

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL**

**Thursday, 7th February, 2019**

**Present:** Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman), Cllr M A Coffin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs S M Barker, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr T I B Cannon, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr D Markham and Cllr T B Shaw.

Together with representatives from Addington, Aylesford, Birling, Borough Green, Burham, Hadlow, Hildenborough, Kings Hill, Platt, Plaxtol, Ryarsh, Snodland, Wateringbury, Wouldham and Wrotham Parish and Town Councils and County Councillors Mrs S Hohler and Mr H Rayner.

Councillors O C Baldock and H S Rogers were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, R V Roud, Ditton, Ightham Parish Council and Mr P Homewood

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **PPP 19/1 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **PPP 19/2 UPDATE ON ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES**

The Chairman referred to Minute Number PPP 18/24 and advised that the outcomes of the Polling District Review would be reported later in the meeting. There were no other actions identified which required an update.

#### **PPP 19/3 LOCAL ELECTIONS - GUIDANCE FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS**

The Elections Manager (Daune Ashdown) referred to the timetable for the upcoming borough and parish elections on Thursday 2 May 2019 and outlined the key dates of importance.

Nominations would be accepted from Tuesday 19 March until 1600 hours on Wednesday 3 April. The deadline to apply for postal votes was 1700 hours on Monday 15 April.

All parish councils were requested to use the nomination forms available from the Electoral Commission as these had been revised since the last election and reflected that it was no longer necessary to include a home address.

Information related to election expenses would be circulated to all parish clerks and a return form had to be submitted even if no expenses were incurred or there was no election being held. Further advice was available from the Electoral Commission.

It was intended to undertake the count on Friday 3 May at Larkfield Leisure Centre.

Finally there would be a further briefing session for parish councils related to polling day on Thursday 11 April and details would be circulated in due course.

#### **PPP 19/4 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

The Elections Manager reported on the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places and advised that the representations received as part of the consultation, which had ended in December, had been given careful consideration by the Electoral Review Working Group and the General Purposes Committee on 14 and 28 January 2019 respectively.

It was indicated that there had been in-depth and robust discussions and a number of views had been considered. The final proposals would be considered by Council on 19 February 2019 and any changes arising from these would be made to the Register with effect from 1 March 2019.

Finally, it was noted that all information related to the consultation and review would be published online once final proposals had been agreed.

#### **PPP 19/5 PREPARATIONS FOR BREXIT**

In opening the discussion, the Chairman, in his role as Leader of the Borough Council, indicated that all levels of government had a responsibility to be prepared for Britain's departure from the European Union. The Borough Council had plans in place for various emergency situations and planning for Brexit was an extension of these measures.

Reference was made to the report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 22 January 2019 (attached for information), which advised of a range of initiatives being considered by the Borough Council to ensure that business continuity was maintained in the light of possible disruption related to Brexit issues.

A key concern for Tonbridge and Malling would be the potential significant traffic congestion affecting the M20/A20/M26 corridor and surrounding roads should there be severe delays at Kent ports.

The Head of Kent County Council Resilience and Emergency Planning and the Kent Resilience Forum (Fiona Gaffney) was invited to comment on the latest position regarding countywide preparations. It was acknowledged that Brexit might represent a significant challenge and there could be considerable impact on the ports, Eurotunnel and surrounding road network. Traffic management and transport plans were being developed, in liaison with local district/borough councils, the Kent Association of Local Councils, distribution centres and haulage organisations, as the importance of maintaining supply chains and keeping traffic moving was recognised.

There was also a focus on Community Impact Assessments to understand the issues that could affect local communities, such as becoming isolated in the event of gridlock on minor roads. In addition, consideration was being given to ensuring that all key partner websites were updated regularly to offer 'real time' guidance and advice.

The following concerns and points were raised, discussed and noted:

- The significant impact on the M20/M26/M2 and other road networks within the borough
- Options being considered to alleviate the pressures on these road networks
- Plans being developed to address the instruction of the Department for Transport to keep the M20 open and traffic flowing
- Uncertainty around the proposals for a lorry park on the M26 and its status
- The unintended consequences to the surrounding road network if the M26 was used as a lorry park
- Clarification that Operation Brock was an initiative to keep the M20 open by queuing freight traffic and having a contraflow in place for non-freight traffic
- The request to have dedicated websites to provide latest information regarding traffic and supply chains
- Preparations for enforcement around non-compliance of freight drivers to avoid minor roads

In summary, Members expressed severe concern around the ability of the local road network to cope should the significant numbers of freight predicted arise and stressed the importance of listening to local communities who had experience of the issues.

#### **PPP 19/6 KENT POLICE SERVICES UPDATE**

Inspector Rothwell had submitted apologies and due to operational pressures other representatives of Kent Police were unable to attend the meeting. However a written report had been submitted for information, which set out details of a number of recent initiatives and operations.

Further information on any of the items raised in the Kent Police Services Update report was available by contacting Kent Police direct. Alternatively, any specific community issues could be passed to the Democratic Services Officer ([allison.parris@tmhc.gov.uk](mailto:allison.parris@tmhc.gov.uk)) to forward to Kent Police.

#### **PPP 19/7 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The County Councillors for Malling North (Councillor Sarah Hohler) and Malling West (Councillor Harry Rayner) provided an update on key points of relevance to the Malling Division and the headline messages included:

- The County Council would be setting their budget for the forthcoming year on Thursday 14 February.
- The 'Big Conversation' public consultation related to local bus services was open for comments and ended on 19 February.
- Further work at Manston Airport had increased freight capacity although this was still short of the volume that passed through the port of Dover.
- The consultation into the review of library services had finished on 29 January 2019 and a reduction in opening hours was proposed for Borough Green and Hildenborough. Kent County Council had been asked to consider whether funding contributions from parish councils to fund the shortfall in hours was a viable option. A response was awaited.

A list of current County Consultations was available on:

[https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/system/findConsultations?dos\\_earch=Y&pageinfo=consultations&ca\\_weblistcontrol=Main&type=O](https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/system/findConsultations?dos_earch=Y&pageinfo=consultations&ca_weblistcontrol=Main&type=O)

With regard to the library consultation, the Chairman advised that the Cabinet Member for Community Services had written to the County

Council setting out the views of the Borough Council. This letter would be available as part of the Communities and Housing Advisory Board [agenda](#) in due course.

Finally, the County Council were pleased to report that the Turner Contemporary in Margate would host the Turner Prize 2019.

## **PPP 19/8 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The Chief Executive provided an update on key points of relevance to Tonbridge and Malling. The headline messages included:

### **Waste Services Contract:**

A new contractor Urbaser had been appointed and an introductory leaflet would be sent to all residents in the next couple of weeks. The new contract would start on 1 March and up until the end of September would mirror the current service arrangements. However, from 30 September new service arrangements would be rolled out across the whole borough and would include the new opt-in garden waste scheme.

Residents could apply for the garden waste service from 7 May and early bird discounts would be offered to those who signed up by 3 August. Parish councils were encouraged to promote this initiative.

A detailed update on the new Waste Services Contract, including a marketing plan, would be reported to the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board on [11 February 2019](#)

Finally there was still time to arrange a meeting with the Waste Contract Officer (Alison Sollis) and parish councils were asked to contact her direct if they were interested.

### **Public Conveniences:**

Following a review of the Borough Council's facilities by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 October 2018 a number of recommendations would be considered by the Cabinet on 14 February 2019. These included the potential transfer of public conveniences in parished areas to the local parish council and the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services would be contacting those parishes affected to discuss this further.

It was intended that any transfers would take place in March 2020 which gave sufficient time for arrangements to be put in place.

The Chairman thanked the Parish Councils that had responded to the consultation and these representations had been given careful consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Local Plan:**

This had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 23 January 2019. It was anticipated that a Planning Inspector would be appointed within the next few weeks, who would then consider the submitted documents and set out the next steps in the process. A Programme Officer had been appointed to assist with the Local Plan Examination process and further information regarding the next stages would be published on the website as soon as it was available.

All representations received during the Regulation 19 Consultation in November 2018 would be published as soon as was practically possible on the Borough Council's website. It was noted that this would take time to complete as personal information would have to be removed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations. However, it was estimated that this would not be complete before the end of March 2019.

In response to a question raised by the Kent Association of Local Councils, the Chief Executive advised that whilst the Local Plan had been submitted it had limited weight in planning terms until it had been approved by the Secretary of State. All current planning applications had to consider current planning policies. However, the Chairman reiterated that the Borough Council's objectively assessed need had been met in terms of the Local Plan submission.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm