

# TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL

### MINUTES

Thursday, 27th January, 2022

**Present:** Cllr R W Dalton (Chairman), Cllr Mrs M Tatton (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Dr T Shelley (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr N G Stapleton and Cllr M Taylor.

Together with representatives from Addington, Birling, East Malling and Larkfield, Hadlow, Hildenborough, Platt, Shipbourne, Ryarsh, West Malling and West Peckham Parish/Town Councils and County Councillors Mrs T Dean, Mrs S Hohler, S Hudson, A Kennedy and H Rayner.

Councillors A Cope, M D Boughton, D Harman, D Keers, Mrs A S Oakley, W E Palmer, H S Rogers, R Roud and T B Shaw participated via MS teams and joined the discussion when invited to do so in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Bell, M A Coffin and P M Hickmott.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **PPP 22/1 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **PPP 22/2 UPDATE ON ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES**

The Chairman advised that no updates had been identified in advance of the meeting.

#### **PPP 22/3 APPOINTMENT OF SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Panel agreed the appointment of Dr Thomas Shelley to the post of Vice Chair (as a representative of the Parish and Town Councils).

**RESOLVED:** That the appointment of Dr Thomas Shelley to the post of Vice Chair be agreed.

**PPP 22/4 REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN 2022/23**

Members of the Panel noted the Forward Plan for 2022/23 and were requested to identify matters of business to be added to Plan. There were no further items identified.

**PPP 22/5 PLANNING LAW AND POLICY - GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS**

The Leader of the Council provided an update on the Governments proposals to change the planning laws/policy and advised that the position in respect of the Local Authority was difficult due to the high targets and the requirement to submit a Local Plan which met the Governments criteria, and which allowed for the infrastructure to be planned across the borough. The impact of the Governments Planning for the Future White Paper on the Local Authority was unknown, and planning in the borough would continue to be enacted on the current policies with the brown field first policy continuing to be pursued and exceptional circumstances applied to housing development in the green belt. Consideration would be given to the availability of brown field sites and whether they would deliver infrastructure improvements at the next stage of the Planning for the Future consultation. In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Leader explained that local communities and other interested parties would be invited to engage in the consultation of the Local Plan with the Regulation 19 consultation likely taking place in 2023.

The Leader explained that the housing numbers were calculated for all Local Authorities, and he would continue to argue the high number calculated for Tonbridge and Malling. The Housing Delivery test and the method for calculating the result was being questioned, and it was recognised that an action plan would be needed following a reduction in housing delivery since the previous year. The Leader offered to circulate the current 5 year land supply.

**PPP 22/6 CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Kent Association of Local Councils (on behalf of the parish councils) asked that each planning application be assessed to minimise the impact on climate change. The Leader highlighted the introduction of the Climate Change strategy which aimed for carbon neutrality by 2030, with a focus on sustainable building developments, biodiversity and travel initiatives.

There was general discussion on a range of topics including the Local Plan and the regulation 19 consultation, development in the green belt, the insulation of new and older homes and available modern technology.

In response to questioning, it was explained that the Council worked closely with developers at the pre-application stage to encourage

developers to promote sustainability and steered applicants towards supporting the Council's climate change goals and utility providers would be invited to respond to the Local Plan consultations.

In response to concerns, the Leader of the Council provided reassurance that the Council would follow a brown field first strategy when attempting to meet housing needs to ensure that the green belt land would be protected.

Concern was raised regarding the negative effect that the potential substantial increase in heavy good vehicles in the borough would have on the highway network and its impact on the Council's aim to be carbon neutral. The Panel were advised that the Council would continue to follow the legal processes to determine planning applications.

A response to the whether the Council would be submitting an evidence base for the local plan was requested for the next meeting.

#### **PPP 22/7 LOCAL PLAN - COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

An update was requested from West Malling Parish Council in relation to the Local Plan, with particular emphasis on communication and engagement with parish councils.

In response to a suggestion by the Leader of the Council, it was agreed that the Parish Partnership Panel be utilised for strategic discussions in relation to the Local Plan and individual councils would be invited to engage on any site specific concerns.

#### **PPP 22/8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business raised.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm