

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL**

**Thursday, 13th June, 2019**

**Present:** Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman), Cllr M A Coffin (Vice-Chairman),  
Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr R W Dalton,  
Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr S A Hudson,  
Cllr Mrs C B Langridge, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr B J Luker,  
Cllr M R Rhodes and Cllr M Taylor.

Together with Addington, Aylesford, Borough Green, Burham, East Peckham, Hadlow, Hildenborough, Ightham Mereworth, Offham, Platt, Plaxtol, Wateringbury, West Peckham and Wrotham Parish Councils and County Councillor H Rayner.

Councillors Mrs S Bell and Mrs A S Oakley were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Shipbourne and Wouldham Parish Councils and County Councillors Mrs T Dean, Mrs S Hohler and Mr P Homewood.

### **PART 1 - PUBLIC**

#### **PPP 19/9 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT(S)**

##### **(1) Local Election and New Appointments**

Following the local elections on Thursday 2 May, the Chairman opened the meeting by congratulating and welcoming newly elected and re-elected Borough and Parish Councillors. This was the first meeting of the Panel in the new municipal year.

The recent appointments set out below were noted:

- Leader – Councillor Nicolas Heslop
- Deputy Leader – Councillor Martin Coffin
  
- Mayor – Councillor Mrs Jill Anderson
- Deputy Mayor – Councillor Roger Roud
  
- Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (Councillor David Lettington)
- Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Environment Services (Councillor Robin Betts)
- Cabinet Member for Community Services (Councillor Mark Rhodes)

- Chairman of Area 2 Planning Committee (Councillor Howard Rogers)
- Chairman of Area 3 Planning Committee (Councillor Dave Davis)

The Chairman thanked the outgoing Chairman of the Kent Association of Local Councils (Tonbridge and Malling), Mr Patrick Thomas, and referred to the good working relationship between the organisation and the Borough Council. This had been greatly appreciated and welcomed. It was hoped that a similar approach would be established with the new Chairman, Mrs Sarah Barker.

The Mayor was invited to address the Panel and she announced that the Civic Service would be held on Sunday 30 June at Hadlow Church and all were welcome to attend. Further details were available from the Mayor's Office (email: [mayors.office@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:mayors.office@tmbc.gov.uk)) In addition, the Mayor expressed pleasure at her appointment and appreciated the opportunity, especially of meeting the volunteer and community groups who worked tirelessly to help others. In particular, she referred to her recent attendance at the Tonbridge Lions It's a Knockout event for those with learning difficulties. This had been well attended and greatly enjoyed by everyone. Finally, the Mayor would be pleased to attend any community or parish events and this could be arranged via the Mayor's Office.

## **(2) Recent Flooding**

Reference was made to the flash flooding which had occurred on Monday (10 June) evening and the devastating impact on a number of residents' homes, particularly those in Birling, Snodland and Ryarsh. At the current time across the Borough there were 28 verified flooded property reports, including 1 business.

It was reported that on the night of the flooding, the Borough Council had worked closely with KCC Highways and Kent Fire and Rescue Services and had Officers out on site monitoring the situation. Fortunately, an Emergency Rest Centre had not been required.

The following day (Tuesday 11 June) Borough Council Officers had spent the day talking face to face with residents impacted by the flooding and offered advice and support. All flood damaged goods would be collected by the Borough Council free of charge and this information would be circulated to all affected residents.

In the meantime, residents were being referred to the County Council's Support and Assistance Service and/or Business in the Community for additional guidance. The County Council were also prioritising the clearing of drains and gullies.

Finally, local town and parish councils would be provided with regular updates as past experience had shown that resolving the impacts of flooding could often take a significant amount of time.

### **PPP 19/10 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **PPP 19/11 UPDATE ON ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES**

There were no actions identified that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

### **PPP 19/12 SOUTHERN WATER**

The representative of Southern Water (Jean-Paul Collett – Operations Manager) addressed the concerns raised by parish councils in advance of the meeting.

#### **Maintenance and cleaning of the A25 sewer (Sevenoaks Road) to avoid flooding and odour**

*(raised by Borough Green Parish Council)*

Southern Water confirmed that funding had been secured to progress improvement works and it was anticipated that these would start in April 2020. Work to improve resilience and address ongoing drainage and infrastructure problems at the pumping station had also been agreed. CCTV surveys to identify any areas of remedial work were ongoing and a plan of action would be considered in due course.

Borough Green and Platt Parish Councils indicated that flooding remained a significant risk to residents and there was a need for better education around what could be disposed of and better monitoring of gullies. It was noted that these had been cleaned in the last few weeks using funding initially earmarked for Brexit planning.

East Peckham also expressed concern regarding cleaning of gullies and advised that a number of properties had recently been flooded. These details would be shared with Southern Water for further investigation.

Finally, it was reiterated that Southern Water were committed to mitigating the causes and effects of flooding and the plan was to completely replace the Victorian sewer. However, no timescale was known at the current time and it was recognised that the site had many challenges.

## **Responsibility for fire hydrants**

*(raised by Offham Parish Council)*

Clarification was being sought on this question although it was believed that this was the responsibility of Kent Fire and Rescue Services. When the answer was confirmed this would be circulated to parish councils for information.

## **Would Southern Water have sufficient water resources to supply all the new homes planned to be built in Kent between now and 2031. Were there any plans to have additional reservoirs**

*(Raised by the Kent Association of Local Councils – Tonbridge and Malling)*

The Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) considered water supply needs to 2070, taking account of local council proposed housing growth numbers (from local plans) as well as other factors such as climate change. In Kent the most significant new strategic water resources scheme being proposed was a water reuse scheme at Aylesford to support the abstraction from the River Medway. This was needed by 2027-28. The updated WRMP went through a public consultation process in 2018 and should be published later this year once permission was granted by DEFRA.

Reference was also made to a Stakeholder Workshop on Friday 28 June in Maidstone and parish/town councils were welcome to attend. Full details would be circulated as soon as possible.

A further question was raised by Snodland Town Council in relation to the Guaranteed Standards Scheme and what (if any) financial compensation was available in recognition of sewer flooding. Details of this Scheme would be circulated as soon as possible and attached to the Minutes for information. However, information was available from [OFWAT](#)

## **PPP 19/13 LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health advised that the Borough Council was actively engaging with the two Planning Inspectors appointed to look at the Local Plan, prior to public examination.

Reference was made to the letter received from the Planning Inspector dated 23 May 2019. The Panel was advised that Officers were in the process of dealing with all the points raised and were confident that the timescales set out by the Inspector could be met. Further clarity was being sought around the approach to the General Data Protection Regulations and engagement with the public and the Borough Council

remained confident that these could be addressed and responded to in a timely fashion.

At the current time the Borough Council could not demonstrate a 5 year land supply and this created a risk related to development opportunities and increased planning appeals. However, once the Local Plan had been approved the Borough Council would be able to demonstrate a 5.9 year land supply.

The Panel noted the progress being made.

### **PPP 19/14 WASTE AND RECYCLING UPDATE**

The Street Scene Manager provided an update on the new Waste Services Contract and the improved recycling service. The latter would come into operation from September 2019 together with the introduction of charging for garden waste. Initial take up of the Early Bird Discount for the opt-in of garden waste had been very encouraging. Based on early uptake, the Borough Council remained confident that the 30% target of all households in the Borough registering for the service could be achieved.

It was noted that under the new contract recycling, opportunities for residents would be greatly improved and the Borough Council was committed to recycling as much material as possible, including a variety of plastics. The new contractor (Urbaser) was performing satisfactorily with the number of missed bins being reported dropping by 6%.

Members were advised that a new street cleansing schedule had recently been introduced, as part of the new contract, which had resulted in concerns being raised regarding the emptying of dog and litter bins. Parish Councils were encouraged to continue reporting these issues on [waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk) so that the Borough Council was aware of what areas might be missing from the collection schedule.

Particular reference was made to the marketing campaign undertaken to promote the new waste services contract and the following actions were noted:

- an Introduction Leaflet about the new contractor was mailed to all residents by Urbaser;
- a flyer outlining the new service arrangements was mailed out with the Council Tax bills;
- a new waste and recycling website went live on 3rd May 2019 [www.tmbc.gov.uk/recycleforall](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/recycleforall);
- the use of a wide range of social media advertising;
- individual presentations had been made to 12 Parish/Town Councils;
- 4 roadshows had taken place in Tonbridge, Kings Hill, Hildenborough and Shipbourne; and

- a number of presentations had been made to community groups, meetings of the Parish Partnership Panel and the Tonbridge Forum.

The next most significant marketing activity would be the posting of the New Recycling Service Guide to all households in August 2019. This information pack would explain in detail the new service arrangements and advise households on which day their waste would be collected. There would also be a range of promotional activities a few weeks before the 'early bird discount' expired, to encourage residents to benefit from the reduced charge.

Parish Councils offered to help promote the new arrangements and asked that early notice be given of key dates that should be shared with residents. It was suggested that promotional information could be included in parish magazines if the print deadlines were shared with the Borough Council.

The following roadshow dates were noted:

- 21 June at Tesco, Larkfield
- 14 July at Longmead Stadium, Tonbridge
- 6 August at Asda, Kings Hill

## **PPP 19/15 KENT POLICE SERVICES UPDATE**

Inspector Rothwell provided a verbal update on the achievements made in performance and the neighbourhood policing agenda. The headline messages were the ongoing recruitment drive for additional Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and improved communication with parish councils, with parish clerks receiving monthly updates.

Recent crime trends and activity identified during the 3 month spring period included:

- Nuisance cycling: A Community Protection Order had been issued and there was ongoing engagement between parents and police officers;
- Nuisance vehicles, particularly in Larkfield: Community Protection Orders had been issued;
- Additional funding had been secured to address knife crime. However, it was stressed that Tonbridge and Malling remained a safe place to live;
- Truancy 'sweep' was a joint initiative between Kent Police and Youth Groups and work would continue throughout the year;

- There had been a spike in rogue traders and vulnerable people were warned to be careful. Three suspects had been identified; and
- Unlawful encampments: A number of section 61 notices had been issued and it was likely that this trend would continue throughout the summer.

The following trends and initiatives were identified for monitoring during the 3 month summer period:

- Increased creeper burglary where thieves took car keys from homes to steal vehicles from drive ways;
- Increased shed break-ins and theft of garden equipment; and
- Increased activity in 'hot spot' areas such as bikers gathering at Oakdene Café.

The Cabinet Member for Community Services (Councillor Mark Rhodes) referred to the HMICFRS PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) report 2018/19 in which Kent Police had been assessed as outstanding in efficiency and legitimacy and good in effectiveness. This was an impressive result and represented the hard work and dedication of the Kent police force.

Wateringbury Parish Council asked whether communication with parish councils and the crime data provided could be improved. Inspector Rothwell reiterated that local PSCOs could attend parish council meetings if required and reminded Members that parish clerks should be receiving monthly updates advising of current initiatives.

Reference was made to the introduction of a new 'Your Neighbour' reporting tool which would generate online notifications relevant to the local area. This was due to be launched in August 2019. Members welcomed this additional resource but cautioned that the current crime information was too broad in its content and needed to be tailored to a civilian audience.

## **PPP 19/16 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The County Councillor for Malling West (Councillor Harry Rayner) provided an update on key points of relevance to the Malling Division. Particular reference was made to household waste recycling centres and the recent decision by Medway Council to exclude Kent residents from its sites at Cuxton. Fortunately, as of 23 May Medway Council had changed its position and KCC residents would be able to use the site at Cuxton for the next 18 months. However, all users were required to provide a form of identification that had their address on it. This would enable Medway Council to monitor usage of the sites.

The County Council had publicly confirmed that a suitable site for a new household waste recycling centre in Tonbridge and Malling had been

identified. It had been indicated that this facility would be available to residents within 15 months, subject to planning approval.

### **PPP 19/17 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The Chairman, in his role as Leader of the Council, advised that key points of relevance to Tonbridge and Malling had been covered elsewhere on the agenda as the Local Plan and the Waste Services Contract continued to represent significant challenges for the Borough Council at the current time.

However, Members were advised that a Crossing the River Medway event, which told the story of the bridges over the river, was being held at Tonbridge Castle until 31 January 2020. Further information would be circulated with the Minutes.

Details of the Holiday Activity Programme for 14-16 year olds during the summer had also been circulated to Parish Councils for information.

The meeting ended at 9.20 pm