

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL BOARDS

NOTES OF MEETING

FAVERSHAM LOCAL ENGAGEMENT FORUM

Date Tuesday, 8 December 2009

Venue: Davington Primary School, Faversham

Present:

Local Board Members: Andrew Bowles and Tom Gates

Apologies for absence:

KCC Officers:

		Action
A11.	Apologies for Absence	
	<p>FAVERSHAM LOCAL ENGAGEMENT FORUM</p> <p>MINUTES of the Meeting held in Davington Primary School, Faversham on Tuesday 8th December 2009 from 7:00 pm to 8:45 pm.</p> <p>PRESENT: Councillor Anita Walker (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Mark Baldock, Barnicott, Bobbin, Mike Cosgrove, Cindy Davis, Mike Henderson 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, Bob Pullen, Pete Raine and Jean Wood (all Swale Borough Council) and Jane Blenkinsop and Bill Ronan (both Kent County Council).</p> <p>ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Town Councillors Jane Hawkins and John Winlow (Faversham Town Council), Parish Councillor Friar (Oare Parish Council), Station Commander Alan Monk (Kent Fire Brigade), Inspector Swinney (Kent Police), Mrs Akhurst (Oare Parish Clerk), Mr and Mrs Bridgen, Mrs Radcliff and Mr Oswald-Jones (local residents).</p> <p>APOLOGIES: Councillors Trevor Fentiman, Mulhern, Prescott, Parish Councillor Vaight (Oare Parish Council) and Sarah</p>	

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	Williams (Swale Centre for Voluntary Service).	
A12.	Minutes	
	546 MINUTES The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd September 2009 (Minute Nos. 354 - 364) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Station Commander Alan Monk (Kent Fire Brigade) being in attendance.	
A13.	Declarations of Interest	
	547 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST No interests were declared.	
A14.	Public Session	
	548 PUBLIC SESSION The Chairman brought Members' attention to the Information Sheet for Public Consultation. This proposed revisions to Swale Borough Council's Electoral Arrangements from 'elections in thirds' to 'whole council elections' that would mean elections were held once every four years in Swale. Members of the public and Members of the Forum were encouraged to complete the form and return it to Swale Borough Council by 26th February 2010. Two questions had been submitted to the Forum prior to the meeting and responses were tabled, as below: Mr Mackay asked: Please could you clarify and expand on the proposal by Brett's for the uses of their land between Faversham and Oare Creeks. The Head of Development Services (SBC) replied as follows: The land between Oare and Faversham Creek lies outside the defined built confines of Faversham. It is close to the Special Protection Area (a European designation for the protection for birds) and the Medway/Swale Ramsar site (an International designation for the protection of wetlands). The site is specifically subject to policy AAP3 in the 2008 Local Plan for mixed used - comprising business, recreation and tourism; and conservation, enhancement and long term management of the site's ecological resources.	

It is the Council's view that future employment development should be restricted to previously developed land and that B1 uses (for example innovative eco-businesses) would be most appropriate, with other facilities to complement and enhance the waterside activity at Oare Creek. It is envisaged that ultimately a Local Nature Reserve will be designated for those parts of the site not being used for employment purposes and that the land in the south east corner would be made suitable for use as public open space.

Planning permission will not be granted until a full range of environmental and transport assessments have been undertaken.

These should include the following:

'Appropriate Assessment' under the Habitat Regulations (proximity to the SPA/Ramsar site);
assessment of impacts on landscape and archaeology; and
in the event that proposals come forward in advance of the cessation of the gravel workings on site consideration of the impact on the economic, transport, heritage and wildlife objectives for the site,

No planning application has been submitted for the development of the site, although informal approaches have been made to the Council. It is noted that the local press has reported proposals for a Marina (following a presentation of proposals to Faversham Town Council).

Mr Oswald-Jones asked: (A2 Faversham, vicinity of junction with Salters Lane, Faversham)

Inter alia other planned action work-in-progress, the issue of perceived speed was highlighted again recently with yet another RTI.

While a hard-wired Interactive Speed Indicator may be on a longer term agenda, would it be possible to fund the installation of a Concrete/Metal Socket, to accept the Peripatetic Solar Powered Interactive Speed Indicator? (similar to that at Bysingwood Road).

I suggest a position visible to traffic coming from Canterbury, between the bus shelter and first traffic island refuge opposite Hilton Close.

Transportation Engineer (KCC) replied as follows:

Speed Indicator Devices (SID)

The project to install SID signs started late 2008 and is programmed to end March 2010. The effectiveness of the project can then be evaluated, with the intention of having an established policy by Autumn 2010.

Research indicates that that these signs are only effective over short periods of time. In this pilot each sign will remain at its location for a period of one month before being rotated to another site. It should also be noted that SID signs are currently not prescribed in the 'Traffic Signs and General regulations 2002' prescribed and as such they cannot be used permanently at a single location.

Vehicle activated (Interactive Signs) and Speed Indication Devices (SID) are popular with the public and parish councils and consequently with elected members at borough and county level. However the 'over use' of such signs can lead to their effectiveness being reduced. There is therefore already in place a County policy for the use of interactive speed and warning signs that aims to address that concern. Dependent upon the evaluation of the speed indication device pilot project SIDs may become an option as part of a tool kit of speed management measures. A policy will then be developed to support this and enable KHS to offer this method to parish and town councils to assist with identified speed abuse issues in their locality.

These signs are managed and implemented by the Road Safety Team in Network Management and they have been made aware of the request. This location is not included in the current programme of sites.

The members of the public who had submitted the questions were present at the meeting.

Mr Oswald-Jones thanked the Chairman for his response and confirmed that he sought the addition of a concrete/metal socket, which could be used with the interactive speed indicator already in existence, which could then be located to a suitable location on the A2. The Chairman advised that this scheme was in the programme of works for the following year.

Mrs Radcliff, a local resident, suggested an interactive sign was needed in Ospringe in the direction of Sittingbourne. A Member explained that the path was too narrow for a sign to be on that side of the road.

Mrs Brigden, a local resident, raised concern with the lack of consultation on the removal and replacement of trees on Abbey Street, Faversham.

	<p>The Chairman explained the background of the trees on Abbey Street and that they needed to be removed as they had damaged the footpath. He explained that new trees would be planted and their roots constrained to restrict the growth of the trees. Mrs Brigden explained that she had seen plans of where the new trees would be planted, but had not been consulted on the decision. Mr Brigden reported that there were anomalies on the plan and suggested that the Abbey Street Residents' Association be consulted regarding the amount of trees that were to be re-planted.</p> <p>The Interim Regeneration Director confirmed that he would take Mr and Mrs Brigden's comments back to Kent County Council.</p> <p>Interim Regeneration Director</p> <p>A local resident raised concern with the proposals for a new supermarket on the Western Link/Bysingwood Road corner in Faversham and considered that it would mean more people would shop out of Faversham and this could have detrimental affects on businesses and the market in the town centre. She considered there would be more traffic generated when the supermarket was built. She encouraged people to respond and give their comments on the SBC planning portal website by 10th December 2009.</p> <p>Some Members explained that they were unable to give their opinion on the proposals, as they would have to consider the application when it was submitted to the Planning Committee; they needed to keep an open mind to avoid pre-determination.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Planning Committee clarified to the Forum that the closing date on the planning portal was for comments to be included in the report that would be written for Members to consider. He emphasised that comments could still be submitted after that date and forwarded to Planning Officers. A Member further advised that comments could also be forwarded to Councillors on the Planning Committee and members of the public could speak on the matter at Planning Committee.</p>	
A15.	Update from Partners	
	<p>549 UPDATES FROM PARTNERS</p> <p>Inspector Swinney updated the Forum on Police matters in the Faversham area. He gave a flavour of the past month's work. This included steps against cycling on footpaths; increased patrolling in the recreation ground; nuisance motorcycles and vehicles; speeding issues; dog fouling and anti-social behaviour. Inspector</p>	

	<p>Swinney reported that 5,000 people had attended 'have your say' sessions in Swale which had given residents a chance to raise community issues.</p> <p>In response to a question, Inspector Swinney advised that the Police would enforce parking regulations when an obstruction was being caused. A Member suggested that obstruction of sight lines was an obstruction to traffic. Inspector Swinney confirmed that vehicles were required to park 10 metres from a junction, and that it was not possible for the Police to enforce all vehicles that contravened this; they had to prioritise their work.</p> <p>Inspector Swinney advised that crime figures could be viewed on the Kent Police website.</p> <p>Station Commander Alan Monk updated the Forum on Fire Brigade matters in the Faversham area. He explained that levels of accidental fires were low and a poster campaign on secondary fires had begun. A car safety campaign was being carried out to target young drivers and home safety checks were taking place.</p>	
<p>A16.</p>	<p>Building Schools for the Future</p>	
	<p>550 BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Jane Blenkinsop, Project Finance Officer, to the meeting.</p> <p>Mrs Blenkinsop gave a presentation on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. She advised that it was a national initiative to create 21st century learning environments for secondary age pupils. Kent's BSF programme commenced in 2006 and it aimed to renew and rebuild schools over a 10 to 15 year period. The aim was to enhance ICT facilities, transform teaching and learning and locate schools at the heart of the community.</p> <p>Swale was in Wave Six of the programme and this would be delivered via the first of the two Local Education Partnerships to be set up to deliver the programme. The four main strands of the Kent Secondary Strategy were the development of a flexible environment; enhanced ICT infrastructure; collaboration between schools and the inclusion of the school as part of the community. The first Local Education Partnership, which included Gravesham, Thanet and Swale, was established in 2008 and based on the current proposed timescales, construction on the participating schools in the Swale area would commence in 2012.</p> <p>In response to questions, Mrs Blenkinsop advised that the majority of the funding for the project came from Central</p>	

	<p>Government and exemplar of schools in other countries had been used to inform and develop the vision.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mrs Blenkinsop for her presentation.</p>	
A17.	Funding for Community Projects	
	<p>551 FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY PROJECTS</p> <p>The Policy and Performance Officer referred to the tabled paper, which provided background on the funding process and listed the bids received for community projects and schemes. Annex A listed the project, which had received pledges of support from SBC Councillors, and Annex B listed those that still sought support from SBC Councillors. He explained that 15 applications had been received so far.</p> <p>Discussion ensued on the funding that was available from each Borough Councillor and that additional funding was also available for County Members from KCC, and also the process carried out to allocate the funding. In response to a question, the Policy and Performance Officer explained that the scheme had been promoted by press releases and local community groups had responded to these.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(1) That the project in Annex A, which had received a pledge of support from a Borough Councillor be approved.</p> <p>(2) That the project applications received which are still seeking further support from Borough Councillors, in Annex B, be noted.</p> <p>(3) That delegated authority be given to the Vice-Chairman to approve projects on behalf of the Forum to ensure that applicants receive funding for their projects in a timely manner and before the end of the financial year, for reasons stated in the report.</p> <p>(4) That applications continue to be invited, but with a cut-off date of 5th March 2010 to enable all applications to be processed before the end of the financial year.</p>	
A18.	Swale Centre for Voluntary Service	
	<p>552 SWALE CENTRE FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE</p> <p>This item was not considered due to apologies received from the facilitator.</p>	

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A19.	Date of Next Meeting	
	553 VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING	
	RESOLVED:	
	(1) That the next meeting of the Faversham LEF on 23rd March 2010 be held at the United Reformed Church, Faversham.	