

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER
2017**

Present: Councillor Pickett (Chairman) and Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Butler, Ells, Fort, Hastie, Lewins, Perry and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillor Naghi

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Hinder.

68. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Perry was present as a Substitute for Councillor Mrs Hinder.

69. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

70. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Naghi was present as a Visiting Member and indicated that he wished to speak on Agenda Item 12 – Reference from Policy and Resources Committee – Budget Monitoring – Parks and Open Spaces, Agenda Item 13 – Second Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18 and Agenda Item 14 – Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 2 HCL.

71. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

72. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

73. EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

74. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

75. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

76. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

77. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programme for 2017/18.

It was noted that the Museum Future Governance Options Report would be presented to this Committee in January 2018 and not in December 2017.

RESOLVED: That the Committee work programme be noted.

78. REFERENCE FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - BUDGET MONITORING - PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The Committee agreed to take the reference in conjunction with Agenda Item 13 – Second Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18, as the items were related. Therefore, the discussion of the reference can be found in Agenda Item 13.

RESOLVED: That the reference be noted.

79. SECOND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2017/18

The Head of Finance gave a presentation to the Committee relating to capital and revenue budgets and outturn within the Committee's remit for the second quarter of 2017/18. The Committee used the debate to consider the reference from Policy and Resources Committee (Agenda Item 12).

Councillor Naghi addressed the Committee on this item.

It was noted that:

- As of 30 September 2017, the budget for this Committee was reporting an overall under spend of £237,447 and the year-end position was forecasted to decrease to an under spend of £143,000.
- The slippage on Parks and Open Spaces capital schemes in the first quarter of the year was reported to Policy and Resources Committee on 20 September 2017. This Committee was asked to consider the slippage in relation to Mote Park and other parks.
- The Market had an adverse variance of £21,400 for the second quarter which had arisen from unachieved income in this area. The

most notable shortfall arose from the Tuesday market and this was a continuation of the trend noted in previous years and was reflective of the national picture.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development stated that:

- The slippage on Parks and Open Spaces capital schemes related only to non-urgent work to resurface the entry and exit roads into Mote Park and that this would be completed by the end of 2021 and within the 5 year capital programme.
- As the Market was currently operating under an unachievable income target it would be reassessed at the upcoming budget setting at Council.
- The private contractor had not yet taken over the operation of Mote Park Café due to the delay in exchanging contracts. The Officer was not concerned because the cafes were performing well and it was expected that the contracts would be exchanged soon.

The Committee raised concerns that parking machines were coming out of this Committee's budget but that the income from parking services was being placed under the remit of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee. It was noted that it appeared that this Committee was paying a capital sum for a service for which it was not receiving a benefit. The Officer agreed to investigate the query and inform the Committee of the findings by email following the meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revenue position at the end of second quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position where significant variances have been identified be noted.
2. That the capital position at the end of the second quarter be noted.

80. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE QUARTER 2 HCL

The Information and Corporate Policy Officer presented the Key Performance Indicator Update to the Committee and it was noted that, for this quarter:

- 20% (1) of targeted Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) achieved their target.
- For 50% of indicators, where previous data was available for comparison, performance improved compared to the same quarter last year.
- The reason that the three KPIs which related to the Museum and Visitor Information Centre had not reached their target was because

major refurbishment had taken place to install a new lift and the Ancient Lives Gallery at the Museum, which meant the closure of two of the Museum's galleries. The Officer advised the Committee that performance should therefore improve in the next quarter.

It was noted that the Committee were keen that any galleries or areas of the Museum which were closed for refurbishment in future should be managed to minimise the impact on performance.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development advised that:

- The target value for the percentage of all available tickets sold at the Hazlitt Theatre was what was included in the contract with Parkwood Leisure. The reason that the target for this KPI seemed low was because Parkwood Leisure had to ensure a varied programme of events and new and challenging shows.
- The performance indicator measure for the number of users at the Leisure Centre was targeted as a 5% increase on the value that was measured the year before. This was a contractual target.
- The Leisure Centre was diversifying the activities that were run in order to engage with new markets and to ensure that they were not losing out to the private sector.
- The contacts to the Visitor Information Centre included telephone enquiries, personal enquiries and email enquiries.
- The system which recorded the number of calls to the Visitor Information Centre had been out of order since July and there was a possibility of retrieving the missing data since the system had first been out of order. The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development agreed to inform Members why the system had been out of order following the meeting.
- A dedicated electronic visitor counting system had now been purchased for the three external entrances of Maidstone Museum. This would provide a more accurate record of footfall because it would count individuals in groups and would not miss people at busier times.

The Committee were concerned with the low values of KPIs which related to the Museum and Visitor Information Centre. The Committee requested that, as there was no meeting of this Committee in February, the summary of performance for Quarter 3 of 2017/18 be circulated to the Committee by email by the end of January 2018, before being reported to the Committee in March 2018. This would ensure that any trends found in the performance of KPIs would be detected before budget setting at Council took place.

RESOLVED:

1. That the summary of performance for Quarter 2 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators be noted.
2. That the summary of performance for Quarter 3 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators be circulated to the Committee by email by the end of January 2018.

81. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.31 p.m.