

# **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Democracy Committee**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2015**

**Present:** Councillor Fissenden (Chairman), and Councillors Butler, Cuming, English, Mrs Hinder, Mrs Joy, Newton and Mrs Ring.

**Also Present:** Councillors Ash, Mrs Gooch and Sargeant

13. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chittenden.

14. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Joy was substituting for Councillor Chittenden.

15. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillors Ash, Sargeant and Gooch (from 10:40am) were in attendance for item 8 – Review of Outside Body vacancies as of October 2015.

16. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members of Officers.

17. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

Councillor English declared he had been lobbied on item 8 – Review of Outside Bodies.

18. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

19. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 AUGUST 2015**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. **REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODY VACANCIES AS OF OCTOBER 2015**

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report and pointed out that recommendation 3 of the report should read:

*"That Committee approve Councillor Mrs Parvin as the Nominative Trustee of the Relief in Need Charity and the Brenchley Charity for **the next four years**".*

The Committee were informed that the outside bodies recommended for termination in the review of outside bodies in 2007 were not terminated as it was later agreed, that while they may not have had borough wide significance, they did have local significance.

The Committee discussed the relevance of outside bodies in relation to the Council's priorities. The point was made that many outside bodies, who may not have an obvious link to the Council's priorities, do contribute to Maidstone as a town. Some concern was raised regarding reducing the number of outside bodies based on assumptions. The point was made that any withdrawal of support should be evidence based.

The Committee went on to discuss the effectiveness of memberships of outside bodies. Concern was raised regarding the lack of communication between the member representatives on outside bodies and the rest of the Council. It was agreed that the right person with the right skills and interest in the work of an outside body should be appointed.

The Committee agreed the initial stage of the review would be carried out by the Democratic Services Officer, who would contact each outside body to establish how useful Councillor membership is to their organisation. Once this stage had been reported back to the Committee, the Committee would decide on the appropriateness of Member involvement in continuing the review.

A Motion to amend recommendation 1 was recommended and seconded that the review would not take place with a view to reducing the number of outside bodies supported by the Council, however this may be one of the outcomes. The review would also look at aligning each outside body with a service committee, where possible.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the Committee agreed to a review of all Outside Bodies with a view to aligning them with the relevant Service Committee;
- b) That the Committee approved the Councillor nominations to Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendices A to D, and;
- c) That the Committee approve Councillor Mrs Parvin as the Nominative Trustee of the Relief in Need Charity and Brenchley Charity for the next four years (ending 2 November 2019).

21. **DURATION OF MEETING**

10:30am to 11:29am

