

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2015

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

Also Present: Councillors Daley, English, Naghi and
Sargeant

46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

47. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

48. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

49. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Daley indicated a wish to speak on item 18 – Maidstone’s Culture and Heritage.

Councillor English indicated a wish to speak on the following:

Item 13 - Destination Management Plan Task and Finish Groups;
Item 15 - Disposal of land at Unicomes Lane;
Item 17 - Medium Term Financial Strategy; and
Item 19 - The Social Festival Review.

Councillors Naghi and Sargeant reserved their rights to speak on any item.

50. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

51. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

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

RESOLVED: That the items on Part II of the agenda be taken in private as proposed.

53. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

54. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no Petitions.

55. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

56. REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE - CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTCOMES

The Committee considered the reference from Community, Housing and Environment Committee and was informed by Dawn Hudd, the Head of Commercial and Economic Development, that Maidstone Leisure Centre was now operating at a high level of performance.

RESOLVED: That the reference from Communities Housing and Environment Committee – Carbon Management Plan Outcomes be noted, and the monitoring of performance of the Maidstone Leisure Centre be continued.

57. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014-15, and noted that the matters identified had been picked up and included in the Committee's work programme.

RESOLVED: That the reference from Council – Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014-15 be noted.

58. REFERENCE FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Head of Commercial and Economic Development, Dawn Hudd, told the Committee that a document outlining the Destination Management Plan (DMP) timescales and working group objectives had been produced. This would be forwarded to Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee. The recommendation to be included on the reference asked that one Member of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability

and Transport Committee be co-opted for involvement in the DMP working groups as and when cross-cutting issues arose.

RESOLVED: That the reference from Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee and the Officer response to this be noted.

59. REFERENCE FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Head of Economic and Commercial Development, Dawn Hudd, explained to the Committee that a document outlining the Destination Management Plan (DMP) timescales and working group objectives had been produced. This would be referred to Policy and Resources Committee. The recommendation to be included on the reference asked that one Member of the Policy and Resources Committee be co-opted for involvement in the DMP working groups as and when cross-cutting issues arose.

RESOLVED: That the reference from Policy and Resources and the Officer response to this be noted.

60. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - DISPOSAL OF LAND AT UNICUMES LANE

Jason Taylor, the Parks and Open Spaces Manager, introduced the report setting out the option to lease public open space at Unicumes Lane, Maidstone to Fant Wildlife Group.

In response to questions it was confirmed that the area would remain entirely open access, and whilst it did not feature a recreation area there were such facilities in close proximity.

RESOLVED:

1. That the open space land outlined in red on the attached plan to the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development – Disposal of open space at Fant, Maidstone be declared surplus;
2. That the placing of a Public Notice pursuant of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 be authorised; and
3. That the matter be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee for a final decision concerning disposal of the land.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

61. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE'S CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Dawn Hudd, the Head of Commercial and Economic Development, introduced Nick Ewbank, the consultant who researched and produced the report attached at Appendix I to the report.

Mr Ewbank identified four central themes:

- The town centre, hidden heritage and the link to the river Medway.
- Place making, involving local people in culture and heritage activity.
- Cultural and heritage current assets such as transport history and reputation as Kent's music centre.
- The creative sector, those who work within it, and the creative economy.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- There were Maidstone based organisations which had not been included in the report such as Maidstone Symphony Orchestra and Maidstone Wind Orchestra.
- Conference centres had been used in other areas to create funding for cultural activities.
- Maidstone United Football Club formed a part of Maidstone's cultural offering.

RESOLVED:

1. That the consultant's report attached as Appendix I to the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development – Maidstone's Culture and Heritage be noted; and
2. That the next steps as outlined at paragraph 4 of the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development be supported.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

62. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - SECOND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2015-16**

The Head of Finance and Resources, Paul Riley, introduced the report detailing the financial analysis of the Committee's services in the second quarter of 2015/16. The Committee was informed that there had been improvement on the first quarter, but the Museum continued to present an underlying problem.

In response to questions it was explained that:

- Large exhibitions at the Museum could be lucrative but were risky to put on due expense and spatial restrictions. The Brick City exhibit – featuring famous structures crafted using lego - had provided cross-

generational appeal and had been sponsored. This would not be achievable with all exhibitions.

- The Museum shop had a projected outturn of -£23,430.00. Should this reach -£30,000.00 it would become a significant concern, at which point the issue would come back to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the revenue budget position as at September 2015, the predicted outturn to 31 March 2016 and the actions being taken to control the potential adverse variance be noted.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

63. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS**

Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources, presented the report on the suggestions put forward by Members at an informal briefing session on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17.

The Committee considered the exempt appendix to the report and the following points were raised:

- Some Members had been dissatisfied with the informal briefings, and preferred information to come to public meetings using Part II exemptions for sensitive information where required.
- The informal briefings had been scheduled to involve the whole Committee in agenda setting, however Members were able to contribute to and shape the agenda through the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

RESOLVED:

1. That:

- a) The proposals set out in exempt Appendix A to this report be submitted to Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion in the savings proposals for the medium term financial strategy 2016/17 onwards; and
- b) Policy and Resources Committee be notified that the Museum is a potential budget pressure and that following full consideration by Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee a further recommendation may be referred to Policy and Resources Committee.

For – 9

Against – 0

Abstain - 0

2. That the scheduled informal bi-monthly briefings for the whole Committee no longer take place.

For – 9

Against – 0

Abstain – 0

64. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - THE SOCIAL FESTIVAL REVIEW

Laura Dickson, MCL Marketing and Sales Manager, delivered a report evaluating the Social Festival following an increase in complaints.

The Committee were advised that:

- MBC received a fee from the organiser for the hire of Mote Park, however now that the Festival had grown in size more input was required.
- The Social Festival had been shortlisted by the UK Festivals Awards for Best Small Festival and Best Line-Up.
- The Safety Advisory Group (SAG) - comprised of MBC Officers and partners such as the police - had noted that sound issues were mainly created by air direction and pressure.
- The nature of the complaints received included taxi cabs stopping and picking up from residential streets, anti-social behaviour, litter, use of legal highs and urination in public.
- The organiser of the Festival had agreed to implement additional requirements to mitigate against such issues, such as:
 - a. Additional stewarding;
 - b. An improved traffic management plan;
 - c. Policing if required by SAG;
 - d. A comprehensive clean-up programme; and
 - e. Comprehensive communication with ward Members and local residents.

These would be funded by the organiser.

Paul Spooner, interim Director of Planning and Development, put forward further suggestions for the Committee to consider, as follows:

- That the additional requirements listed above be detailed in an exacting contract.
- That additional resources be allocated by the organisers to ensure police presence at the event.
- That a task and finish group led by an MBC appointed expert event organiser would be set up to work on the development of the event

plan. The event plan would go before SAG and the Licensing Committee, before being adopted and led by the event expert. It was put forward that two Members of the Committee should be included on the task and finish group.

RESOLVED:

1. That the evaluation and the lessons learned from this year's Social Festival set out in the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development – The Social Festival Review be noted.
2. That, taking account of this evaluation and the additional measures proposed to address all of the issues raised, permission be granted for the Social Festival to be held in Mote Park in 2016 subject to the organisers being granted an appropriate licence for the event, and Councillors Fissenden and Hemsley as representatives of the Committee being involved in the development of the event plan.

For – 8 Against – 1 Abstain – 0

Councillor Paterson requested that her dissent be noted as she felt that the matter should return to a future meeting with further information provided.

65. DURATION OF MEETING

6.35 p.m. to 9.40 p.m.