

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22  
MAY 2012**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Gooch (Chairman)  
Councillors Burton, Butler, Yates, English, Mrs Gibson,  
Mrs Grigg, Pickett and Moss

**1. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**

**It was resolved** that all items be webcast.

**2. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Councillors Hogg and Mrs Stockell.

**3. Notification of Substitute Members.**

Councillors Butler and Burton substituted for Councillors Hogg and Mrs Stockell respectively.

**4. Notification of Visiting Members.**

There were no Visiting Members.

**5. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

**It was resolved that:**

- a) Councillor Fay Gooch be appointed as Chairman for the municipal year 2012-13; and
- b) Councillor Clive English be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2012-13.

**6. Disclosures by Members and Officers:**

Councillors English and Mrs Gooch declared a non-prejudicial interest in Item 9, Work Programming Workshop. This was in relation to the review topic, Parish Services, by virtue of their roles as secretary to the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) area committee and Chairman of Barming Parish Council respectively.

All Members of the Committee with the exception of Councillor Moss and Councillor Burton disclosed that they had been lobbied on review topics which formed part of Item 9, Work Programming Workshop.

**7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.**

It was agreed that all items be taken in public as proposed.

**8. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 April 2012**

**It was resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2012 be agreed as correct record of the meeting and duly signed.

**9. Work Programming Workshop**

Angela Woodhouse, Head of Change and Scrutiny gave Members a presentation entitled, 'Making an Impact'. The Officer's presentation outlined the Council's vision and commitment to residents and the Centre for Public Scrutiny's four governing principles for effective scrutiny, illustrating scrutiny's purpose and what could be achieved by Members. Mrs Woodhouse explained the new ways of working for scrutiny as agreed by the scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee at the end of the 2011/12 Municipal Year. These included bi-monthly meetings with Member led working groups for review topics. Members raised issues about Officers not attending meetings, as they are constitutionally bound to do so, and meetings being cancelled as a result. The importance of this was stressed with the move to bi-monthly meetings. It was clarified that scrutiny had a £2,000 budget for expert witnesses and review expenses.

The Committee was informed that the scrutiny team would be offering a scrutiny surgery on a monthly basis, alternating between daytime and evening meetings. This would provide members with an opportunity to discuss their work programme with the team and request or collect information and research. Members requested that the Officer's presentation be circulated via email.

The Committee considered its future work programme and the review topics put forward by staff, Councillors and residents. Members evaluated the information provided for them in the Chamber. They then used the score sheets provided to indicate their preferences. The Committee considered undertaking a review of the Capital Programme as well as looking at Communications including how we communicate with businesses and residents and a review of Governance. It was clarified that the review of Governance had been recommended by the Coordinating Committee following the review of scrutiny last year. The review of Governance also addressed the full council motion to examine returning to the committee system passed in December 2010. Other topics discussed included the Asset Management Plan and the Parish Services Scheme.

It was agreed that the following suggestions put forward for review should be passed to the Committee with the appropriate the terms of reference:

- Planning Process;
- Youth – Life Choices and Employment;
- Housing including Maidstone Borough Council and Residents; and
- Impact of reduction in Police.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) The Asset Management Plan should be the focus of the June Meeting with a pre meet arranged with Officers for the Committee;
- b) The Parish Services Scheme should be an update item at the August meeting;
- c) The Committee's first review topic will be the Capital Programme including Asset Management, Lottery Funding and recession borrowing;
- d) The following review topics should remain as review options to consider later in the year: Communications, Governance and Parish Services.
- e) The Co-ordinating Committee should consider the Governance review and the options for its completion; and
- f) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman should scope the chosen review topics for the Committee's approval at the June meeting.

**10. Duration of Meeting**

**6.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.**