

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL BOARDS

NOTES OF MEETING

FAVERSHAM LOCAL ENGAGEMENT FORUM

Date Tuesday, 9 June 2009

Venue:

Present:

Local Board Members: Andrew Bowles and Tom Gates

Apologies for absence:

KCC Officers:

		Action
A21.	Election of Chairman / Vice Chairman	
	<p>FAVERSHAM LOCAL ENGAGEMENT FORUM</p> <p>MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Fleur de Lis Hall, 10-13 Preston Street, Faversham on Tuesday 9th June 2009 from 7:00 pm to 9:10 pm.</p> <p>PRESENT: Councillor Anita Walker (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Bobbin, Mike Cosgrove, Cindy Davis, Trevor Fentiman, Mike Henderson, Prescott and David Simmons. Kent County Councillors: Mr Bowles and Mr Tom Gates (Chairman). Kent Association of Local Councils Representative: Councillor Duncan (Selling Parish Council).</p> <p>OFFICERS PRESENT: Philippa Davies, Mark Radford, Peter Speakman, Alan Turner and Jean Wood (all Swale Borough Council (SBC)) and Bill Ronan (Kent County Council (KCC)).</p> <p>ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Inspector Tony Henley and Inspector Kevin Swinney (Kent Police), Neil Fisher (Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT), Susan Wilson (Swale Community Empowerment Network) and Councillor Wilcox (Faversham Town Council). Mr Stewart Laurie, Mr Oswald-Jones and Dr Stephen Rowlstone (local residents).</p> <p>APOLOGIES: Councillors Mark Baldock, Barnicott and Bryan Mulhern.</p>	

	<p>42 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(1) That Mr Tom Gates is elected Chairman for the Municipal Year 2009/2010.</p> <p>43 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(1) That Councillor Anita Walker be elected Vice-Chairman for the Municipal Year 2009/2010.</p>	
A22.	Apologies for Absence	
A23.	Minutes	
	<p>44 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st April 2009 (Minute Nos. 842 - 850) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.</p> <p>With regard to Minute No. 849, a Member asked when there would be a report on the lease of the Bysingwood Community Centre. The Chief Community Services Officer (Swale Borough Council (SBC)) reminded the Forum that a report had been submitted to the Faversham LEF at the meeting on 21st April 2009. He explained that there was no further update as the matter had not yet been considered by SBC's Executive.</p>	
A24.	Declaration of Interest	
	<p>45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>In accordance with Standing Order No. 25(b) Councillor David Simmons declared a personal interest in respect of Minute No. 46, Public Session, Abbey School Day Nursery as his wife was a member of staff at the school. Councillor Simmons did not speak or vote on this item.</p>	
A25.	Public Session	
	<p>46 PUBLIC SESSION</p> <p>Dr Rowstone, a local resident, raised concern with the threatened</p>	

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closure of the Abbey School Day Nursery in Faversham. He explained that a letter had been sent to all parents of the children attending the nursery, on the previous Friday, which had explained that there was a deficit of £90,000. Dr Rowstone raised concern that parents had not been allowed to see the report regarding the nursery and considered it was important that they were able to view it before the planned consultation meeting on 18th June 2009.

Mr Gates reported that he had been in touch with the headmistress of the school on Monday 8th June 2009. He advised that he had been told that he could view the financial report, but that it was not available to be viewed by the public. He had contacted the Cabinet KCC Member for Children, Families & Education, Sarah Hohler. Mr Gates had received conflicting reports regarding other parties that were interested in taking the nursery on. He had also spoken to Rosalind Turner, the Director of Children, Families & Education at KCC. Mr Gates explained that he was unclear why there was a deficit of £90,000. Copies of the letter from the nursery were made available. Mr Gates suggested that a letter be written to the Director of Children, Families & Education.

A Member considered that it may be beneficial to obtain the full facts before the consultation meeting and was unsure why the financial facts were not available to everyone. He suggested a letter be written to the Director after the consultation meeting.

A Member suggested that as the matter was progressing rapidly, a letter should be written as soon as possible. He raised concern that the financial papers were not accessible to the parents and that this was needed to enable them to comment on the consultation. He stated that parents were concerned over the need to find alternative nursery places for their children.

The Community Liaison Manager suggested that it could be beneficial to receive some history and background of the nursery.

A parent of one of the children who attended the nursery reported that there were 45 children at the nursery and that the staff were highly qualified.

RESOLVED:

(1) That a letter be written to the Abbey School Day Nursery expressing the Faversham Local Engagement Forum's concerns regarding the loss of nursery places; a request for further information, including financial implications and the future of the nursery. The letter to be copied to the Cabinet KCC Member for Children, Families & Education, the Director of Children, Families & Education, the Area Education Officer (Canterbury &

	<p>Swale) and the Chair of Governors at the school.</p> <p>Chairman</p> <p>A Member raised concern that a Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT) meeting had clashed with the Faversham LEF meeting. Inspector Swinney advised that PACT meetings were set up, subject to the availability of a meeting venue. The Corporate Services Director advised that the dates of the Faversham LEFs for 2009/2010 were now known and these were on the agenda for information.</p> <p>Mr Macdonald, a local resident, reported that a sign restricting vehicles of a certain weight needed to be moved as it was not clearly visible on West Street during the current road works. The Community Liaison Manager advised that he would report this to Kent Highway Services.</p> <p>Community Liaison Manager</p>	
A26.	The Alexander Centre	
	<p>47 THE ALEXANDER CENTRE</p> <p>The Chief Community Services Officer gave a verbal report on the Alexander Centre. He explained that SBC was very committed to the Alexander Centre as a community facility. Efforts were being made to make financial savings and to raise the centre's income. A business plan was being developed to increase the centre's business. The Chief Community Services Officer explained that fees and charges were competitive so as not to exclude potential users of the facility. He outlined the improvements that had been undertaken which included measures to improve the attractiveness of the building, including improvements to the toilets and heating and changes to the reception area. He explained that SBC were committed to improving disabled access to the first floor and this would increase the flexibility of use of the Alexander Centre. He stressed the need to make the Alexander Centre more attractive for users and that a planned programme of maintenance was being undertaken by the Council's Property Services Team. There would be a showcase event at the Alexander Centre on 10th October 2009 for users of the centre in the hope that more people would be attracted to it as a venue to hire. In response to questions, the Chief Community Services Officer confirmed that he would look into the loop system in the Gatefield Hall to ensure that it was working properly and stated there were no plans to put a permanent caterer in which could potentially have an adverse impact on bookings. In response to a question, he explained that a glass screen was still needed in the reception area as it was still</p>	

	<p>dealing with some cash.</p> <p>A Member questioned whether the report received was the one that had been expected with regard to the future of the Alexander Centre. He asked whether there continued to be discussions on its long term future.</p> <p>The Chief Community Services Officer explained that SBC was committed to form a partnership with a third sector for management, with SBC retaining the freehold, and to increase flexibility of the centre. This could not be done until the Alexander Centre was more physically fit to transfer. He explained there was a working party, but no trustees; there had been a Heritage Lottery Bid, but this had failed which had meant that a trust had not been taken further.</p> <p>A Member believed lottery funding would have fast tracked repairs to the Alexander Centre, instead these were being completed at a slower rate. The Swale Community Empowerment Network had networked across sectors and helped to enable the centre's assets to be seen by groups and individuals.</p> <p>A Member raised concern with the lack of public information that was given out on Alexander Centre issues.</p> <p>During consideration of this item, the Chairman left the meeting and the Vice-Chairman took the Chair.</p> <p>In response to a question, the Chief Community Services Officer explained that over £100,000 had been spent on the Alexander Centre over the last 12 months. This was in addition to the normal reactive maintenance needs.</p> <p>Some Members welcomed the public interest that had been generated with regard to the progress of the Alexander Centre and they considered this had helped to increase awareness.</p>	
<p>A27.</p>	<p>Update from Partners</p>	
	<p>48 UPDATE FROM PARTNERS</p> <p>The Chairman returned to the chair.</p> <p>Inspector Swinney updated the Forum on Police matters in Swale.</p> <p>He briefly reported on the recent murder at the Recreation Ground in Faversham and explained that it had not been a random attack and a charge had been made.</p> <p>Inspector Swinney reported that there had been parking problems</p>	

	<p>on the A2 near the Gate Services where parked lorries had become a nuisance to local residents. He explained that signs had been put up in different languages and a meeting was to be held with KHS for a long term plan.</p> <p>Inspector Swinney reported that the attendance at PACT meetings varied; town centre meetings were well attended. He explained that the meetings were advertised on the Kent Police website and Faversham.org website.</p> <p>Inspector Swinney reported that crime figures were down and that good progress was being made.</p> <p>In response to a question, Inspector Swinney advised that where speeding in rural areas had been identified, speed enforcement would be carried out.</p> <p>In response to a question, Chief Inspector Henley advised that there was a link on the Kent Police website which broke down the crime categories within each ward.</p> <p>The Community Liaison Manager suggested that the Police needed to be supported and that the role of the Police enabled feedback to be sent to KCC. Chief Inspector Henley explained that meetings between partners enabled them to engage with each other towards solving problems. The Community Liaison Manager reported that the Community Safety Partnership had showed that the highest unresolved issue was unresolved KHS issues. He confirmed that he would forward this information to the new Cabinet Member.</p> <p>In response to a question, Inspector Swinney explained that demand for Alcohol Control Zones had increased. They were sited where there had been evidence of incidents of anti-social behaviour caused by alcohol.</p>	
<p>A28.</p>	<p>Waste and Recycling</p>	
	<p>49 WASTE AND RECYCLING</p> <p>The Community Liaison Manager brought the Forum's attention to the tabled response from the Waste Operation Manager (KCC) with regard to raising the height barrier at household waste recycling centres.</p> <p>Discussion ensued on the loss of the ability to walk into recycling centres due to health and safety issues and the environmental impact of having to travel to an alternative site for those vehicles that were too high to clear the barrier. Concerns were raised that the new measures could increase flytipping.</p>	

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	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(1) That a letter be written to the Cabinet Member for Waste inviting him to a site visit at Faversham recycling centre and that the letter be forwarded to the recycling centre.</p> <p>Chairman</p> <p>The Principal Cleansing Officer introduced his report which provided an update on recycling in Swale and the stationing of wheeled bins on pavements. He explained that recycling levels were increasing year on year and this had been possible because of public support. With regard to the retrieval of wheeled bins, he advised that there was a set protocol that had to be followed and the removal of a wheeled bin was a last resort.</p> <p>In response to a question, the Principal Cleansing Officer advised that increases in recycling totals could be achieved by adding textiles and electrical goods to the recycling. This may be carried out as a pilot in selected areas.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(1) That the report be noted.</p>	
A29.	Dates, Times and Venues for Future Meetings	
	<p>50 DATES, TIMES AND VENUES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>Selling Village Hall was suggested as a meeting venue for the next Faversham Local Engagement Forum on 22nd September 2009.</p> <p>The venues of the other meetings would be decided at the next meeting.</p> <p>Post meeting note: The venue for the next meeting is Selling Village Hall.</p>	