

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2014

Present: Councillor Mrs Gooch (Chairman), and
Councillors Black, Butler, Hotson, D Mortimer,
Nelson-Gracie, Mrs Parvin and Pickett

Also Present: Councillors English, Moss and Mrs Ring

96. THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER WHETHER ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA SHOULD BE WEBCAST

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

97. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman stated that, in her opinion, the documents attached to the Amended Agenda and Appendix 4 circulated at the meeting were urgent and should be considered with Agenda Item 9 – Mid Kent Environmental Health Shared Service Model – Project Update.

98. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

99. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

100. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES

It was noted that Councillors English and Moss were in attendance as Visiting Members.

It was noted that Councillor Mrs Ring was in attendance as a witness in relation to Agenda Item 9 – Mid Kent Environmental Health Shared Service Model – Project Update.

101. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

102. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the Items on the Agenda be taken in public as proposed.

103. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2014

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 January 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

104. DRAFT LOCAL COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT SCHEME (AMENDMENT)

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Environment and Shared Services regarding changes required to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme approved by Council on 11 December 2013.

The Head of Revenues and Benefits introduced the report informing the Committee that at the Council meeting on 11 December 2013 it was agreed that amendments to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme should be considered by this Committee prior to implementation.

The changes that are required to be made are typical of the uprating that is made to benefit awards each year and do not principally change the approach which the council has set out.

In response to a question, the Head of Revenues and Benefits informed the Committee that the total number of residents in the region that this affected was 10,000, 6,000 of which are of working age.

RESOLVED: That the Director of Environment & Shared Services and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, be recommended to approve the changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme, as outlined at Appendix A to the report of the Director of Environment and Shared Services, be agreed and introduced from 1 April 2014.

105. MID KENT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SHARED SERVICE MODEL - PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Environmental Health Shared Service Manager outlining the design for the two-site model of operation of the Mid Kent Environmental Health Shared Service.

The Head of Housing and Community Services, the Interim Environmental Health Shared Service Manager and the Cabinet Member for Environment were in attendance to introduce the report and respond to comments raised by the Committee.

The Interim Environmental Health Shared Service Manager introduced the report stating that the proposed model provides resilience through increasing the number of frontline posts to enable less experienced but professionally qualified officers opportunities to increase their range of experience, flexibility and ensure there is a continuation of local knowledge shared between staff.

The model proposes:

- a combined in-house delivery and partial contract out across the three authorities for the Environmental Permitting Regime over a three year planned programme to bring the majority of the service in-house, gradually increasing officer skills and expertise to deliver a defined number of process types and maintaining a contractor for a small number of high risk premises.
- That food inspections be brought in-house across the three authorities.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to training for staff, the range of premises covered by the service, resilience and service standards, governance of fees, air quality and office accommodation.

The Committee thanked the Head of Housing and Community Services, the Interim Environmental Health Shared Service Manager and the Cabinet Member for Environment for their responses to questions and were in support of the proposals made.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for the Environment be recommended to agree the proposed two-site model for the Mid Kent Environmental Health Shared Service, as set out in the Appendices to the report of the Interim Environmental Health Shared Service Manager.

106. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman informed the Committee that the following items had been added to the Work Programme for March:-

- Equalities Objectives
- 3rd quarter Complaints monitoring report
- 3rd quarter performance monitoring report
- Follow up on past reviews and recommendations (The Council as a Business & The Capital Programme Reviews)
- Communication and Engagement Strategy
- Resident's Survey

Concern was raised that April would be too late for consideration of the MKIP Governance Review and it was felt this should be brought forward to March and that the follow up on past reviews and recommendations be moved to April.

The Chairman informed the Committee that she had become aware of a consultant's report regarding the MKIP operational model and has asked Officers to circulate this report to all members of the Committee as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the MKIP Governance Review be considered at the meeting in March;
- b) That the additional items to the Work Programme be noted, subject to the item on follow up on past reviews and recommendations being moved to the April meeting.

107. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.28 p.m.