

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 APRIL 2016

Present: Councillor Mrs Ring (Chairman), and
Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Mrs Hinder, D Mortimer,
Perry, Mrs Robertson, Webb and J.A. Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Round and Sargeant

154. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The meeting was opened and adjourned for ten minutes to allow for Members to arrive who were stuck in traffic.

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillors Newton, Mrs Parvin and Webster.

155. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Mrs Hinder was substituting for Councillor Mrs Parvin and Councillor Mrs Blackmore was substituting for Councillor Webster.

156. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman advised that she intended to take Agenda Item 15 – Report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm relating to the Review of Waste Strategy 2014-2019 as an urgent item as some of the data produced in the report could only be collated after 31st March 2016 and had therefore missed the publication date.

157. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Round reserved his right to speak on any item. Councillor Sargeant indicated that he was just observing.

158. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

159. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

160. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the Minutes (Part II) of the Meeting held on 15 March 2016 be taken in public with Minutes (Part I) for that meeting provided no Member had further comment that would result in confidential information being disclosed.

161. MINUTES (PART I) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED: That the minutes (Part I) of the meeting held on 15 March 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed.

162. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

164. REFERENCE FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE - DRAFT LOW EMISSION STRATEGY

Members considered the Reference from Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee on the Draft Low Emission Strategy.

The Head of Housing and Community Services advised Members that Officers had managed to secure one of the country's leading experts to attend the Forum on 6th June 2016.

It was also noted that a suitable venue had still to be arranged. Once all the details were finalised, this would be communicated to Members.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee be advised of this update.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

165. REFERENCE FROM LICENSING COMMITTEE - LICENSING PARTNERSHIP: LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY

Members considered the Reference from the Licensing Committee relating to the Licensing Partnership: London Borough of Bexley.

The Head of Housing and Community Services advised that the London Borough of Bexley were looking to outsource a whole range of their regulatory services and had approached this Council's Officers towards the end of last year expressing an interest in joining the Licensing Partnership.

Members were reminded that one of the Partnership's service plan objectives since 2013/14 was to reduce the overall operating costs by expanding the Partnership to share costs and reduce each local authorities' contributions to the operation.

The issue had only come to Committee recently as the Cabinet Member for Bexley had asked for details of the negotiation to be kept confidential until they had gone through their own internal procedures.

It was noted by Members that the licensing functions for Bexley would exclude taxis and private hire as these are licensed by Transport for London.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approve the enlargement of the Licensing Partnership to include the London Borough of Bexley's Licensing Team functions as a fourth and equal partner.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

166. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES -
RESPONSE TO REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND
HOMELESSNESS

Members considered the report of the Head of Housing and Community Services which related to the Response to the Referral from Council on Young People and Homelessness.

It was noted that following the Motion from Council, Members had met with members of the public (or interested groups) to better understand their concerns on where the young were going to live and homelessness in general. Following the informal meeting, actions were formulated which included:-

- (a) The interested group would undertake a visit to Manchester to explore best practice and report their findings back to the Council's Housing Service; and
- (b) A Multi-Agency Housing Seminar, bringing together relevant stakeholders, would be facilitated by the Council.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee agrees to explore the promotion of a Seminar on housing and instructs the Head of Housing and Community Services to report back in June 2016 with proposals for the Committee to consider; and
- (2) That the Committee considers sending a delegation to other local housing authority areas to explore and make recommendations about best practice in tackling homelessness.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

167. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES - UNAUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

Members considered the report of the Head of Housing and Community Services which set out the Council's proposed Unauthorised Development Matrix.

Members noted that the matrix would be used to assess developments and sites that are causing community concern based on a specified criteria (ASB and Crime, illegal activity, local priorities and possible future impact).

RESOLVED: That the Committee approve the matrix, attached as Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Housing and Community Services, for use across the borough when assessing levels of harm caused to local communities and environment in order to prioritise various enforcement actions relating to unauthorised sites within the borough.

Voting: 8 – For 0 – Against 0 – Abstentions

168. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM - REVIEW OF WASTE STRATEGY 2014-19

Members considered the report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm which identified areas for targeting work and focusing areas for improvement.

Members were advised that in 2014 a new 5 year Waste Strategy was adopted which set more ambitious targets of 60% recycling by 2019 and zero waste to landfill by 2015/16.

However, the Strategy was set against a backdrop of uncertainty within the industry with the new Waste Framework Directive which came into force on 1 January 2015 requiring Councils to provide separate recycling collections of paper, plastic, metals and glass.

Members were advised that despite significant focus on improving awareness of the services, recycling levels have levelled at just below 50%. Therefore there was a need to revise the recycling target from 60% by 2019 to a more realistic target of 55% by 2020. It was noted that the new target would remain above the EU target of 50% by 2020.

Following the results of a Necessity and Technically, Economically and Environmentally Practicable (TEEP) test carried out in 2014. One key focus of the Necessity and TEEP assessment was the quality of recyclate. Maidstone's contamination rate averages around 9.5%.

It would therefore be necessary to introduce a new target for contaminated waste of less than 8% to ensure that the Service focuses on maximising the quality of the recycling collected through the elimination of contaminants.

RESOLVED:

- (1) The Committee notes the progress made so far against the objectives set out in the Waste Strategy 2014-2019 as detailed in Appendix A to the report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm;
- (2) The Committee revises the target for recycling, reuse and composting to 55% by 2020;
- (3) The Committee agrees a new target to be included in the Waste Strategy of achieving less than 8% contamination of recycling; and
- (4) The Committee agrees the action plan to support the waste strategy, as set out in Appendix D to the report of the Head of Environment and Public Realm.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

169. MINUTES (PART II) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED: That the Minutes (Part II) of the meeting held on 15 March 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed.

170. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.