and ride site was the 71. This service served the Park and Ride site on London Road. The last bus for this service was at about 2310. Mr Bailey suggested that he could update Recommendation 7 so that it specifically mentions the Park and Ride site on London Road.

RESOLVED: That the changes outlined above be incorporated in the Twilight Economy Review report, and the final draft be presented to the committee at the meeting on 27 January for final changes and sign off.

97. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Mr Bailey introduced the Future Work Programme.

Mr Bailey reminded members that there was a scoping meeting for a possible review of Skills and Employability on 5 January 2015. This meeting would take place at 18:30 in the Town Hall Committee Room. Karen Franek, Abi Lewis and Dawn Hudd had all confirmed that they would be available to attend.

Mr Bailey explained that a representative from Town Centre Management's Night Time Economy Forum had forwarded a particular concern to the Chairman. The concern was that enforcement action had been taken against a bar for using speakers outside. Whilst this current enforcement issue could not be discussed, and the forum recognised this individual issue was a matter between the proprietor of the bar and the council's Enforcement and Licensing teams, the forum were concerned that similar action may be taken against other Night Time Economy venues in the Town Centre. This could be detrimental to the Night Time Economy as the music, although at a low enough volume to hear conversation, sets the store for what the venues are offering their customers and is standard practice in the Night Time Economy for creating atmosphere.

The committee discussed this, and recognised that the enforcement issue was not within its terms of reference. However the issue of whether having a vibrant Night Time Economy was compatible with having more people living in the Town Centre was considered as being within its terms of reference. Therefore it was suggested that this item be considered at the meeting in January, so that recommendations could be made to be incorporated into the Town Centre Visioning exercise that was being carried out by the Economic Development Team. Within this the issue of outside speakers could be considered, with the aim of recommending action that would help businesses whilst also showing consideration for residents. For this item, representatives from the Economic Development Team, the Environmental Enforcement Team and Town Centre Management or the Night Time Economy Forum should be invited.

Mr Bailey confirmed that the final Twilight Economy Review Report, incorporating the changes suggested by the committee, would be presented to the committee at the meeting in January.

RESOLVED: That an item on the compatibility of the Night Time Economy with having a greater number of residents living in the Town Centre be scheduled for the January meeting.

98. MINUTES (PART II) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2014

RESOLVED: That the minutes (part II) of the meeting held on 25 November 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the following change: that the word 'asset'- located on the final bullet point on the Enterprise Hub item on page 2 of the minutes- be changed to 'facility'.

99. DURATION OF MEETING

18:32 to 19:16