

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2016

Present: Councillor Newton (Chairman), and
Councillors Ash, Ells, Fissenden, Fort, Hemsley,
Paterson, Perry and Pickett

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Sargeant
and Vizzard

66. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Hinder.

67. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Perry was substituting for Councillor Mrs Hinder.

68. URGENT ITEMS

Members noted that there were two Urgent Items, the report of the Head of Finance and Resources - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 Onwards – Final Update and the report of the Head of Finance and Resources – Change to the Committee Cycle for Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee.

69. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Vizzard indicated that he wished to speak on the Museum's Development Plan. Councillors Mrs Blackmore and Sargeant reserved their right to speak on any item.

70. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

71. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

72. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

73. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 NOVEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

74. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no Petitions.

75. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

76. REFERENCE FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Members considered the Reference from Policy and Resources which set out the nominations for the Task and Finish Groups.

RESOLVED: That the approved representatives for the Task and Finish Groups as nominated by Policy and Resources Committee be agreed.

77. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-20 REFRESH

Members considered the report of the Head of Policy and Communications which set the direction for the next five years of the Strategic Plan and the Committee's priority action areas.

RESOLVED: That:-

- 1) The projects under the priority action areas be agreed; and
- 2) The action plan, milestones and outcomes attached as Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Policy and Communications be agreed.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

78. ORAL REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE ON VISIT MAIDSTONE WEBSITE AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN ACTIONS

Members were given a tour of the Visit Maidstone website which had been launched in January 2015.

It was noted that 'Things to Do' was one of the most popular landing pages on the website.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that:

- the website featured places of interest across the Borough, not just concentrated in the town centre
- the Parish Councils would be contacted to ensure that any events in their areas are included on the website

RESOLVED: That the information contained on the website be noted.

79. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - AMENDING AGREED MINUTES AND ADDING OMITTED DECISION TO DECISION NOTICE FOR PARKING CHARGES IN MOTE PARK

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources regarding the omission of part of the decision which related to the preferred options at paragraph 4 of the original report presented to the 13th July 2015 meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the decision of the Committee on 13 July 2015 which agreed the second recommendation of the Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development – Parking Charges in Mote Park, had been omitted from the minutes and decision notice be noted; and
- 2) That the Democratic Services Officer be instructed to amend the decision notice to include the omitted decision, wording as follows:

That the preferred options at paragraph 4 are approved to enforce the charges.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

80. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Members considered the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development which set out proposals to restructure Maidstone Museum's Service and to agree the capital programme.

In response to Members questions, it was noted:-

- That the request for capital funding for children's parties was due to the fact that this was one of the Museum's best income generators and additional space was required to accommodate more parties.
- That more interactive displays would be commissioned as part of the plans for the future. However, in the meantime the Museum's website did offer a lot of interactive pages.
- That the Museums' Federation would be represented on the Strategic Board.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The progress on the staff restructure, the appointment of a new full time Museum's Director and the museum improvements programme be noted;
- 2) The formation of a Museum's Strategic Board to develop and oversee delivery of a 20 year Strategic Plan for the Museum Service be agreed;
- 3) The appointment of the Chairmen of both Heritage, Culture and Leisure and Policy and Resources Committees to serve on the Museum's Strategic Board be supported; and
- 4) The first phase capital programme outlined for inclusion in the Council's capital programme which will go to Policy and Resources Committee on 27 January 2016 be agreed.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

81. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR MOTE PARK

Members considered the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development which informed the progress made with regard to various projects related to Mote Park, sought approval for the development of the outline spatial framework for locating the projects in Mote Park and sought approval for capital to deliver the programme of projects and improvements.

In response to Members' questions, it was noted:-

- That the Skate Park would be removed from the area adjacent to the Play Area but every effort will be made to relocate it within the Park.
- A competition would be launched for the design of the Visitor Centre.
- It was envisaged that the Adventure Zone would be built ahead of the toilet facilities. However, Officers were confident that there would be sufficient toilet facilities elsewhere in the Park until they are built.
- That at the Committee's request any consultation with Members should be to all Members, not just High Street Ward Members as what happens in the Park affects all residents.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The progress of the programme of projects known as 'A sustainable future for Mote Park' be noted;
- 2) The development of the outline spatial framework for locating the projects in Mote Park be agreed;
- 3) A request to Policy and Resources Committee for £3.929m (subject to future review) of capital to deliver the programme of projects and improvements and to maximise operational and commercial opportunities be approved;
- 4) Should the capital programme bid be successful, delegated authority be given to the Head of Commercial and Economic Development to spend up to £100,000 developing the detailed plans; including the business case for the new visitor centre.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

82. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS: FEES AND CHARGES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources which set out proposals for the level of fees and charges for 2016/17 for services where the Committee raises income by charging users of the service.

Members noted that the charge for memorial licences was significantly lower than other Cemeteries in Kent and should therefore be aligned as appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources be approved, subject to the addition of an increase of £40 for memorial permits.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

83. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS - FINAL UPDATE

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources which detailed the current revenue and capital budget plans for the Committee.

The Head of Finance and Resources advised Members that when Policy and Resources Committee met on 16 December, the Government's financial settlement had not been released. Now that those figures had been fully considered, it had indicated that there would be significantly less resources available than earlier estimates.

Members were asked to consider accepting a further £30,000 assumption of income from the Café in Mote Park to produce as savings from this Committee.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The additional savings and efficiencies set out in Appendix B to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources be amended to £33,000;
- 2) The budget proposed for 2016/17, as set out in Appendix C to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed and that this be confirmed to the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- 3) The capital programme 2016/17 to 2020/21, for this Committee, as set out in Appendix F to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed and that this be confirmed to the Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion in the full programme.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

84. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - CHANGE TO THE COMMITTEE CYCLE FOR HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources which had been requested by some Members of the Committee to put forward a Reference to the Democracy Committee to review the frequency of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee to monthly instead of bi-monthly when considering their review of the Constitution.

Members felt that this Committee should be given the same recognition as the other Service Committees especially as the areas under the Committee's remit contribute greatly to the visitor economy of this borough and have produced more commercialisation projects than any other.

RESOLVED: That the Democracy Committee be recommended to revise the frequency of meetings of this Committee from bi-monthly to monthly as part of its review of the Constitution in view of the anticipated increase in workload of this Committee.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

85. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.45 p.m.