

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Communities, Housing and Environment Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Councillors M Burton, Garten, Joy, D Mortimer, Purle, Mrs Robertson and Rose

41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Powell and Webb.

42. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

43. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

44. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

45. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

46. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

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

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

48. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JULY 2018

The Committee queried the record of Item 29. Exempt Items, as Members had requested that their dissent to be noted on this item.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the following addition to Item 29. Exempt Items:

Councillors M Burton, Purle and Rose requested that their dissent be noted.

Voting: Unanimous

49. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

51. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

52. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: That Councillor Round be nominated as the Council's representative for Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK).

Voting: Unanimous

53. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee discussed improvements to the Reports of Outside Bodies and suggested that guidance be included in the template to ensure consistent reporting.

RESOLVED: That the Reports of Outside Bodies be noted.

54. FIRST QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Mr Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement, presented the Quarter 1 Budget Report. Mr Green explained that the Committee was within budget for the first quarter, and was projected to remain within budget for the whole year.

Following questions from the Committee, Mr Green responded that:

- The surplus generated by Grounds Maintenance was to be reinvested in repairs to the depot.
- A significant proportion of the underspent Homelessness Prevention budget was expected to be utilised by the end of the financial year, once recruitment was finalised and project work was progressed.
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 had increased Maidstone Borough Council's legislative responsibilities. This resulted in a greater number of people seeking assistance from the Council, together with an increase in the duration of time that individuals were accommodated for. The early trends had been recognised,

and reviews were underway to explore appropriate courses of action.

- The Homelessness Strategy was to be revisited later in the year.
- The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance item on the Committee Work Programme would provide a greater supply of affordable housing to relieve pressure on the Housing Service.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the revenue position at the end of the first quarter and actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.
- 2) That the capital position at the end of the first quarter be noted.

55. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE QUARTER 1 CHE

Ms Anna Collier, Policy and Information Manager, introduced the Quarter 1 Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Report. Ms Collier stated that performance was strong for the First Quarter, with six of eight targetable indicators exceeding targets. Changes in legislation, however, meant that adjustments to the KPIs were advised.

Ms Collier informed the Committee that, following publication, an error was highlighted in the report. The report should therefore include the following amendment to Appendix 2, page 39:

Percentage of reports of littering attended to: 68.69%.

Officers responded to questions from the Committee, outlining that:

- Changes to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 meant that an individual was required to have a Homelessness Application in order to be included in the data returns for prevention activities. The new cohort was therefore smaller than previously recorded.
- A significant investment had been made to ensure that IT resources were appropriate for the new data returns. It was expected that Maidstone Borough Council would capture supplementary data on preventions made for those without a Homeless Application. However, this needed time to implement.
- Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) were assessed against a national criteria. The Council's ability to spend the DFG budget was linked to the availability of specialist builders. If the budget was not spent, it could be carried into the next year.
- The KPI "Percentage of reports of littering attended to" helped the Council to assess whether the planned programme of cleaning was effective. The name of the indicator had been retained from

previous national KPIs. Mr William Cornall, Director of Regeneration and Place, agreed to provide a comprehensive explanation of this KPI by email following the Committee meeting.

Resolved:

1) That the summary of performance for Key Performance Indicators during Quarter 1 of 2018/19 be noted.

2) That the housing advice performance indicator be changed to:

“The number of cases where the homelessness Prevention Duty or Relief Duty has been brought to an end due to the applicant having secured suitable accommodation that will be available for at least 6 months.”

3) That the housing advice performance target be changed to:

“200 cases per year for the first year.”

Voting: Unanimous

56. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.15 p.m.