

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL BOARDS

**NOTES OF MEETING
SANDWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

Date: Thursday, 16 July 2009

Venue: Eastry Church Hall, Church Lane, Eastry

Present:

Local Board Members: Sue Chandler (Chair), Ian Martin (Vice-Chairman) and Steve Manion

Apologies for absence: Leyland Ridings

KCC Officers:

		Action
A1.	Chairman's Welcome	
	Cllr Sue Chandler welcomed those attending and invited Worth Parish Cllr Ian Martin to take the chair and, in his absence, KCC Leyland Ridings to act as Vice-Chairman.	
A2.	Notes of Previous Meeting	
	Were approved as a correct record and there were no matters arising.	
A3.	Clean Kent	
	<p>Anne Charman, KCC, explained that Melanie Price, Clean Kent Co-ordinator KCC, had been taken ill suddenly and was therefore unable to attend the Forum and talk about her work. Her presentation was shown and a note made of any question which could not be answered at the time but which would be passed to Melanie, or any other appropriate officer, with the replies being forwarded to those attending the meeting.</p> <p>Clean Kent is a partnership between KCC, 12 districts, Kent Fire & Rescue Service (KFRS), Police, Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Crown Prosecution Service and other which focuses on fly-tipping, littering, environmental criminal damage and Anti Social behaviour (ASB). Specific action targeted rogue traders taking away domestic rubbish are registered waste carriers. A campaign with KFRS aimed at changing attitudes and behaviour regarding rubbish fires encouraging young people to make informed choices so preventing/detering loose or contained rubbish fires. The tactics used include cinema adverts, online information, talking to young people using Face book, You Tube, etc. An education initiative using secondary theatre targeted years 8 and 9 in high fire-risk areas of Kent and used a scenario of ASB escalating into wheelie-bin fire which trapped residents in flats above in a burning building. The young person causing the fire received a custodial sentence and the performance is supported by on-line teaching resources. This is being developed</p>	

	<p>into a workshop aimed at young people on the verge of offending.</p> <p>Legislation on waste carriers and fly-tipping meant that householders could be liable to prosecution if their domestic waste was found to have been fly-tipped. Householders have a duty of care and should be sure that they used a registered waste carrier; details are available on-line at www.cleankent.com or from the Environmental Agency on telephone number 08708 506506. The maximum penalty for fly-tipping is now up to 5 years imprisonment and/or a £50,000 fine. Kent is one of the most successful counties in the UK in addressing fly-tipping with a highly experienced enforcement team, shared legal powers, a 24 hour contact centre on 0845 3450210, legal support and a robust prosecution policy. With regard to litter clearance, KCC and the district support community activities by providing equipment, health and safety advice, insurance and collection of waste materials collected by volunteers. Information is available at www.cleankent.com.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch members were invited to join Clean Kent Watch to focus on reporting risks and incidences of rubbish accumulations, abandoned vehicles, rubbish fires and fly-tipping. They would provide intelligence to support a criminal investigation and alert teams to areas where cleaning was required.</p> <p><u>Question and Answer Session</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many elderly people do not use computers, emails or the internet so need lists of registered waste carriers – what can Councils do to promote this? • Registered waste carriers all have a licence; householders using their services should ask to see the licence and note the number, this should avoid the householder being prosecuted. Is there legislation to ensure that waste carriers must give householders documents showing their registration and details of waste collected? 	
<p>A4.</p>	<p>DDC Waste Services</p>	
	<p>Chris Brown, Waste Services Officer DDC, gave a brief overview of his work and explained the kinds of litter which caused most of the problems in the District: smoking litter and rubbish left out early on waste collection days which were disturbed by seagulls, vermin or youths. This year weeds had become a problem due to a combination of factors; rain and high winds delaying the early weed spraying and knock-on effects of the contractor running behind schedule. The Environmental Protection Act had defined areas of the District by grades and each grade had a different period of time in which the contractor was required to restore cleanliness. These periods ranged from 1-3 hours at the highest</p>	

level to next-day for less prominent areas and contractors would suffer a financial penalty if they did not achieve the required target.

The number of abandoned vehicles reported after a period of 7 days had decreased by 50%. Abandoned vehicles did not need to have an expired road fund licence; 14 days were allowed for a vehicle abandoned on private property so that the landowner could be contacted for permission to enter the site. Operation CUBIT undertaken with the police identified untaxed vehicles and in the last such operation 20 cars were removed in 2 days. Commercial vehicles used for advertising while parked were difficult to deal with if they were taxed.

Fly tipped TVs and fridges provided no identification but plastic sacks were thoroughly searched to find names and addresses. Items were taken away unless they were on private land in which case they became the responsibility of the landowner unless the materials were hazardous. 50% of the Waste Service workload came through Customer Service contacts and the rest involved monitoring the area and contractors.

Question and answer session

- Using black sacks is unsustainable because they don't rot down in landfill and bins are better in rural areas because they keep the vermin out, but I was told I must use sacks, is this right? Bins must have contained rubbish in them and weigh no more than 25kg; it is likely to be the collectors who don't want bins used as they have to put them back after collections.
- Will collectors still take refuse from the side and rear of the premises, especially when occupied by elderly people, and why do collectors rush around and finish early? The contract between DDC and SITA requires refuse to be collected to a certain standard; if the standard is not met and complaints are made then the contractor can be asked to re-do the work. Complaints about substandard collections should be made to DDC Waste Services. Street sweepers should not start before 6.30am. People who cannot carry refuse to the nearest point on the highway should speak to Waste Services and could get an exemption through their GP. This service takes two weeks to set up.
- **Are there any problems with recycling plastics which make up 50% of waste?** DDC's policy is to recycle materials which can be dealt with properly, such as plastic bottles, rather than other plastics which were less useful or valuable.
- **Is DDC considering collecting food waste separately?**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If shredded plastic takes 80 years to break down in a landfill what other ways are there to dispose of it? A new incinerator plant is proposed which would produce energy and reduce toxins. • Why is the ragwort in grass verges not sprayed? • A particular vehicle has been in a council-owned car park for 4 years; it has a Statutory off Road Notification (SORN), what can be done about it? The vehicle must be in a good condition, if it deteriorates further, has no SORN or is untaxed; DDC will trace owners through DVLC and KCC Trading Standards can take action. Vehicles on private land will need permission from the landowner and police can take action on vehicles blocking private drives. 	
A5.	Eastry's Community Warden	
	<p>Bob Priestly, KCC Community Warden spoke of his 7 years experience in Eastry keeping peace and quiet in the village. He had a camera, book and evidence bag to record instances of fly-tipping and he worked closely with DDC. When graffiti proved a problem, a concrete wall had been provided in the Gun Park specifically for graffiti artists to use and if the work was defaced by unwanted messages these were painted over and new artwork added.</p> <p>Members of the public referred to the less positive aspects of young people gathering at such venues, drinking, swearing and being a nuisance and it appeared that there was a marked difference between adult's attitudes depending on whether the area was urban or rural.</p> <p>It was pointed out that grass verges in Gore lane had been mown by the Council but the litter had not been cleared up afterwards. Bob Priestly reported that the requests for volunteers for a recent litter pick had not provoked any response and Chris Brown advised that street cleaners visited Eastry regularly; DDC should be told of any part of the village with litter problems. Litter from McDonalds was spread in a radius from the store and was frequently thrown from cars along country lanes. Cllr Manion reported on a very successful litter picking exercise in Mongeham and spoke of an idea that McDonalds should be asked to put the vehicle registration number on the food wrapping so that litterers could be traced.</p> <p><u>Question and answer session</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting had been very interesting but did not address how to stop people throwing take-away food on the floor, even when sat right beside a litter bin in the Guildhall forecourt, or what action could be taken about anglers 	

	<p>leaving food litter on river banks. Education was needed. Chris Brown visited fish and chip shops with regard to cleaning the areas outside their premises and had visited schools with results that a teacher patrolled the town on a Wednesday afternoon watching for children dropping litter. Youths who had abused and threatened a street sweeper had been cautioned. Opinions differed on whether approaches should be made to a person dropping litter, in view of the risk of abuse or violence. Cllr Chandler reported that fixed penalty notices were being considered by DDC; they were usually issued to people over 16 and, whilst some considered them to be overbearing, they did work. The Chairman spoke of McDonalds in Margate and Canterbury using employees to clear up every evening and Sandwich having notices asking people not to feed to pigeons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there to be a waste incinerator at Richborough Power Station? The work is being carried out there is for power to be brought ashore from the off-shore wind farm to be fed into the national grid. • Will the green waste to be collected at Venson Farm near Tilmanstone be covered or left to break down in the open, and will there be traffic problems? Cllr Chandler advised that this was a KCC planning application but it could be viewed on line through the DDC Planning portal. DDC had raised an objection to this application. 	
A6.	Topics for Future Discussion	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Eastry's narrow streets and double yellow lines; double yellow lines are supposed to prevent parking but are not enforced and local shopkeepers complain that the lines prevent passing trade. On-street parking may slow down speeding traffic but also makes it difficult for emergency service vehicles. How to balance this issue? 2) Government places problems in the way of volunteers; police approval (CRB) check required and a 6 page application form from KCC to be filled in simply for helping at a residential care home. More volunteers will be needed in future so the matter needs addressing. Anne Charman undertook to mention the issue to the County Co-ordinator for Kent Volunteers who might attend a future forum. 3) Motorbikes congregated in number at the bottom of Dover Road, Sandwich on a Wednesday evening which causes a nuisance and a hazard. <p>The Meeting ended at 8.50pm</p>	

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