

Notes of the meeting of the DOVER TOWN Neighbourhood Forum held on 13 October 2008 at the Town Council Offices, Dover at 6.30pm

Present: KCC Councillor Gordon Cowan Vice-Chairman
Other Councillors and members of the public.

Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman DDC Cllr Kevin Mills and KCC Cllr Bill Newman.

1. **Chairman's welcome**

Cllr Gordon Cowan welcomed those attending.

2. **Notes of previous meeting**

Were approved as a correct record and there were no matters arising.

3. **Street Scene Consultation**

3.1 Christopher Allen, DDC Street Scene Project Manager, gave a presentation on the Street Scene in the District which covered:

- objectives for environment, residents and public realm
- partnerships to ensure clean, tidy, well maintained and safe streets
- top 10 and all other priorities for street scene
- top issues for Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
- service delivery: education, prevention, involvement, enforcement
- partnerships between all tiers of local government and CSP
- measuring how the service is doing
- purpose of the consultation being to understand communities' expectations from street scene service and how they can become involved

Consultation would be completed in November with strategy adopted by Council in March 2009 to start in April 2009.

No extra money or resources would be available for street scene so redirection of priorities was needed in budget setting process which is starting now.

Consultation is not restricted to Forums; individual responses are welcomed.

Enforcement, when necessary, would need to be robust.

3.2 The Forum broke into discussion groups to identify priorities, suggest means of community involvement, define the role of Town and Parish Councils and raise any other issues:

Priorities:

- drug taking paraphernalia
- drinkers in Pencester Gardens and other public spaces
- focus regeneration on area from Bench Street to Market Square (tourist route) before moving on to other areas
- utility companies to restore road surfaces after work to avoid 'patchwork'
- vegetation overhanging road signs
- proper refuse collection so that clean-ups not needed
- chewing gum removal
- graffiti – artistic is acceptable, mindless is not

- noisy neighbours and noisy cars
- empty properties; take action against absentee landlords
- improve communication - tell people who to contact and how
- engage young people
- clean River Dour
- anti social behaviour
- It was also felt that many of the priorities could be grouped together rather than being listed as separate priorities

Community involvement:

- PCSOs need greater powers and an obvious presence in parks
- individuals need to know they are not alone; supply contact numbers, support and feedback; get together in 'street communities' to take action
- young people to create murals on hoardings round empty properties
- educate children not to litter
- use probation service to help clean streets, carry out community tasks
- get schools to keep their own areas clean
- report anti social behaviour
- run campaigns and newsletters on local issues
- keep refuse away from domestic properties and shopfronts
- Neighbourhood Watch; community groups to report more than just crime
- adopt an area and clean it up
- encourage local schools and communities to take pride in their own areas and keep them clean

Town and Parish Council action

- Councillors to be more visible and approachable; reduce 'them and us'
- partnership between tiers of government needs to be made public together with contact details for Councillors
- ask for volunteers for clear-ups
- brighten up areas with flags
- all authorities to take responsibility for complaints; give quicker response and keep complainant advised of progress

Other ideas/issues

- community spirit may have been lost in many places but is not a lost cause
- owners to clear the fronts of their own premises and help those who cannot manage through age or infirmity
- have one annual free collection for large items of waste
- enlist the help and support of local businesses
- Awards Scheme to help motivate communities to take more of an interest in keeping their areas clean

4. **DDC/KCC Small Community Capital Project Grants 2008/09**

Chairman reported results of scoring the various applications and recommendations to DDC and KCC for grants:

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>
St. Radigund's Community Centre Company Ltd	Transforming waste land to useable space	£3,950
Buckland Residents Association	Renovation of meeting room	£3,000
St. Edmund's Catholic School	New tiered seating & control room	£5,000
Blackfish Academy	Development of theatre	£2,550
Dover Watersports Centre	Funding for dinghies	£2,000
Dover Counselling Centre	Fire precaution alterations	£2,000
Dover Grammar School for Boys	Recording studio, mobile sound/PA system	£2,000
Dover Youth Theatre project	Enhancement of sound studio	£2,000
Total		<u>£ 22,500</u>

No grant had been awarded to the Move the Miner application or the Dover Town Council's application for a Western Heights sports facility.

Members of the Forum agreed that these amounts be recommended to the Leaders of KCC and DDC for approval

KCC Local Schemes Grant 2008/09

KCC Cllrs. Bill Newman and Gordon Cowan had jointly allocated their funding under the above scheme to:

St. John's Ambulance - Headquarters Modernisation	£5,000
Dover Town Council - Western Heights sports facility	£5,000
Dover Watersports Centre – Replacement of dinghies	£3,000
Buckland Residents' Association – Renovation of stage	£2,500
St. Edmund's Catholic School – Tiered seating and control room	£2,000
Dover & District Merchant Navy Memorial (Maintenance)	£1,000
Dover & District Volunteering Centre - Transport Scheme	£ 156

Total **£18,656.00**

Cllrs. Newman and Cowan will also be contributing additional funds from their Member Community Grant allocation to the Dover & District Volunteering Centre.

6. **Suggested topics for Future Forums**

The Forum suggested the following topics for future discussion:

- George Cross for Dover to commemorate civilian actions: St. James' Church has no plaques or benches
- Advice to communities on dealing with the 'credit crunch'
- Tourism – after regenerating Dover we need to keep the tourists.

Monday, 13 October 2008

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.