

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 JUNE 2018

Present: Councillors D Burton, Clark, Cox, Field, Garten,
Mrs Grigg, Munford, Parfitt-Reid and de Wiggondene-
Sheppard

Also Present: Councillors M Burton, English and Harper

6. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

7. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no Substitute Members.

8. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

9. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

The following Visiting Members were noted:-

Councillors English and Harper for Agenda Item 14 – Reference from Council – the Condition of Roads in the Borough and Agenda Item 17 – Walking and Cycling Update
Councillor M Burton for Agenda Item 20 – Statement of Community Involvement Consultation Draft

10. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

11. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

It was noted that Councillors Burton, Field and Grigg had been lobbied on Agenda Item 17 – Walking and Cycling Update.

12. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 APRIL 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

14. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

15. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

16. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

17. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme for 2018/19.

The following items were discussed:-

Designating the Greensand Ridge as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – to be presented later in the year

Management Plan for the Kent Downs – to be separate from the 'Duty to Co-operate/Other LPA Key Issues Report' and put into the Work Programme

Review of the Park and Ride – it was noted that the Committee had agreed that this would come back in November with recommendations following a reasonable period for evidence and data gathering to be incorporated

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted with the additional items agreed by the Committee.

18. OUTSIDE BODIES - VERBAL UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

The Chairman updated the Committee on the Strategic Board Meeting he had recently attended related to Maidstone East.

Councillor Garten updated the Committee on the work of the Kent Downs AONB who were reviewing their Management Plan.

The Committee requested that a report be presented to the next meeting which clarified which outside bodies would be appointed by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Updates from Members be noted and that a report from the Democratic Services and Administration Manager be presented to the next meeting which clarified which outside bodies would be appointed by the Committee.

Voting: Unanimous

19. REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL - THE CONDITION OF ROADS IN THE BOROUGH

The Reference from Council following a motion in regard to the condition of roads in the Borough was considered.

Members raised the following points:-

- That an Officer had already been looking into the issue of the Council taking on the responsibilities from within the Highways Act 1980, Section 42.
- That a cost benefit analysis should be made in order that the Committee could take a measured approach.
- That a report should be brought back to the Committee setting out the implications and repercussions of taking on these responsibilities.
- That the Council had enough responsibilities and should not take this on.
- Should the Council take on this responsibility, it would confuse the public.
- The Council's relationship with KCC would become more complicated.

RESOLVED: That Officers be requested to bring a report to the Committee that sets out the implications and repercussions of the Council taking on the responsibility.

Voting: For: 5 Against: 2 Abstentions: 2

20. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE QUARTER 4 SPST

Miss Anna Collier, Policy and Information Manager detailed the progress of Key Performance Indicators for the Committee during Quarter 4.

It was noted that:

- The target for the delivery of affordable homes during Quarter 4 had been exceeded.

- The target for the processing of major planning applications during Quarter 4 was not achieved and was due to the backlog of cases. This was also the case for minor applications as well.
- Other planning applications had been processed in a timely manner.

It was noted that the situation had improved for Quarter 1 and the backlog of minors had been cleared.

In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Planning and Development advised that in some instances there had been a problem with the Planning Committee not processing applications referred to them quickly enough.

RESOLVED: That the summary of performance for Quarter 4 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

21. FOURTH QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2017/18

Miss Ellie Dunnet, the Head of Finance detailed the financial position for the Committee at the end of 2017/18.

The Committee noted that there was a £200,000 underspend at year end.

It was noted that the budget for the Bridges Gyrotory Scheme had been carried forward as some of the proposed work had not been deemed feasible.

RESOLVED:

1. That the financial performance of the services within its remit for 2017/18 be noted.
2. That the revenue resources to be carried forward into the current financial year as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be noted.
3. That the slippage within the capital programme in 2018/19, detailed in Appendix 3 to the report be noted.

22. WALKING AND CYCLING UPDATE

Mrs Tay Arnold, the Planning Projects and Delivery Manager presented a report on the Walking and Cycling Strategy which provided an update on the progress made to date.

Mr Chidwick from the Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum addressed the Committee and made the following points:-

- The aim of the Forum was to improve the cycling conditions in Maidstone and to encourage people to take up cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle and ensure cycling is used as an alternative to cars

for journeys to work, shops, schools etc.

- That the Cycling Forum wanted to express their appreciation of the opportunity provided by the Council to give their input to and comment on the draft Sustrans report.
- That the current arrangements in regard to the link between the Town and West Maidstone via the gyratory were a substantial barrier to walking and cycling and that urgent attention should be given to the safety issues.

Members made the following points:-

- That the routes across the town needed to improve to make cycling safer.
- That there should be rural cycling routes developed as well.
- That there should be defined cycle routes for children to get to their schools.
- That Pheasant Lane should be added to the cycle link as this is predominately a pedestrianised road.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mrs Arnold confirmed that:-

- There was a number of new routes that would be picked up on the new map following new developments.
- Officers had been liaising with KCC Officers regarding rural hubs to enable residents to catch the bus and the issue regarding cycle racks on the buses was also being revisited.
- KCC are responsible for collating crash data.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress against actions within the Integrated Transport Strategy and Walking and Cycling Strategy be noted.
2. That the publication of the Walking and Cycling Assessment as set out in Appendix 4 to the report be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

23. SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL CONSULTATION: LOOKING AHEAD

Mr Stuart Watson, Planning Officer (Strategic Planning) outlined Swale Borough Council's 'next steps' consultation process and highlighted the draft responses to certain questions that Swale Borough Council had asked within the consultation.

Members made the following points:-

- That most HGV drivers use the A229 (Bluebell Hill) to get to the M2 and this is seen as a significant pressure point for traffic.
- That early engagement should be undertaken with Swale Borough Council regarding prospects of housing developments neighbouring our Borough.
- That emphasis should be put on the effect on the AONB by road users using this as a cut through.

RESOLVED: That the responses set out in paragraphs 1.9 to 1.15 in the report be agreed as a basis for the Council's consultation response to the Swale Borough Council Local Plan consultation 'Looking Ahead' with particular emphasis on the fact that the response should include a reference to road users using the A2 (AONB) as a cut through which would be damaging on the environment.

Voting: Unanimous

24. MEDWAY LOCAL PLAN: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OPTIONS CONSULTATION

Mrs Sarah Lee, Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Planning) presented a report which outlined the Medway Council's consultation on its Development Strategy Options for its emerging Local Plan (2012-35).

The Committee noted the proposed response to the consultation as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Mrs Lee emphasised that Officers would be requesting early dialogue with Medway Council on junction improvements that affect Maidstone before they go out to the next stage of consultation.

RESOLVED: That the response to the Medway Local Plan Development Strategy options (March 2018) as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

25. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT CONSULTATION DRAFT

Mr Mark Egerton, Strategic Planning Manager, gave a presentation on the Council's draft Statement of Community Involvement Consultation which local planning authorities are required to prepare under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The report sought approval to consult statutory consultees and the wider community on the consultation methods as set out in the draft document.

Following a debate on the issue, the Committee were minded to defer this item to allow Officers to come back with more information to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the item be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee.

26. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.50 p.m.