AGENDA

SCRUTINY COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

MAIDSTONE
Borough Council

OSC

Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Wednesday 23 April 2014
Time: 9.30 am
Venue: 4th Floor Training Room, Maidstone House

Membership:

Councillors: Barned (Chairman), Mrs Blackmore, Mrs Gooch (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Grigg, Mrs Joy, McLoughlin, Paterson and Mrs Wilson

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 Christian Scade on 01622 602523** . To find out more about the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk/osc

Issued on 11 April 2014

Alison Broom

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

Agenda Item 4

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2014

Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, Mrs Joy, McLoughlin and Paterson

14. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Barned and Councillor Mrs Wilson.

15. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no notifications.

16. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS OR OFFICERS

There were no disclosures.

17. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2013 be received and approved and the Chairman be authorised to sign them.

18. GOVERNANCE REVIEW UPDATE

Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications, explained that in 2012/13 the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee had commissioned a small Member working group to undertake a review of the Council's corporate governance model.

In February 2013 full Council considered a report on models of governance and concluded that the Cabinet system should be retained with enhanced scrutiny. The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee were tasked with developing this model and in April 2013 the new model was approved by Council.

The Committee noted that the new system had been in place for ten months and the following issues were discussed:

- The low response rate from Members to the Scrutiny Survey (2014)
  - It was suggested that hard copies of the survey should be made available to all Members at the next full Council meeting
- Findings from the Scrutiny Survey (2014)
- Progress that had been made with the recommendations for improvement

- The use of agenda planning meetings to develop the future work programme
- Developing briefing papers to highlight key lines of enquiry / questions for each agenda item
- The possibility of including a "Members' Question Sheet" as part of the paperwork for each agenda item to help Committee Members prepare for meetings
- Providing feedback forms at each Committee meeting to gather feedback from those in attendance
- The need for a glossary of acronyms and terminology and a Frequently Asked Questions list
- The recent amendment to the Constitution, agreed by Council in December 2013, concerning Visiting Members at Committee Meetings
- Cabinet Member Decision Notices

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that:

a) Hard copies of the Scrutiny Survey (2014) should be made available to all Members at the next full Council meeting;

b) Officers from the Policy and Information Team should work with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny to develop briefing papers to highlight key lines of enquiry / questions for each agenda item;

c) A "Members' Question Sheet" should be included in the paperwork for each agenda item to help Members prepare for scrutiny meetings;

d) Feedback forms should be made available at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting as a way to gather feedback from those in attendance;

e) The Head of Policy and Communications be recommended to develop a glossary of acronyms and terminology and a Frequently Asked Questions list be made available to all Members. These documents should be prepared, and circulated, as soon as possible to ensure this information was available for new members following the elections in May 2014;

f) The Head of Policy and Communications be recommended to discuss "Recommendation O" with Cabinet Members to establish why the views of other Members had not been included in notices for Cabinet Member Decisions.

19. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS (SCRAIPS)

On the 28 November 2013 the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee agreed that a) The Chairman and Vice Chairman from each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should review the Scrutiny Committee Action Implementation Plans (SCRAIPs) for reviews carried out by their Committee since 2008; and that b) Following their investigations an update should be provided, by each Committee Chairman, at the next Scrutiny Coordinating Committee meeting

The following issues were discussed:

- Rules of the constitution including deadlines for responses
- The follow up work that had been carried out by the Chairman and Vice Chairman from each Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to reviews that had been carried out since 2008
- Ways to monitor future Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action Plans
- Ensuring outstanding actions are followed up and monitored
- Work programme development

Following the research that Members of the Committee had carried out, in relation to monitoring outstanding actions, it was agreed that a blank SCRAIP template should be sent to Members of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee so they could record the progress that had been made against any outstanding actions.

In view of various suggestions that were made by Committee in relation to the monitoring of recommendations it was agreed that the Policy and Information Team should set up individual briefing sessions with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure the follow up work for each review/SCRAIP was appropriate.

It was agreed that the following issues should be discussed by each Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman:

- Agenda planning meetings
- SCRAIPs being a standard item on all Overview and Scrutiny Committee agendas
- Covalent – the Council's performance management and risk management software
- Updating the SCRAIP template (with a RAG status) so that it is clear whether further information, or review via Overview and Scrutiny Committee, is required
- Work programme development

RESOLVED: It was agreed that the Policy and Information Team should set up individual briefing sessions with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure appropriate follow up work for each review/SCRAIP.

20.   OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer, explained that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee was required to approve and co-ordinate an annual work programme.

The Committee agreed that each work programme should be realistic, relevant to Members and be able to be adequately resourced. It was also acknowledged that each work programme needed to be flexible to ensure additional issues could be scrutinised urgently.

The following issues were discussed in relation to developing the scrutiny work programme for 2014/15:

- The "marketplace" activities that took part at the start of the 2013/14 municipal year
- The importance of input from Cabinet Members and Officers
- Receiving suggestions from members of the public, community representatives and key stakeholders/partners including input from parish councils, Kent County Council, Ward Members, Community Wardens, Kent Police, statutory consultees, Voluntary Action Maidstone, and Disability Groups, amongst others.
- Ensuring an understanding of major pieces of work, applicable to each Committee's terms of reference, for the coming year
- Learning and development opportunities to ensure effective work programing and scoping of reviews
- Pre-decision scrutiny
- The use of social media
- Using the findings from the Residents' Survey and the possibility of setting up a sub-group / panel to help develop the scrutiny work programme
- Options for the June 2014 round of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings – the first round of scrutiny meetings in the 2014/15 Municipal Year

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that:

a) Rather than holding "marketplace" activities, the first round of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings in 2014/15 should include both a work-shop on effective work programming and input from Cabinet Members and Senior Officers to ensure a better understanding of major pieces of work, applicable to each Committee's terms of reference, and where scrutiny could add value;

b) An update on ways to develop an effective 2014/15 work programme, with options for the June 2014 round of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, be considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at their next meeting.

21.   FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered topics for inclusion in the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee's work programme for the 2013/14 Municipal Year and beyond.

The following issues were discussed:

- The Corporate Peer Challenge carried out by the Local Government Association in October 2013
- Building relationships between Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny
- Pre-decision scrutiny
- Development opportunities for newly elected Members
- The "Questioning / Challenging Skills" workshop, facilitated by the Parliamentary Outreach Service in January 2014
- Future development activities, including a session which had been prepared, in draft, by the Centre for Public Scrutiny
- Overview and Scrutiny work programme development and options for the June 2014 round of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings
- Opportunities for stakeholders / partners to influence the scrutiny work programme

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that:

c) The next Scrutiny Coordinating Committee meeting should take place in late April with the time and date to be confirmed outside of the meeting by the Senior Corporate Policy Officer;

d) An update on ways to develop an effective 2014/15 work programme, with options for the June 2014 round of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, be considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at their next meeting;

e) The development activity, prepared in draft by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, be re-written to have a clear focus on building relationships between Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny. The session should be interactive and tailored to meet the particular needs of Maidstone Borough Council;

f) An update on learning and development opportunities for Overview and Scrutiny (including for newly elected Members) be considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at their next meeting;

g) The findings from the Corporate Peer Challenge, carried out by the Local Government Association in October 2013, be circulated to Members of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee by the Head of Policy and Communications.

22.   DURATION OF MEETING

9.30am to 11.40am

Agenda Item 5

Maidstone Borough Council

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

Wednesday 23 April 2014

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Development

Report of: Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer

1. Introduction

1.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to create a work programme for the municipal year.

1.2 In February 2014 the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee agreed that rather than holding "marketplace" activities, the first round of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings in 2014/15 should include both a workshop on effective work programming / topic selection and input from Cabinet Members and Senior Officers to ensure a better understanding of major pieces of work to identify where scrutiny could add value.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee notes the report and provides feedback on the work that has taken place to develop an effective scrutiny work programme for 2014/15.

3. Background

3.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is required to approve and co-ordinate an annual work programme. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of each OSC have an important role to play in ensuring that time and resources are effectively and efficiently used.

3.2 The careful selection and prioritisation of work is essential if the scrutiny function is to be successful, achieve added value and retain credibility.

3.3 The breakdown below provides a useful summary and *aide memoire* on the role of scrutiny:

- *Holding to Account*

- *Policy Development*

- *Policy Review*

- *Performance Management*

- *External Scrutiny*

3.4   Each work programme should be realistic, relevant to Members and be able to be adequately resourced. They also need to be flexible to ensure they remain relevant and retain a degree of capacity to enable additional issues to be scrutinised urgently.

3.5   In addition to committee reports, scrutiny reviews are an important aspect of Overview and Scrutiny work, and provide opportunities to thoroughly investigate topics and to make improvements. This type of work should enable more robust and effective challenge and lead to better decision-making. In depth reviews should also help engage the public, and provide greater transparency and accountability.

3.6   To develop the scrutiny work programmes for 2014/15 Members of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee have agreed that, rather than holding "marketplace" activities, the first round of meetings in 2014/15 should include:

- A work-shop on effective work programming / topic selection

- Input from Cabinet Members and Senior Officers

- Suggestions from community representatives and key stakeholders

3.7   The Policy and Information Team have been working on each of these bullet points while the Communications Teams have developed a Communications Plan to encourage stakeholders to submit ideas for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15.

4.   Background Documents

4.1   None

Agenda Item 6

Maidstone Borough Council

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

Wednesday 23 April 2014

Cross Cutting Issues

Report of: Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer

1.   Introduction

1.1   The terms of reference for the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee includes developing mechanisms for addressing cross cutting issues and to prevent duplication in the work of individual committees.

2.   Recommendation

2.1   That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee:

(a)   Consider which Overview & Scrutiny Committee should follow up the Council as a Business? Review SCRAIP responses (attached at Appendix A);

(b)   Agree that there are no additional work programme issues that fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.   Matters Covering More Than One O&S Committee

3.1   The Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure was changed for the 2013-14 municipal year. As a result of the Governance Review, and the development of an Enhanced Scrutiny Model, the number of Committees increased from 3 to 4.

3.2   The terms of reference for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is outlined below:

Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services	Community, Leisure Services and Environment
Leader; and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services; & Cabinet Member for Environment
- Reviewing performance and ensuring appropriate action is identified and executed to remedy performance issues - Asset Management - Communications - Human Resources - Business Transformation and the Corporate Improvement Programme - Equalities - Democratic services - Scrutinising standards of governance and conduct are achieved throughout the business of the Council - Customer service - Corporate finance including regular budget monitoring - Information Technology including scrutiny of the shared service - Council Tax and Housing Benefit including the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service - Mid Kent Improvement Partnership - Democratic Services including electoral services and member services - Procurement, Property Services and Facilities Management	- Housing - Community Development - Community Safety (To act as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership OSC twice a year) - Safety In Action - Voluntary and Community Sectors - Health - Parks, open spaces and allotments including grounds maintenance - Leisure activities including sporting and recreational based activities and including services provided via the Maidstone Leisure Centre - Community engagement - Allocation and monitoring of grants - Air Quality - Contaminated Land - Water - Climate change - Licensing - Carbon Management - Local Biodiversity - Waste minimisation, recycling and collection - Cleansing services - Environmental Health services - Bereavement i.e. services provided from the cemetery and crematorium - Capital projects and programmes relevant to the portfolio - Cobtree Golf Course - Climate Change

Planning, Transport and Development	Economic and Commercial Development
Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development	Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development
• The Council's contribution to securing sustainable construction with respect to development in the borough. • Spatial planning including the Local Development Framework and other spatial planning documents including Development Plan Documents, Development Management policies and development briefs • Transport and Infrastructure (including Highways, Parking, Park and Ride and Public Transport) • Development Management including planning enforcement and land charges • Landscape and Conservation • Building Control	• Economic Development and Regeneration • Commercial Services Development • The Visitor Economy including the Hazlitt Arts Centre, Maidstone museums, tourism, the Kent Conference Bureau and Maidstone market. • Capital projects and programmes relevant to the portfolio including regeneration and public realm improvement schemes • Events and venues

3.3 From time to time, matters may arise which fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, state:

"In such instances, one of the relevant Committees may decide to establish a working group which can be made up of representatives from the appropriate committees. The Report will be considered by the appropriate committee following the opportunity of all other appropriate committees to comment, before it is forwarded to the Executive for a response.

Before submitting its findings to the Executive and/or Council for consideration, the report of the reviewing Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be considered by the other Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment. Those comments shall be incorporated into the report which is then sent to that body for consideration.

If a single committee decides to examine an issue that falls within the remit of another committee, its report shall be passed to the other relevant committee(s) for comment before its findings are submitted to the Executive and/or Council for consideration. Those comments shall be incorporated into the report which is then sent to that body for consideration."

3.4 The role of the Coordinating Committee is to review the work of the individual committees, to address overlap and identify opportunities for joint working.

3.5 On the 4ᵗʰ March 2014 the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services OSC received an update on the recommendations of the Council as a Business Review (attached at Appendix A).

3.6 The Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services OSC will receive an update in financial terms in October 2014 but agreed, given the cross cutting nature of the review, that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee should consider which Committee should follow up the SCRAIP responses (in full).

3.7 In addition, the work programme for each Committee is attached at Appendix B. The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee is asked to confirm that there are no additional work programmes issues that currently fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

4.1 The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will consider reports that deliver against all the Council's priorities: For Maidstone to have a growing economy, For Maidstone to be a decent place to live and Corporate and Customer Excellence.

4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will consider throughout the coming year.

5. Background Documents

5.1 None.

Maidstone Borough Council

**Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Tuesday 4 March 2014

Report prepared by Christian Scade

1. **The Council as a Business Review (Follow Up)**

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 The Committee to receive an update on the recommendations of the Council as a Business Review.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Policy and Communications

1.2.1 That the Committee note the current position with regard to the recommendations of the Council as a Business Review and consider whether a further update should be produced for consideration at a future meeting.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 At its meeting on 7 June 2011, the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a review that explored the financial restraints faced by the Council and how savings could be achieved in a more innovative manner.

1.3.2 The focus of the review diversified to include the evaluation of "businesslike" operations within the Council and opportunities that demonstrated a "businesslike" approach in the delivery of Council services and the use of Council assets.

1.3.3 The Committee carried out face to face questionnaires with residents at a public event and conducted formal and informal interviews with internal officers, local business people and other local authorities. A survey was designed and sent to all staff, Councillors and the public and calls for evidence were made via social media and the local press.

1.3.4 Members visited the Print Shop at Her Majesty's Prison, Maidstone to understand the working practice and ethos behind a public sector organisation competing with the private sector. The Committee also considered a wide range of desktop research and explored current thinking on public sector income generation.

1.3.5 Having considered the evidence, the Committee approved a wide range of recommendations for income generating opportunities, focusing on a business like attitude towards utilising the Council's assets.

1.3.6 The Committee's recommendations were considered by Cabinet in June 2012 while the current position is noted at **Appendix A**.

1.4   Alternative Action and Why Not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could decide not to consider whether any recommendations are outstanding but this would prevent the Committee from ensuring that important findings from the Review are not overlooked.

1.5   Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Council's Strategic Plan 2011-2015 lists "corporate and customer excellence" as key priorities. The recommendations, and action taken as a response, of the Council as a Business Review, contribute to the fulfilment of these objectives.

1.6.   Background Documents

1.6.1 None

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SCRAIP)

Report Title: The Council as a Business? Review

Report of Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Publication: 24 February 2014

Dates to report back to Committee:

Update	Date	Completed?	Note
1st			6 months after publication
2nd			12 months after publication
3rd			

Recommendation[1]	Cabinet Member[2]	Response[3]	Timetable[4]	Lead Officer[5]
1. That a cross party, Member led, budget working group be established and meet at the appropriate critical times in the budget making process;	Councillor Moss/Councillor Greer	The Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Budget Working Group is established and has been meeting.	Completed	Paul Riley
2. That procurement and legal sections are shared with outside organisations, especially within the	Cllr Moss	The Legal Services team is part of the MKIP shared service and would look to identify business opportunities as part of MKIP. The work of the procurement team	September 2014	Paul Riley

	public sector as a starting point from which a business section can be developed that can take on other businesses interests;		is being reviewed and any opportunities to generate income will be considered as part of that review.		
	3. That the Council set up a 'work hub' facility for small businesses utilising space that is not used in Maidstone House or the Gateway. Printing and other resources including mentoring in areas of in-house expertise could be provided for a fee;	Cllr Greer	This service will be provided via the proposed Enterprise Hub at 1 King Street as part of a wider project to support business start-up and provide business support. Heads of Terms are currently being negotiated with the landlord and the business plan and cash flow forecasts are being finalised.	September 2014	Dawn Hudd
	4. That an event organiser is sought and Mote Park is let for big festival events on a similar scale to the Radio 1	Cllr Greer	This recommendation will be addressed as part of the Maidstone Culture and Leisure (MCL) work programme. The business plan for MCL will be developed over the next six months and a new Festivals and	October 2014	Dawn Hudd

	Big Weekend. The viability of establishing an events team should be investigated;		Events Strategy is being drafted and will be consulted on shortly.		
	5. That the Council investigate the opportunity presented by the Environment Agency with the introduction of a compulsory 'boat MOT' called the BSS (Boat Safety Scheme). Existing staff could be trained to provide BSS checks, providing a service to boat owners, but also working to improve safety on the river;	Cllr Ring	Having investigated this opportunity, the knowledge and registration requirements are significant and as there are already fifteen examiners offering this service in Kent with two in Maidstone it is not consider worthwhile to pursue.	Completed	John Littlemore
	6. That the Council's evaluates its facilities and assets i.e. land and	Cllr Moss	The Council will be reviewing its Asset Management Plan and the commercial opportunities arising from the review will be identified	October 2014	Paul Riley/Dawn Hudd

	buildings with a view to hiring them out for future use to generate an income;		and evaluated to maximise income generation.		
7.	That the Council develops a marketing model for hiring out its assets and utilising empty space for advertising that includes fees and charges and terms and conditions of use. This should be advertised widely and information included on www.maidstone.gov.uk;	Cllr Greer	The Council's approach to commercialisation will include marketing and setting appropriate fees and charges.	October 2014	Dawn Hudd
8.	That the Council address the potential for hiring out the Town Hall in conjunction with events held in Jubilee Square;	Cllr Greer / Cllr Moss	The Council's approach to hiring out the Town Hall in conjunction with events will be addressed in the new Festivals and Events Strategy.	October 2014	Dawn Hudd

9. That the Willington Street Park and Ride Site, currently closed on Sundays, is rented out to a private organiser for Boot Fairs;	Cllr Paine	This has been considered in the past for all the park and ride sites and rejected for a number of reasons. However in view of the reduced demand for park and ride this will be considered again over the next three months.	March – June 2014	Jeff Kitson / Steve Goulette
10. That there is a renewed emphasis on what Maidstone has to offer in terms of Tourism to maximise its financial benefits to the borough; and	Cllr Greer	Significant work has been done on the Visit Maidstone website and social media channels and an app is available. The visitor offer will be further developed via MCL and the new Festival and Events Strategy.	October 2014	Dawn Hudd
11. That the Council finds a more cost effective way of charging for small fees ad fines so that the significant numbers of small amounts that are written off (e.g. stray dog fees) are reduced; and the	Cllr Moss	The current systems are considered to be as efficient as possible – these systems will continue to be monitored to identify any future opportunities to improve efficiency.	Completed	Zena Cooke / Paul Riley

Council is enabled to charge for all the statutory fees it is entitled to.				

Notes on the completion of SCRAIP

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[1] Report recommendations are listed as found in the report.

[2] Insert in this box the Cabinet Member whose portfolio the recommendation falls within.

[3] The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box either the acceptance or rejection of the recommendation.
> **If the recommendation is rejected** an explanation for its rejection should be provided. The 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes can be left blank
> **If the recommendation is accepted** an explanation of the action to be taken to implement the recommendation should be recorded in this box. Please also complete the 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes.

[4] The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box when the action in indicated in the previous box will be implemented.

[5] The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box the Officer responsible for the implementation of the action highlighted in the 'response' box.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2014

Present: Councillor Mrs Gooch (Chairman), and
Councillors Black, Butler, Mrs Grigg, Hotson,
D Mortimer, Nelson-Gracie, Mrs Parvin and Pickett

Also Present: Councillors Garland, Greer and Moss

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

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

109. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

110. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES

It was noted that Councillor Greer was in attendance as a witness in relation to Agenda Item 10 – The Council as a Business Review (follow up), Councillor Garland was in attendance as a witness in relation to Agenda Item 11 – The Capital Programme Review (follow up) and Councillor Moss was in attendance as a witness in relation to all Items on the Agenda.

111. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

112. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

113. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the Items on the Agenda be taken in public as proposed.

114. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2014

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

115. <u>REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2013 (QUARTER 3)</u>

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Policy and Communications regarding the Council's performance in dealing with complaints during October-December 2013 (Quarter 3).

The Research and Performance Officer, the Head of Planning and Development, the Mid Kent Planning Support Manager, the Parks and Leisure Services Manager and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services were in attendance to introduce the report and respond to comments raised by the Committee.

The Research and Performance Officer introduced the report asking the Committee to note the performance, particularly in relation to the compliments received by teams and individual officers within the Council and:-

   i. The high number of complaints received by Development Management this quarter
   ii. The high number of complaints that were responded to out of time for Development Management this quarter
   iii. The high number of complaints received by Parks and Leisure this quarter
   iv. The high number of stage 2 complaints received this quarter
   v. Improvements made as a result of complaints this quarter

In response to questions raised by Members of the Committee, the Head of Planning and Development explained that the number of submitted applications is increasing and a high proportion of those submitted are major applications. Also, there are currently vacancies for a Principal Planning Officer and a Development Manager, both of which were advertised in December. There were no suitable candidates for the Development Manager role (following 2 interviews) and although they did offer the position of Principal Planning Officer it was unfortunately not accepted due to the extra travel. In the meantime, two consultants have been brought in. It was noted that the number of Freedom of Information ("FOI") requests has increased dramatically.

The Head of Planning and Development informed the Committee that, as a Department, they need to re-prioritise the importance of complaints and general customer care.

The MKIP Planning Support Manager explained that they are in the process of setting up the Planning Support Shared Service which is due to be in place from 1 June 2014. Planning Support will take the first calls across all 3 Authorities. There is a programme of work leading up to 1 June 2014 and thereafter an improvement exercise. There is a programme of extensive training with the Contact Centre and setting customer care as a priority. A number of areas will be looked at and improvements made where required and as much of the process standardised where possible.

The Committee felt very strongly that they wanted to do all they can to help the Department and that it was important to attract the right calibre of candidate and get the vacant positions filled as a matter of urgency. They felt that in order to do this the Council should offer a market supplement (as has been done in the past) to ensure the package is attractive to the best candidates. They felt this would be of great benefit to the whole Department as they will have the experience and expertise required. It was therefore felt appropriate to send a recommendation to the Chief Executive to this effect.

A Member of the Committee mentioned that another Council in Kent charges for FOI requests and the Committee felt it was prudent for this option to be investigated at Maidstone.

The Parks and Leisure Services Manager addressed the Committee explaining the detail behind the complaints received with regard to the Social Festival held in Mote Park in September 2013.

In response to questions, the Parks and Leisure Services Manager confirmed:-

- that a de-brief with the organisers was held after the meeting;
- when measuring sound, it does not take into account the base level and therefore a restriction to the base level will be put in place for future events and that sound curtains around the event would help stop the noise travelling;

RESOLVED:

a)   That the performance in relation to complaints be noted, in particular:-

   i.   The high number of complaints received by Development Management this quarter
   ii.   The high number of complaints that were responded to out of time for Development Management this quarter
   iii. The high number of complaints received by Parks and Leisure this quarter
   iv.   The high number of stage 2 complaints received this quarter
   v.   Improvements made as a result of complaints this quarter

b)   That the compliments received by teams and individual officers within the Council be noted.

c)   That the Chief Executive be recommended to advertise for the positions of Development Manager and Principal Planning Officer offering a market supplement as a matter of urgency.

d)   That the Committee fully supports the various work programmes being undertaken for the MKIP Planning Support Shared Service and that the Customer Improvement Programme be prioritised and be

considered by this Committee at the earliest opportunity.

e)   That the Head of Policy and Communications give consideration to charging a fee for FOI requests.

f)   That the Parks and Leisure Services Manager be congratulated on the outstanding "The Social" event held in September 2013 and the Committee are pleased that action will be taken to control the base noise level for future events.

116.   QUARTER 3 KPI PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Policy and Communications setting out the progress made in the third quarter of 2013/14 for the Council's key performance indicators ("KPIs").

In response to questions, the Committee were informed that:-

- the level of short term sickness was 2.5 days (as opposed to 9 days which included long term sickness);
- the new website has a lot less pages then the previous one and therefore the process is much simpler. Also there are more active pages where customers can request services and information and this has seen an increase;
- £9,000 has just been approved to pay for the website to be flexible so that it can re-configure itself to the size of screen being used;
- The number of indicators (too many or not enough?) will be considered at the workshop being held on 5 March 2014;

RESOLVED:

a)   That the out-turns of the KPIs be noted;

b)   That the following additional indicators that are unlikely to achieve the annual target (by more than 10%) be noted:

-   E&S 001 – Work experience placements delivered across the council;
-   E&S 002 – Number of employers that have engaged with NEETs;
-   HSG 005 – Number of households prevented from becoming homeless through intervention of housing advice;
-   CTC 001 – Average wait time for calls to the contact centre
-   PIT 002 – Satisfaction with complaint handling;
-   CTC 004 – Proportion of avoidable contact;
-   BIM 003abc – Percentage of customer contacts made a) in person, b) online, c) by phone;
-   BIM 004- Reduction in the number of out-going post items;
-   WCN 006 – Missed bins (per 100,000 collections); and

c)   That the review of performance indicators that will be undertaken by the Head of Policy & Communications and the Performance and

Scrutiny Officer with Overview and Scrutiny Members as part of the refreshed Strategic Plan be noted.

117. THE COUNCIL AS A BUSINESS REVIEW (FOLLOW UP)

The Committee considered the responses received to the SCRAIP regarding The Council as a Business review undertaken by the Committee previously.

The Head of Finance and Resources, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and the Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development were in attendance to respond to questions raised by the Committee.

In response to questions by Members, the Head of Finance and Resources and the Cabinet Members informed the Committee that:-

- The new Commercial and Economic Development Department is now fully staffed;
- A Festival and Events Policy is being prepared with a vision to develop a festival and event programme to make Maidstone a lively and vibrant place to live, work and visit ;
- The new Head of Commercial and Economic Development does have a large remit but the timescale of October 2014 is felt to be realistic;
- There will be an update in October, in financial terms, following the work of the Budget Working Group;
- The Town Hall is included in the draft policy to make it financially viable;
- A report is due to be published shortly regarding the re-organisation of Legal Services following it becoming part of MKIP; and
- The proposed business hub at the old Post Office premises is being re-assessed as KCC have now informed us that grants are no longer available;

The Committee raised concerns regarding the following:-

- The lack of explanation as to why Willington Street Park & Ride was not felt suitable to hold Boot Fairs on a Sunday;
- The remit of this review now falls outside of the Committee and how is it going to be monitored on overall progression

RESOLVED: That the current position be noted and:-

a) That the Committee receive an update in financial terms in October 2014.
b) That the Parking Services Manager provides explanatory information on why the Willington Street Park & Ride site is not to be used for boot fairs; and
c) That the Scrutiny Co-Ordinating Committee be requested to consider which Overview & Scrutiny Committee should follow up the Council as a Business? Review SCRAIP responses.

118. THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW (FOLLOW UP)

The Committee considered the responses to the SCRAIP with regard to the Capital Programme Review previously undertaken by the Committee.

The Head of Finance and Resources, the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services were in attendance to respond to questions raised by the Committee.

The Head of Finance and Resources thanked the Committee for their immensely helpful support over the last year on the budget strategy and that he hoped a similar level of engagement would be possible for the coming year.

The Leader of the Council stated that the capital programme is there to deliver the objectives of the Council, which is robust and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan has to be put in place.

The Chairman stated that the Committee recognised how helpful it was to be involved through the Budget Working Party this year. However, as the membership of the Committee for 2014/15 will not be agreed until the Annual Council Meeting in June, it was difficult for this Committee to make a commitment before then.

It was suggested that at the first meeting of the Committee in the new Municipal Year a proposal is put forward for them to take part in the Budget Scrutiny with options on a programme of work in consultation with the Head of Finance and Resources.

RESOLVED:

a)   That the current position with regard to the recommendations of the Capital Programme Review be noted; and

b)   That a proposal regarding Budget Scrutiny, with options of a work programme, be brought to the June 2014 meeting for consideration.

119. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the future work programme.

The Chairman was grateful to the MKIP Programme Manager for the explanatory email sent to all Members of the Committee regarding the current position in relation to the MKIP Governance Review and proposed that Maidstone hold their own meeting to consider this before meeting with the Scrutiny Committees of Tunbridge Wells and Swale.

A Member raised the issue of the future of Maidstone House and concern was expressed at the lack of progress. It was proposed that the Director of Environment and Shared Services be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee in May to update them on the current situation.

RESOLVED:

a)   That a separate Meeting of the Committee be arranged for w/c 7 or 14 April 2014 at 10am to consider the MKIP Governance Review and that the MKIP Programme Manager be invited to attend.

b)   That the Director of Environment and Shared Services be invited to attend the Meeting on 6 May 2014 to update the Committee on the progress of the future of Maidstone House.

120. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.52 p.m.

Community, Leisure Services & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013-14

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
11 June 2013	- Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman - Work programming workshop - Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year	- Appoint Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2013-14 - Ascertain work plan for the year and strategic direction for the Council & Select and develop review topics focusing on achievable outcomes.
16 July 2013	- Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year - Draft report: Approval of a new Play Area Strategic Standard	- To consider the Cabinet Update and make recommendations as appropriate - To consider the report and make recommendations as appropriate
13 August 2013	- CCTV Protocol - Eco Pilot - Draft Health Inequalities Action Plan	To consider the report and make recommendations as appropriate
10 September 2013	**Health Inequalities (Mental Health) Review**	To interview the witness invited to the meeting and participate in a 'act finding' discussion as part of evidence gathering for the review topic.
8 October 2013	**CANCELLED**	**CANCELLED**
29 October 2013	*Acting as the Crime & Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee* Mental Health and the Police and frontline services	The Committee will be acting as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee interviewing the witness invited to the meeting and participate in a 'fact finding' discussion as part of evidence gathering its review topic (Mental Health). Witnesses will include the Safer Maidstone Partnership.
12 November 2013	Homelessness Strategy Review	The Committee to consider the findings of the Homelessness Strategy Review, interviewing witnesses from a national and local level to establish the needs of Maidstone. The Committee will need to consider when the

		Homelessness Strategy will return to it, pre-decision, before its adoption.
10 December 2013	• **POSTPONED Pilot Street Triage Scheme – Health Inequalities (Mental Health) Review** • **UPDATE Eco Homes Pilot**	• To interview the Mental Health nursing staff and Police Officers involved in the pilot scheme. To establish the positive outcomes of the scheme and any gaps that have been identified. • To consider the update from officers, making recommendations as appropriate.
14 January 2014	• Draft Play Areas Strategy INFORMATION UPDATE: Health Inequalities (Mental Health) Review – follow up interviews with the Clinical Commissioning Group. To take place on 30 January at 7pm (Town Hall, Room B).	• To consider the report and make recommendations as appropriate
11 February 2014	*Acting as the Crime & Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee* *Topic: Road Safety – to consider in relation to the KCC Consultation - Road Casualty Reduction Strategy for Kent & Revisions and as a priority of the Safer Maidstone Partnership* *Maidstone Protocols for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Overview and Scrutiny – to consider proposed update*	

11 March 2014	- Air Quality Action Plan - Waste Strategy - Draft Homelessness Strategy (TBC) - Follow up on Scrutiny Waste Review and the new Waste Contract. - Mental Health Review – Final Report - Health Inequalities Action Plan	
8 April 2014	Evaluations of Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year	
13 May 2014		

Municipal Year 2014-15

Date	Items	
17 June 2014	• **Election of Chair and Vice Chair** • **Future Work Programme for 2014/15**	
15 July 2014	•	
12 August 2014	• **Acting as the Crime & Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee**	
9 September 2014	• **Update on Accessing Mental Health Before the Point of Crisis**	
14 October 2014	•	
11 November 2014	•	
9 December 2014	•	
13 January 2015	•	
10 February 2015	•	
10 March 2015	• **Annual refresh of the Health inequalities Action Plan**	
14 April 2015	•	

Suggestions received for 2014/15:
- **Older Persons Services**
  - **Information Services**
  - **Dementia care**
  - **Care home provision**
- **Welfare Reforms**
- **Night Time Economy**
- **Revisit Community Toileting Scheme**
  - **Is info on MBC web site updated?**
  - **How many organisations take part**
  - **How many new organisations taking part?**
  - **Potential sponsorship**
  - **RADAR facilities**
- **Update on Accessing Mental Health Before the Point of Crisis –**

- **Annual refresh of the Health Inequalities Action Plan – March 2015**   **September 2014**

Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013-14

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
18 June 2013	- Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman - Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year - Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment - Work Programming Workshop 2013-14	- Appoint Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2013-14 - Ascertain work plan for the year and strategic direction for the Council & Select and develop review topics focusing on achievable outcomes.
23 July 2013	**CANCELLED**	**CANCELLED**
20 August 2013	- Development Management Policies for Local Plan - Public Consultation Approach for the Maidstone Local Plan	To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
TRAINING 28 August 2013	PowerPoint presentation to explain the methodologies behind the SHMA/SLAA/SEDLAA and how the Sustainability Appraisal fits into the process	Background and preparation for the September and October meetings
17 September 2013	**SPECIAL MEETING** to act on the instruction of the extraordinary Council meeting on 2 September 2013 to the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee	The Committee to update Council on 18 September
26 September 2013	**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING.** A second, follow up meeting to hear further evidence from Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council and Maidstone to enable the committee to make a recommendation in response to Council's instruction.	To respond to Council's instruction.
15 October 2013	Infrastructure Delivery Plan	To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
19 November 2013	- Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy - Mid-Year Five Year Housing Land Supply - Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 2 Policies	To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.

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2 December 2013	**SPECIAL MEETING – DEFERRED ITEMS:** • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 2 Policies • Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy	• To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
17 December 2013	• Solar Farms	• To consider the report and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
21 January 2014	• Draft Integrated Transport Strategy – Vision and Objective • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft – Group 3 Policies • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy • Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13	• To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
18 February 2014	• Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) • Infrastructure Delivery Plan • Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (*Training to be scheduled before the meeting*)	
18 March 2014	• Cost Benefit Analysis of Maidstone Park and Ride (part of the Draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy)	
15 April 2014	• Evaluations of Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year • Planning Enforcement and admin under the new MKIP	

	arrangements (notify to all Councillors)	

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
May 2014	**Possible training session on Planning Enforcement (TBC)**	

2014-15 Municipal Year

9 June 2014	**Election of Chair and Vice Chair** **Results of further Call for Sites and proposed additional sites for inclusion in the Local Plan** **Forward Work Planning**	Review additional proposed sites and make recommendations
24 June 2014	**Leader and Cabinet Member priorities for 2014/15** **Update on the state of play with the ITS** **Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy** **Open Space Standards (possibly including the Action Plan)**	
22 July 2014		
19 August 2014		
16 September 2014		
30 September 2014	**Draft Local Plan and other reports – in preparation for next stage – Regulation 19**	
26 October 2014		

18 November 2014		

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
16 December 2014		
20 January 2015		
17 February 2015		
17 March 2015		
21 April 2015		

Strategic Leadership & Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013-14

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
4 June 2013	• Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Work programming workshop • Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year	• Appoint Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2013-14 • Ascertain work plan for the year and strategic direction for the Council & Select and develop review topics focusing on achievable outcomes
9 July 2013	• Proposals for use of 2012/13 Underspend • Annual Performance Plan	• To consider the proposals and make recommendations as appropriate • To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate
6 August 2013	• Commissioning and Procurement Strategy • 4th Quarter Complaints Reports and End of Year Review • Proposals for use of 2012/13 Underspend	• To consider the strategy and agree to going forward for decision • To consider the report and make recommendations as appropriate • To consider the proposals and make recommendations as appropriate
3 September 2013	• 1st quarter performance monitoring report • 1st quarter Complaints monitoring report • Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13 • **Mid Kent Improvement Partnership (MKIP) TBC**	• To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate • To consider the annual report making recommendations as appropriate for it to be seen by Council • **POSTPONED**
1 October 2013	• Budget Strategy 2014/15 Onwards – revenue • Budget Working Group Update • Budget Savings Workshop (to follow meeting)	• To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate • Workshop/Discussion
5 November 2013	• Mid Kent Improvement Partnership (MKIP)	• Presentation followed by a question and answers

		session to enable the Committee to make a recommendation to include MKIP in its future work programme
3 December 2013	• Recommendations from the Budget Savings Workshop • 2nd quarter performance monitoring report (Mid-year Strategic Plan Performance Report) • 2nd quarter complaints monitoring report	• To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate
7 January 2014	• Strategic Plan refresh • Corporate Improvement Plan refresh • Budget Strategy(Capital, Revenue and Fees and Charges) • Policy for the use of Bankruptcy Proceeding (POSTPONED)	• To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate
4 February 2014	• Local Council Tax Support Scheme • MKIP Environmental Health Model	• To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate
4 March 2014	• 3rd quarter Complaints monitoring report • 3rd quarter performance monitoring report • Follow up on past reviews and recommendations (The Council as a Business & The Capital Programme Reviews)	
1 April 2014	• Evaluations of Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year • Communication and Engagement Strategy • Residents' Survey	
15 April 2014 at 10.00am	• MKiP "Special Meeting"	To consider MKiPs current programme status and next steps. MKiP Programme Manager to be invited to attend.
6 May 2014	• Use of Revenue Underspend • The Future of Maidstone House	• Update Report from Paul Riley • Interview with David Edwards

Appendix Bc

Future Items

- **Budget Scrutiny Proposals – 10th June 2014 (Paul Riley / Christian Scade)**
- **Equalities Objectives – 10th June 2014 (TBC by Clare Wood)**
- **The Council as a Business – Update in Financial Terms – 7 October 2014**
  - Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to consider (April 2014) which Overview & Scrutiny Committee should follow up the Council as a Business? Review SCRAIP responses

Economic & Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013-14

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
25 June 2013	• Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year • Work Programming Workshop 2013-14	• Appoint Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2013-14 • Ascertain work plan for the year and strategic direction for the Council & Select and develop review topics focusing on achievable outcomes.
30 July 2013	Cancelled	Cancelled
27 August 2013	• Market Update • VIC Update • Economic Development Staff Structure	• To review outcomes from previous scrutiny reviews • To understand to new structure for Economic Development
24 September 2013	• The State of Maidstone Economy • Regeneration and Economic Development Plan Update • Maidstone Enterprise Hub • Skill and Employability Work Programme update	• Contextual information to aid understanding • Update on Regeneration & Economic Development Plan • To provide the committee with an overview of the project and expected outcomes.
22 October 2013	• Interview with Cabinet member for Economic & Commercial development- Vision for visitor economy • Interview with Cabinet member for Corporate Services – leasing of Town Hall Foyer • Agree review Scope	• Follow up from the ViC review 2012 and provide background to events review • Follow up from the ViC review 2012
26 November 2013	• Interview with Alan Reading – Maidstone Tourism Association • Interview with Cllr Moss & Zena Cooke – Town hall foyer lease	• Provide background and information about events review • Follow up from the ViC review 2012
24 December 2013	Cancelled	Cancelled
28 January 2014	• Interview with the new Head of Economic &	• To inform the committee of strategic

	Commercial Services	direction of the economic and commercial functions
25 February 2014	• Maidstone Enterprise Hub Update - Deferred • Events review – The Social – Outcomes - Deferred • Ken Scott – Maidstone Area Arts Partnership	• Progress update –requested by cmt • Provide background and information about events review
25 March 2014	• Events review – The Social – Outcomes • Events Review – Hazlitt – Park Wood Leisure • Events Review – Museum of Kent Life • Events Review – The Town Team – Jenny Hunt	• Provide background and information about events review
22 April 2014	• Evaluations of Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year • Enterprise Hub Update • Skill and Employability Work Programme Update • Review of the year	• Ascertain progress made on Cabinet member Priorities • To provide the committee with an update on the projects and outcomes to date. • Ascertain committee's contribution

In addition, the following items for the upcoming year were suggested by the Head of Commercial and Economic Development that the Committee may wish to look at in detail:
- Events and Festivals Strategy
- Museum Business Plan
- Economic Strategy

It was also indicated that the results of a Business Survey, which has been conducted to inform the Economic Strategy, will be available for the meeting to decide the future work programme on the 1st July. This may be useful to the Committee to inform their review selection.

A follow up on the recommendations made in the events review should be expected in December/January.

Maidstone Borough Council

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

Wednesday 23 April 2014

Future Work Programme

Report of: Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer

1.   Introduction

1.1   To consider topics for inclusion in the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee's work programme for the 2013/14 Municipal Year and beyond.

2.   Recommendation

2.1   That the Committee considers its work programme, attached at **Appendix A**, and suggests items for consideration at future meetings, to ensure it is appropriate and covers all issues Members wish to consider within the Committee's remit.

3.   Background to recommendation

3.1   The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee is a Committee consisting of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It will meet from time to time to consider matters relating to the conduct, performance and procedures of the Committees; to develop mechanisms for addressing cross-cutting issues; and to prevent duplication in the work of the individual committees.

3.2   The Committee may wish to consider the support and development it could offer the four Scrutiny Committees at each meeting by structuring its own work programme.

4.   Impact on Corporate Objectives

4.1   The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will consider reports that deliver against all three of the Council's priorities: For Maidstone to have a growing economy, For Maidstone to be a decent place to live and Corporate and Customer Excellence.

5.   Background Papers

5.1   None

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee Work Programme (2013/14)

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Comments
28 November 2013	- Election of Chairman / Vice Chairman - Audit Committee Work Programme - Visiting Members – Discussion Item - Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2013/14 - Scrutiny Recommendations - Future Work Programme (SCC) - Member Development Needs	
25 February 2014	- Governance Review Update - Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plans (SCRAIPs) - Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Development - Future Work Programme (SCC)	
23 April 2014	- Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Development 2014/15 - Cross Cutting Issues - Overview and Scrutiny Feedback – Discussion Item - Future Work Programme – Scrutiny Coordinating Committee - Member Development Needs	

Appendix A

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee Work Programme (2014/15)

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Comments
TBC	• Election of Chairman / Vice Chairman • Audit Committee Work Programme • Draft Scrutiny Annual Report – 2013/14	For consideration by Committee before submission to Council
TBC		
TBC		

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Maidstone Borough Council

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

23 April 2014

Member Development Needs

Report of: Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview and Scrutiny requires a number of skills and the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, in its report (April, 2013) to Council on the Cabinet and Enhanced Scrutiny Model made the following recommendations:

- "The development needs for scrutiny and an appropriate programme be developed by the Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and the Scrutiny Team. This could include an annual event with other Councils and use of Parliamentary Outreach support."

- "Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should identify development needs at the beginning of the year and then on a quarterly basis via the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee"

1.2 Following discussion at the last meeting, this is an opportunity for the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, to provide feedback on the updated Centre for Public Scrutiny activity, attached at **Appendix A**, and to identify any additional training needs for Overview and Scrutiny.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee:

(a) Consider, and provide feedback, on the updated Centre for Public Scrutiny activity attached at **Appendix A**;

(b) Identify any additional training needs or development areas for Overview and Scrutiny (including for newly elected Members).

3. Background to recommendations

3.1 Maidstone Borough Council is committed to providing an effective and efficient service to the residents and businesses of and visitors to the Borough. The council recognises the importance of learning and development in supporting all councillors in undertaking their roles in the community and within the council.

3.2 In July 2013, the Member and Employment and Development Panel agreed the revised Member Development Policy, which provides a framework to enable the Council to manage its member development activities for elected members in a coherent and systemic way. This is attached at **Appendix B** for information.

4. Scrutiny Skills

4.1 A number of skills have been identified for Scrutiny Committee Members and these are listed in the Members' Overview and Scrutiny Handbook.

4.2 The list below should be used to identify any training needs or development areas. These can be addressed through formal training, one-to-one sessions or mentoring; many, however will be developed though experience.

Skills for Scrutiny Members
– adapted from the LGiU Scrutiny Checklist, 2003

- Taking evidence from a wide range of people, interviewing, questioning and listening skills

- Understanding and using
  - Performance management information
  - Other data and findings from research
  - Information from inspections

- Understanding of the policy framework, skills to review implications of policy framework

- Developing recommendations, negotiating a report across parties and handling minority reports/vies

- Digesting and understanding paperwork and electronic information

- Communication skills
  - Presentation and public speaking
  - Reporting, possibly report writing

- Influencing Skills

- Monitoring implementation of recommendations

- Evaluation skills

4.3 In addition, the skills below have been identified as necessary for Scrutiny Chairmen:

Skills for Scrutiny Chairmen
– adapted from the LGiU Scrutiny Checklist, 2003

- Leadership and project management skills

- Planning and managing a busy workload

- Ability to identify topics of public interest for review

- Ability to work with officers

- Chairing meetings of different types, from steering a formal agenda to facilitating an informal group to holding a public consultation session

- Champion Scrutiny both internally and externally

- Dealing with the media

5. Member Development Activities

5.1 Following the recommendations that were made in relation to the Cabinet and Enhanced Scrutiny Model, listed in par 1.1 above, and the implementation of the revised Member Development Policy, the Policy and Information Team have been working with the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Parliamentary Outreach Service on two development activities.

Questioning Skills

5.2 Representatives from the Parliamentary Outreach Service facilitated a Questioning / Challenging skills session on the 29 January, 2014. The workshop covered the following issues –

- Preparing for scrutiny meetings
- Questioning skills
- Tools for interpreting information

5.3 Feedback from the session has been positive and will be used to develop future activities.

Building Relationships Between Cabinet and Scrutiny

5.4 At the last meeting the Committee considered a draft development activity that had been prepared by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

5.5 Members of the Committee agreed that the session should be re-written to ensure a clear focus on building relationships between Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny. It was also agreed that the session should be interactive and tailored to meet the particular needs of Maidstone Borough Council.

5.6 In view of this feedback, Jessica Crowe, Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny, has suggested a revised approach. The outline of the session is attached at **Appendix A** for comment.

6. Impact on Corporate Objectives

6.1 Member Development underpins the work of the council in all the democratic processes and is critical to ensure that Members are properly supported to undertake their role.

7. Other Implications

7.1 The council has agreed a budget for Member Development.

7.2 In addition to meeting the individual training needs of elected members, the budget will be used to provide across the board training for all councillors on Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

7.3 There are financial implications of either increased or reduced provision, but the Member Development Policy would operate within existing budgets.

7.4 There are staffing implications because the development of scrutiny training activities is provided by officers. An increase in member participation would make better use of their time.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None.

Appendix A

Updated Centre for Public Scrutiny Development Activity

Email from Jessica Crowe, Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny

Thanks for getting in touch. We can certainly provide the revised approach that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee are seeking. To really make the session as useful as possible there will need to be commitment from Cabinet to be part of it as well as scrutiny – is there agreement to this from the members? Without Cabinet present, it is hard to envisage how we could usefully understand and overcome any perceived barriers to building a stronger relationship between the two, as it would be a one-sided discussion and would leave lots of issues raised but not resolved.

If we can arrange a joint event with Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny I would suggest something along the lines of:

- Initial small groups session seeking to build a shared consensus around the vision and purpose of O&S in Maidstone, what works and what could improve from both perspectives
- [if we can identify it] case study joint presentation of where a cabinet member and their relevant committee have worked productively together – it would be a powerful message if everyone could hear from their own colleagues about the benefits of closer working. From the Update report it sounds like it is working well in some areas if not all, so it would be good to identify a positive experience that could be shared. If there is no local case study we can identify some good practice examples from elsewhere (eg of where Cabinet have asked scrutiny to investigate an issue, or where O&S have picked up on a key council priority and done work to develop the council's approach on it) but would be good to find a local one that would have more resonance
- Facilitated discussion on priorities and emerging work plans for the coming year to identify practical opportunities for closer working between Cabinet and O&S (each cabinet member and committee to highlight 3 priority issues to see if there is overlap or potential for collaboration)
- Facilitated discussion on how the scrutiny / holding to account element is working and what might need to change to enhance it.
- Agreement on what each member will do differently and personal actions to take away. We will capture these and record them (could use the approach of writing a postcard to themselves which we would then post to them in 3 months time to remind them of what they agreed they would do)

This could be a very productive, practical and interactive session, but as I say needs commitment from Cabinet as well. Could you let me know what you think and if this is along the lines of what the Coordinating Committee wanted? Ed is back on Tuesday so can pick this up, and I think the initial proposal stemmed from an LGA request to provide some support so we probably need to check out with them the basis on which we'd be doing this work.

Best wishes

Jessica

Member Development Policy

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this member development policy is to provide a framework to enable Maidstone Borough Council to manage its member development activities for elected members in a coherent and systematic way.

It describes:

- The purpose of member development in Maidstone Borough Council
- The scope of the member development policy
- The member development priorities
- The mechanisms for identifying, planning and delivering member development
- The key responsibilities and resources for member development
- The mechanisms to evaluate member development

It aims to ensure that member development activities are aligned with the visions and priorities of the council.

Purpose of Member Development

Maidstone Borough Council is committed to providing an effective and efficient service to the residents and businesses of and visitors to the Borough. The council recognises the importance of learning and development in supporting all councillors in undertaking their roles in the community and within the council.

Scope of the policy

This policy covers all member development activities. This refers to 'learning' activities for members from which there is a clear and visible transfer of knowledge and skill from the trainer (e.g. a course) and 'development' which covers the complete spectrum of activities that help people learn in and beyond their current role.

This policy covers all members of Maidstone Borough Council.

This policy also reflects the Council's Equal Opportunities Statement ensuring all members regardless of disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation or political or other personal beliefs are benefiting equally from learning and development opportunities.

Its aim is that all members will be afforded equal access to learning and development, according to the needs of their role and the council's priorities as outlined within the Strategic Plan and councillor role descriptions. The procedure outlined within this policy is designed to ensure that equal access is achieved.

For the purpose of this document 'Equal Access' refers to:-

- Information relating to member development opportunities

1

- Selection for participation in member development opportunities
- Access to member development activities

A systematic approach to member development

In line with current best practice the council commits itself to providing a planned approach to member development based on four-stages:

Stage 1 - Identifying learning and development needs
Stage 2 - Planning learning and development activities
Stage 3 - Delivering learning and development activities
Stage 4 - Evaluating learning and development investment.

Stage 1 - Identifying Member Development needs

- Group Leaders are responsible for ensuring that processes are in place within the group to identify individual development needs.

- Members are involved in a development needs analysis which identifies individual and collective learning and development needs. Members are also responsible for identifying their on-going learning needs and bringing new needs to the attention of the Democratic and Member Services Manager.

- Development needs that are specific to the work of a particular committee e.g. licensing or planning, will be identified by the officer or Chairman responsible for that committee.

Stage 2 – Planning Member Development

- When all members needs have been identified they are reviewed and prioritised. A member development calendar is created by Democratic Services supported by the Learning and Development Team which incorporate the priority needs within the available funding. The development calendar is incorporated within the Calendar of Meetings which is agreed by full Council and then the budget plan to provide the development requirements is agreed by the Member and Employment and Development Panel.

- Member Development activities other than those scheduled on the development calendar will be scheduled as far in advance as possible in order to ensure that all members have the opportunity to attend. Development dates from the calendar are set in advance and posted into the member diaries so that forward planning can take place effectively. Activities that are arranged as the need arises will be organised to give members at least 3 weeks' notice wherever possible.

- The selection of providers and the type of development to be used will include identifying the best/preferred learning methods to meet the needs of the members. This will include wherever possible joint learning activities with other councils in order to maximise learning and to share best practice and reduce costs.

- It is an expectation that all members will contribute to their own development to enhance their roles within the council and within the community. Any member development that supports strategic objectives should be attended by all members.

2

Records will be kept and attendance and evaluation of the activities will be forwarded to the Learning and Development Manager for recording and review.

Stage 3 - Delivering Member Development

- This policy encourages the use of a wide range of approaches, methods and timings of programmes to meet the learning and development needs of members and to provide maximum access to learning opportunities.

- These methods may include:-

Formal learning

- Training courses (including internal and external courses, long and short term training),
- Seminars (including CPD),
- Conferences (e.g. skills updating, changing legislation etc.).

Informal learning

- Mentoring,
- Shadowing,
- Coaching,
- Project work (specific or experience),
- Increased responsibility,
- Collaborative learning (e.g. debriefing sessions)

Self-learning

- Videos,
- Reading,
- E-learning,
- Networking,
- Workbooks,
- Manuals,

This list is not exhaustive. Other learning methods may be used where considered to be appropriate.

De-Briefing sessions and information sharing plays an important part in the dissemination of learning and development activities that take place. Once a member has attended such an activity the Learning & Development Information Share Form should be completed within 1 week so that key points can be shared in a timely manner. This information sharing activity provides the following benefits:

- Enables those members who were unable to attend to gain key information
- Provokes further discussion on new topics
- Provides an avenue to further identify learning needs
- Assist us in evaluating the effectiveness of our delivery methods
- Builds consistency of approach

This information form will be available in the following areas in order to maximise access for all members:

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- Members Web Lounge
- Briefings at group and committee meetings
- Delivered in the member mail envelopes

Stage 4 - Evaluating Learning and Development Investment

- Evaluation of learning and development will mainly be carried out through the Learning and Development Evaluation Questionnaire.   These will be completed at the end of any programme or activity.   The evaluation form will review how the learning and development activity satisfied the skills, knowledge or behaviour gaps and how these newly learned skills, knowledge or behaviour can be utilised in their role. These will be summarised and evaluated by the Democratic and Member Services Manager.

- Information gathered from all evaluation processes will inform future learning and development strategies including methods of learning and development activities at all levels.

- Information gained at conferences and seminars will be disseminated by those members who attend and key learning points or information highlighted on the Learning & Development Information Share Form (see APPENDIX 3). This information will then be shared with other councillors and officers, as is most appropriate, in one or all of the following ways:

  - Delivered in the member mail envelopes
  - Posted onto the members web lounge
  - Discussion at committee / group meetings

Learning records

Records of all learning undertaken by members will be kept on a database by the Learning and Development Team.

This database includes the following:

- Name
- Name of course/conference/seminar attended
- Date of course/conference/seminar attended
- Outstanding learning needs

Information on member development is required by the organisation to ensure accurate planning and evaluation. The Learning and Development Team will collate and evaluate this management information on a regular basis.

Learning priorities

Once elected, new members will have the following learning opportunities:

Corporate Induction

All new members will receive induction from the moment once they are elected to Maidstone Borough Council. Corporate Induction will include:

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- Introduction to the Management team of the council
- Overview of Learning & Development activities and introduction to the Member and Employment and Development Panel and its role
- Issue and training on laptops and members web lounge
- Issue of members handbook/welcome pack and induction CD Rom
- Tour of Borough and council offices
- Overview of the role of Scrutiny
- Code of conduct and constitution
- Local Government Finance

Members will receive an induction pack and a record of the completed induction programme is placed on the member development database by the Learning and Development Team. Each new member will be given a **senior officer** as a key contact who will act as a central point for that member helping them to understand how the Council works and their role within the organisation. This will complement the role of the Member mentor mentioned below.

Political Group Induction

Each new member will be inducted into their Political Group and be assigned a 'buddy'. The role of the 'buddy' is to introduce the new member to other councillors and act as a source of information, support and advice to help the new member become effective in their role as soon as possible.

Committee Members

Development is on-going for most committee members depending on new legislation and requirements as identified from time to time. New members who take up a position on a committee are required to undertake development to give them a working knowledge of the particulars relevant to the committee and to be able to continue on the committee. This development is sometimes undertaken informally at the meeting or more formally such as in the Planning Committee, with scheduled development sessions held early in the municipal year as well as throughout the year. These sessions are scheduled as part of the member development calendar.

Resources to support learning and development

The Council allocates appropriate resources to the Democratic and Member Services Manager to cover the costs of priority needs relating to member development linked to the Strategic Plan and individual role requirements. The full cost of all member development will be identified, approved by the Member and Employment and Development Panel and monitored by the Democratic and Member Services Manager.

Bookings on courses, conferences and seminars will be handled through the PA to the Cabinet; and records will be maintained by the Learning and Development Team. Information on development opportunities will be communicated to all members using the intranet and diaries. Expenses incurred for attending member development activities will be paid according to the council policy on claiming expenses.

5

Roles and responsibilities

Maidstone Borough Council has allocated responsibility to agree key policies, procedures and plans for member development activities to the Member and Employment and Development Panel. It is recognised that the responsibility for member development is a joint responsibility between officers and members. Given the importance of the quasi- judicial committees there is an agreement regarding mandatory development for members.

Members

Responsibility of all councillors

- To ensure that they understand their role in relation to both the work within the council and their ward.
- To actively seek feedback on the performance of their role.
- To work with Political Group Leaders to agree their development plan.
- To commit to on-going professional development for their role as a councillor
- To fully participate in any mandatory development required for particular committees or roles (continued non-attendance will result in removal from the Committee).
- To complete the request form for attendance at any external conferences/seminars (Appendix 2) and to feedback their learning to other members and relevant officers using the share form (Appendix 1).

Responsibilities of Political Group Leaders

- Responsible for encouraging formal and informal development within their group.
- Ensure that buddies are assigned to all new members and that the role is carried out effectively with the support of the relevant officers.
- Ensure that any Members appointed to committees are committed to and fully understand the development requirements and, where necessary, replace those Members failing to comply with their commitment.
- Carry out the annual review discussions to assist in identifying future learning needs and inform the council's annual Member development plan.

Responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

- To consider and approve resources and budgets are allocated to member development

Officers

Responsibilities of the Principal Committee Advisors

Principal Committee Advisors are those Officers primarily responsible for advising a particular committee e.g. Head of Audit for the Audit Committee

- Ensure that members of their committee have the support to be competent and feel confident in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities
- Ensure that members of their committee receive appropriate and timely development as informed by legislation, statutory guidance, best practice and as identified by individual members
- Ensure that there are effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of their specific member development
- Advising the Democratic and Member Services Manager of any outstanding learning needs and development that members need to attend in order to keep the knowledge and skills of committee members up to date

Responsibilities of the Learning and Development Manager

- Advise officers, group leaders and individual members on the most effective learning methods;
- Commission programmes or events required to meet identified learning needs;
- Support the Democratic and Member Services Manager with the production of the annual development calendar for members;
- Maintain accurate records of member attendance

Responsibilities of the Democratic and Member Services Manager

- Identify learning needs and collate a programme of member development activities aimed at meeting current and future learning needs based on feedback from Group Leaders.
- Evaluate and prioritise all member development activities to ensure needs are met and value for money is achieved
- Present proposals for the budget to the MEDP
- Feedback any compliance issues to the MEDP and Group Leaders
- Report to the Member and Employment and Development Panel on the member development programme indicating levels of attendance, evaluation and impact

Supporting documents and appendices

Appendix 1:   Learning & Development Information Share Form
Appendix 2:   Request to attend Conference/ Seminar
Appendix 3:   Mandatory development

Appendix 1

Learning & Development Information Share Form

Title: Date & duration of event:

Compiled by: Date compiled:

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v   What were the main aims and objectives (please list)

v   What were the key messages or learning points that you feel were most important and relevant:

v   How can members use this information to assist them in their role:

v   Further information can be found (please list any contacts and or web site addresses etc that may be useful)

(Please send this form and any photos, flyers or additional information to the Learning and Development Team for distribution)

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Appendix 2
Attendance at Conferences and/or Seminars:

If a member/committee/officer feels that it would be beneficial / important to attend a conference or seminar an application should be made using the attached form and sent to the Democratic and Member Services Manager

Request to attend Conference / Seminar

Name: Role (Committee etc):

Conference / Seminar title: Duration:

Cost of event:

Estimated costs of extras e.g. travel etc:

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1. What are the main aims / objectives of the conference / seminar? (please list)

2. How was this conference / seminar identified as being of value?

3. How will this conference/seminar improve your ability to perform in your role?

4. Who is responsible for transferring the knowledge gained and completing the conference/seminar information sheet?

Sign: Applicant: ………..……………….……………………   Date: …………..………

Sign: Democratic and Member Services Manager……………   Date: ………..……...

Appendix 3

Draft for consideration by Panel and relevant Committees

Mandatory Development

All Members

Induction – council and political group induction
Governance
Code of Conduct
Health and Safety matters

Planning Committee Members

The Development Plan/Supplementary Planning Documents & Government Policy
Use of Planning Conditions and Reasons for Refusal
Planning Enforcement

Licensing Committee Members

The Licensing Committee agree the development requirements for the year and this is incorporated into the Calendar of Meetings agreed by Council. All new Committee & Substitute Members must attend the following development:

Induction
Licensing Act 2003
Street Trading
Sexual Entertainment Venues
Gambling
Taxis/Private Hire Vehicles

Audit Committee Members

Induction training
Finance and Budget
Regulatory framework
The importance of risk management

Scrutiny Committee Members

Basic Overview & Scrutiny skills
Questioning Skills

Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman
Chairing Skills (all should have attended before becoming Chairmen)