

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **TONBRIDGE FORUM**

**Monday, 24th November, 2014**

**Present:** Cllr O C Baldock (Chairman), Cllr N J Heslop (Vice-Chairman),  
Cllr Mrs J A Anderson and Cllr P F Bolt; County Councillors  
Mr R Long and Mr C Smith; together with representatives from  
The Bridge Trust, Kent Fire and Rescue Service,  
Kent Police (Tonbridge), Society of Friends, Tonbridge Art Group,  
Tonbridge Civic Society, Tonbridge District Scout Council,  
Tonbridge Lions Club, Tonbridge Rotary Club,  
Tonbridge Sports Association and Tonbridge Theatre and Arts Club

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors  
Ms J A Atkinson, V M C Branson, Mrs M F Heslop, Ms S V Spence  
and D J Trice.

#### **TF 14/23 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **TF 14/24 UPDATE ON ANY ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES**

There were no actions identified.

#### **TF 14/25 PROPOSAL TO ADD TONBRIDGE AND MALLING SENIORS TO THE FORUM MEMBERSHIP**

The Chairman outlined a proposal to add Tonbridge and Malling Seniors to the Forum membership and introduced the group's representative, Mr Michael Adams.

#### **TF 14/26 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE**

The Kent County Council Community Engagement Manager reported that the County Council was on track to deliver this year's savings target of £81m on top of the £269m savings achieved over the last three years. He indicated that, due to reduced levels of Government funding and increased demands on services, a further £206m would need to be found during the next three years.

As part of the budget setting process a full public consultation (closing on 28 November 2014) had been launched to give residents the opportunity to comment on how savings could be achieved. The Forum noted that further information could be found at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/have-your-say/budget-consultation>

Particular reference was made to the Kent Emotional Well-Being Strategy for Children and Young People Consultation which would be open for comments until 5 January 2015. The Forum noted that further information was available on <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/EWStrategy/consultationHome>

The Community Engagement Manager outlined action taken to prepare for any winter weather emergencies which may arise and the Chief Executive of Tonbridge and Malling took the opportunity to update members on the position regarding flooding measures within the Borough. It was noted that the Borough Council continued to work closely with the Environment Agency, Kent County Council, Southern Water, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Services to ensure flood protection and emergency planning measures were as robust as possible.

In response to the Airports Consultation on options for a new runway in the south-east of England it was reported that Kent County Council opposed a second runway at Gatwick Airport and that this issue would be discussed by the Council's Cabinet in the near future as responses were required by 3 February 2015.

**TF 14/27 KENT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (COLIN KING, GROUP MANAGER)**

Colin King, Group Manager of Kent Fire and Rescue Services, provided an overview of the Services' recent activity with regard to assisting vulnerable people within their homes, dealing with flooding incidents and involvement with the Kent Resilience Forum. He outlined the constraints on the Services' budget and focused on schemes such as the 'Message in a Bottle' scheme run by Tonbridge Lions and Tonbridge and Malling Seniors which aimed to provide key information in the event of a home emergency.

**TF 14/28 THE CARE ACT 2014 (CHRISTINE GROSSKOPF, KENT COUNTY COUNCIL)**

Christine Grosskopf of Kent County Council provided an overview of the main changes and implications of the Care Act 2014 and outlined the anticipated effect this could have on the delivery of residential care to the vulnerable and elderly.

**TF 14/29 COLLECTIVE ENERGY SWITCHING (CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER, TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL)**

L Hibbs and L Hicks of the Borough Council's Private Sector Housing Team gave a presentation on the advantages of a collective switching campaign which, in association with Energy Deal, aimed to help and support local residents trying to reduce their energy bills.

**TF 14/30 KENT POLICE UPDATE**

Inspector Mark Hutcheon provided an overview of the achievements made in performance and neighbourhood policing. Particular reference was made to Domestic Violence Protection Orders, the protection of victims of crime and action taken to a recent increase in drug dealing incidents. He outlined work undertaken in association with numerous partners to identify people at risk and made particular reference to the Safe Town Partnership.

**TF 14/31 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING SERVICES UPDATE**

The Chief Executive provided an update on key points relevant to Tonbridge and Malling namely the improvement of the Town Lock area, the completion of the Remembrance Garden, the Airport Commission Consultation, £219K funding provided across the Borough through the Community Enhancement Fund and the numerous community events held in and around Tonbridge which had significantly raised the town's profile.

The meeting ended at 9.19 pm