

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULATION COMMITTEE MEMBER PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Regulation Committee Member Panel held at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on 21 February 2006.

PRESENT: Mrs P A V Stockell (Chairman), Mr F Wood-Brignall (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Gates, Mr S J G Koowaree and Mr B P Wood.

OFFICERS: The Principal Case Officer – Public Rights of Way, Mr C Wade (with Miss M McNeir); and the Democratic Services Officer, Mr A Tait.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Application to extinguish part of Public Footpath ZU29 at Sittingbourne
(Item 3 – Report by Divisional Director Environment and Economy)

(1) A site visit to the public footpath took place prior to the meeting. It was attended by representatives of Fulston Manor School and Highsted Grammar School (the applicants); the Ramblers Association and Mr R Platten, a local objector.

(2) The Principal Case Officer tabled late representations from Mr R Platten. This consisted of data provided by Kent Police relating to incidents at both schools that had taken place when the path had been open from March to August in 2004, and to incidents from March to August 2005 when the path had been temporarily closed. This data purported to show that the greater number of incidents had taken place when the path had been closed.

(3) The Principal Case Officer introduced his report and commented on the data provided by Mr Platten. He said that a large number of the reported incidents had taken place at times when there were no children or staff on the premises and referred to damage to property rather than to harassment of pupils and staff. Section 118B of the Highways Act 1980, however, related purely to the protection of pupils and staff. In addition, a number of the reported incidents were irrelevant to the matter in hand.

(4) Mr A Brookes, Head Teacher of Fulston Manor School addressed the Panel in support of the application. He asked for the applicants' appreciation of the work undertaken by Miss McNeir to be recorded.

(5) Members of the Panel commented on the need for the part of the footpath leading from Highsted Road that was not part of the application to be closed speedily in order to prevent it becoming a black spot for anti-social activities.

(6) Mr F Wood-Brignall moved, seconded by Mr T Gates that the recommendations set out in Paragraph 31 of the report be adopted.

Carried unanimously

- (7) RESOLVED that an Order be made under the provisions of Section 118B of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish the part of Public Footpath ZU29 at Sittingbourne shown in the Plan in Appendix A of the report, on the grounds that it is expedient that the section of footpath concerned should be stopped up in order to protect pupils or staff from violence, harassment, alarm or distress arising from unlawful activity, and from any other risk to their health or safety arising from such activity.

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