

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18 APRIL 2017

Present: Councillor Mrs Ring (Chairman), and
Councillors Barned, M Burton, Joy, D Mortimer, Perry,
Mrs Robertson, Webb and Webster

72. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

73. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no Substitute Members.

74. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

75. **CHANGE OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman advised that she intended to take Agenda Item 13 – Oral Update on the Housing White Paper as the last item.

76. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Mrs Springett was in attendance as a Visiting Member and indicated her wish to speak on Agenda Item 15 – Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour relating to dogs: Updating our enforcement tools.

77. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

78. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

Councillor M Burton indicated that he had been lobbied on Agenda Item 15 – Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour relating to dogs: Updating our enforcement tools.

79. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

80. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MARCH 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

81. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

82. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

83. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members asked for the following items to be put on the work programme for the next municipal year:-

- Enforcement action against litter thrown from cars – It was noted that a report would come forward to the Committee once the new legislation was in place.
- MBC Lottery – It was noted that a report would come forward to the Committee in June.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

84. ORAL UPDATE - BRUNSWICK STREET AND UNION STREET DEVELOPMENTS

The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager gave a verbal update on the progress of both Brunswick Street and Union Street developments.

Brunswick Street

Members noted that a number of designs had been looked at and currently there was provision for 12 market sales, 24 market rents and 16 affordable homes, together with 33 parking spaces.

The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager advised that some pre-app discussions had been held with Ward Members which would result in some design changes and a consultation would be going out to local residents mid to late May with an intention to submit a planning application in June or July.

Union Street

Members were advised that similar progress had been made with this development and by the end of May the public consultation would have been completed.

It was noted that a tendering process would be carried out for a contractor using an OJEU compliant framework with the expectation that building work would commence by March next year.

In response to comments from Members, the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager advised that the current car parking provision would be re-sited and the latest design would provide 19 market sales and 30 market rents. However, it had been difficult to come up with an affordable rent scheme but as further design work would be undertaken the situation could change.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

85. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2017-18

The Head of Policy and Communications presented a report on the current and proposed performance indicators for the Committee following a Member workshop in March.

RESOLVED: That the following Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators be agreed for the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee for 2017-18:-

Providing a Clean and Safe Environment

No changes to be made

Encouraging Good Health and Wellbeing

Change 'Number of completed disabled facilities grants' to 'Percentage spend of disabled facilities grant'.

Add 'Number of completed home hazards grants' and 'Number of housing assistances'.

Delete 'Number. of people successfully completing a course at the leisure centre following referral by a GP'.

A Home for Everyone

That the three KPIs related to planning applications would be reported to Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee.

Add 'Number of households in temporary accommodation'

Providing a Clean and Safe Environment

- The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of litter at an acceptable level (provide photos of

the standards for information) – Target 94%

- The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having acceptable levels of detritus (provide photos of the standards for information) – Target 84%
- Number of fly tips assessed within 2 working days – Target 88%
- Percentage of fly tips with evidential value which result in enforcement action – Target 20%
- Number of reports of litter attended to – Target – (TBC)
- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192) – Target – 52.5%
- SMP Information (Contextual)
 - * Domestic Abuse and other Violent Crime
 - * Substance Misuse
 - * Anti-Social Behaviour

Encouraging Good Health and Wellbeing

- Percentage spend of disabled facilities grant – Target (TBC)
- Number of completed home hazards grants – Target (TBC)
- Number of completed housing assistances – Target (TBC)

A Home for Everyone

- Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) – Target 200
- Number of households prevented from becoming homeless through the intervention of housing advice – Target 300
- Number of households housed through housing register – Target 600
- Number of households in temporary accommodation – Target (TBC)

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

86. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM - TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR RELATING TO DOGS: UPDATING OUR ENFORCEMENT TOOLS

The Environmental Enforcement Manager presented a report on the formal process of replacing the existing Dog Control Orders with updated enforcement measures.

The Committee was informed that a consultation had been undertaken with residents and visitors to Maidstone in relation to controls for dogs in the borough. The survey was conducted to establish awareness levels around the removal of specific bins for dog waste and the success of the accompanying campaign about how dog waste could be disposed of in the regular litter bins.

It was noted that the current Dog Control Orders would convert to Public Space Protection Orders in October 2017 and would stay in place for a maximum of 3 years before they needed to be reviewed.

The Environmental Enforcement Manager advised that he had reviewed the current Dog Control Orders and considered that the fixed penalty level should be more in line with other offences and that provision should be made to extend the current orders to other areas that should be protected. The proposed measures for the PSPOs would be subject to a public consultation to be run in the Spring and was as follows:-

1. To increase the current fixed penalty notice for dog fouling from £75 to £100. The maximum fine through prosecution would remain at £1000.
2. To extend the current order which applied to enclosed children's play areas to open plan play areas.
3. To make it an offence for a dog to be in the cemetery grounds without being on a lead.

In response to questions from Members, the Environmental Enforcement Manager advised that:-

- The fixed penalty notice for dog fouling could not be increased above £100 due to legislation.
- That covert work was being carried out in local parks where particular problems had arisen.
- That a policy of more dogs on leads would reduce the level of fouling and the amount of anti-social behaviour of some dogs.
- The Dog Watch campaign encouraged people to inform on others who had not picked up their dog waste and disposed of it appropriately.
- The Cemetery had experienced problems of dogs being allowed to run loose and this had been considered anti-social.

RESOLVED:

1. That a formal consultation be undertaken for a 1 month period on the introduction of 3 Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to update and improve the enforcement tools available to officers

when dealing with irresponsible dog owners;

2. That the fixed penalty notice available for each PSPO be set at £100 in line with other PSPOs; and
3. That representations made in the public consultation be considered by the Head of Environment and Public Realm as detailed in Section 6 before the Head of Housing and Community Services makes the PSPOs unless there are significant relevant objections when there would be a report back to Committee.

Voting: For: 9 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

87. ORAL UPDATE - HOUSING WHITE PAPER

The Director of Regeneration and Place gave an update on the consultation document for the Housing White Paper.

The Committee was informed that the deadline for a response was early May and that Members of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee had already been briefed.

The Director of Regeneration and Place appraised the Committee on the issues arising out of the Housing White Paper which included:-

- Encouraging Local Authorities to build their own homes
- Right to Buy/Help to Buy
- Planning for the right homes and in the right places
- Higher Planning Fees

The Committee noted that the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of both this Committee and the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee would be consulted before the response was sent.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

88. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.05 p.m.