

Thanet Local Board

Tuesday, 24 January 2012

Present: Bill Hayton (Chairman), Robert Bayford, Robert Burgess, Elizabeth Green,

Charles Hibberd, Michael Jarvis, John Kirby, Chris Wells.

Apologies: None

KCC Officer: Anne Charman (Community Engagement Officer, Thanet)

1. Welcome to the meeting – Mr Bill Hayton, Chairman

Mr Hayton welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed the audience that there could be a slight alteration in the sequence of agenda items as an accident on the A2 had meant that two of the speakers were delayed in arriving.

The members of the board introduced themselves.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Notes of Local Board meeting held on 18 October 2011 and progress on any actions agreed

The notes were agreed as a true record.

3. The London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay in Thanet - Martyn Cassell, Sport and Leisure Manager, Thanet District Council

Martyn Cassell will be co-ordinating the Olympic Torch Relay in Thanet on 19 July 2012 and described how the event would look and how local communities and businesses can get involved.

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) is responsible for the preparations and delivery of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and for animating the route of the Olympic Torch. Martyn recommended visiting its web site to view a video with more information:

http://www.london2012.com/olympictorchrelayanimation

The Torch Relay lasts 70 days starting at Lands End and travels for 63 days around the UK with seven days in London. The Torch stays in Thanet longer than any other district in Kent, entering Thanet on day 63 and just eight days' away from the start of the games giving Thanet an excellent opportunity to take advantage and showcase itself to the world. (The Relay will be filmed and televised each evening.)

The Torch Relay enters Thanet at Great Stonar (Cliffsend) and visits 10 communities, staying a total of six hours (99% in Torchbearer mode), passing through all major towns and exiting at Birchington. The street level route is embargoed and TDC has had to sign a confidentiality agreement not to disclose details until two to six weeks' beforehand (although there has been pressure on LOCOG to extend this to six to eight weeks and could change). There will be a photo opportunity at Turner Contemporary and the Margate Piazza and one lunchtime stop. It is unlikely there will be any unscheduled stops as the route has been very carefully planned by LOCOG. The Relay has been paid for by LOCOG's three sponsors; Coca Cola, Lloyds TSB and Samsung.

People on the route could be affected by rolling road closures and there will be letter drops to local residents and businesses to keep everyone informed.

TDC cannot animate the whole route and therefore would encourage local people, local community groups, schools, parish and town councils to help celebrate in their local areas and dress the route. It is hoped (and anticipated) that a number of events will be organised along the route, but as there is likely to be a massive strain on public services (6,000 police officers have been seconded from Kent on Olympic duties) local groups are encouraged to apply early for road closures. TDC is also events training in February and March. For more information, please visit:

http://www.thanet.gov.uk/leisure - culture/sports clubs - centres/london 2012 olympics.aspx

To view Martyn's PowerPoint presentation please visit: http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=155

- **Q.** (David Green, Chair of Ramsgate Town Council.) How do you organise an event on the route if you don't know the route?
- **R.** This was discussed in a meeting with parish/town councils and we appreciate the difficulties. If you contact TDC and outline your proposals, we can then advise you whether or not it's worth continuing with your plans.
- **Q.** (Ann East, Chair of Ramsgate Carnival). If the Torch Relay organisers in Thanet go to the county councillors for funding, will this affect smaller group's ability to secure funding?
- **R.** No. The Olympic Torch Relay team in Thanet will apply to the county councillors' grant schemes in exactly the same way as any other local organisation would with the same criteria applied.

4. Kent Youth County Council / Thanet Youth Council

Troy Barden introduced his co-presenters, Alice and Rosie and gave apologies for Andrew Frank from KYCC. Troy then provided an update on TYC's activities. TYC met at the beginning of the year to decide on its priorities. The Westgate Youth Project has been recently been renamed the Strength Youth Café as part of a competition that was rolled out across schools to decide a new name and gives young people a feeling of ownership over the provision.

TYC is involved with the Blast events and other social events for young people that hopefully will encourage more young people to get involved with TYC and influence decisions made about and for them.

TYC is also planning its own mini Blast event as well as an 'All About Youth' project made available using funding from Mr Burgess' KCC Member Community Grant supporting young people financially to achieve a number of goals and enabling them to tackle a number of priorities identified in the Thanet Youth Strategy. Decisions on projects will be made solely by a panel of young people so that TYC's priorities can be achieved.

5. Member Highway Fund and Highways update – Ryan Shiel, KCC Highways Transportation Engineer and Paul Valek, Highways District Manager for Thanet

Ryan Shiel works on the KCC Member Highway Fund projects for Thanet and Canterbury councillors and provided an update on how the scheme works and the latest projects supported.

To view Ryan's presentation please visit: http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=155 Mr Burgess emphasised that MHF supports projects using local knowledge to identify a need, many of which would probably have to wait a long time to be completed using the KCC Highways' scoring system. This is an excellent example of Localism, where local people feed into local members the need for these works to be undertaken.

Ryan Shiel also provided an update on the roadworks being undertaken outside Garlinge School (work that was not funded by MHF but qualified under the county scoring system). Curbing should be undertaken by the end of the week; the roadways and footpaths will be resurfaced the following week.

- **Q.** (Vera Elliott) Please could you email the Power Point presentation? There will be a number of people who will be very impressed by the number of works being undertaken through the Member Highway Fund scheme.
- **R.** Anne Charman confirmed that the presentation will be emailed out to those on the board's distribution list and separately to Vera.
- **Q.** With the surfacing of Monkton it was noticeable that there were dips creating pools of surface water that that the rook colony uses to drink from. Had you realised this? Could a pool be dug nearby for the rook colony?
- **R.** Will contact the engineer to ensure he is aware.
- Q. Regarding the bus services being funded through member grants and in particular the bus route 35 service which local people campaigned hard for, will this be affected by Easternways being taken over by another company? Also there is still a need for parking posts at St Crispins as the grass verges are being completely destroyed at the moment.
- **R.** 1. (Paul Valek) Highways has been aware of the problems with verges in St Crispins Road and this has been inspected recently, although a decision on how this should be dealt with is still to be reached.
- R. 2. (Mr Burgess) The members put in 12 months' funding for the Sunday bus to go from Westgate up to the hospital, via the seafront. This was trialled for six months and, to get greater take up rather than stop it, the route was increased to go to Westwood Cross and back. I'm afraid it's a case of 'use it or lose it' and if not enough people use this bus service to make it financially viable then it probably won't be recommended for funding in the next financial year.
- **Q.** (Cllr Iris Johnston) Thank you and Chris Wells for the help with the Union Row project. One of the biggest issues in Margate is the bad state of Canterbury Road up to the town centre which is ruining car tyres. Also in the Westbrook ward the verges are in a poor state with overhanging branches, etc and perhaps the Members fund could be used to deal with this?
- **R.** Mr Hayton offered to discuss this with Cllr Johnston after the meeting.
- **Q.** Who monitors the quality of the work undertaken by Kent Highways and in particular the filling of potholes? There are two potholes in Cliffsend, in an unlit part of the village, that have been refilled within the past two months and are already breaking up and creating a dangerous situation.
- **R.** KCC Highways is responsible for monitoring works, auditing a percentage of repairs. However there are times during winter when filling potholes in bad conditions results in failures and the public is encouraged report these incidents. We will get someone out to look at this.
- Q. There is a dog fouling epidemic in Cliftonville. Is there any scope within this fund to

address this?

R. This is a Thanet District Council responsibility.

school. It is very dangerous.

- **R.** (Mr Hayton) Would recommend taking this up with the relevant ward councillor at TDC.
- **Q.** There is a new pedestrian crossing on the main road coming into Ramsgate by the Nethercourt roundabout, but unfortunately there is still a 40mph speed limit. This must be one of the few crossings in the country with 40mph; will it be reduced to 30mph?
- **R.** This has been investigated. The 30mph traffic calming schemes on Nethercourt Rd have slowed down traffic. However Kent Police did not see/support the need to reduce speeds in the Canterbury Road and therefore the 40mph remains. Comment. Would suggest the police go down there when children come out from
- **R.** This has been raised again with the Police and Highways and we hope to have another look at this.
- **Q.** In Ramsgate there is concern over the traffic speeds off the London Road around the junction of Pegwell Road. Residents have asked for something to be done about this but as yet we had had no response.
- **R.** Regarding traffic calming schemes, there are two methods of funding; (i) MHF and (ii) the Crash Remedial Measures process which requires a proven fatality/serious injury record which is investigated every three years across the county. So if there is no crash report then we will need to explore other sources, perhaps talk to the Ramsgate councillors. Ryan agreed to investigate the crash record and speak with county members about this.

Comment: Charles Hibberd and the Highways team were thanked for the installation of the 30mph speed limit at Manston.

6. The Big Society Fund – David Whittle, Head of Policy and Strategic Relationships, Kent County Council

David Whittle has recently been appointed as KCC's Head of Policy and Strategic Relationships and provided an overview of the background to the Big Society, why it was created, how local organisations can apply and how it is managed.

Last December KCC committed to developing a fund that aimed to encourage the growth of social enterprises in the Community and Voluntary Sector, in order to help create job opportunities in Kent. It was also decided that this would be a recyclable fund, pump primed in the first instance to ensure its sustainability. There are a number of other Big Society funding projects nationally, most notably Big Society Capital funded with up to around £400m from dormant bank accounts and 'Project Merlin' which is an agreement between the government and the big four banks committing them to lend more money to small businesses. The key aim behind KCC's Big Society Fund is to take people out of welfare dependency and into work by creating sustainable business models that don't rely on grants alone.

The Kent Community Foundation was chosen because it was Kent based and the most appropriate organisation as it is part of the Community Foundation network that operates across the country. Although it hasn't distributed social loan facilities in the past, it does have a long track record of distributing the government's Grassroots Grants programmes and Big Lottery Fund programmes. And this reinforces the message that KCC is encouraging the Voluntary and Community Sector and changing the way its does things in response to the financial pressures its faces.

Loans are expected to be provided to small and medium-sized enterprises that might find securing loans from banks difficult and interest rates reflect this. KCF has contracted with

the Key Fund who has a very strong track record of looking at the business cases of social enterprises to determine whether or not they should be funded. (This is a short term measure to make sure the initial decisions to fund are correct until KCF is ready to undertake this role itself.)

Initially KCC set aside £5m for this fund, although £2m of this has now been allocated towards the Kent Jobs for Kent Young People Scheme to be launched in the Spring.

To view David's presentation please visit:

http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=155

- **Q.** Does the £75k management fee include the cost of the Key Fund? And if not, why are you not working directly with them?
- **R.** No, there is an additional cost of 1% of the loan value. It was a KCC Cabinet decision to keep the Big Society Fund Kent focussed and have a Kent based social intermediary. KCF have an existing relationship with the Key Fund who will provide support and advice as a short term measure while it develops this in house function.
- **Q.** This is unique in that it is a loan. Will details of this scheme appear in Inside Track?
- **R.** KCC External Funding Unit, the publishers of Inside Track, will be contacted to ensure it does.
- Q. What is a Social Enterprise?
- **R.** Although often talked about as one specific type of organisation, in reality there is a very broad definition, from companies to cooperatives and mutuals. However the critical factor is that in a Social Enterprise's Articles of Association it must have a social purpose and any profits made must be reinvested for a social purpose.
- **Q.** Can you explain in simple terms what it is and what the fund is for? Is it for organisations who might normally apply for a grant? Examples would help.
- **R.** It could be. An example would be a group of apprentices who want to set up a motorcycle repair business and they are looking particularly at supporting ex-offenders or young people coming out of the care system. If they established themselves as a 'Social Enterprise' and any profits they made from the business were reinvested to support taking on more apprentices, then they would be able to access this fund. Another example would be a group of nurses who wanted to supply services to the PCT or GP and any profits from their business will go back into providing healthcare.
- **Q.** (Mr Wells) You mentioned an upfront administration fee for applicants which will be netted off APR. This assumes a successful application. If unsuccessful, is this upfront fee lost?
- **R.** It is possible that an upfront fee will be lost, but very unlikely as the application process has effectively a triage system before organisations have to pay this fee. If a business case is not worth going forward this will be picked up long before the upfront fee is paid.
- **Q.** You talk about measuring success by job creation; however you also mentioned those organisations who recruit volunteers to give people experience to get people back into work, through apprenticeship routes, etc. How will these two measurements be matched?
- **R.** We will take a broad view of what is termed as employment opportunities and we will be measuring the number of job opportunities, including volunteering and getting people back into work.
- **Q.** We were told at an earlier Thanet Local Board meeting that covered the Youth Transformation Programme that workers in youth clubs that weren't hubs, could apply

to a council fund to form a Social Enterprise. You now seem to be describing a different model.

R. If a group want to spin themselves off as a Social Enterprise then they can apply. (Mr Wells confirmed that the fund referred to at a previous meeting was a discretionary fund controlled by the Youth Service centrally that funds by application and is effectively a grant fund. But this would not preclude or stop any organisation in receipt of the discretionary fund applying the Big Society Fund.

7. Libraries update – Cath Anley, Head of Libraries and Archives

Cath Anley spoke about how KCC would like residents to get involved and take part in transforming its library services for the future, describing its proposals for consulting and working with local people about future library services in Thanet. Jackie Taylor-Smith, District Manager for Dover and Thanet was also available to assist her in answering the audience's questions.

The three key drivers for KCC Libraries and Archives are:

- 1. The need to improve and modernise its services. Already there has been a huge amount of modernisation of libraries in Thanet both the spaces and the services, particularly with the huge move towards online working
- 2. To meet its statutory obligation under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to 'provide a comprehensive and efficient library service'. If the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) deem that Kent is failing in its duty then it can call an enquiry or judicial review. Therefore it is crucial that Libraries and Archives consult with the public.
- 3. The need to deliver savings. Huge savings have been made over the past few years but the need still remains to deliver further savings from front of house delivery going forward.

Its approach is to set up local conversations, primarily through Locality Boards or through the other mechanisms in place, for example Local Boards and ask local members to help with these conversations. Libraries and Archives are open to considering any reasonable suggestions and are keen to know what are local people's expectations, tapping into any ideas, using these conversations to inform the consultation which is due to start in the Summer. While KCC Libraries know of models that may work it doesn't want to pre-empt conversations by putting proposals on the table. For example, a small library in Kent went into partnership with the parish council who had a parish clerk that needed space to operate from and who asked to share library space. The parish clerk now provides a library service and when not doing this uses the space for parish clerk duties, halving costs. Other examples include a new library that has co-located with a Housing Association and in other parts of the country communities have come together to say they would like to run the local library.

The hope is that not only will savings be made but that services will be improved and all agencies will benefit. Libraries and Archives will continue to support communities and partners by providing stock and materials, the county Reservation Service, IT, support and training from library staff and, in some cases, funding. However any model proposed would have to result in net savings otherwise it would not be viable.

Local members (both county and district) will be supported with an Information Pack containing information about every individual library in their districts and a whole range of other facts and figures. All this information is to determine the need of customers, by profiling and looking at the usage of the local library, etc. Community Engagement Officers will assist with the consultation as will local Library District Managers. Conversations in districts will develop in different ways as the current provision varies across the county.

- Q. Do you think it is credible that you can improve services and save money?
- **R.** It is a tough ask, but ways have been found already using the benefits from working with other large organisations and sharing costs.
- **Q.** Some communities in Thanet suffer high levels of deprivation and don't have access to the internet and therefore won't be able to access online services. How will this be made viable?
- **R.** One of our targets is to help more people get online, with about 770 public access computers in libraries across Kent, and volunteers operating in many libraries helping those who are not skilled to get online, plus other courses offered. Libraries see this as a critical part of its role and which it does not see diminishing in the future.
- **Q.** How can better be provided for less? Modernisation and efficiencies; this is another term for cuts. The Libraries and Museums Act was brought in to protect libraries. There is concern about wholesale closures of libraries. For example Westgate Library is the only library in Thanet that has not been part of the modernisation programme with self-service. Do you have an idea already of where the closures are likely to be?
- R. There are no plans for closures. However, if a community feels that this should happen as part of a wider proposal for example so that the existing library premises could be reused for other purposes that the community is interested in, and perhaps in the context of offering a mobile library service as an alternative service, then obviously we would hold that conversation. But Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities has made it clear that KCC has no plans for closures. The only factor considered in deciding where to offer self service is whether or not the possible savings in staff exceed the costs of installing and running the self service technology. A number of factors are significant in making this decision, e.g. the number of staff, the opening hours, the layout of the building etc. Self service is in the process of being rolled out to 34 of the 99 libraries across the county. Jackie Taylor Smith confirmed that in Thanet; Westgate, Newington and Minster in Thanet libraries would not be part of that rollout.
- **Q.** Why has Registration gone into libraries?
- **R.** Because we are able to offer more locations over longer hours and also by merging the roles of two to one, we are able to make significant savings of £350k across the county.
- **Q.** Will there be separate rooms?
- **R.** In most locations this is possible. However there has been a time lag in rolling out this programme, with some building works required, and therefore when someone rings to make an appointment they are given a choice of a location with open plan or a private room. In Thanet we are planning to offer registrations at 3 locations: Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs, all in separate rooms. However, Broadstairs has not been available because the roll out of this programme coincided with the closure of Broadstairs Library for modernisation works. We are now planning to offer registrations at Clifftonville Library in addition while Broadstairs is closed, this service will start 20th February.
- **Q.** Please could you comment on the Libraries & Museums Act which I believe the current government is trying to repeal and which could result in wholesale closures of libraries.
- **R.** Unable to comment on the government's intentions, although I am not aware of any intention to repeal this legislation. Under existing legislation KCC needs to ensure comprehensive and efficient library services across the county in the context of local need. A comprehensive needs analysis has been undertaken by KCC and this data will be available to inform local debates about future local library service provision.
- **Q.** The Local Income Tax Office has moved into Margate Library. As the area is quite open it makes it very difficult to have a private conversation. Are there any separate

rooms for a private conversation? Have spoken to my local MP who has indicated she will raise this issue with HMRC.

- R. (Jackie Taylor-Smith) The HMRC is operating from the Thanet Gateway Plus. This is a very busy service and we are unaware of any concerns being raised by users. However, I will ask the Thanet Gateway staff if this has caused problems. We will ask HMRC if they require a separate room, although they did seem happy with the space allocated.
- **R.** (Cath Anley) Clearly we will need to have a conversation with HMRC about the appropriateness of its location. There are many surgeries undertaken in the Gateway, for example the CAB and if you have any concerns about what is offered, pleased let us know.

Comment from audience. Used the tax office at the Gateway last week and was taken to a private room.

- **Q.** (Cllr David Green). Many people greatly value the assistance of a skilled librarian, especially in answering local history enquiries, and there is a concern that we will lose this service with any changes proposed.
- R. The principal local history collections are held at town centre libraries and it is unlikely that these will be affected. Change is more likely to occur with smaller libraries but we have one example in Kent where the Local History Society has moved into the local library, sharing costs and providing even greater specialist local knowledge. Also Libraries are increasingly offering digital collections online and if there is a question a member of staff cannot answer there are specialists available by telephone or email to advise and help staff and customers; so within an hour or perhaps a day, an answer will be available. Shortly a new flagship Archives Centre in Maidstone will open that will be the hub of this Kent-wide service.
- **Q.** It is very distressing to have to register a death and this was made worse for a friend recently when they had to travel to Deal Library from Ramsgate. Why is this necessary?
- R. There is local provision. However the service transferred on 2 January 2012, and due to close down of a number of services over Christmas/New Year, January is always an especially busy time for registrations. We did recognise early in January that not enough appointments were being offered in Thanet. However more dates have been added and currently we are about to offer this service from Cliftonville Library, as well as Margate and Ramsgate while Broadstairs is shut. We are resolving the problems that occurred and are confident that next January will be better than formerly as we will be offering a Saturday service, and more appointments between Christmas and New Year than had previously been offered by registration offices. Prior to this change, the Registration Service offered appointments in Ramsgate, and 2 days a week in Margate so the move to libraries has widened choice of location for local people.
- **Q.** Will every library have a registrar?
- **R.** No, we currently plan to offer registrations at Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs (although this will be monitored and reviewed).
- **Q.** (Cllr Iris Johnston) While the facilities at the Gateway are useful, Libraries are for research and this needs quiet. It is increasingly becoming less of a library and is very noisy. Why are you talking about these changes, when this has already happened in Margate?
- **R.** There has been a building modernisation programme over the past 10 years and Margate was part of this, with extensive public consultation beforehand. It was not part of the programme we are currently consulting on. While the Gateway is not everyone's choice, there are significant benefits, particularly when trying to attract the disadvantaged customers that are normally 'hard to reach' and who can benefit

especially from our services. Families who are accessing the other services in the Gateway are often introduced to books when otherwise they might not be. Within Thanet there are three big town centre libraries, each offering different services and therefore there is a choice for customers in Thanet.

8. Grant recommendation – Small Community Capital Projects and Local Schemes Grant 2011/12

The Board's recommendations were announced:

Small Community Capital Projects 2011/12 - Tranche 2

North Down Community Project in partnership with St Philip's Church	£ 5,781
St Paul's Community Trust	£16,769
Thanet Leisureforce	£ 2,000

Local Schemes Grant 2011/12 - Tranche 3

Charlton Athletic Community Trust	£ 7,920
Pilgrims Hospice	£ 2,215
Skillnet	£ 4,000
Workers of Art CIC	£ 1,354

9. Opportunity to ask questions about local public services

- **Q.** (Cllr Clive Hart) There have been several references this evening to a Locality Board. The Local Board seems to be a more formal forerunner to this and I understand there are other locality boards elsewhere in Kent. Why does Thanet not have a Locality Board?
- **R.** The Thanet Local Board is currently discussing the possibility of a Locality Board.
- Q. (Tom Brown, Thanet Gazette) 1. Are the members aware of the letter sent out by Kent County Council to the users of Minnis Day Centre talking about its future and the meeting planned for next week? What does 'under review' mean? 2. Are you able to provide an update on the decision making process around the Youth Service and in particular the 'hub' in Thanet? Are you opposed to the idea of one hub?
- **R.** 1. (Mr Hibberd) Perhaps you could show me a copy of the letter after the meeting as I have not seen this and then I can provide some guidance.
- R. 2. (Mr Burgess) The consultation went out to the public and all the responses have been received. It has been proposed to have one hub in each area and that the other youth centres should be commissioned. As a result of the consultation and the Cabinet member has taken the decision that he will consult with the Locality Board in each area (or its equivalent) because the firm belief is that local people have a better understanding of what's required. It is not definite there will be one hub and is still to be decided in consultation with local members. There is a need however when making a decision to seek more innovative and cost efficient ways to deliver services.
- **Q.** (Cllr Iris Johnston) Please could TDC members be made aware of any reviews being undertaken about facilities like the Minnis Day Centre. Also what is happening about the Tivoli Rd Centre, a centre for families and young people with learning difficulties. Is it possible that this facility will remain?
- **R.** (Mr Wells) The consultation on Tivoli is now complete and responses collated. Not aware that a decision has been reached yet but as soon as it is you will be notified.
- **Q.** (Cllr David Green). The grant schemes the Local Board runs are very welcome in the local community but the different schemes can be quite confusing and in some areas these are decided by the local community. Are there any plans to do this in Thanet?
- **R.** It is possible we may consider this however there are difficulties around these schemes. For example some small, local organisations can be disadvantaged if larger groups are

able to influence the decisions made by bringing along large numbers of supporters and a local councillor's knowledge is vital sometimes to ensure that small groups of volunteers are given the support they need.

10. Any Other Business notified to the Chairman prior to the meeting.

Q. (Bill Bell, Vice-Chairman of Manston Parish Council). What are our local board members doing at County Hall to assist the expansion of Manston Airport and help to create more jobs at that location for the people of Thanet?

R. TDC are looking at a consultation with all people in Thanet and beyond to look at the night flight proposals. As a Board we are unable to help with the expansion of Manston.

Mr Hayton thanked all the speakers for their presentations and the public for attending and closed the meeting.