

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Committee

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28
NOVEMBER 2018**

Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Clark, Cox (Chairman), Field, Garland, Mrs Gooch, McKay, McLoughlin, D Mortimer, Newton, Perry, Springett and Mrs Wilson

109. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies were received by Councillors Boughton and Harvey.

110. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Wilson was present as a substitute for Councillor Harvey.

Note: Councillor Springett arrived at 6.31pm during consideration of this item.

111. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had decided to accept an urgent update for item 13 Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Chairman explained that the reason for urgency was that these pages had been missed from the agenda in error, but contained important information to assist with the decision being made.

112. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

113. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

114. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

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

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public, as proposed.

116. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

117. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme is noted.

118. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

There were no questions from members of the public.

119. PLANNING TRAINING FOR POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr Sam Bailey, Democratic and Administration Services Manager, presented a report outlining the training programme for the Committee. The reason a planning training programme was being presented for approval was so the Policy and Resources Committee were compliant with the requirements in the constitution in regard to Planning Training if it needed to meet to determine a planning application. The recommendation in the report was for the Committee to replicate the training programme agreed by Planning Committee, to ensure consistency of training across the two Committees.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, Mr Bailey confirmed the Planning Committee had not agreed their training programme yet, but that it was due to be agreed at the Planning Committee meeting on the following evening.

The Committee felt it was important that, if the Planning Committee failed to agree its training programme, there was a provision in place to ensure that the Head of Planning and Development could ensure appropriate training was provided to the Policy and Resources Committee before it convened to exercise its function as the planning referrals body.

RESOLVED:

That the planning training programme for members of Policy and Resources Committee for 2018/19 replicates the mandatory training programme agreed by the Planning Committee.

Voting: Unanimous

120. NEW STRATEGIC PLAN VISION, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES 2019-45

Mrs Angela Woodhouse, the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance, presented the New Strategic Plan Vision, Objectives and Outcomes for 2019-45 to the Committee. Mrs Woodhouse explained that the Strategic Plan had undergone an extensive consultation process with members, parish councils, Council staff, partner organisations and the

public. The plan that was presented to members had been drafted taking into account the feedback received.

The Committee thanked the team for their hard work on producing the Strategic Plan, and asked that the work that had been carried out engaging with Parish Councils continued once the plan had been agreed.

RESOLVED:

That Council is recommended to adopt the new Strategic Plan Vision, Priorities and Objectives as set out in Appendix A.

Voting: Unanimous

Note: Councillor Garland arrived at 6.51pm, during consideration of this item.

121. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Committee received a presentation from Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement, outlining the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2019/20 – 2023/24. Mr Green explained that the strategy had been adapted to align with the new draft strategic plan and its four strategic priority areas. The Committee was presented with three possible future scenarios in terms of the Council's finances – positive, adverse and negative. Mr Green conveyed that the Council's spending would need to reflect the financial resources available to it, and the resources available depended on outside factors. However Maidstone Borough Council was less exposed to this risk than other authorities due to being more reliant on Council Tax collection and generating its own income rather than grants from central government. It was noted that the financial position appeared to be relatively secure up to 2020/21, but following this the future was much more unclear.

The Committee requested that as the strategy continued to be developed, further consideration be given to modelling the impact on the Council's finances to limiting Council Tax rises to the rate of inflation.

RESOLVED:

That Council is recommended to adopt the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20-2023/24 as set out in Appendix A.

Voting: Unanimous

122. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30pm to 7.19pm