

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH
2018**

Present: Councillor Newton (Chairman), and
Councillors Boughton, English, Fermor, Fissenden,
Garten, Mrs Hinder, Perry and Vizzard

Also Present: Councillor Adkinson

72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lewins and Mrs Ring.

73. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:-

Councillor English was substituting for Councillor Lewins
Councillor Garten was substituting for Councillor Mrs Ring

74. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

75. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Adkinson attended as a Visiting Member and indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 13 – Honorary Aldermen and Agenda Item 14 – Economic Development Committee.

76. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

77. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

78. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

79. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

80. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

81. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

82. CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman advised that he intended to take Agenda Item 15 – Decommissioning of Democracy Committee before Agenda Item 11.

RESOLVED: That Agenda Item 15 – Decommissioning of Democracy Committee be taken before Agenda Item 11.

83. DECOMMISSIONING OF DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the report of Mr Sam Bailey, the Democratic and Administration Services Manager, which outlined proposals for the decommissioning of the Democracy Committee.

Mr Bailey advised that this report had been requested by Councillor Harper who considered that agenda items for this Committee had tended to be light and he felt that the functions of the Committee could easily be distributed to other existing Committees of the Council.

The Committee made the following observations on the proposal:-

- That there would be a further reduction of the workload of the Committee due to the outside bodies being moved to other Committees as a result of the Outside Bodies Review.
- That the Democracy and Employment Committees could merge.
- There should be a wider review carried out which looked at all the Committees, considering their size, responsibilities and whether there should be any reductions in the number of Committees overall.
- That a scoping report be brought to the next Committee meeting which set out the terms of reference of the review, to include the original principles agreed by the Council when the review of Committees was carried out in 2015.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a review be carried out into the functions and terms of reference of all the Committees, excluding the Regulatory Committees.
- 2) That a scoping report be brought to the next Committee meeting setting out the terms of reference for the review, including the original principles agreed by the Council.

Voting For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

84. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Committee considered the report of Ms Patricia Narebor, the Head of Legal Services Partnership and Monitoring Officer which set out some minor changes made to the Constitution which had been made under the Monitoring Officer's delegated authority.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

85. APPOINTMENT TO AN OUTSIDE BODY - MAIDSTONE RELIEF IN NEED CHARITIES

The Committee considered the report of Mrs Caroline Matthews, Democratic Services Officer which set out the options to make an appointment to the Maidstone Relief in Need Charities.

It was noted that other than Councillor Daley, there had not been any further nominations received.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Daley be re-appointed as a nominative trustee of the Maidstone Relief in Need Charities.

Voting Unanimous

86. HONORARY ALDERMEN

The Committee considered the report of Mr Sam Bailey, the Democratic and Administration Manager, which set out the legal powers that the Council had for appointing Honorary Aldermen as well as a suggested selection framework.

It was noted that Councillor Harper had requested that this report be brought before the Committee for consideration.

Members made the following comments:-

- That there should be a nomination process.

- That the suggested timescale of 8 years was not enough and it should be 12 or 16 years.
- That an automatic qualification of 8 years could lead to a large number of ex-Councillors becoming Honorary Aldermen.
- That further consideration was required to enable an informed decision.

RESOLVED: That a meeting be held to take into account issues raised by Members and that a criterion for the appointment of an Alderman/Alderwoman be produced and firm proposals be brought back to the Committee.

Voting Unanimous

87. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Chairman announced that as a result of the motion being passed in relation to Agenda Item 15 – Decommissioning of Democracy Committee, this item would not be discussed but would be considered as part of the review of Committees.

RESOLVED: That the agenda item be deferred and considered as part of the review of Committees to be undertaken.

Voting Unanimous

88. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.