

# **Attachment 1**

## **MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

### **Terms of Reference**

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- 1. Role** - The role of the Maidstone Partnership Board is to:
  - 1.1 Set the strategic direction and agree the shared priorities of the Partnership as a whole.
  
- 2. Aims** - The aims of the Maidstone Partnership Board are to:
  - 2.1 Ensure effective partnerships operate in the borough and to secure effective partnership engagement in district and county-wide arrangements where appropriate to achieve local priorities and actions set out in Maidstone's Community Strategy.
  - 2.2 Act as a forum for discussion and debate on the key strategic issues affecting the economic, social and environmental well being of Maidstone's residents, visitors and businesses and where appropriate identify actions.
  - 2.3 Provide leadership in the development of shared priorities and outcomes for the Maidstone borough; review priorities in light of performance information and monitor delivery to ensure effective political and managerial leadership, action centred service planning and constructive challenge.
  - 2.4 Provide strategic input into the development and endorsement of key strategies and plans which support the joint delivery of priority outcomes which are critical to Maidstone's future success.
  
- 3. Innovation and Joint Delivery** - The Maidstone Partnership Board will:
  - 3.1 Drive innovation in addressing key issues for the Maidstone borough and county.
  - 3.2 Provide a conduit for encouraging productive joint action and joint working, and ensure that opportunities for collaboration on service delivery and efficiency are given sufficient focus and drive.
  - 3.3 Commission activity through delivery mechanisms (including priority sub-groups, delivery groups and task and finish groups) in support of the Maidstone Partnership Board (MPB) agenda.
  
- 4. Partnership and Engagement** - The Maidstone Partnership Board will:
  - 4.1 Consult, liaise and engage with other organisations across the public, private, voluntary and community and faith sectors on issues of common interest.

- 4.2 Provide leadership to achieve change across the Maidstone borough, facilitating improved partnership working across all sectors to improve outcomes, and maximise efficiencies.
- 4.3 Priority groups, delivery groups and task and finish groups will, where appropriate, be created to support the Partnership Board priorities and ensure continued delivery of actions, which can be reported back to the main Partnership Board.
- 5. Learning and Development** - The Maidstone Partnership Board will:
- 5.1 Identify opportunities and increase collective capacity for shared learning and development across all partner organisations.
- 5.2 Develop collective understanding of key policy issues across all sectors affecting the Maidstone borough and county through focused discussion and seeking expert input where appropriate.
- 5.3 Develop mechanisms for ensuring that the MPB receives the views of key stakeholders - including Council service users, other partner organisations and forums, the wider community and staff as appropriate – to inform decision making.
- 6. Membership** - The membership of the Maidstone Partnership Board will be:
- 3 district councillors (nominated as Chairs of the MPB sub-groups, including the Leader of the Council who will also Chair the MPB);
  - 3 county councillors (nominated as Vice Chairs of the MPB sub-groups, one of which will be the Vice Chair of the MPB);
  - A representative from Kent Police;
  - A representative from Kent Fire and Rescue;
  - A representative from the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group;
  - A representative from the Kent Association for Local Councils;
  - A representative from Jobcentre Plus;
  - A representative from the voluntary and community sector (non-voting);
  - A representative from the business community (non-voting);
- The membership should not exceed 15 individual board members. This does not include the lead support officers and support team.
- 6.1. All members of the MPB and the chair have equal standing. MPB members are valued as committed leaders with a unique contribution to make and as representatives of their respective organisations.
- 6.2 The chair or nominated representative of the priority sub-groups and task and finish groups will be expected to formally report progress and partnership working opportunities to the MPB at its meetings as requested by the Members of the Board.

- 6.3 For specific, individual meetings, other people may be invited to attend to discuss any topics.
- 6.4 Requests by other external organisations to join the MPB must be made, in the first instance, to the support officers for the MPB. This request will then be put forward by officers to the next meeting of the MPB and the Chair and Vice Chair will agree whether to accept the organisation as a Member on the MPB.

**7. Responsibility of Members:** The Members of the Maidstone Partnership Board will:

- 7.1 Prepare for and attend meetings as required and agreed, and fully participate in meetings.
- 7.2 Monitor the performance of the MPB against the objectives set out in the Maidstone Community Strategy on a regular basis.
- 7.3 Conduct an annual review of progress against the delivery of the Maidstone Community Strategy. The review will be reported back at the nearest meeting after the end of the financial year and made available to the public.
- 7.4 Ensure prompt progress and delivery on any agreed actions outside formal meetings.
- 7.5 Assist other members of the MPB, as required, in ensuring the overall delivery of the Maidstone Community Strategy.
- 7.6 Work with partners to review the Maidstone Community Strategy making any appropriate proposals on revised, amended or deleted objectives as well as targets and goals.

**8. Decision Making Arrangements and Quorum -** The Maidstone Partnership Board will:

- 8.1 Wherever possible, make decisions on an informal consensus basis.
- 8.2 If a consensus cannot be reached take a vote with each voting organisation on the MPB entitled to one vote. Decisions made will be based on a simple majority vote and noted as part of the minutes of the meeting.
- 8.3 Operate a quorum of a minimum of 9 board members at each meeting and will always be an odd number.

**9. Declarations of Interest**

- 9.1 Declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda should be permanently retained as the first item of the MPB meeting agenda.
- 9.2 If during a meeting any issue is discussed in which a Member has an interest, this must be declared at the earliest possible moment, whether or not it has been previously declared.

- 9.3 The chair will consider whether the member should take part in the discussion or be asked to leave the meeting while the item is discussed. Any Member declaring an interest in an item of discussion will not be entitled to vote on that item.

## **10. Dealing with conflict and grievances**

- 10.1 In the event of any grievance raised by a MPB member, an independent adjudicator will be appointed by the Maidstone Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny team to resolve the conflict.

## **11. Maintaining ethical standards**

- 11.1 All members of the MPB are expected to act in accordance with the highest standards of personal and professional integrity in all aspects of their activities and to comply with all applicable laws and regulations as required.

## **12. Values and Principles - The Maidstone Partnership Board will:**

- 12.1 Be a listening collaboration behaving to ensure mutual trust and respect;
- 12.2 Ensure each member enjoys equality of consideration and treatment;
- 12.3 Have a clear understanding of individual and collective risks and work to mitigate them so far as possible;
- 12.4 Maintain a culture of open communication and transparency of reporting;
- 12.5 Act in the best interests of the collaboration.

## **13. Governance Arrangements for the MPB**

- 13.1 The chair of the MPB will be the Leader of Maidstone Borough Council.
- 13.2 The political membership of the MPB will be reviewed following each local and county election. Non-political membership will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 13.3 Meetings of the MPB will be held on a six monthly basis with a duration of two hours. The meetings will be scheduled at the start of the financial year for the whole year. Additional meetings will be held as required by members of the MPB.
- 13.4 Meetings will be held at the offices of Maidstone Borough Council, unless Members agree to an alternative location. The decision to alter the location of a meeting must be made at the preceding meeting.
- 13.5 Where possible, meetings will be web-cast and open to the public.
- 13.6 All Members must endeavour to attend all meetings of the MPB. If District and County Members are unable to attend, they can nominate a suitable substitute. If a partner Member is unable to attend a meeting they may send a substitute who shall be treated as their equivalent for the duration of the meeting.

- 13.7 An Agenda Planning Group will set and agree the MPB's agenda and work programme at least one month in advance of the six monthly meeting. The group will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair and be supported by lead officers from Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council.

#### **14. Support Arrangements**

- 14.1 Maidstone Borough Council will provide administrative support to the MPB Board (including priority sub-groups, delivery groups and task and finish groups) as follows:
- Meeting dates will be co-ordinated by Maidstone Borough Council's Policy and Communications team.
  - Agendas and papers for the meetings will be compiled and circulated by Maidstone Borough Council's Policy and Communications team.
  - The minutes of the meeting will be taken by the Policy and Communications team at Maidstone Borough Council. The minutes will be circulated to the chair and vice-chair of the MPB within 10 working days of the meeting for approval, and will then be published on the Maidstone Borough Council website.
  - Preparation of reports for the MPB will be undertaken by the relevant officers at Maidstone Borough Council as required.
- 14.2 Records of attendance will be maintained and will be formally noted on the minutes of the meeting.
- 14.3 Any Member of the MPB has the right to submit items for meeting agendas. The Policy and Communications team must be notified of such items at least 10 working days before the meeting date.
- 14.4 Requests for Membership will be submitted and reported in accordance with paragraph 6.5 above.

#### **15. Financial arrangements**

- 15.1 Maidstone Borough Council will normally act as the accountable body for financial matters on behalf of the MPB. All accounting arrangements will be made under the supervision of the Director of Regeneration and Communities in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 15.2 For accounting purposes the MPB's financial year will correspond to that of the Borough Council and will therefore commence on 1st April each year and end on 31st March the following year.
- 15.3 These governance arrangements do not change, replace, substitute or amend in any way the statutory duties or other responsibilities of partners.

## **16. Dealing with Complaints**

- 16.1 Any complaints about the operation of, or recommendations made by, the MPB will, in the first instance, be considered by the Borough Council in liaison with the Chair. If required, a report on the complaint will be brought to the next meeting of the MPB with recommendations as to whether it is legitimate for the MPB to respond and if so, what the nature of that response should be. The MPB will also explore any lessons learnt from the complaint that can be acted upon.
- 16.2 T The MPB is only to be held responsible for the recommendations it makes collectively as recorded in the minutes of its meetings. Complaints related to the conduct of individual members or decisions taken by them unrelated to the minuted work of the MPB will be passed to the relevant organisation to deal with.

## **17. Review**

- 17.1 The terms of reference of the MPB will be reviewed annually by the MPB to ensure they remain relevant to the working of the Board.
- 17.2 Initially, a review will be undertaken after the MPB has been in place for one year to review its effectiveness and ways of working. Following this, the MPB will then be reviewed on a three-yearly basis.