

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL

MINUTES

Thursday, 2nd September, 2021

Present: Cllr R W Dalton (Chairman), Cllr D Lettington (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr M D Boughton, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr Mrs F A Kemp, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr N G Stapleton and Cllr M Taylor.

Together with representatives of Aylesford, Birling, Borough Green, Burham, Hildenborough, Ightham, Platt, Plaxtol, Shipbourne, Ryarsh, West Malling, West Peckham, Wouldham Parish Councils and County Councillors Mrs T Dean and Cllr H Rayner.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R P Betts, P M Hickmott, Kent Police and Snodland Town Council.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

PPP 21/7 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PPP 21/8 UPDATE ON ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES

PPP 20/17 – Invitation to Southern Water

Due to a period of maternity leave, Southern Water were unable to attend meetings of the Parish Partnership Panel for the immediate future. Borough Green Parish Council, who had initially requested Southern Water attendance, indicated that there had been an improvement in communication and was pleased to report that ongoing works in the parish were due to finish shortly.

PPP 20/22 (c) – Climate Change Strategy

The Chairman advised that the Minutes of the inaugural Climate Change Forum had been presented to the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board on Tuesday 31 August 2021. The Minutes were available on the website for those interested in viewing them.

PPP 20/27 – Update on Waste Services

The Chairman advised that the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board had also received an update on waste services. The reports and livestreaming of the meeting were available on the Borough Council's website.

PPP 21/9 KENT POLICE SERVICES UPDATE

As a result of operational pressures, Kent Police were not in attendance. However, Acting Chief Inspector Elizabeth Jones had provided a written report setting out the latest initiatives, activities and operations that had taken place since the last meeting. The report had been circulated to all parish clerks in advance of the meeting and would be attached to the Minutes for convenience.

Any specific community or parish issues that Members wished to raise with Kent Police were to be emailed to allison.parris@tmbc.gov.uk for onward circulation to Acting Chief Inspector Jones for addressing.

PPP 21/10 WEBSITE DEMONSTRATION

The Head of Communications provided a demonstration of the Borough Council's new website which had been launched in June 2021. Early feedback had been extremely positive as users found it easier to navigate to points of interest and undertake key tasks and transactions.

Particular reference was made to the 'my account' application which enabled residents to create a personalised online account to pay council tax bills, apply for permits and find information relevant to their local area, such as bin collections.

During the discussion the Head of Communications noted a number of concerns and points raised and these areas would be monitored, reviewed and/or progressed by the Media Team and IT developers.

In summary the key matters raised related to:

- the search area radius related to planning applications needed to be extended to reflect a wider area;
- improving how planning applications could be viewed including reinstating the ability to select multiple documents for downloading;
- the availability of historic planning applications on the website, which parish councils found a useful reference tool;
- enabling reporting of littering and flytipping.

PPP 21/11 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

The County Member for Malling West (Councillor Harry Rayner) advised that the County Council were currently consulting on 'Booking to visit a Kent Household Waste Recycling Centre' and 'Budget 2022-23'. All were encouraged to submit a response as the views of individuals were important in setting targets and priorities.

All Kent County Council consultations could be viewed online at:

<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/>

PPP 21/12 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

The Leader of the Borough Council (Councillor Matt Boughton) reminded Members of the ongoing review into the operation of the Parish Partnership Panel. A number of options would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee later in the year and it was hoped that a revised Panel would be launched as soon as possible.

Members welcomed the opportunity to express their views and to work in partnership with the Borough Council in identifying improvements that would benefit all those involved in the Panel. In addition, Members recognised that the Panel was an important forum for communication between all tiers of local government.

However, parish councils indicated that they would like more involvement in setting the agenda for meetings and to ensure that matters discussed were relevant and appropriate. There was also an acknowledgement that larger and smaller parishes had different challenges and all views should be accommodated.

The Leader invited all parish councils to submit their views as soon as possible to inform the options to be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There was also a discussion on the performance of the waste service collections and the Leader set out the difficulties related to the operating model of the contractor and the national shortage of HGV drivers. The Borough Council continued to work with the contractor to resolve the issue.

In concluding the meeting, Councillor Roger Dalton indicated that it was a great honour to be invited to be Chairman of this Panel and having served as a parish councillor for 30+ years he would encourage communication with and participation of all parishes.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm