

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY
2016**

Present: Councillor Mrs Ring (Chairman), and
Councillors Mrs Hinder, D Mortimer, Newton,
Mrs Parvin, Perry, Mrs Robertson, Webb and Webster

Also Present: Councillor Sargeant

110. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor JA Wilson.

111. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Hinder was substituting for Councillor J A Wilson.

112. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman, in her opinion, took the following as urgent items:

Item 14 – Draft Low Emission Strategy Consultation Response was taken as an urgent item as the information was not available when the agenda was published.

Item 15 – Housing Options Quarter 3 update was taken as an urgent item as it provided explanatory information for item 13 – Third Quarter Budget Monitoring.

113. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Sargeant was in attendance and indicated a wish to speak on item 14 – Draft Low Emission Strategy Consultation Response.

114. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

115. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillors D Mortimer, Robertson and Webb disclosed that they had been lobbied on the following items:

Item 11 – Mitigation for the withdrawal of the Saturday Freighter Service

Item 14 – Draft Low Emissions Strategy Consultation Response

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

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

117. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2016

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed.

118. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

120. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM - MITIGATION FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE SATURDAY FREIGHTER SERVICE

Jennifer Shepherd, Head of Environment and Public Realm, presented the report proposing a series of mitigation measures to be implemented in place of the Saturday Freighter Service. This followed the decision to withdraw the Freighter Service made at the previous meeting of the Committee.

The proposed mitigation measures included:

- The introduction of a subsidised bulky collection to those in receipt of the Council Tax Discount.
- Signposting residents to recycling and charitable organisations.
- The introduction of a facility at the depot for commercial waste deposits aimed at small businesses.

Following comments from Members regarding access to and traffic using the Household Waste Recycling Centre in Tovil, the Committee were advised that Kent County Council would be undertaking a review of their waste strategy, and this would include a public consultation.

It was moved by Councillor Robertson and seconded by Councillor D Mortimer:

That the proposed fifty pence increase in price of a standard (non-subsidised) bulky collection be rejected, and the price kept at £23.00

For – 4 Against – 5 Abstain – 0

The motion was not carried.

RESOLVED: That the proposed mitigation measures for the removal of the Saturday Freighter Service be approved.

For – 6 Against – 3 Abstain – 0

121. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - KCC MOBILE LIBRARY CONSULTATION

John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services, introduced the report providing a draft response to Kent County Council’s mobile library consultation.

During discussion it was raised that smaller rural villages and hamlets that were not near a library stood to lose out from the proposed changes, and that the old and the young alike would be affected. It was felt that these comments should be included in the consultation response.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the response to the KCC Mobile Library Consultation attached as appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Housing and Community Services be endorsed; and
- 2) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Housing and Community Services to make suggested amendments before the final consultation response is submitted.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

122. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - THIRD QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING

Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources, presented the report on the Third Quarter Budget Monitoring, and explained that that major issue arising was the overspend on temporary accommodation for the homeless.

RESOLVED: That the revenue budget position as at 31 December 2015 and the predicted outturn to 31 March 2016 be noted.

123. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - DRAFT LOW EMISSION STRATEGY CONSULTATION RESPONSE.

Dr Stuart Maxwell, Senior Scientific Officer, introduced the framework for the Low Emission Strategy and advised the Committee that three responses had been received during public consultation.

During discussion the following points were made:

- Air quality was a cross cutting issue and should be considered by Communities, Housing and Environment Committee alongside Planning Committee and Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee.
- There was no central responsible body for air quality. Improvement in this area would require several different organisations to work together.

A revised recommendation was proposed.

RESOLVED: That the revised recommendation be taken as the substantive motion.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain - 0

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the framework for the Low Emission Strategy attached at Appendix B of the report of the Head of Housing and Community Services be adopted.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Housing and Community Services to develop an action plan to deliver against the priorities in the framework for the Low Emission Strategy. The development work should be informed by the views of representatives from all stakeholder groups.
- 3) That the resulting Low Emissions Strategy be reported back to the Committee once the actions have been prioritised and Council actions have been identified separately from other stakeholder actions. Actions that are resources should be identified separately from actions that require resourcing.
- 4) That an annual update on progress of the actions in the Low Emissions Strategy be provided to the Committee once agreed.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

124. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE - HOUSING OPTIONS QUARTER 3 UPDATE

John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services, introduced the Housing Options Quarter 3 update report and explained that the information it contained provided context for the Third Quarter Budget Monitoring report.

The Committee was advised that:

- Those who were in work made up 40% of those presenting as homeless.

- Benefit capping had increased the number of people moving from London to Kent.
- The cost per unit for temporary accommodation had reduced and a small surplus was expected on one of the properties owned. This capital would be set aside for further properties.

In response to questions it was noted that:

- Aylesbury House was used as emergency accommodation and was managed by AMAT.
- It was not possible to accommodate all those in need of temporary accommodation in Maidstone.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Housing Options Quarter 3 update be noted;
- 2) That a Housing Options update be presented to Committee quarterly; and
- 3) That a snapshot headline figure for the number of people in temporary accommodation be presented to each future meeting of the Committee.

For – 9 Against – 0 Abstain – 0

125. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.27 p.m.