

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE ON WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER 2016

Present: Councillor Butler (The Mayor) and Councillors Adkinson, Barned, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, Brice, D Burton, M Burton, Clark, Cox, Cuming, Daley, Fermor, Fissenden, Fort, Garland, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Greer, Mrs Grigg, Harper, Harvey, Harwood, Hastie, Hemsley, Mrs Joy, Lewins, McLoughlin, B Mortimer, Munford, Naghi, Newton, Perry, Pickett, Powell, Prendergast, Revell, Mrs Ring, Mrs Robertson, Round, J Sams, T Sams, Springett, Vizzard, Webb, Webster, De Wiggondene, Wilby, Willis and Mrs Wilson

69. PRAYERS

Prayers were said by the Reverend Canon Andrew Sewell.

70. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Ells, English, Mrs Hinder, D Mortimer and Mrs Stockell.

71. DISPENSATIONS

There were no applications for dispensations.

72. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

With regard to the report of the Democracy Committee recommending that the venue of the polling station for Fant Ward (East) be changed from St Michael's School to the Grange Moor Hotel in St Michael's Road, Councillor Boughton said that since he had responded to the consultation exercise and pre-determined the issue, he would leave the meeting when the recommendation was discussed.

73. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

74. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

75. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Borough Council held on 21 September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed.

76. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Barned to his first meeting of the Council since his re-election in September. The Mayor explained that Councillor Barned had been unable to attend the last Council meeting due to ill-health. The Mayor also welcomed Councillor Mrs Blackmore who had been unable to attend the last Council meeting on the grounds of ill-health.

The Mayor then updated Members on recent and forthcoming mayoral engagements, and thanked them, the Deputy Mayor and former Mayors for their support.

During his announcements, the Mayor made specific reference to the announcement that Maidstone's Invicta Park Barracks would close in 2027. He also congratulated Maidstone YMCA (Tovil and Loose Centres) which had won YMCA of the year in the YMCA Youth Matters Awards 2016.

77. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

78. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

79. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TO THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

There were no questions from Members.

80. CURRENT ISSUES - REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, RESPONSE OF THE GROUP LEADERS AND QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Leader of the Council submitted her report on current issues.

After the Leader of the Council had submitted her report, Councillor Mrs Blackmore, the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Mrs Gooch, the Leader of the Independent Group, Councillor Powell, the Leader of the UKIP Group, and Councillor Harper, the Leader of the Labour Group, responded to the issues raised.

Note: Councillor Fort entered the meeting after the Leader of the Council had submitted her report. Councillor Fort said that she had no interests to declare.

81. REPORT OF THE AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2016 - AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL 2015/16

It was moved by Councillor McLoughlin, seconded by Councillor Daley, that the recommendation of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee regarding the Committee's Annual Report to Council 2015/16 be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee's Annual Report to Council 2015/16, attached as Appendix A to the report of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, be noted.

82. REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2016 - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY: DRAFT CHARGING SCHEDULE SUBMISSION

It was moved by Councillor D Burton, seconded by Councillor De Wiggondene, that the recommendation of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy: Draft Charging Schedule and Draft Regulation 123 List be approved.

RESOLVED: That the Community Infrastructure Levy: Draft Charging Schedule and Draft Regulation 123 List, attached as Appendices A and B respectively to the report of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, be approved for submission to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).

83. REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2016 - ADOPTION OF BYELAWS FOR COSMETIC PIERCING AND SEMI-PERMANENT SKIN COLOURING

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Ring, seconded by Councillor Barned, that the recommendation of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee regarding the adoption of new byelaws to cover cosmetic piercing and semi-permanent skin colouring be approved.

RESOLVED: That byelaws be adopted for registering businesses involved in cosmetic piercing and semi-permanent skin colouring by implementing Section 120 and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act 2003 based on models provided by the Department of Health as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report of the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee.

84. REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2016 - STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

It was moved by Councillor D Burton, seconded by Councillor McLoughlin, that the recommendation of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee regarding the adoption of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan to become part of the Development Plan for Maidstone be approved.

In moving the recommendation, Councillor D Burton congratulated all those involved in the preparation of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan and thanked them for their efforts.

Councillors Perry and Brice, Ward Members for Staplehurst, also thanked the Parish Councillors, local residents and Borough Council Officers who had been involved in the preparation of the Plan for their work and commitment.

RESOLVED: That the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan, attached as Appendix A to the report of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, be made (adopted) and becomes part of the Development Plan for Maidstone.

85. REPORT OF THE DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2016 - ST MICHAEL'S SCHOOL POLLING STATION REVIEW

Having stated that he had pre-determined this issue, Councillor Boughton left the meeting when it was discussed.

It was moved by Councillor Fissenden, seconded by Councillor Mrs Joy, that the recommendation of the Democracy Committee regarding the venue of the polling station for Fant Ward (East) be approved.

RESOLVED: That the venue of the polling station for Fant Ward (East) be changed from St Michael's School to the Grange Moor Hotel in St Michael's Road.

86. REPORT OF THE DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2016 - WEBCASTING SERVICE

It was moved by Councillor Boughton, seconded by Councillor Prendergast, that the recommendation of the Democracy Committee regarding the use of the webcasting voting system be approved with the addition of the following after the word "decision" in the third line:

"as follows:

Part 3.1, Rule 21.3 – Show of Hands

Amend to read:

Part 3.1, Rule 21.3 – Means of Voting

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rule 21.4, the Mayor will take the vote by electronic vote, show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

Part 3.1, Rule 21.4 - Recorded Vote

Amend to read:

If five Councillors present at a Council meeting, three Councillors present at a Committee or two Councillors present at a Sub-Committee meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be recorded using electronic voting or taken down in writing and entered into the minutes.”

RESOLVED: That the use of the webcasting voting system to ensure transparency and accuracy at meetings be approved, and that the Constitution be amended to reflect this decision as follows:

Part 3.1, Rule 21.3 – Show of Hands

Amend to read:

Part 3.1, Rule 21.3 – Means of Voting

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under Rule 21.4, the Mayor will take the vote by electronic vote, show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

Part 3.1, Rule 21.4 - Recorded Vote

Amend to read:

If five Councillors present at a Council meeting, three Councillors present at a Committee or two Councillors present at a Sub-Committee meeting demand it, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be recorded using electronic voting or taken down in writing and entered into the minutes.

87. REPORT OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2016 - COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2017/18

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Wilson, seconded by Councillor Mrs Blackmore, that the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2017/18 be approved with the addition of the following after the word “below” in the sixth line:

“, to be effective from 1 April 2017 for a period of one financial year:”

RESOLVED: That having noted the outcome of the public consultation and considered the potential impact of the proposed changes on working age claimants with the protected characteristics of disability, age and sex, under the Equalities Act 2010, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, attached as Appendix B to the report of the Policy and Resources Committee, as amended by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 23 November 2016 as detailed below, be approved to be effective from 1 April 2017 for a period of one financial year:-

Option 1 – Reduce the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 87% to 80%.

Option 2 – Remove the Family Premium for all new working age applicants.

Option 5 – Reduce the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Reduction to four weeks.

Option 11 – Remove the work related activity component in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction.

Option 12 – Limit the number of dependent children within the calculation for Council Tax Reduction to a maximum of two.

Option 13 – Introduce a scheme, in addition to Council Tax Reduction, to help applicants suffering exceptional hardship.

88. ORAL REPORT OF THE HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2016

There was no report from the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee on this occasion.

89. ORAL REPORT OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2016

There was no report from the Licensing Committee on this occasion.

90. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT - EXTERNAL AUDIT PROCUREMENT

It was moved by Councillor McLoughlin, seconded by Councillor Perry, that the recommendations set out in the report of the Director of Finance and Business Improvement relating to the appointment of external auditors be approved.

RESOLVED:

1. That Public Sector Audit Appointments' (PSAA) invitation to opt into the sector led option for appointment of external auditors for five financial years starting 1 April 2018 be accepted.

2. That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement be authorised to liaise with PSAA and respond to its consultations on specific proposals as they come forward.

91. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Boughton, and

RESOLVED: That the following changes to the membership of Committees be approved to reflect the wishes of the Leader of the Conservative Group:

Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

Add Councillor Prendergast as a Substitute Member of the Committee

Licensing Committee

Delete Councillor Greer as a Member of the Committee and add Councillor Revell

Add Councillor Greer as a Substitute Member of the Committee

Planning Committee

Add Councillor Greer as a Substitute Member of the Committee

Policy and Resources Committee

Add Councillors Perry and Prendergast as Substitute Members of the Committee

92. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.