

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2016**

Present: Councillor D Burton (Chairman), and
Councillors English, Garten, Mrs Grigg, D Mortimer,
Munford, Prendergast, de Wiggondene and Wilby

Also Present: Councillors Boughton, Clark, Daley,
Vizzard and Willis

96. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Springett and Councillor de Wiggondene would be late.

97. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Garten was substituting for Councillor Mrs Springett.

98. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman advised Members that he had agreed to take the urgent update report which related to Agenda Item 17 as it provided information arising out of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum that was held on 3 November 2016.

99. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Visiting Members were noted:-

Councillor Clark – for Agenda Item 19 – Local Plan Examination Update

Councillors Boughton, Daley, Vizzard and Willis – for Agenda Item 21 – Response to Regulation 18 Consultation on the Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan

100. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

101. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor English stated that he had been lobbied in relation to Agenda Item 21 – Response to Regulation 18 Consultation on the Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan.

The Chairman stated that whilst he had had quite a few discussions with other Members on Agenda Item 21, he did not feel he had been lobbied.

102. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed subject to the following amendments being made:-

Minute 86 – Reference from the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
– Air Quality Working Group

This should be amended to 'Reference from the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee – Air Quality Working Group'

For clarity it was also agreed that the resolution should read:

RESOLVED: That Councillors **D** Burton and English be appointed to sit on the Air Quality Working Group as representatives of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee.

103. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

104. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

105. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

106. STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman advised that the meeting due to take place on 6 December would be cancelled. This was in view of the fact that Officer time was fully committed to the Local Plan Hearings which would create difficulties in producing reports for the December Committee meeting within the required timescales.

Enforcement – it was agreed that a report should be considered by the Committee after the Retrospective Planning Consent and Enforcement Workshop had been held.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

107. OUTSIDE BODIES - VERBAL UPDATES (IF ANY)

The Chairman advised that he had attended the Kent County Council's Select Committee on Bus Transport and Public Subsidy where he had been asked to speak about the quality bus partnership. It was noted that the evidence gathered would be published in due course.

108. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - RESPONSE TO REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION ON THE TONBRIDGE AND MALLING LOCAL PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Development which related to the Response to Regulation 18 Consultation on the Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan.

Councillor de Wiggondene arrived at 6.45 p.m.

Members of the Committee made reference to the following points that they would like included in the correspondence to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council:-

- A need to highlight particular areas of traffic congestion in Hermitage Lane
- A need and desire to work with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, along with KCC Highways and Highways England.
- A need for the retention and provision of open space, including areas of landscaped semi-natural open space
- A need to address the highways and sustainability transport issues
- A need for the provision of appropriate planting to improve air quality
- To enquire whether Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council will produce an Integrated Transport Strategy

RESOLVED: That the Committee agrees the essence of the formal response to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation and gives delegated authority to Officers to amend the response, incorporating the revisions made by Members.

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

109. REFERENCE FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE - WEST STREET, HARRIETSHAM, KENT

The Reference from Planning Committee was considered which related to traffic and parking issues in West Street, Harrietsham.

It was noted that Planning Committee had requested that the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee explore the traffic and parking issues in West Street and how they might be addressed by Traffic Regulation Orders.

The Committee felt that the Planning Committee could refer any such issues direct to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board in future. However, if any issues are deemed significantly different, then they should be referred to Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee for comment.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Planning Committee makes a specific, detailed request to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board to consider the traffic and parking issues in West Street, Harrietsham; and
- (2) That the Planning Committee refer any similar issues direct to the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board in future unless they consider that the circumstances are significantly different and the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee should deal with the issues direct.

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

110. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT - SECOND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2016/17

The report of the Director of Finance and Business Improvement which related to the Second Quarter Budget Monitoring 2016/17 was considered.

Members noted that the overall projection showed a minor favourable variance. However, although car parking income had been significantly above target, development management had seen a large overspend mainly due to agency staff having been employed for longer than expected. Members were advised that a Planning Review would be undertaken shortly by the Director of Regeneration and Place to address the issue.

RESOLVED: That the revenue position at the end of the second quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.

111. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - STRATEGIC PLAN PERFORMANCE UPDATE Q2

Members considered the report of the Head of Policy and Communications on the Strategic Plan Performance Update Quarter Two.

Members noted that there had been excellent progress on two of the key performance indicators for this quarter, these were for the Local Plan Update and processing of major planning applications in 13 weeks, both

having achieved 100%.

Members were advised that the target which related to the number of Parishes satisfied with the level of communication and engagement they had with the Council was 38.30%.

In response to a question from a Member the Policy and Information Manager advised that she would find out if the Parish Meeting Chairmen had been consulted.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the summary of performance for Quarter 2 of 2016/17 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and corporate strategies and plans be noted;
- 2) That the progress of strategic plan action plan at Appendix II of the report of the Head of Policy and Communications be noted;
- 3) That it be noted where complete data is not currently available; and
- 4) That the performance of Key Performance Indicators from Quarter 1 of 2016/17 for which data was not available at Policy and Resources Committee on 26 July 2016 be noted.

112. **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE - PLANNING SERVICE REVIEW**

The report of the Director of Regeneration and Place in regard to a planned review of the Planning Service was considered which would enable continuous improvement and ensure that the service provides ongoing value for money to the Council and the end user.

Members noted that a Working Group would be set up and the service areas outlined in paragraph 2.3 of the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place would be within the scope of the review.

The working group would consist of various stakeholders pertinent to the review and were outlined in paragraph 2.5 of the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that the review would commence in January 2017, to be completed with the recommendations implemented by 30th June 2017.

113. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Members considered the report of the Head of Planning and Development and the Urgent Update to the report.

It was noted that the Referendum for the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan took place on 3 November 2016. The turnout for the referendum was 33.77%, with 92.56% voting 'yes' to the question: "Do you want Maidstone Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Staplehurst to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?". The total number of votes cast was 1,586, with 1,468 votes for 'yes' and 118 votes for 'no'.

Members were advised that as the outcome of the referendum was a 'yes', the Regulations require that the Council must make (adopt) the Plan as soon as reasonably practicable after the referendum.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee notes the 'yes' result of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum of 3 November 2016; and
- (2) That the Committee recommend to Council that the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan ("the Neighbourhood Plan") is made and becomes part of the Development Plan for Maidstone.

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

114. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - HEADCORN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Development which related to the progress on the Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan Examination.

Members were reminded of the historical difficulties of the examination of Headcorn's Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that due to the volume of consultation responses and the diversity of issues that gave concerns, the Examiner appointed to restart the halted examination, Mr Jeremy Edge, had determined that it would be beneficial to hold a hearing to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan, the issues and to allow a number of different parties to respond.

The hearing took place on 18th October and was well attended by local residents. The Examiner advised that he would need approximately three to four weeks to reach his conclusions on whether the Neighbourhood Plan would be suitable to go to referendum as it was, or whether further modifications would be required.

However, it was noted that given the significant changes suggested and agreed during the hearing, it was highly likely that a further round of consultation would need to take place before any referendum could be held.

In response to a question from a Member, the Project Manager advised that the Council would bear the costs of the Examiner. However, the Council could apply for funding for a successfully completed referendum.

RESOLVED: That the progress with the examination of Headcorn Neighbourhood Plan be noted.

115. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION UPDATE

The report of the Head of Planning and Development related to progress on the examination of the Local Plan was considered.

Members noted the issues raised in the hearings to date which included strategic matters, legal compliance and duty to co-operate, housing needs (whether the figure was too high or too low). Other issues considered were windfalls, broad locations as well as the strategic development underway in the south-east of Maidstone. The November sessions would consider in more detail the allocated sites as well as hearing from landowners and agents who would be promoting sites not currently allocated in the submitted plan.

A Visiting Member addressed the Committee to advise of the difficulties he had had in applying to speak at the hearing. It was noted that his submission had been mis-categorised as ITS, when it was for the Local Plan. Once he brought the matter to the attention of Officers, he was given a slot to speak.

Officers acknowledged that an error had occurred but gave assurances that a check had been done to ensure no other submission had been batched into the wrong category.

RESOLVED: That the update on progress with the examination of the Local Plan be noted.

116. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE TRANSPORT OPERATORS GROUP

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Planning and Development on the establishment of a Maidstone Transport Operators Group.

Members expressed their concerns that the figure quoted in the report of £350 per meeting was not accurate and should be revisited. The Director of Finance and Business Improvement advised that if the cost of accommodating the meetings of the Maidstone Transport Operators Group could not be found from within existing resources, it would need to go to Policy and Resources Committee for assessment. It was also noted that there would be no capacity for a Democratic Services Officer to service these meetings.

A Member expressed his disappointment that the report had come forward at this time as he had asked for it to come in February/March next year when all the issues would have been resolved.

The Director of Regeneration and Place undertook to ensure that the resourcing issue for this Group would be covered in his report on the Planning Review.

RESOLVED: That the Committee requests the Director of Regeneration and Place to investigate, as part of his Review of Planning Services, how the Maidstone Transport Operators' Group and other similar groups could be funded and resourced.

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

117. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m.