

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation
Committee**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 JULY 2017

Present: Councillor D Burton (Chairman) and Councillors Cox, English, Mrs Gooch, Prendergast, Springett, de Wiggondene and Willis

Also Present: Councillor Perry

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Munford and Wilby.

28. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Gooch was present as a substitute for Councillor Munford.

29. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that there was an urgent update relating to Item 15 – Planning Performance Statistics 2016/17, which contained background information for the report and had been circulated to the Committee the day of the meeting. The Chairman stated that in his opinion the information as urgent as it gave greater context to the report.

30. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor John Perry was present as a Visiting Member and indicated that he wished to speak on Item 13 – Park and Ride Review – Findings and Next Steps.

31. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

32. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

33. EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

34. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to the addition of the following sentence, in Item 19 – Review of Air Quality Management Area and Low Emissions Strategy:

The Committee supported the need for the Air Quality Working Group to continue for the time being.

35. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

36. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

37. OUTSIDE BODIES - VERBAL UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

The Committee noted that:

- Councillors D Burton and English attended a seminar on Low Emission Vehicles. The Chairman agreed to circulate the presentation slides from the seminar to the Committee.
- The Community Rail Partnership had discussed the process of meeting with the four bidders for the South Eastern Rail Franchise.
- The Medway Valley Rail Partnership had asked to be a consultee on the Tri-Study and the Planning Policy Manager asked for the details to be sent to him in order to facilitate this.

38. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee requested that a report relating to General Permitted Development Rights be added to the Committee Work Programme.

The Planning Policy Manager informed the Committee that Ashford Borough Council were at Regulation 19 consultation stage of their Local Plan and that, as there were no Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee meetings before the end of the consultation period, Officers would send a written draft to the Committee for comments. The Committee requested to be kept informed of the main changes that Ashford Borough Council had proposed since their last consultation.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

39. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMISSIONING AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT - PARK AND RIDE REVIEW - FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

The Head of Commissioning and Business Improvement presented the Park and Ride Review to the Committee.

Councillor John Perry, present as a Visiting Member, spoke on this item.

The report highlighted that:

- The Park and Ride service was an area of large spend within the Council and that the contract was being reviewed.
- The current Park and Ride contract with Arriva had been extended by a year to allow the review to be completed and was due to end on 31 May 2018.
- The Council proposed to tender for this service in July. In order to provide innovative solutions the procurement method used would provide the opportunity for a two stage process. The process included a requirement for initial tender returns by early September and then a potential second stage negotiation to ensure the contract was awarded by 30 November 2017.
- Park and Ride costed around £584,000 per year to run. £400,000 of this figure consisted of the contract with Arriva to deliver the service. The service delivered £342,000 of income in 2016/17 and therefore cost the Council £242,000 to run. £218,000 of this cost was funded from the Civil Parking Enforcement Fund.
- Nearly 1500 people responded during the public consultation period and the results showed that the Park and Ride service was highly valued by its users.
- The Park and Ride service took around 170 cars off of the road at peak congestion times on weekdays and therefore the service was currently not providing good value for money.
- There would be consultation with both users and non-users about possible service improvement and potential changes to the charging model for the service.

The Committee discussed charging the passengers who were using an older person's bus pass 50p for a return journey, which would generate extra income for the Council. The Head of Commissioning and Business Improvement agreed to carry out further research into this proposal, as it was not clear if these passengers could be charged for the service.

The Committee suggested that, in the next consultation with members of the public, the consultees were asked: "would you consider paying more to keep the Park and Ride service running, as it is currently at risk?"

The Director of Regeneration and Place confirmed that officers had delegated powers to go out to tender for the contract as a result of a previous decision made by this Committee to run this service.

The Committee considered whether there would be any merit in looking at shorter term contracts in addition to contract lengths of 7 and 10 years, that were currently being considered in the working draft of the tender specification. But, officers informed the Committee that this might make the tender too complex, meaning that smaller companies might be put off bidding for the contract as the resources required to prepare the bid would be too high.

In discussions, the Committee considered having a trial to test a new charging model with the current service users before the contract was awarded.

The Committee were keen for officers to update them at the earliest possible opportunity, in order to be kept up to date with the tender process.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and further updates be brought back to this Committee at the earliest opportunity.

Voting: Unanimous

Note: Councillor English left the meeting during discussion on this item (at 7.37 p.m.) before the voting took place.

40. REPORT OF THE PARKING SERVICES MANAGER - PARKING SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT

The Parking Services – Service Analyst presented the Parking Services Annual Report to the Committee. The Annual Report aimed to correct preconceptions and myths surrounding parking services and to inform the public what benefit the service had. The Annual Report would be published on the Council’s website once small amendments to the report had been made.

RESOLVED: That the Parking Services Annual Report 2016/17, at Appendix A, be noted.

41. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - PLANNING PERFORMANCE STATISTICS 2016/17

The Business Manager - Planning and Development presented her report on the Planning Performance Statistics for 2016/17, including an urgent update relating to the report, to the Committee.

The Committee noted the fantastic work of the Planning Department and all the hard work that the officers had put in.

The Committee requested that the data be presented to the Chairman and Vice Chairman throughout the year. If the Chairman and Vice Chairman are of the opinion that the data needed to be reported back, then a report would be presented to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Planning Performance Statistics for 2016/17 be noted.

42. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - BROWNFIELD LAND REGISTER UPDATE**

The Planning Officer – Spatial Policy provided an update to the Committee on the Brownfield Land Register.

The Committee noted that the Brownfield Land Register was in two parts. Part 1 was a comprehensive list of all brownfield sites in a Local Authority area and that the Local Authority considered suitable for housing irrespective of their planning status. Part 2 of the Brownfield Land Register had the potential to add additional sites to the 5 and 20 year Housing Land Supply and would include only those sites for which Permission in Principle had been granted.

The Committee raised concerns about the significant loss of control and income for the Council, in return for the benefit of the Brownfield sites being included in the 5 and 20 year Housing Land Supply.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

43. **DURATION OF MEETING**

6.32 p.m. to 8.44 p.m.