

**Tonbridge & Malling Local Strategic Partnership  
Minutes of Meeting – 6 December 2013**

**Present:** Cllr Nicolas Heslop – Leader, TMBC  
 Mark Raymond – TMBC  
 Cllr Brian Luker - TMBC  
 James Harman – KCC  
 Penny Nicholls – Age Concern Malling  
 Chris Hare – K College  
 Bridget Remy – K College  
 Gill Fox – TMBC  
 Capt Richard Garrett – 220 Med Sqn. TA Centre  
 Jackie Wilkinson – Russet Homes  
 Bernadette Gillow – Ightham Mote  
 Angela Newey – Tonbridge CAB  
 Teresa Vickers – KCC  
 Jonathan Shaw – Shaw Business Partnership Limited  
 Peter Robinson – T&M District Cricket Partnership  
 Harry Rayner - Kent Association of Parish Councils

**Apologies:** Julie Beilby – TMBC  
 Peter Robinson – T&M District Cricket Partnership  
 Liz Simpson – TMBC  
 Bishop Brian Castle - Bishop of Tonbridge  
 Amanda Forrest – Kent Libraries  
 John Handley – Bridge Trust  
 Father Brendan Grady – The Friars  
 Bev Cleves – Hadlow College  
 Chris Smith – KCC  
 Liz Rikaby – RBLI  
 Paul Temple – Age Concern Malling  
 John Kirby – Kent Police  
 Jane Heeley - TMBC

		<b>ACTION BY</b>
<b>1. Introductions and Apologies</b>		
Nicolas Heslop welcomed all to the meeting and thanked Capt. Richard Garrett for the use of the meeting room at Ditton TA Centre. Apologies received from those listed above.		
Richard was invited to provide an update on issues for the Army Reservists, as follows: 220 Medical Squadron is a bespoke regiment,		

<p>currently has no deployments in Afghanistan; however other shorter term deployments on-going, including exercises in Kenya and Canada. Major recruitment drive currently underway as army seeks to raise number of reservists and reduce number of regular army personnel.</p>	
<p><b>2. Declarations of Interest</b> No declarations were made.</p>	
<p><b>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2013</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>Apprenticeship issues / employability skills are still an unresolved issue with the Skills Group of the LEP. However, SE LEP is currently considering the strategy to be taken in Kent and we will wait to see what emerges. K College currently undergoing significant change and unable to continue to chase this. Decision taken to remove this from the agenda for the time being until there is greater certainty of LEP representations to Government.</p>	
<p><b>4. Presentation – Mind the Gap – Health Inequalities Report</b> Jane Heeley was unable to attend the meeting. However, Mark Raymond gave a brief run through of the powerpoint presentation that she had provided. It demonstrated a need to focus initiatives on addressing health inequalities in the Borough. Those with lower incomes were more likely to die earlier and suffer from serious illnesses than those on higher incomes. These issues were being addressed via a new plan – “Mind the Gap” – this will be circulated with the minutes and used for wider discussion at the next meeting.</p> <p>Peter Robinson – mentioned the Nike survey – heading for a generation of children that will die before their parents due to poor diet and lack of exercise.</p> <p>Richard Garrett – offered to contact Jane Heeley – health professionals from the sqn. could get involved in workplace health.</p> <p>Bernadette Gillow mentioned the outdoor facilities at many NT sites – Ightham Mote has over 500 acres of grounds. Want to encourage children to go outdoors more.</p> <p>Intergenerational projects discussed. Older people going into schools. Training – Dementia Champions – possibility of linking with youth forum.</p>	<p>GF – Circulate MTG plan for discussion at next meeting</p>

Nicolas Heslop thanked Mark for his presentation and for the useful discussion.

#### **5. The Impact of Universal Credit – Updates from partners**

Jackie Wilkinson mentioned that the number of tenants affected by spare room subsidy had been reduced through house exchanges. However, 513 families were still affected. 89 of these have 2 spare bedrooms. They have managed to assist some via discretionary housing payments (approx. 80). Rent arrears have increased – gone up by about £90,000. Still uncertain about when Universal Credit will come in, but when it does, substantial rent arrears are anticipated. Now finding it harder to let larger properties, this had not been anticipated.

Angela Newey reported on some statistics from the CAB regarding the types of issues of concern locally. The biggest issue at the CAB is benefits (27% of all advice given). Relationship issues have also gone up by 13%.

The problem of young people needing support was raised. An opportunity existed for K College to work with the CAB to address this as often young people are unwilling to go to the CAB direct. Chris Hare/Angela Newey to discuss further.

Jackie Wilkinson reported that demand for affordable housing of one and two bed units was increasing whilst larger 3 and 4 bed properties were increasingly difficult to let, People living longer, may want to downsize, more single people, welfare reform adds complexities. Some need 2<sup>nd</sup> room for dialysis, adaptations required for large equipment etc.

Nicolas Heslop suggested that this remains a standard item on the agenda. The Council has an Officer Study Group, Job Centre Plus are engaged. Need to get more people into employment. A benefit map is currently being plotted; overlaying work undertaken by partners, need to ensure that no-one falls through the net. A representative from the Officer Study Group could attend to present the mapped data. Information about different forms of support available for those affected by the welfare reforms was also being placed on the TMBC staff intranet – useful database to show locations of food banks etc.

<p>Jackie Wilkinson drew attention to a consultation underway on the impact of the affordable rent model. She reported that “affordable rents” were currently 70% of market rent in T&amp;M and this was likely to increase 80%. Such levels meant that rents were unaffordable for many people in need of housing.</p>	
<p><b>6. Presentation – Promoting Social Value via Procurement – Jonathan Shaw, Shaw Business Partnership Limited</b></p> <p>A presentation on Social Value via Procurement was given by Jonathan Shaw. RBLI were recently awarded Charity of the Year. Also awarded the MOD contract to look after veterans and awarded liable money from the Government fines placed on the banks. Aim to provide resources to assist employment.</p> <p>Social Value Act 2012, a Private Member Bill, requires public bodies to consider how services they commission and procure might improve the wellbeing of an area. Social Value – a way of thinking about how resources are allocated and used, not about spending more, but as part of tendering process, indicating what can be done to benefit the wider community.</p> <p>It was suggested that Henry Swan, procurement officer at KCC, could attend a future meeting of the LSP to indicate how the County Council was addressing this issue.</p> <p>Following discussion of the opportunities that could be achieved via procurement processes and some of the difficulties involved given the continuing need to demonstrate value for money balancing cost and quality issues, it was agreed that, in 2-3 meetings time, further consideration would be given to the issue to explore how LSP partners might assist with the process.</p> <p>Nicolas Heslop thanked Jonathan for his presentation.</p>	
<p><b>7. Facing the Challenge / Update on transformation and budget consultation &amp; 8. Children’s Centre Update – James Harman</b></p> <p>James Harman provided an update on Facing the Challenge – this is KCC’s organisational transformation approach which aims to achieve savings whilst continuing to focus on what is important to residents.</p> <p>An update was also provided on the Children’s Centre changes. Consultation ended on 4 October 2013 and proposals have been made. Locally it will mean the closure of Hadlow and East Peckham</p>	

<p>Children's Centres.</p> <p>Jackie Wilkinson mentioned that some of their larger houses, which are empty, could potentially be used as alternative venues for youth events.</p> <p>Nicolas Heslop thanked James for the update.</p>	
<p><b>9. Additional Agenda Item – Presentation on Fostering – Teresa Vickers , KCC</b></p> <p>Teresa Vickers provided a presentation and overview of Fostering in Kent. Highest number of children fostered in the country (852). Aim to have people through the system (background checks undertaken etc) within 8 months. No maximum age for potential foster parents.</p> <p>Richard Garrett raised the question of numbers of service personnel applying to foster? There have been some, but the number is quite low and would have expected it to be higher. Richard to help promote.</p> <p>Jackie Wilkinson suggested those seeking work could apply? Possibly also helping to fill spare rooms for those currently affected by spare room subsidy.</p> <p>It was agreed that partners would help promote the fostering service as much as they could. A link from Borough Council website to the fostering page on KCC website will be arranged and information provided in gateways etc.</p> <p>Jonathan Shaw will include Fostering as an agenda item for the next Children's Operational Group.</p> <p>Nicolas Heslop thanked Teresa Vickers for her presentation.</p>	
<p><b>10. AOB</b></p> <p>Peter Robinson mentioned the Young Leaders in Cricket project and the recent presentation held at Lords. This was planned to take place again next year and also looking to extend the programme into formal apprenticeships.</p> <p>Discussion around the Centenary of WW1 – events activities to take place from 2014, funding is available.</p>	

Penny Nicholls mentioned the Dementia Friendly Community project – currently underway in West Malling. Working group established – aim to educate all, not just those immediately affected by dementia.

Chris Hare summarised the situation at K College – procurement process underway, staff will be transferred under TUPE regulations. Bids are in and being assessed, with an announcement expected 13/12/13. The entire process has taken two years. Hopefully will be able to report back outcomes to the next meeting.

Harry Rayner reported that budget cuts from TMBC to the Parish Councils have so far been minimal which was appreciated.

It was decided that the next meeting (14 March) would be held at Tonbridge CAB – and would include an update on the Advice Service Transition Fund. The following meeting (13 June) would be held at Ightham Mote.