

AGENDA ITEM 3

F/C 18/12/14

TOWN COUNCIL
16 OCTOBER 2014

MINUTES of the MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2014 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

- Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill – Town Mayor
- Councillor K G Basson
- Councillor Ms L M Cross
- Councillor Ms L M Hall
- Councillor J M Harman
- Councillor P M Harman
- Councillor A Harvey
- Councillor Mrs A R Harvey
- Councillor J B Harvey
- Councillor J A Hayes
- Councillor Ms L C Howes
- Councillor R J Lees
- Councillor Mrs C K Openshaw
- Councillor V Openshaw
- Councillor B E Read
- Councillor Mrs I A Read
- Councillor P J Scanlan

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: There were none.

226/14-15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors' P C Harris (work commitments), B R Parry (holiday) and P A Read (work commitments).

Apologies for lateness were received and accepted from Councillors' Ms L M Hall and J A Hayes.

227/14-15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor Ms L M Cross declared a DPI interest in agenda item 25 Pavilion – Update and request to install notice board outside squash courts, as she is a Town Council representative on the Pavilion Community Sports & Social Club Committee.

Councillor J A Hayes declared a DPI interest in agenda item 25 Pavilion – Update and request to install notice board outside squash courts, as he is a Town Council representative on the Pavilion Community Sports & Social Club Committee.

Councillor R J Lees declared a DPI interest in agenda item 25 Pavilion – Update and request to install notice board outside squash courts, as he is a Town Council representative on the Pavilion Community Sports & Social Club Committee.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

228/14-15. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2014.

Members were provided with a copy of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2014 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

229/13-14. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

230/14-15. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2014 AND 1 OCTOBER 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & Environment Committee Meetings held on 10 September 2014 and 1 October 2014 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

231/14-15. MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 25 September 2014 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

232/14-15. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 4 September 2014 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

233/14-15. MINUTES OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR & CRIME SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime Sub-Committee meeting held on

234/14-15. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 10 July 2014 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

235/43-15. MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS & CEMETERIES SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 10 JULY 2014 AND 18 SEPTEMBER 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Allotments & Cemeteries Sub-Committee meetings held on 10 July 2014 and 18 September 2014 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

236/14-15. TO NOTE DETAILS OF DCLG 'OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT' IN RESPECT OF PRESS AND PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEETING & TO RESOLVE COUNCIL POLICY REGARDING RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS INCLUDING AMENDMENT OF COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS.

There had been changes made by the introduction of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (DCLG). These changes required the Town Council to agree a new policy and subsequently amend its current Standing Orders as indicated in the report.

After discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed that, in accordance with Standing Order 42 (b), Standing Order 35 be revoked.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That the changes to the rules on the recording, filming, photographing and broadcasting of Council meetings introduced by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, be noted.
- 2 That the policy on the recording, filming, photographing and broadcasting of Council meetings, attached at Appendix A to the report, be agreed.
- 3 That the amendments to Standing Orders, as outlined at Appendix B of the report, be agreed.
- 4 That, in accordance with Standing Order 42 (b), Standing Order 35 be revoked at the next full Council meeting.

237/14-15. DISPENSATION – THE PAVILION.

The Council's representatives on the Pavilion Committee had recently changed with Councillor P M Harman being replaced by Councillor Ms L M Cross (*Councillor J A Hayes and R J Lees making up the other 2 Town Council representatives*).

Members discussed the fact that the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association were no longer affiliated to The Pavilion which meant that dispensation was not required for those members effected. With this in mind it was agreed that dispensation was only required to be granted to members of the Council, other than the 3 Council representatives on The Pavilion Committee, who were also members of The Pavilion.

RESOLVED:

That dispensation be granted to Councillor P M Harman and to those members of the Council who are also members of The Pavilion.

238/14-15. CAPACITY BUILDING FUND (DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC)) 2014 – 2015.

Members were pleased to receive confirmation from the Leader of DBC that both the applications submitted by the Town Clerk had been approved and that the full amounts Applied For awarded.

The Town Clerk requested that Members give serious consideration to proposing appropriate projects for future funding applications to the Capacity Building Fund. After discussion members agreed that an item should be included on future committee agendas to give members the chance to propose and consider possible projects for submission to the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That an item be included on future committee agendas to give members the chance to propose and consider possible projects for submission to the scheme.

239/14-15. SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL RECOGNITION AWARD – PROPOSAL.

Members discussed the proposal details put forward by the Town Mayor and agreed that this was a very worthwhile proposal and requested that a Working Group be set up to investigate how best to progress this idea and to investigate and finalise the detail of how this recognition award/s would be administered and managed and then submit their findings/recommendations to full Council for consideration.

It was agreed that the Working Group membership be made up of the Town Mayor and Councillors' Ms L M Cross, P M Harman and R J Lees.

RESOLVED:

That a Working Group be set up to investigate how best to progress this idea and to investigate and finalise the detail of how this recognition award/s would be administered and managed and then submit their findings/recommendations to full Council for consideration.

That the Working Group membership be made up of the Town Mayor and Councillors' Ms L M Cross, P M Harman and R J Lees.

240/14-15. KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (KALC) – COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2015.

Bearing the previous item in mind members agreed that it was not appropriate to adopt this Scheme at the present time.

RESOLVED:

That the KALC Community Awards Scheme not be adopted at the present time.

241/14-15. AMENDMENT TO TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY.

Due to the decommissioning of the computers at the Community Café, as per minute 181/14-15 it was necessary to amend the Community Engagement Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the amendments to the Town Council's Community Engagement Strategy, as detailed, be endorsed and adopted.

242/14-15. LETTER OF THANKS FROM DARTFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (CAB).

A letter of thanks had been received from Cab for the funding given by the Town Council for the CAB Outreach Service at St Marys Church, Greenhithe.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

243/14-15. LETTERS OF THANKS FOR FUNDING FROM WALK TALL AND THE ELLENOR LIONS HOSPICE TO PREVIOUS TOWN MAYOR, CLLR MS L M CROSS.

Members were pleased to receive the letters from organisations that had benefitted from the fund raising of the previous Town Mayor, Councillor Ms L M Cross.

Members requested that their acknowledgement and thanks for the hard work put in by Councillor Ms L M Cross during her term of office be recorded.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

244/14-15. INSURANCE CLAIM/S – UPDATED.

Members were informed that claim ref: 27140000044 had been settled subject to an excess of £250.00

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

245/14-15. KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (KALC) – PARISH NEWS (SEPTEMBER ISSUE).

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

246/14-15. STAFF/MEMBER TRAINING – UPDATE.

The Town Mayor and Councillor Ms L C Howes had attended the launch of Kent's first Community Transport Forum on 14 August 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

247/14-15. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES.

Members were advised that this item provided an opportunity for Members' appointed as representatives on outside bodies to provide a report at the meeting.

Dartford Youth Advisory Group (DYAG)

Councillor Ms L C Howes is the Town Council's representative on the DYAG. As previously agreed the minutes from the 10 July 2014 meeting were available in the Chamber for inspection.

Borough and Parish Councils Forum (BPCF).

The Town Mayor and the Town Clerk are the Town Councils representatives on the BPCF. As previously agreed the agenda for the 7 October 2014 meeting were available in the Chamber for inspection.

Greenhithe Community Association (GCA).

Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill and B R Parry are the Town Councils representatives on GCA. As previously agreed the agenda for the 9 September 2014 meeting, including the minutes from the 20 May 2014 meeting were available in the Chamber for inspection.

Bluewater Forum (BF).

The Town Mayor, or agreed substitute, is the Town Councils representative on the BF. As previously agreed details of the 25 September 2014 meeting were available in the Chamber for inspection.

Kent Association of Local Councils, Dartford Area Committee (KALCDAC).

Councillor R J Lees and the Town Clerk are the Town Council's representatives on the KALCDAC. As previously agreed the agenda for the 18 September 2014 meeting including the minutes from the 5 June 2014 meeting were available in the Chamber for inspection

Advice Service Dartford Partnership (ASDP).

The Town Mayor and the Town Clerk attended the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) AGM on 23 September 2014.

Ingress Park Greenhithe Management Limited (IPGM).

IPGM had indicated that, although unable to provide documentation, they would like to submit verbal updates to the Town Council.

Councillors' P M Harman and P C Harris are the Town Council's representatives on IPGM.

Councillor P C Harris had submitted the following information:

The repair to the Flint Wall on the London Road that I reported to members some months ago has been repaired using residents money which was passed by a majority vote of the IPGM board; both the Town Councils representatives voting against this proposal. The AGM is due to take place in the RBL Greenhithe on Tue 18 Nov 14 from 7.00 pm.

Councillor P M Harman informed the meeting that the Boulevard lights were now working and were very effective; the play area near Duncannon Place had experienced ASB issues last year but was now much improved.

248/14-15. REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

Kent County Councillor P M Harman had submitted a report which included details of the following items:

Full KCC Meeting; KCC Planning Committee; KCC Regulation Committee; Home to Scholl Transport Appeals;

The Teal Energy planning application WHICH Central Government had frozen the decision on whilst they exercised their right to have 28 day stay whilst they decided whether they would call it in or not; Manor School which had issues with a previous planning application having the drop off zone part of the proposals removed; recent flooding issues within Swanscombe; road hump and street light issues outside the Sun

PH the recent KCC sponsored Open Health Day at The Pavilion which had proven to be very successful and his recent appointment to the Teenage pregnancy Working Party.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

249/14-15. REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

The Dartford Borough Councillors on the Town Council reported on the following matters:

The Tesco/Lowfield Street Development had not seemed to progress to any great degree.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

250/14-15. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

There were none.

251/14-15. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor advised/updated on the following items:

There had been 2 Armchair Talks recently by Christoph Bull which had been very well attended including the High Sheriff of Kent and several Mayors.

The High Sheriff of Kent was undertaking a charity cycle ride on 17 October which included meeting students at Ebbsfleet Academy.

There was a book launch taking place on 17 October at the Council's Community Café, Church Road at 11am

To date approximately £520 had been raised for the Mayors Charity Fund.

252/14-15. QUESTIONS.

Members were informed that questions did not form part of the Meeting; they were merely the opportunity for Members to exchange information.

253/14-15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor P J Scanlan;

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

254/14-15. RIGHT OF ACCESS TO REAR OF HERITAGE COMMUNITY HALL AND CRAYLANDFS LANE ALLOTMENTS – UPDATE.

This matter had been referred to the full Council by the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee, minute 249/13-14. The Town Clerk apprised members of the current situation and also of the advice received from the Town Councils Solicitors.

Members discussed this in detail and agreed that the Town Council could not be seen to be doing nothing regarding this issue and that it was right to progress this matter as per the Solicitors advice.

RESOLVED:

That the matter be progressed as per the Solicitors advice.

Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillors' Ms L M Cross and R J Lees left the chamber and took no part in the debate or decisions of the following items.

255/14-15. THE PAVILION COMMUNITY SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUBS – UPDATE AND REQUEST TO INSTALL NOTICE BOARD OUTSIDE SQUASH COURTS.

Members received the update documents along with a request by the Pavilion to install a notice board on the grassed area outside of the squash courts.

Members discussed the documents/information contained in the report and raised concerns that the AGM which had been scheduled to be held in May had not appeared to have taken place as this was felt to be a legal requirement of a members club. The Town Clerk was instructed to request the Councils representatives on the Pavilion Committee to seek clarification on this and to advise the Pavilion that the council's Pavilion Working Group were more than happy to meet with them to discuss how the club is progressing.

Members agreed to the request to install a notice board outside the squash courts subject to the following conditions being agreed to by the Pavilion;

1. The notice board has to be in keeping with the Councils current notice boards (similar size, colour, standard etc.) and that you provide an example which has to be agreed by myself prior to any purchase or installation.
2. The exact location of the notice board, on the grassed area in front of the squash courts, has to be agreed with myself prior to installation.

3. The Pavilion are responsible for the installation of the notice board and the reinstatement of any disturbance to the surrounding area.
4. Once installed The Pavilion are responsible for maintaining and cleaning the notice board to a standard acceptable to the Town Council and any damage or vandalism to the notice board has to be repaired by The Pavilion within 2 weeks of it being reported to The Pavilion.
5. The Pavilion are responsible for ensuring the notice board has appropriate insurance cover against theft and damage at all times.
6. The Pavilion are responsible for any costs involved should the notice board be required to be removed or relocated at a later date.

RESOLVED:

That the Councils representatives on the Pavilion Committee be requested to seek clarification as to the holding of an AGM and to advise the Pavilion that the council's Pavilion Working Group were more than happy to meet with them to discuss how the club is progressing.

That the request to install a notice board outside the squash courts subject to the conditions detailed above.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date: - _____

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A R Harvey
Councillor J A Hayes
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor P A Read

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: Councillor K G Basson
Councillor V Openshaw

268/14-15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill (family commitments), P M Harman (work commitments), P C Harris (work commitments), J B Harvey (family commitments) and P J Scanlan (unwell).

Members were informed that Councillor P J Scanlan had been the victim of a physical assault whilst walking home on the evening of 7 November 2014 which had resulted in him being hospitalised. On behalf of the Town Council members asked that their best wishes for a full and speedy recovery be passed onto Councillor P J Scanlan.

Recommended: That the apologies for absence and reasons, as listed, be formally approved.

269/14-15. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

270/14-15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

271/14-15. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

272/14-15. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2014.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2014 were confirmed and signed.

273/14-15. FLOODING IN STANHOPE ROAD, SOUTHFLEET ROAD AND MILTON STREET / MILTON ROAD.

Kent Highway Services (KHS) had undertaken a CCTV survey on 21 October 2014 and had planned to hold a joint site visit with KCC Member Peter Harman on 10 November 2014. Unfortunately this joint site visit had had to be postponed and the re-arranged details were not yet known.

Recommended: That the item be noted and kept under review.

274/14-15. UPDATE ON PROGRESS AT NORTHFLEET WEST SUBSTATION DEVELOPMENT (REDROW).

Members received the update letter that Redrow had distributed to the 600+ residents that had been invited to their earlier public exhibition.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

275/14-15. CLAIMED AMENDMENT (DS10).

Members were happy to receive notification from KCC PROW that a Notice of Decision had been made with a recommendation to make an Order.

Members acknowledged the work undertaken by the Town Council in ensuring this application had been successful.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

276/14-15. APPLICATION BY FOR AN ORDER GRANTING DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FOR THE LONDON PARAMOUNT ENTERTAINMENT RESORT – SCOPING CONSULTATION.

Members discussed the application document, reference BC080001.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

TOWN PLANNING:

277/14-15. Due to the previous meeting being cancelled the following applications were responded to by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & the Environment Committee.

DA/14/01395/FUL	Provision of dormer windows in front elevations and velux
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	windows in rear elevations in connection with providing additional rooms in the roof space. 5 Eliza Cook Close, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/14/01418/FUL	Provision of a new footpath to link Southfleet Road and Station Access Road. Station Quarter North
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations although the Town Council would request that as this application is for a temporary footpath that, due to the amount of major development in the area that this item should be re-visited after a period of 5 years and that discussions be held between the applicant and the Town Council to ascertain whether the facility still meets with needs and aspirations of the area and residents.

Recommended: That the comments submitted on behalf of the Committee be endorsed.

278/14-15. **APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.**

DA/14/01414/FUL	Erection of a detached 4 bedroom house with associated parking and conversion of offices to garden room, timber decking over aluminium structure and enclosed access (revisions to previously approved planning permission DA/14/00502/FUL in respect of conversion of office to garden room, decking and access). Neptune Slipway, Pier Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council object to the application for the following reasons:- 1. The proposal would give rise to an increase in on street parking in an area where there is very limited capacity, contrary to Policies T22 and T23 of the Dartford Local Plan, Policy T11 of the Dartford Local Plan Review Second Deposit Draft and Policy TP19 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006.

	<p>2. The proposal would be out of character within the existing conservation area.</p> <p>3. The proposal does not comply with the Greenhithe Riverfront Urban Design Strategy Supplementary Planning Guidance Approved June 2004 (also contained in the Town Council's Local Development Framework :Minute 136, DBC Cabinet 22 January 2009) with regard to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The continuation and enhancement of the PROW footpath along the riverfront; b) The site was listed for community /recreational use; c) Protecting existing views and vistas of the conservation area from the river and the park; d) Should use traditional materials and building techniques; e) Retain established building heights; f) Pier Road is a low key and intermittent environment; g) Should be an opportunity for small scale development in an important part of Greenhithe Village that protects and enhances the qualities of the village; h) It should protect the conservation area and not compromise its character; i) It should be a small, carefully detailed community building. <p>It should also be noted that it appears that the proposal is losing a lot of the parking facilities contained in the original application for this proposal and there is concern that the turning point is not sufficient and that the entrance that has been moved to the north will have visibility problems for pedestrians due to the telephone box that is located there which would obscure line of vision for pedestrian and drivers.</p> <p>The green roof proposed would also have views straight into the windows of the cottages opposite were it to be accessed and used for recreational purposes (sun bathing etc.)</p>
DA/14/01426/FUL	<p>Remove of cement silo and installation of batching plant with silo.</p> <p>VMC Ltd, Unit E1-E3 Kent Kraft Estate, Lower Road, Northfleet.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council has concerns that any changes to the

	<p>industrial use on the site/s in that area do not result in any increase in traffic volumes from the plant onto the already overloaded local roads and assurances are requested to confirm that this is the case.</p>
DA/14/01478/FUL	<p>Erection of a single storey rear extension.</p> <p>34 Caspian Way, Swanscombe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.</p>
DA/14/01320/FUL	<p>Provision of replacement sash windows, reinstate doorway into rear garden (previously been made into a window) and fit 2 velux roof lights (velux windows are retrospective).</p> <p>The Hollies, 9 High Street, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>It is believed that that the applicant should have sought permission from the Management Company of The Hollies for this proposal. The Town Council are concerned that the sets of windows at the front of this building could end up all being of differing styles etc. which would not be in keeping with the character of the Greenhithe Conservation Area and confirmation is sought that this will not be allowed to happen.</p>
DA/14/01492/FUL	<p>Removal of existing uPVC French Doors and replacement with single pane uPVC glazed door; Remove two existing uPVC casement windows, enlarge openings downwards, to match existing door height and install new uPVC windows.</p> <p>11 Bridge View, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application. Confirmation is sought that this proposal will be in keeping with the character of the local area.</p>
DA/14/01500/FUL	<p>Erection of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, front entrance porch and excavations to form a new vehicle parking area and vehicle crossover onto Knockhall Road.</p> <p>136 Knockhall Road, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>This is a very large extension (increasing the property to 5 bedrooms) which obviously increases the capacity for more</p>

	residents therefore off street parking provision should be of paramount importance as the local area already has severe issues with this. Please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/14/01517/REM	Submission or Reserved Matters for infrastructure works pursuant to Conditions 2 and 19 of Planning Permission DA/05/00308/OUT for redevelopment. Northfleet West Grid Sub Station Southfleet Road Swanscombe Kent.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/14/01520/CDNA	Submission of details relating to masterplan pursuant to condition 12 for development of site comprising a mixed use of up to 950 dwellings & non-residential floorspace for: shopping, food & drink, hotel use; community, health, education & cultural uses; assembly & leisure facilities & associated works to provide the development. Northfleet West Grid Sub Station Southfleet Road Swanscombe Kent.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/14/01523/CDNA	Submission of details relating to public art strategy pursuant to condition 16 for development of site comprising a mixed use of up to 950 dwellings & non-residential floorspace for: shopping, food & drink, hotel use; community, health, education & cultural uses; assembly & leisure facilities & associated works to provide the development. Northfleet West Grid Sub Station Southfleet Road Swanscombe Kent.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council has no observations at this point but looks forward to seeing the detail of the artwork proposed.
DA/14/01344/FUL	Erection of 159 dwellings comprising 2 x 1 bed, 7 x 2 bed, 32 x 3 bed and 10 x 4 bed houses, 21 x 1 bed, 82 x 2 bed, 3 x 3 bed and 2 x 4 bed flats and 130 sqm of flexible commercial space, class A1, A2 and B1 uses together with the provision of associated public realm and landscaping, parking and infrastructure works.

	Phase 2 Land at St Clements Way.
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>The Town Council object to this proposal as it would result in adding traffic to an area which already has an extremely high density of vehicular movement that increases dramatically at stages throughout the year (Christmas, Easter, school holidays etc.) and it is felt a development of this type would be unsustainable and would have a negative impact on the residents and visitors of the Town.</p> <p>This area is unique within the borough as it contains several elements and large developments such as; the expansion of the Bluewater Shopping Centre; the large development at Eastern Quarry; the recent discussions/plans for improvements to the McDonalds roundabout as well as the Bean Interchange.....all of these matters need to be considered with a Strategic Plan for the infrastructure around this area being produced and consulted on prior to any permissions or work being granted or undertaken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Development Control Board members are respectfully requested to hold a site meeting, preferably during peak time, prior to making any decisions on this application. <p>The Town Council would welcome the chance to enter into dialogue with all agencies/partners involved in this application.</p>
DA/14/01531/COU	<p>Change of use of ground floor from Class A1 (retail) to Class C3 9residential. 1 bedroom flat) with alterations to front elevation.</p> <p>Formerly Craylands Chemist, 137A Milton Road, Swanscombe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>Clarification is sought as to the allocation of parking spaces for this proposal. Currently the parking at the site is used by the top floor flat so it is unclear where the residents of this proposal would be able to park</p> <p>The Town Council are also concerned with the loss of a shop in an area within the Town that is designed for shops.</p>

279/14-15. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY KENT COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.**

KCC/DA/0348/2014	Section 73 application to amend condition 2 of planning permission DA/06/200 to upgrade the exiting percolate management system. Broadness Percolate Treatment Compound, Manor Way, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council have concerns that should anything contained in the amendment cause or result in an increase in traffic movements then we would object as we are aware that the local area is already at full capacity regarding the local roads.
KCC/DA/0343/2014	Variation of planning application DA/13/1491 (Temporary consent (5 years) for the operation of a construction and recycling facility for concrete and road/base planings and ancillary plant storage areas, reception weighbridge office and parking) to amend conditions 2 (development to be built in accordance with approved details), 4 (Hours of operation), 5 (increase in maximum throughput per annum) and 6 (increase in maximum HGV movements). Eastern Quarry, Watling Street, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
KCC/DA/0337/2014	Construction and operation of a Leachate Disposal Plant (LDP) at South Pit Landfill to enable raw leachate to be collected and managed so that it can be disposed of to sewer or tinkered off site. South Pit, Manor Way, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council would object to the application if the proposal increases vehicular traffic movements outside of the site and seek assurances that this is not the case.

280/14-015. **GRANTED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.**

The following granted decision notices were noted.

DA/14/01120/ADV	Display of 5 Replacement externally illuminated fascia signs
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	<p>in existing positions. 1 externally illuminated and 2 No. non illuminated additional fascia signs and 1 No. non illuminated pole sign.</p> <p>The George and Dragon PH, London Road, Swanscombe.</p>
DA/14/01122/FUL	<p>Erection of a single storey rear extension.</p> <p>33 Sara Crescent, Greenhithe.</p>
DA/14/00584/EQCHC	<p>Submission of Castle Hill (Central) Area Master plan pursuant to Condition 19 of Planning Permission DA/12/01451/EQVAR.</p> <p>Eastern Quarry, Watling Street, Swanscombe.</p>
DA/14/01198/FUL	<p>Erection of a single storey rear extension.</p> <p>1 St Clements Road, Greenhithe.</p>
DA/14/01212/FUL	<p>Erection of a single storey side/rear extension and a detached outbuilding.</p> <p>6 Fiddlers Close, Greenhithe.</p>

281/14-15. ESTIMATES FOR 2015 – 2016.

Members were informed that officers had begun work on the estimates for 2015 – 2016 and that they were invited to contact the RFO, outside of this meeting, and inform her of any suggestions and/or items they feel should be included.

The draft Annual Estimates 2015 - 2016 would need to be approved and endorsed by the full Council in January 2015 before setting the Council Tax Base for the 2015 - 2016 financial year.

Recommended: To note.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2014 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor P J Scanlan
Councillor P C Harris
Councillor Mrs A R Harvey
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor P A Read

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: There were none.

306/14-15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors' K G Basson (work commitments), Mrs S P Butterfill (other commitments), P M Harman (work commitments), J B Harvey (other commitments), J A Hayes (holiday) and V Openshaw (other commitments).

Recommended: That the apologies for absence and reasons, as listed, be formally approved.

307/14-15. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

308/14-15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

309/14-15. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Town Clerk drew members' attention to the Development Policies Draft Plan and Options Stage Consultation December 2014 (Dartford Borough Council) which was currently subject to Cabinet approval at DBC. If approved the consultation period would run from 12 December 2014 until 30 January 2015.

Members were also advised of the Kent County Council Consultation on a proposed new school at Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet which was running from 1 December 2014 until 12 January 2015 :- <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/CastleHill/consultationHome>

Due to the deadline/timescales involved the Town Clerk would submit a response, in consultation with the Chairman of Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & the Environment Committee.

310/14-15. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2014.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2014 were confirmed and signed.

311/14-15. PROPOSED DIVERSION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATHS DS1 (part), DS3 (part) and DS30 – CREST NICHOLSON (EASTERN) LTD.

The above applications had been received from the Public Rights of Way Office at KCC with a deadline for responses of 19 December 2014.

Unfortunately members were unable to understand the maps as they did not seem to line up (they also seemed to show a footpath being diverted through an open green space) and requested whether the Public Rights Of Way Officer (Kent County Council) could supply a composite map (showing a before and after) so that what is being proposed is more clearly identified.

Recommended:

- 1 That the Public Rights Of Way Officer (Kent County Council) be requested to supply a composite map (showing a before and after) so that what is being proposed is more clearly identified.
- 2 That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman respond once clarification had been obtained from the Public Rights of Way Officer (Kent County Council).

312/14-15. PROPOSED DIVERSION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATH DS30 – LAND SECURITIES LTD.

The above application had been received from the Public Rights of Way Office at KCC with a deadline for responses of 19 December 2014.

Recommended: No observations.

313/14-15. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC) TRANSPORTATION AND WASTE SURVEY FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS – NOVEMBER 2014.

Members considered the survey, deadline for responses of 19 December 2014, which sought views of the local community on the delivery of highway and transportation services in Kent.

Members went through the survey and agreed responses to the questions.

Recommended: That the responses agreed be submitted.

314/14-15. CLAIMED FOOTPATH RUNNING FROM THE HIGH STREET TO THE FORESHORE ADJACENT TO RTHE SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

Members were very disappointed to receive the recommendation from Kent County Council "To Decline to Make an Order". After discussion members requested that an appeal be made to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds that this access way to the river was a valuable community asset and that it was a similar situation to the "pump alley" footpath which had been designated as DS28.

Recommended: That an appeal be made to the Planning Inspectorate on the grounds that this access way to the river was a valuable community asset and that it was a similar situation to the "pump alley" footpath which had been designated as DS28.

TOWN PLANNING:

315/14-15. APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.

DA/14/01570/FUL	Erection of a rear conservatory (retrospective application). 39 The Grove, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/14/01651/TDA	Application of determination pursuant to Part 24 of Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) order 1995 as to whether prior approval is required for the installation of a 15m high monopole supporting 2 no. antennas, installation of 3 No. radio equipment cabinets and ancillary works. Highway verge off The Avenue, Greenhithe
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council have concerns as the proposal will be located closely to the Gatehouse at the top of The Avenue which is to be brought back to its listed condition and the location of a 15M high monopole would be very out of character. The large cabinets would also be located in front of the listed wall which again would be totally out of character for the area.

DA/14/01414/FUL	<p>Erection of a detached 4 bedroom house with associated parking and conversion of offices to garden room, timber decking over aluminium structure and enclosed access (revisions to previously approved planning permission DA/14/00502/FUL in respect of conversion of office to garden room, decking and access).</p> <p>Neptune Slipway, Pier Road, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>The Town Council object to the application as the proposal would be out of character with the existing conservation area. The green roof proposed would have views straight into the windows of the cottages opposite were it to be accessed and used for recreational purposes (sun bathing etc.).</p> <p>Confirmation is sought from the Planning Authority that the spot levels of the ground would be adequate and appropriate for vehicular use.</p> <p>The garden room of the proposal appears to have a glass frontage which would be where the parking facilities are located directly outside of and this raises safety concerns.</p>

316/14-15. PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY KENT COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.

KCC/DA/0270/2014	<p>Operation of an aggregates recycling facility to accept 150,000tpa of construction and demolition waste including a fixed processing plant to utilise certain fractions of the recovered materials in order to produce hydraulically bound materials (*HBM).</p> <p>Land to the South of Manor Way, Swanscombe</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>The Town Council strongly object to the application as it would result in an increase in HGV movements to roads which are already at full capacity and that are in a bad and deteriorating state of repair. The Town Council also has concern for any detrimental effect this proposal could have to the London Paramount Resort development.</p>

317/14-15. CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY KENT COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.

APP/W2275/V/14/2228465	Construction of a renewable energy facility involving
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	advanced thermal technology to generate energy in the form of combined heat and electricity by using residual waste materials as a fuel stock and converting them into a gas. Land at Manor Way Business Park, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	Members asked that their previous objections be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate to ensure they were aware of them.

318/14-15. WITHDRAWN APPLICATION RECEIVED FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.

The following withdrawn application was noted.

KCC/DA/0230/2014 Withdrawn on 11 Nov 2014.	Variation of conditions 4 and 6 of planning permission DA/14/108 (granted for a new 2 storey detached building etc.) to remove the requirements for the drop-off/pick up facility. Manor Community Primary School, Keary Road, Swanscombe.
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319/14-015. GRANTED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.

The following granted decision notices were noted.

DA/14/01478/FUL <i>Tabled at meeting</i>	Erection of a single storey rear extension. 34 Caspian Way, Swanscombe.
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There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2014 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor K G Basson - Chairman
Councillor Mrs A R Harvey
Councillor J B Harvey
Councillor R J Lees (substituting for Councillor Ms L C Howes)
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor B E Read
Councillor P J Scanlan

ALSO PRESENT: 5 members of the public
Graham Blew - Town Clerk
Dan Usher – Senior Groundsman/Gardener

ABSENT: Councillor Ms L M Hall
Councillor J M Harman
Councillor J A Hayes

282/14-15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors' P M Harman (work, commitments), A Harvey (work commitments) and Ms L C Howes (work commitments).

Recommended: That the apologies for absence and reasons, as listed, be formally approved.

283/14-15. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor R J Lees substituted for Councillor Mrs L C Howes.

284/14-15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor R J Lees declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 8.4 – Advice Service Dartford – request to install kiosk at Community Café, Church Road as he is a Trustee of the Citizens Advice Service, Dartford.

Councillor R J Lees declared an "interest" in agenda item 8.1 – Istead Rise Bowls Club – request to install astroturf covering to "ditch boards", as his father-in-law is a member of the club.

Councillor R J Lees declared an "interest" in agenda item 8.2 – Capacity Building Fund (Dartford Borough Council (DBC)) – future applications, as he had been one of the two parish representatives on the panel allocating the funds.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

The Chairman welcomed the residents of Spring Vale to the meeting and informed them that this was the part of the meeting where they were able to comment and ask questions.

The Residents' reiterated their concerns about the trees being high/tall and suggested that a similar survey of the middle section of trees should also be undertaken. The Residents informed members that they appreciated the steps the Town Council had taken thus far and would welcome further survey/information on the middle section of the trees and future maintenance of the area.

On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked the members of the public for attending the meeting.

285/14-15. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

286/14-15. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 SEPTEMBER 2014.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2014 were approved and signed as a true record.

287/14-15. SPRING VALE WOODED AREA.

Members discussed the Residents' concerns and agreed that this item should be re-submitted to the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee once the works highlighted from the survey had been completed in the New Year so that members' could consider a plan of action.

Recommended:

- 1 That the item be reconsidered by the Committee once the works highlighted in the survey had been completed.
- 2 That the actions taken by the Town Clerk to date be noted and endorsed.

At this point the Chairman informed the meeting of the sudden death of one of the Groundsman / Gardeners and acknowledged the hard work, commitment and positive attitude that he had always displayed whilst going about his work. Members asked that their condolences be sent to his wife and family.

As a mark of respect Members stood for a minutes silence.

288/14-15. SENIOR GROUNDSMAN/GARDENER'S REPORT.

The Senior Groundsman/Gardener updated members on the work undertaken, by the Parks Department and also the work planned for the future which included:

Swanscombe Park, Manor Park, Broomfield, Knockhall, Heritage Park, Saxon Court, Valley View and Spring Vale.

Members asked that their gratitude to the Parks Staff for the manner in which they undertook their tasks be recorded

Recommended: That the item be noted.

289/14-15. ISTEAD RISE BOWLS CLUB – REQUEST TO INSTALL ASTROTURF COVERING TO “DITCH BOARDS”.

Members considered and agreed to the request.

Recommended: That the request be approved.

290/14-15. CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA.

291/14-15. TREE WORKS UNDERTAKEN.

The Town Clerk detailed the works that had been undertaken at both Swanscombe Park and at Saxon Court / Alkerden Lane.

Recommended:

- 1 That the actions of the Town Clerk in having these works undertaken be noted and endorsed.
- 2 That it be agreed for quotations being obtained for a Tree Survey to be undertaken on the Town Councils trees with a view to formalising a programmes of works for the future.

292/14-15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor R J Lees;

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

293/14-15. GANG MOWING – CHANGE OF CONTRACTOR.

The Town Clerk advised members that the current contractor had given notice that they were unable to continue and detailed the quotations received during the previous investigation of this service.

Members agreed to proceed with the quotation included in the report subject to the Responsible Financial Officer confirming that this would be within the scope of, and fulfil, the Town Council's obligations with regards to its' Financial Regulations.

Recommended: That the Town Council proceed with the quotation included in the report subject to the Responsible Financial Officer confirming that this would be within the scope of, and fulfil, the Town Council's obligations with regards to its' Financial Regulations.

294/14-15. THE MEETING RETURNED TO PUBLIC FORUM.

295/14-15. CAPACITY BUILDING FUND (DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC)) – FUTURE APPLICATIONS.

Members had requested (minute 238/14-15) that this item be considered on future Committee agendas to allow them to begin considering suitable/appropriate projects for any future funding opportunities under this scheme.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

296/14-15. COUNCIL OFFICE AND CAFÉ CHRISTMAS OPENING ARRANGEMENTS.

Members agreed that the Council Offices and Café should be closed on 24, 29, 30, 31 December 2014 and 2 January 2015.

Recommended: That the Council Offices and Café be closed on 24, 29, 30, 31 December 2014 and 2 January 2015 with a notice being displayed in advance, advising Members of the Public and a relevant message being recorded on the Council Office answer machine.

Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillor R J Lees left the chamber and took no part in the discussion or decision of the following item.

297/14-15. ADVICE SERVICE DARTFORD – REQUEST TO INSTALL KIOSK AT COMMUNITY CAFÉ, CHURCH ROAD.

Members considered and agreed to the request from the Advice Service Dartford.

Recommended: That the request be agreed.

298/14-15. ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION – UPDATE.

Members were advised that the Allotment & Cemeteries Sub-Committee had met on 18 September 2014 to discuss the current administration of the allotments. It had been agreed that due to very unfortunate circumstances the current arrangements were not able to continue and a consultation meeting with the allotment holders was arranged and held on 27 October 2014.

At this meeting it was agreed that the current Agreement with the Allotment Association was not operating as it should be and that it would be in the best interests of the allotments and the allotment holders if notice was given to the current Allotment Association and the allotment holders form a new Allotment Association.

Recommended:

- 1 That the actions taken in serving notice on the agreement with the current Allotment Association be noted and endorsed
- 2 That it be agreed to hold discussions with a newly formed Allotment Association to formulate an Agreement regarding the administration of the allotment sites.

299/14-15. GRAVESHAM COMMUNITY LEISURE LIMITED (GCLL) – SCALE OF CHARGES 2015 – 2016.

In accordance with the Management Agreement (Section 27.2.2), the Managing Director, GCLL, had advised of the proposed charges for 2015.

Members acknowledged the comparison prices provided by GCLL and agreed the scale of charges proposed for 2015.

Recommended: That the proposed Scale of Charges 2015 be agreed.

300/14-15. ESTIMATES FOR 2015- 2016.

Members were made aware that officers had begun work on the estimates for 2015 – 2016 and were invited to contact the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), outside of the meeting, and inform her of any suggestions and/or items they felt should be included.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

301/14-15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor R J Lees;

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

302/14-15. CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS.

Members were informed that the current 3 year contract was coming to an end and the current contractor had offered a further 3 year contract at an increase of £20 per column. Members were apprised of the alternative quotation that had been obtained.

After discussion it was agreed that the Town Council should continue with having festive lights in both Swanscombe and Greenhithe High Streets and that the further 3 year contract be agreed.

Recommended: That the further 3 year contract with the current supplier be agreed.

303/14-15. GROVE CAR PARK.

Members had previously requested that this item be investigated (minute 165/14-15) as it was suspected that the car park was being used by commuters and commercial vehicles resulting in it being regularly full.

An email from a member of the public highlighting this issue had also been received and was attached to the report along with photographs showing the car park full with vehicles in the disabled bays, motor cycle bays and on the kerbsides.

After lengthy debate Members agreed that this item should be submitted to full Council to set up a Working Group to investigate how the Town Council should proceed with this matter and that part of the Terms of Reference for this Working Group should be the consultation of residents of Swanscombe and Greenhithe regarding the future use of the car park.

Recommended:

- 1 That this matter be submitted to full Council to set up a Working Group to investigate how the Town Council should proceed with this matter.

- 2 That part of the Terms of Reference for this Working Group should be the consultation of residents of Swanscombe and Greenhithe regarding the future use of the car park.

304/14-15. LAND FRONTING KNOCKHALL ROAD.

Members considered the Title documents and request received on behalf of the land owner.

After discussion Members requested that the land owner that had submitted the request be informed that the Town Council did not currently wish to dispose of the land but were agreeable to discuss the possibility of entering into an agreement to licence/lease the access way to them.

Recommended: That the land owner be informed that the Town Council did not currently wish to dispose of the land but were agreeable to discuss the possibility of entering into an agreement to licence/lease the access way to them.

305/14-15. TEMPORARY FENCE AT HERITAGE COMMUNITY HALL.

Members discussed the request, and photographs submitted by the hirer of the property adjacent to the Heritage Community Hall.

Members agreed that the hirer of the property be informed that the Town Council would not be taking any action until the matter of access was resolved with the property owner.

Recommended: That the hirer of the property be informed that the Town Council would not be taking any action until the matter of access was resolved with the property owner.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at
THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2014
AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A R Harvey
Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Councillor P C Harris
Councillor P M Harman (substituting for Councillor K G Basson)
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor R J Lees
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor Mrs I A Read
Councillor P J Scanlan

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Sara Stapleton – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

ABSENT: Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor V Openshaw

256/14-15. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were submitted and accepted for Councillor K G Basson (family bereavement).

The Committee asked that their condolences be passed onto Councillor K G Basson at this sad time.

257/14-15. **SUBSTITUTES.**

Councillor P M Harman substituted for Councillor K G Basson.

258/14-15. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

Councillor P M Harman declared a prejudicial interest in item 8 – Kent County Council's (KCC) Consultation on Community Wardens as he is the KCC Member for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Councillor P M Harman declared a prejudicial interest in item 9 – Kent County Council's (KCC) Budget Consultation as he is the KCC Member for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

259/14-15. TO RECEIVE ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

The Chairman and Town Clerk advised members of the correspondences between the residents of Spring Vale regarding the wooded area and confirmed the work that had been scheduled, which included a survey report, and the cost implications of these works. This was due for consideration at the 27 November Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting.

260/14-15. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2014.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2014 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

261/14-15. TO RECEIVE FINANCE STATEMENTS AND PASS ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

Members were provided with details of all receipts and payments for authorisation for August and September 2014.

Members asked that it be recorded that, as was normal practice, each page of the finance statements and accounts was scrutinised.

Recommended: That the receipts and payments for August and September 2014, as per the annexed list, be approved.

262/14-15. SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.

Members were provided with details of the Summary of Accounts, balanced to 30 September 2014.

Recommended: That the details of the Summary of Accounts, balanced to 30 September 2014 be noted.

Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillor P M Harman left the chamber and took no part in the discussion or decision of the following two items.

263/14-15. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL'S (KCC) CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY WARDENS.

This item had been submitted to the committee via the Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime Sub-Committee (8 October 2014), minute 195/14-15.

Members felt that the Community Warden Service was a much needed and valued grassroots service and that KCC should be assessing Swanscombe and Greenhithe with a view to increasing the level of this service due to the unique position of the area regarding the large developments due to take place (Garden City and Paramount

Resort). After lengthy debate members agreed on responses to the Consultation questions.

Recommended: That the responses agreed to the Consultation questions be submitted by the Town Clerk.

264/14-15. KCC BUDGET CONSULTATION.

Members considered the Consultation which had an end date of 28 November 2014.

Recommended: That due to the way the questions were phrased it be more appropriate for individuals to respond to the Consultation.

265/14-15. CAPACITY BUILDING FUND (DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC)) – FUTURE APPLICATIONS.

Members had previously requested this item be included on future Committee Agendas (minute 2385/14-15) to give the opportunity for suggesting suitable/appropriate projects for any future funding opportunities under this scheme.

Member discussed the way in which previous allocations had been distributed and it was clarified that the scheme was available to Parish and Town Councils not for other organisations.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

266/14-15. FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENTS (FRA's) 2015 – 2016.

Members were reminded that officers had begun work on the estimates for 2015 – 2016 and that they were invited to contact the RFO, outside of the meeting, and inform her of any suggestions and/or items they feel should be included.

The draft Annual Estimates 2015 - 2016 would need to be approved and endorsed by the full Council in January 2015 before setting the Council Tax Base for the 2015 - 2016 financial year.

Members considered the deliberations of the FRA Working Group (who had met on 8 October 2014). It was unanimously agreed that there should be no amendments or changes to the current FRA's. Members thanked the FRA Working Group and officers for the diligent manner in which the FRA's had been progressed and managed since their inception.

Recommended:

- 1 That the work of the FRA Working Group to date be noted and that it be agreed that the FRA's remain the same with no amendments or alterations at the present time.

- 2 That the FRA figures be submitted to full Council (18 December 2014) for endorsement and inclusion in the Annual Estimates for 2015 – 2016.

267/14-15. **APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING UNDER SECTION 137 OF THE LGA ACT 1972.**

Members were provided with a copy of the application for consideration. Members were asked to decide on the applications received and if successful, any amounts of funding to be awarded.

Application – Swanscombe Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP).

After discussing the application it was agreed;

Recommended: That £514 from the 2014 - 15 Section 137 budget be awarded.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

MINUTES of the MEETING of the ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR & CRIME SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2014 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read – Chairman
Councillor P C Harris
Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor J M Harman
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor Mrs C K Openshaw
Councillor P J Scanlan

ALSO PRESENT: Sara Stapleton, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)
District Commander Gary Woodward, Kent Police
Sgt Sarah Tyler, Kent Police
Dominic Norwell, Housing Officer, Dartford Borough Council
Billy Unsworth, KCC Community Warden for Swanscombe
Steve Tyler, KCC Community Warden Supervisor for the Dartford District
Ms Steve Doran, Dartford Borough Councillor for Swanscombe Ward

ABSENT: There were none.

189/14-15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor P M Harman (other commitments), Colin Newmarch (Community Safety Unit (CSU) Dartford Borough Council), PC Rob Payne (Kent Police), PCSO Kelly Shurmer (Kent Police), PCSO Steve Howard (Kent Police)

Recommended: That the apologies for absence and reasons, as listed, be formally approved.

190/14-15. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor J M Harman substituted for Councillor P M Harman.

191/14-15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

192/14-15. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

193/14-15. **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2014.**

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 July 2014 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

194/14-15. **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014: COMMUNITY TRIGGER.**

Members were provided with a copy of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Police Act 2014, Community Trigger.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

195/14-15. **KENT COUNTY COUNCIL'S (KCC) CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY WARDENS.**

Steve Tyler, the KCC Community Warden Supervisor for the Dartford District apprised members on KCC's consultation for the proposed changes to the community warden service. He gave members an overview of the service from its inception in 2002 to where it was today and gave more detail on KCC's proposals. Members were very pleased with the service provided by the KCC Community Wardens and felt it was invaluable. Members did not wish to see any changes to the service and felt that more wardens were required, rather than fewer, particularly in the Dartford area because of the major developments planned and the large increase in population. It was agreed that the Town Council would formulate a response at the Financial and General Purposes Committee on 4 November 2014. The Chairman also urged members to respond to the consultation individually.

Recommended: That the consultation be submitted to the Finance and General Purposes Committee being held on 4 November 2014 for a response from the council to be formulated and that Steve Tyler be thanked for attending the meeting.

196/14-15. **TOWN COUNCIL'S PROBLEM LOG.**

Members were provided with a copy of the incidents reported to the Town Council since the last meeting. Members were reminded that the Town Council should be made aware of any incidents reported to the police, in order for them to be added to the problem log. The RFO advised that the problem log was emailed monthly to the CSU at DBC and also to the Police.

Recommended: That the incident log be noted.

197/14-15. **BEAT OFFICER AND POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSO) REPORT.**

Sgt Sarah Tyler provided members with a report from PC Robert Payne. His team had had a productive few months. An operation had been ran that specifically targeted burglaries and shed break-ins. This had been very successful and a lot of intelligence had been gained. The team had also been undertaking stop checks

which were proving successful and Sgt Tyler was pleased with what the team had achieved in a short space of time.

Recommended: That Sgt Tyler be thanked for attending the meeting, and that the report be noted.

198/14-15. POLICE CRIME STATISTICS: JUNE 2013 TO JUNE 2014.

Members considered the crime statistics for Dartford, provided by the Vice-Chairman, for the period June 2013 to June 2014 with an updated period from September 2013 to August 2014 tabled at the meeting. The Vice-Chairman advised that the number of crimes were going down in Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Inspector Woodward advised that the statistics provided were not just crime, they also included anti-social behaviour, which was not classed as crime, and therefore they were not a true reflection of actual crime. He confirmed that he would forward a link to the town council to a police website that provided solely crime figures which could be broken down to neighbourhood level.

Recommended: That the statistics be noted and that Inspector Woodward forward the website link to the town council.

199/14-15. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR VIA DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL, DARTFORD HOUSING SERVICES (DHS).

Dominic Norwell, a housing officer from DHS, advised members that within its current housing stock there were 10 cases of anti-social behaviour with 6 cases having had legal action of some form taken against them and four with non-legal remedies in place. He advised that the council would be using a new ASB system that would provide better reporting, giving greater detail of the type of ASB being experienced and the hotspots for ASB within the borough. DHS were planning an initiative in the Gunn Road area during the half term period which they hoped to work with the KCC Community Wardens. The recent community garden event at Gunn Road was also positive.

Recommended: That Dominic Norwell be thanked for attending the meeting and that the report be noted.

200/14-15. DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC) – MULTI AGENCY MEETINGS.

Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill advised that there had not been any multi-agency meetings but she was always kept up to date on items of interest to Swanscombe and Greenhithe. The Dartford Against Crime meeting that was scheduled for 16 July 2014 had been cancelled but a further one had been arranged Tuesday 28 October 2014 at 2.00 pm.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

201/14-15. **KCC COMMUNITY WARDENS REPORT.**

KCC Community Warden for Swanscombe, Billy Unsworth advised members that Christine Bates (KCC Community Warden for Greenhithe) was currently on secondment in Swanley and he was now covering Greenhithe and Stone in addition to Swanscombe. There had been a couple of incidents of rogue traders targeting the elderly in Greenhithe. There was also an issue with anti-social behaviour in Mounts Road with an elderly person being intimidated. It was also thought that drugs were being dealt in the MacDonalds car park. Car crime in Bean Road had quietened down. There were drug issues within Ingress Park, particularly one of the children's play areas and canisters of gas propellants potentially being misused.

During the school holidays he had been involved in the Town Councils summer activities and advised that these were very well attended and received within the community.

There were still issues with anti-social behaviour in the alley way near the off licence in Milton Road with potential drug issues in the same location and anti-social behaviour issues at one of the local stores on Craylands Lane. There had also been problems in the Manor Park play area with damage caused to trees and play equipment.

He advised that he was having regular meetings with the Police at the Discovery Centre which were a useful source of information exchange.

Fly tipping had been particularly bad in recent months, but he has managed to work with the relevant authorities to get these cleared.

He had the use of the Community Payback team on 1 October who cleared the alleyway by the off-licence in Milton Road. Unfortunately the Community payback initiative had now been privatised and it was therefore much harder to secure their services and the alternative "Dartford Menshed" did not have enough manpower at the present time.

Recommended: That the KCC Community Warden be thanked for attending the meeting and their report be noted.

202/14-15. **SPEEDWATCH.**

The Vice-Chairman updated members on this initiative. Five watches had taken place with 143 vehicles being recorded as speeding. As a result of the sessions DBC had ordered two sets of the Speed Indication Devices (SIDs) and more watches would soon take place once these had been received. A news article was due in the local press advertising the scheme.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

203/14-15. **COMMUNITY CRIME MEETINGS.**

Members were made aware that a meeting had been held on Saturday 6 September 2014.

Unfortunately the Town Council had not been supplied with/received a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting held on 21 June 2014. Ms Steve Doran, Dartford Borough Councillor for Swanscombe ward confirmed that the Town Council had not been included on the distribution list and apologised for that. Concern was expressed that the meeting was not well attended (18 people in total) and did not represent a good cross section of the community. It was suggested that consideration should be given to changing the day of the meeting from a Saturday evening to an evening in the week.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

204/14-15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Recommended: That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 28 January 2015 at 7.00 pm, unless there was a requirement to call a meeting earlier and that the RFO, when dispatching the agendas to the outside representatives, also asks them to confirm their attendance.

205/14-15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill.

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

Councillor B E Read raised two issues of concern and discussed how the different agencies could work together to resolve them.

206/14-15. POLICE RESOURCING.

Members had been supplied with the email correspondences between the Town Clerk and Inspector Woodward regarding the recent incident of the theft of a strimmer from one of the Groundsman whilst he was working in Swanscombe Park. Inspector Woodward agreed to attend the meeting to explain in full to members how the policing team operated. Inspector Woodward advised that he had explained to members at the Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime Sub-Committee held on 24 April 2014 how his team operated and he was quite frustrated that this had been raised. His team was the only one in Kent to have 4 beat officers, which he strongly believed in. He also confirmed with regards to reporting crime that it was not appropriate for this to be done via email communication as they would not be logged onto the system in the correct manner and would therefore not create a true picture of problems in the areas. He confirmed that the Town Council should log any crimes

by phoning the 101 number with 999 being used for crimes in action (taking place at the current time) and that were an emergency.

Recommended: That the Inspector Woodward be thanked for attending the meeting and that the item be noted.

207/14-15. **ISSUES WITH VEHICLES PARKING ON PAVEMENTS.**

Discussion took place on the difficulty of enforcing this problem with the police only be able to take action if they are present at the time of an actual obstruction. Inspector Woodward advised of an initiative in a London Borough where letters were being put on obstructive vehicles that provided information on the law in relation to obstruction, pointing out the relevant legislation and advising that if the vehicle was caught again, that it could be seized. He would like to roll out the same initiative and would keep the Town Council updated on progress with this. The Chairman also advised that he was aware that a pro-members Bill was being drafted that would make obstructive parking completely illegal.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

208/14-15. **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR MATTERS IN GREENHITHE.**

These items were discussed in the earlier confidential section of the agenda.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Signed _____
Chairman Date

MINUTES of the MEETING of the PERSONNEL COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE, DA10 0GA on WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2014 at 11.00 AM.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill (Chairman)
Councillor B E Read
Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor Mrs I A Read
Councillor P J Scanlan

ABSENT: Councillor P M Harman
Councillor V Openshaw

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew, Town Clerk

209/14-15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

There were none.

210/14-15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

211/14-15. URGENT ITEMS / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

212/14-15. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2014.

Recommended: That the minutes from the meeting held on 10 July 2014 be confirmed and signed.

213/14-15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor P J Scanlan;

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

STAFFING MATTERS.

214/14-15. CAFÉ ASSISTANT (part-time).

The Town Clerk updated members on the vacant Café Assistant position and also on the recovery of wages payment to the previous post holder. Members were pleased to be informed that the vacant post had recently been offered to an applicant.

Recommended: That the item be noted and the actions taken by the Town Clerk be endorsed.

215/14-15. ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT (part-time) THURSDAY AND FRIDAY.

Members received the letter of resignation and the Town Clerk advised that a last day of service of Friday 7 November 2014 had been agreed. The Town Clerk detailed that the recent reduction in the Responsible Financial Officer hours (50%) meant that the required finances were available in the budget to pay for the proposed increase in hours of this post.

Members asked that their gratitude be passed onto the member of staff leaving for her hard work and co-operation.

Members also requested that their appreciation and recognition be recorded for all the Administration Team who do a very good job and frequently go the "extra mile" under difficult circumstances.

Recommended:

- 1 That the hours of the post be increased to include Wednesdays (9am to 5pm with 45 minutes for lunch = 21¾ hours per week).
- 2 That the Notice period for both Administration Assistants (part-time) be amended/extended to 3 months.

216/14-15. OFFICE OPENING HOURS

Members acknowledged the amendment to the Administration Assistant (part-time) Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday starting time (from 8.45am to 9.00am). The Town Clerk asked members to consider amending the current office hours from 8.45am to 5pm to 9.30am to 4.00pm. It was clarified that the office would not be closed outside of these hours and that the staff would still be working from 9.00am to 5.00pm. After discussion Members concurred with the rationale behind this and agreed to the changes.

Recommended:

- 1 That the actions of the Town Clerk in agreeing to the request from the Administration Assistant (part-time) Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday be endorsed.

- 2 That the office opening times be reduced from 8.45am to 5.00pm to 9.30am to 4.00pm (with the staff still working from 9.00am to 5.00pm)

217/14-15. TOWN CLERK.

The Town Clerk explained the issues being encountered regarding taking leave and TOIL accumulated through attending evening meetings and detailed that the recent reduction in the Responsible Financial Officer hours (50%) meant that the required finances were available in the budget to pay for the time unable to be taken.

Members requested that their acknowledgement of the hard work, professionalism and dedication shown by the Town Clerk in the course of his duties be recorded.

Recommended:

1. That approval be granted to the Town Clerk (as per the Conditions of his employment) that any future Annual Leave, over the 5 days allowed to be carried over each year, be paid to him at normal rate.
2. That approval be granted to the Town Clerk (as per the Conditions of his employment) that any future TOIL, over the 12 hour/month maximum limit that the Town Clerk is unable to take, be paid to him at normal rate.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 11.30 am.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(CHAIRMAN)

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the HERITAGE PARK / SKULL SITE SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE, on WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2014 at 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor R J Lees
Councillor Mrs C K Openshaw
Councillor P J Scanlan

ALSO PRESENT: Sara Stapleton, Responsible Financial Officer
Garnet Johnson, Development Manager, Groundwork South
Lis Dyson, Kent County Council, Archaeological Officer

ABSENT: There were none.

218/14-15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted and accepted from Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill (other commitments) and Ms L C Howes (work commitments).

219/14-15. SUBSTITUTES

There were none.

220/14-15. TO DECLARE INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

221/14-15. URGENT ITEMS / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

222/14-15. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2012

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2012 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

223/14-15. HLF BID.

Garnet Johnson from Groundwork was invited to the meeting to discuss progress on the HLF bid. He confirmed that he was now in a position to work solely on the bid and he hoped to have it finished and ready for re-submission within a month. It was agreed that RFO, Garnet Johnson and Lis Dyson would have a separate meeting to review the current paperwork to support the bid, discuss any changes that are

necessary to rework the bid before submitting back to the sub-committee prior to it being re-submitted to the HLF. Lis Dyson confirmed that she felt that more input would be needed from Natural England and it was agreed that they would be consulted during the development stage of the bid. Lis also suggested that something on oral history should be included in the bid along with the importance of stressing the identity of the area.

Recommended: It was agreed that the RFO, Groundwork and KCC would have a separate meeting to review the bid, make any changes necessary and re-submit back to the sub-committee for comment and agreement before re-submitting the revised bid to the HLF.

224/14-15. ANY OTHER ITEMS RELATED TO THE HERITAGE PARK / SKULL SITE.

There were none.

225/14-15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

Recommended: That the next meeting be scheduled for Wednesday 26 November 2014 at 2.00 pm.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 2.40 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

EXTRACT
OF MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL
28 APRIL 2011

T/C 18/12/14
AGENDA ITEM

6

597. NNDR (BUSINESS RATES).

The Responsible Financial Officer had begun the appeal process against the NNDR for the Town Council Office building and the Leisure Centre which would be reported back to council once they had been completed.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted with the results of the appeals being reported to the next appropriate meeting once they had been received.

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
17 MARCH 2011

528. TO RECEIVE ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

The RFO detailed the report tabled at the meeting which highlighted the information recently received concerning the increase in National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). Members were informed that investigations had begun into appealing the valuations used and that a detailed report would be submitted to the next appropriate meeting.

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INCREASE IN NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES : TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES AND THE SWANSCOMBE CENTRE

The rateable value of business properties are re-evaluated every 5 years (the last one being 2010) and the rateable value set is based on what the property would rent for on the open market.

At the last valuation, the Town Council Offices and the Swanscombe Centre's rateable values increased, as shown below:

	Rateable Value 2009/10	Rateable Value 2010/11	Difference
Swanscombe Centre	£29,400	£48,000	£18,600
Council Offices	£26,250	£45,750	£19,500

To reduce the impact of any significant increases in the rateable value, a "transitional rate relief scheme" is applied which limits the percentage the business rates bill can increase following re-evaluation. This transitional relief applies each year until the bill reaches what the full bill would have been in 2010. The percentage limits are detailed below:

Year	Small property	Large property
2010-11	5%	12.5%
2011-12	7.5%	17.5%
2012-13	10%	20%
2013-14	15%	25%
2014-15	15%	25%

Unfortunately, this information was not known when setting the budgets for the 2010 - 11 and 2011 - 12 financial years. It was only forward planning that a 13% increase was budgeted overall for business rate increases in 2010 -11 as I was aware of the re-evaluation, but did not know what effect this would have on the Town Council, so over-estimated any potential increase for that year (which by chance fell in line with the above). However, the percentage increase of 17.5% was not budgeted for in the 2011 -12 Estimates. Below is a table showing

the rates paid for all our premises in 2010 -11 and the rates payable in 2011 -12. You will see that both the Town Council Offices and the Swanscombe Centre have increased 18% with all others increasing only 4%, apart from Knockhall Changing Rooms, which has increased 11%.

	2010 – 11	2011 – 12	Difference	% Increase
Council Offices	14,325.92	17,550.38	3,224.46	18%
Grove Car Park	2,939.40	3,074.30	134.9	4%
Church Road Hall	952.20	995.90	43.7	4%
Swanscombe Centre	16,022.35	19,633.74	3,611.39	18%
Heritage Hall	1,842.30	1,926.85	84.55	4%
Café	1,262.70	1,320.65	57.95	4%
Knockhall Changing Rooms	89.05	99.98	10.93	11%

Members will be aware that an unexpected increase in the business rates was included in the original financial risk assessments. However, even so, not to the above extent and this unexpected increase will impact significantly on the amount that has been reserved in the 2011 -12 estimates for the financial risk assessments and affect the sums allocated to all items.

I have today spoken to the Valuation Office who has confirmed that details regarding transitional relief, and the percentage set limits, are not sent out with the re-evaluation documentation, so unless I was an expert in business rates, I would not have known this information.

Having looked at the rateable values, I do think it is worth the Council pursuing an appeal against the valuations and I have already started collecting data for comparable properties within the area to assist with the appeal.

A further report will be submitted to the next full Council with the actions/recommendations required.

Appendix

A

T/C 18/12/14

Mr. ~~White~~
Whites Close
Greenhithe
Kent
DA9 9JL

AGENDA ITEM 7

9th November 2014

Ref - Recent tree trimming works carried out Alkerden Lane, Thursday 6th November 2014.

Dear Sirs

I write to you today to formally record my complaint and dissatisfaction at the works carried out on Thursday 6th November in cutting back the trees on Alkerden Lane with visual impact on the Saxon Court Estate.

I hereby request that my complaint is logged, acknowledged and acted upon.

These works were carried out, as far as I am aware, following the request of Mr ~~White~~ at ~~16~~ Whites Close for the trees to be trimmed to allow more daylight into his property. As far as I have been informed and indeed had it confirmed by Graham Blew, this request was the instigation of proceedings. To my understanding, following conversations with my neighbours, but also confirmation by Mr Blew during my phone call on Friday 7th (which I shall refer back to later), Mr ~~White~~ at ~~16~~ Whites Close was consulted and he did not approve. As far as I was aware at this stage the trees being discussed were only those behind those two properties - I was not aware of what was to come.

When I took my daughter to school on Thursday morning, cutting works had already begun. By the time I had spoken to my wife later that day she told me that the trees had been cut down to fence level all the way along behind numbers' 17 and 16, behind my garage and that of Mr ~~White~~ at number 15 - and along to the border of the park behind our property. I was frustrated and very disappointed. I was not consulted by either KCC or my local council to enquire as to my feelings about the cutting of the trees given that in fact by cutting them down directly behind my garage it does have an affect on property I own - not to mention the 'trimming' of trees along the border of number 15 (owned by Mr ~~White~~), a semi-detached house that is 'joined' to me at number 14 - would have an impact on the 'viewing' of my property from the road.

I was not consulted in any way, shape or form by anyone from the council, Graham Blew, KCC or any other formal representative whom should have been involved in the decision making process. Indeed when I called and left a message just after 9am on Friday 7th November for Mr Blew, I made it very clear why I was calling and that I would request someone to return my call as soon as possible. My call was made at 9.08 and the time of return call was 10.38 - hardly an efficient return of call? Nevertheless, what annoyed me immediately was Mr Blew saying that he wasn't sure what I was calling about - despite my voicemail being very clear - perhaps there is still a copy of my voicemail to support this.

At this stage I would like to state that Mr Blew's tone of voice and attitude, certainly at the start of our conversation was both unsympathetic and frankly unprofessional - you could almost call it aggressive. As a resident in this road for over 9 years and having lived here with my head down and causing no trouble to anyone, I am bitterly disappointed at the Town

Clerks' tone of voice and attitude to my complaint. My first questions related to the fact that although my property does not 'border' the trees that were trimmed, by cutting these trees down to fence height, from Alkerden Lane, my house is now clearly visible. My 6 year old daughters' bedroom is at the rear of the property, as is my bathroom - albeit both are on the 1st floor. Additionally, as you walk along Alkerden Lane, as I do every day when walking my dog, you can now clearly see in to my garden when you have never been able to. I asked why I would not have been consulted at any time and I could not believe the response I got from Mr Blew which was to suggest he did not even know where my property was in relation to the works carried out and that if he had have done perhaps he would have spoken to me - indeed he went on to apologise for not having done so 'if' it affected me. How exactly is that supposed to calm the situation? The Town Clerk who effectively has the power to sanction or certainly continue the process instigated by Mr ~~White~~, does not know the impact of works being carried out - does not know exactly where the trees are to be able to make an informed decision as to whom it will affect - is not able to accurately discuss or decide based on actual fact rather than no doubt on a plan he has of the area? It is completely farcical.

During the conversation with Mr Blew, I also pointed out that there are at least 2 known paedophiles in the 'local' area (notably Mounts Road) and I was not happy about the trees being trimmed to fence height and now my property being visible from the man road behind my house. I suggested that whilst I have brought my daughter up to know how to behave and not to walk around freely with no clothes on there is also a certainly element of allowing your children to grow up and not take away their innocence - that there potentially are times when she may be in her bedroom having showered or got in from school when she changes and has not fully tilted her blinds. Now, and as she grows up and gets taller, she will be visible from the road. I fully appreciate my role as a parent is to protect her and make sure she does not find herself in situations where someone could take advantage of her naivety, however in the security of your own home you should be able to behave in some sense of safety. Those trees that bordered Mr ~~White's~~ property along Alkerden Lane provided shelter and privacy for my property as well as his, not to mention my neighbour at ~~100~~ Whites Close who also has a young child at the back of the house. One of the paedophiles in the local area has been known in the last 12-18 months to have been seen within close proximity to my house and whilst I have not had any dealings with him personally, I am sure you can understand why any parent would not want increased risk, or perhaps better, increased scope for this or any deviant to take advantage of their child. I asked Mr Blew if he had children to which he said yes, but very quickly followed it up in a very aggressive tone, that he did not see what bringing his family into the conversation would achieve. The reason for asking Mr Blew this was to try and put him in position, make him see why I feel the way I do. I could not believe it when, whilst trying to further discuss this point Mr Blew felt it right to suggest that I should not rely on 'council' property to protect my children or secure my property. This was absolutely not the intention of my question or indeed the reason for my asking it. I do not need to rely on anyone else to secure my property or indeed rely on the council? That was both confrontational and inaccurate and a very poor attempt to try and restore some form of strength to what is frankly a very weak argument as to reason for cutting back trees to this height.

During the phone call with Mr Blew, I will accept that I was slightly argumentative but I am a very passionate person when I believe in something. Unfortunately, Mr Blew on this occasion lacked the necessary personable and articulate skills to be able to discuss my feelings in an honest and professional way. Several times during the conversation he would repeat his stance that he did not know what I hoped to achieve from the phone call as works had already been carried out. He made no attempt to address my concerns and only went on to say he

'wished' (with complete lack of sincerity) that he had spoken with me and that going forward he would bear this conversation in mind. What good does that do me? How does that positively impact on my family and my property? How does that help to resolve my concerns that I had voiced? I explained to Mr Blew that I was more than aware works had been carried out and that yes, as he kept reminding me, the trees would grow back but that was not the answer.

There are several more points during my conversation with Mr Blew I could refer to however I will at this stage hold back from doing so as it really would not paint a good picture of Mr Blew and I would much rather look to move forward than focus on what has happened. However, I should note I would be more than happy to discuss it more with someone senior to this man should the opportunity arise.

Moving forward I will now try to summarise the reasons for my complaint and specifically note the points that I would request to be investigated and a response drawn up to

- 1) Why were the works approved without consulting everybody whom would be impacted by the trimming work. It is not acceptable to say that you were not aware of whom it would affect - that should have been part of the decision making process. How can you make such a decision without carrying out the relevant research?
- 2) Who made the final decision to proceed with these works?
- 3) Why, when I have lived here for 9 years and there has been **no** trimming works carried out, did the only works carried out have to be so severe?
- 4) Who made the decision that a one off severe trim was the correct financial decision rather than carefully planned trimming - because lets be honest one of the main reasons for such heavy works is budget spending?
- 5) Were the police contacted to make sure that there was not a security risk to anyone by cutting back the trees to this level given the fact I have noted previously there is at least 1 if not 2 known paedophiles living within less than a 0.5 mile radius?
- 6) Who made the inaccurate necessary decision to consider the sound pollution impact from the road behind our property now being more exposed to Alkerden Lane?
- 7) Who considered the security implications to the properties affected by these works? From Alkerden Lane the fence panels are now very easy to 'jump' over whereas the tree cover and shelter did provide security and privacy to the properties. On asking Mr Blew this he replied saying that I should not rely on Council property to secure my house. Again, antagonistic, irrelevant and petulant. However, I do want it formally noted that I have lived here for 9 years with no threat to property or safety of property. Should there be anything happen moving forward resulting in rear access I will hold Swanscombe and Greenhithe Council and specifically Mr Blew accountable.
- 8) Who made the decision not to accurately review ownership plans or title deeds to see that my garage directly borders the trees that have been cut back? I would suggest that plans were viewed but assumption made that my garage was owned by Mr ~~Blaw~~ as it is in close proximity to his property - however it is a joined block to garage owned by Mr ~~Blaw~~ at number ~~14~~. Therefore, these works **did** directly impact **my property** and therefore by Mr Blew's own admission if it bordered my property he should have spoken with me. It is inexcusable that he did not.
- 9) **Finally** (at this stage), what is going to be done to replace the security and privacy of my property, and that of my neighbours' whom have been overlooked? Both Mr ~~Blaw~~ (number ~~14~~) and Mr ~~Blaw~~ (number ~~14~~) in conjunction with myself have young children (all under 12) and we have real concerns about our children's privacy as well as our own, within our property - be it indoors or our garden. When we all

bought our houses over 9 years ago these trees were there and provided shelter that all of us considered a huge factor in purchase. That has been removed without proper and correct consultation and simply Mr Blew's comments of the works being carried out and nothing can be done now is not acceptable.

I have attached images of my property now following these works carried out and ask that real consideration be given to my complaint. Just the same as Mr ~~Blaw~~ has his right to make request as the property owner at number ~~10~~, I have rights as the property owner at number ~~11~~ and they have been completely overlooked following substandard decision making and unprofessional conduct by people entrusted with the responsibility of looking after their residents.

I would like to ask that a formal response be considered within 10 days of receipt of this letter and full consultation be undertaken to work toward a resolve.

With kind regards for your time

~~Matthew Blew~~
~~07500000000~~
~~matthew.blew@virginia.net~~



View from behind property when walking along Alkerden Lane. Number ~~10~~ to right hand side with conservatory on lower level.



View out of my garden to Alkerden Lane. High level trees on far side of Alkerden Lane.



View out of my bathroom window as you can see vehicle now has vision of my bathroom. Impinging on my privacy. This photo was taken stood under my showerhead so my wife or I are now viewable from the road – granted that is something for us to consider – however, when the trees gave the privacy we were able to have the windows open and keep the property cool and aired during summer months.

Copies:

Graham Blew – Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
Kent County Council
Dartford Borough Council
Kent Police (Dartford)

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Appendix B
T/C 18/12/14

SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE (Reviewed and Amended 21 April 2010)

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a councillor or the Town Clerk and it is not possible to satisfy the complainant in full immediately, the complainant shall be asked to put his/her complaint in writing to the Town Clerk and receive an assurance on receipt that the matter will be dealt with promptly.
2. If a complainant indicates that he/she would prefer not to put the complaint to the Town Clerk then he/she should be advised to put it to the Town Mayor.
3. On receipt of a written complaint, the Town Clerk or the Town Mayor, as the case may be, shall (except where the complaint is about their own actions) try to resolve the complaint directly with the complainant. If a complaint is about the behaviour of the Town Clerk or a Councillor then the Town Mayor or Town Clerk shall notify the person complained of and afford them an opportunity to comment on the way it is intended to resolve the complaint. Where the Town Clerk or Town Mayor receives a written complaint about their own actions, he/she shall immediately refer the complaint to the Council.
4. The Town Clerk or Town Mayor shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
5. The Town Clerk or Town Mayor shall bring any written complaint which cannot be settled to the next meeting of the Town Council, and the Town Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered.
6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and the public. If the matter is a complaint of the Town Clerk such that the Council or the Town Clerk believes that the matter may lead to a disciplinary hearing then the matter must be heard with the press and public excluded. In this event, if the complaint is of any employee, even if the matter is being dealt with initially out of the context of a formal disciplinary hearing, then the employee is entitled to have a representative present to act as set out in the Employment Relations Act 1999 s.10. The matter before the Council in this case will be to establish whether there is a factual basis to the complaint and the action that should be taken. The proceedings at this stage cannot be a formal disciplinary hearing, which must be convened on a separate occasion in the proper manner.
7. Once a decision has been made the complainant shall be notified in writing. This notification will include details of any action proposed / required to be taken.
8. In the event of serial facetious, vexatious or malicious complaints from a member of the public the Council should consider taking legal advice before writing letters to the complainant.

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Appendix C

T/C 18/12/14

Mr ~~White~~
Whites Close
Greenhithe
Kent
DA9 9JL

18 November 2014

Dear Mr ~~White~~

Thank you for your letter dated 9 November 2014, regarding the maintenance work on the Town Council's green area alongside Alkerden Lane. I will attempt to address the points raised in your letter as summarised:-

- 1 Unfortunately it is not practical or desirable to consult every resident regarding the day to day operational work of the Town Council;
- 2 I, as the Town Clerk, have delegated authority from the Town Council for the day to day operational running of the Town Council. It is entirely appropriate for the Town Clerk to have made this decision;
- 3 Trimming works have previously been undertaken in this area but have been of a minor scale due to the overgrown nature of the site. Whilst the work recently undertaken appears to be severe it is common practice to have horticultural work carried out in this manner periodically as is evidenced at other Town Council sites;
- 4 As discussed in previous points this is unlikely to be a one-off exercise and was undertaken to facilitate continuing maintenance, including litter clearance, of the area;
- 5 The Town Council did not consult with the Police as this green space is owned and maintained by the Town Council to provide an amenity not security;
- 6 Unfortunately the potential for increased noise to residents was not considered but again the area is there to provide an amenity;
- 7 I re-iterate that the green spaces are there to provide an amenity not security for private property;
- 8 Regarding the matter of the ownership of the garages I apologise as this was not taken into consideration as it was not perceived to be an issue for garage owners and in future this may be considered appropriate;
- 9 As mentioned in previous answers the Council's green spaces are to provide an amenity not to provide security and privacy to private

property. It is our intention, through regular planned maintenance, to see this area re-establish itself albeit less densely and at a manageable height.

Please be assured that the points you have raised have been taken on board and that the Town Council takes seriously its responsibility of maintaining its assets for the benefit of all residents.

You will appreciate that I am unable to respond to concerns you have raised about my behaviour and these have been passed to the Town Mayor to respond to you.

Please accept my sincere apologies for any upset or trauma the maintenance of this area has caused as this was never the intention.

Yours sincerely

Graham Blew
Town Clerk

Appendix C

T/C 18/12/14

Mr ~~White~~
Whites Close
Greenhithe
Kent
DA9 9JL

19 November 2014

Dear Mr ~~White~~

Re: Maintenance of the amenity space at Alkerden Lane, next to Saxon Court Play Area.

Thank you for your letter dated 9th November to Mr Graham Blew, the Town Clerk of Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council (SGTC). Mr Blew has passed your letter onto me as Town Mayor to look in detail about the areas that you have raised.

Below is my response and consideration to your concerns:-

- S.G.T.C take comments and concerns from residents very seriously and as Councillors we follow the Town Council's complaints procedure;
- I would like to reassure you that following your detailed letter, the Town Council will now review how it consults with local residents on the maintenance of open space in the future;
- In addition, I would like to mention that all work undertaken in Swanscombe & Greenhithe that is under the remit of the Town Council is managed/operated by the experienced team of officers under the management of the Town Clerk. As such, the Town Council works hard to ensure that open amenity space is kept to a high standard and maintenance on these areas is carefully thought through before any work is undertaken;
- The issues related to Mr Blew's attitude, as detailed in your letter, has been discussed fully and I apologise if you found the conversation unprofessional;

however, I know Mr Blew did not mean any confrontation in his conversation with you on the telephone.

I trust this letter assists with your concerns and please rest assured that as Town Mayor, together with fellow Councillors, we are happy to discuss issues that concern residents at any time and we endeavour to bring about a positive solution for everyone.

Thank you once again for your letter and please do not hesitate to contact me in the future if and when the need arises.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Mayor of Swanscombe and Greenhithe

Councillor Mrs S Butterfill
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe
Kent
DA10 0GA

Appendix D
T/C 18/12/14

1st December 2014

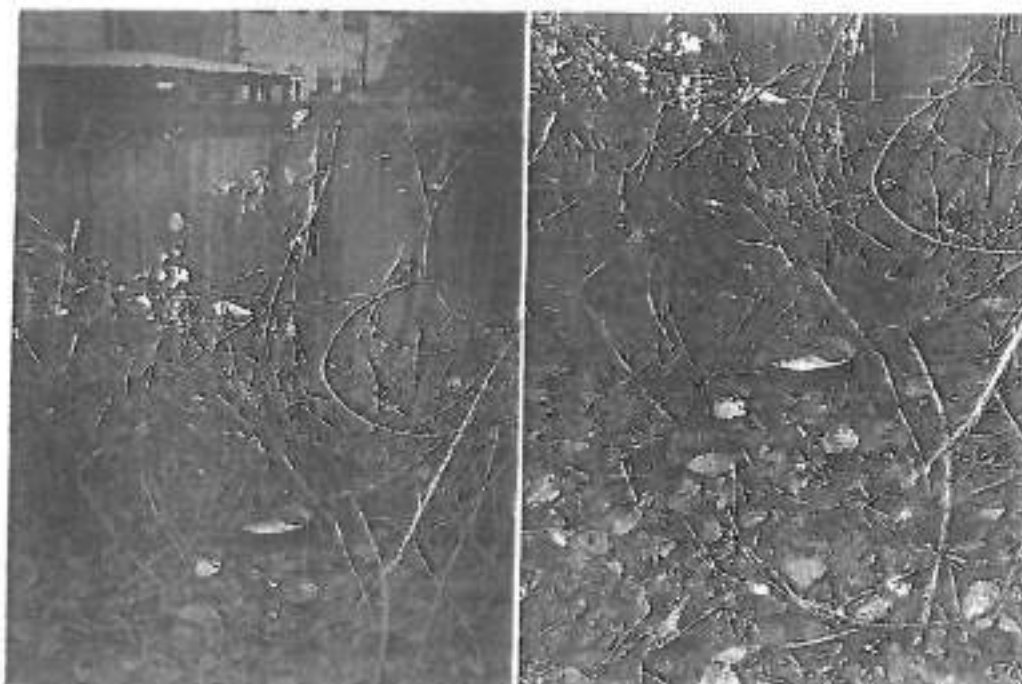
Ref - Amenity space at Alkerden Lane, next to Saxon Court play area.

Dear Mrs Butterfill

Thank you for your letter dated 19/11/14 written the day after the inept response sent by Graham Blew.

Whilst I would like to extend my appreciation for your reply, I still find the actions surrounding this whole façade to be far from that which as a resident under this council I should expect. Naturally I understand you will be defensive of Mr Blew - that goes without saying, however I am disappointed.

The most recent justification for my concern is explainable by the image below. Mr Blew took great content in correcting me verbally when we spoke on the telephone initially when I 'registered' my complaint. I loosely, and apparently wrongly, used the term 'tree felling' to which Mr Blew told me there were no trees felled, they were trimmed. So I am sure you can understand my confusion and somewhat dismay when walking my dog the other day with my wife when I happened to look back at these works and see what seemingly is a tree trunk where once there was a tree attached - presumably standing higher than it does now?



Now - I am far from a politician however articulate I may be - but I would suggest that this is evidence of a lie being told, or perhaps we should call it an inaccurate truth. Whatever fancy terminology we give it, or attempt to, I consider it to be very clear - there was more severe

work done than simply 'trimming' or 'maintenance' and to suggest otherwise is inexcusable. As per my initial letter I have lived here for 9 years and other than the occasional branch being snapped off on the other side of the road by the quarry - there have been no maintenance works done to the trees in this area. In fact, my immediate neighbour at number [REDACTED] has lived here for nearer 20 years and has told me he has struggled in his time to have anyone do anything regarding the tidying of this area. With that in mind I would suggest there have been 'strings pulled' or some other reason that now, since Mr [REDACTED] request works have been undertaken. It goes without saying, that as a mere resident with no political standing or power I would not expect to ever find out what has happened but curiosity can be a devil can't it ?!

I would also like to refer you to point 4 of Mr Blew's monotonous 1 ½ page response to my nearer 5 page initial letter.

4 As discussed in previous points this is unlikely to be a one-off exercise and was undertaken to facilitate continuing maintenance, including litter clearance, of the area.

Albeit not the bluntest or most tedious of his comments, it is the most wholly inaccurate. On the same day I took the images above, I took the image below of evidence of fly tipping having taken place less than 20ft from the works that took place. Something we have never really had an issue with along that stretch of 'amenity space' - but coincidentally now we have this. This is still sited today and has not been removed. I wonder - when will the next planned maintenance works take place? Will it be another 9 years or should I ask Mr [REDACTED] to call up as seemingly things happen where he is involved?



Please accept my apologies for tone of sarcasm in the letter. It is not meant to be confrontational but I truly am so disappointed in the handling of this situation and the promise of the council acting differently in the future is of little consolation to the circumstances that directly affect me. Considering some of the residents that live in this area, I am bitterly disappointed at the way in which my family and I have and are being treated as genuine, law abiding, non fraudulent benefit claiming, Tax paying citizens.

I would like to refer you to a Government dossier which details, in my opinion a superb definition of 'Amenity Green Space' – which I assume we are calling this area

"Amenity Green Spaces are most commonly found in residential areas and function as informal recreation areas, green space in and around housing estates and village greens. Amenity green space is usually publicly accessible and serves the immediate local community providing a space for children's informal play, jogging and dog walking. Amenity space can also act as a buffer, reducing the noise from a busy road or providing shelter from prevailing winds. Amenity areas should always be highly accessible and, therefore, very close to where people live or work."

This is a freely accessible dossier that I have located from a simple Google search. I do not need to be a Town Clerk or Councillor to access this information. Why then, is it something that Mr Blew did not feel was necessary to take into consideration when permitting these works? I refer you to the following points in Mr Blew's letter to me:

5 The Town Council did not consult with the Police as green space is owned and maintained by the Town Council to provide an amenity not security.

6 Unfortunately, the potential for increased noise to residents was not considered but again the area is there to provide an amenity.

7 I re-iterate that the green spaces are there to provide an amenity not securing for private property.

9 As mentioned in previous answers the Council's green spaces are to provide an amenity not to provide security and privacy to private property. It is our intention, through regular and planned maintenance, to see this area re-establish itself albeit less densely and at a manageable height.

I would suggest that there is more than enough in these responses to contradict a Government directive as to the use of this 'green space' as we are calling it. I brought up concerns over security, noise pollution and protection from the wind that now whips up from the quarry. I would go on to suggest that the quote I have detailed gives exact support to why those trees were initially planted to provide all of those – and the direct result of this very poor decision has undermined that?

Let us put it in perspective too. By questioning the security aspect I find it highly insulting that Mr Blew would suggest I considered it my right for those trees to 'protect' or 'secure' my property. However, the world that I live in, trees provide shelter and cover that also potentially mean you cannot see through or beyond them? That was my point – that my property is now far more visible from the road than it had ever been – than it was when I purchased the property. I also used adult rationalisation when viewing and ultimately, buying this house that the trees in close proximity were there for all of the reasons listed above (noise pollution etc).

As I detailed before, Mr Blew seems to consider this to be a very cut and dried situation. I am not happy but as he kept telling me what did/do I want to happen next as the works have been carried out. I do intend to continue this until his inability and unprofessionalism has been admitted. He told a blatant lie about trees not being felled and has also dismissed

literature which is self explanatory in terms of what 'amenity green space' is there for – and I would like to know why?

In doing my research over the last couple of weeks I found an interesting article on Mr Blew and one of his comments was about people always picking what councils do wrong;

Is there anything else which you would like to say or get off your chest?

People tend to immediately be negative when thinking or talking about local government. I want people to take a moment to celebrate and acknowledge the positive things the town council does for the residents of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

I would suggest if he can be ungracious enough to make such an intolerant comment, then he be gracious enough to acknowledge when he does get something wrong and not try to wash his hands of any responsibility.

I look forward to hearing from you with regard to my comments and findings thus far

Kind regards


COUNCIL CLERK

EXTRACT
OF MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL
16 OCTOBER 2014

AGENDA ITEM

T/C 18/12/14

8

238/14-15. **CAPACITY BUILDING FUND (DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC)) 2014 – 2015.**

Members were pleased to receive confirmation from the Leader of DBC that both the applications submitted by the Town Clerk had been approved and that the full amounts Applied For awarded.

The Town Clerk requested that Members give serious consideration to proposing appropriate projects for future funding applications to the Capacity Building Fund. After discussion members agreed that an item should be included on future committee agendas to give members the chance to propose and consider possible projects for submission to the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That an item be included on future committee agendas to give members the chance to propose and consider possible projects for submission to the scheme.

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GUIDANCE NOTE FOR THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CAPACITY BUILDING FUND

The Council has earmarked £25,000 in 2014/15 for grants to parish and town councils.

There are no strict criteria for awarding grants except that grants are not designed to simply replace reduced section 136 contributions.

The Council particularly wishes to encourage joint and innovative working between parish and town councils, or projects that will make a real difference to the local community.

It is not essential that the grant is match funded by the applicant but it would be an advantage.

Normally grants will be for maximum of £3,000 but more will be available for joint applications.

Applications are invited (in your own format) explaining what is proposed, the estimated cost and the amount of grant requested.

Applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of the Leader and Deputy Leader of Dartford Borough Council, the Chairman of the Parish Forum plus another parish Member. The parish Members would not be able to consider applications from their own parish.

The panel will make recommendations to the Managing Director for final decision.

The first round of applications are invited by 31 May. Please send them by email to Tim Sams (Financial Services Manager) at tim.sams@dartford.gov.uk. Applications will be considered in June and applicants notified of the results by the end of June.

THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CAPACITY BUILDING FUND - UPDATE

The Council has earmarked £25,000 in 2014/15 for grants to parish and town councils.

The Council particularly wished to encourage joint and innovative working between parish and town councils, or projects that will make a real difference to the local community.

It was indicated that grants will normally be for maximum of £3,000 but that more will be available for joint applications.

Applications were invited by 31 May and were required to explain the proposal, the estimated cost and the amount of grant requested.

Individual bids have been received from:

- Darenth Parish Council.
- Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council
- Longfield and New Barn Parish Council
- Stone Parish Council
- Wilmington Parish Council

A joint bid was received from Darenth Parish Council, Bean Parish Council & Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley Parish Council.

Expressions of interest to be on the panel were requested on the 21st May and it can now be confirmed that the panel will consist of:

The Leader and Deputy Leader of Dartford Borough Council, Councillor Noreen Salway and Councillor Richard Lees. Please note The Leader / Deputy Leader will not take part in any discussion affecting a Parish on which they sit.

It is hoped that the 1st meeting of the Panel will be held in early to mid-July.



SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS

meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

- g) Any person who records, films, photographs, broadcasts or uses other communication methods in such a way as to be disruptive to the conduct of the meeting or the decision making process, will be asked by the Mayor or the Chairman to desist from such behaviour with immediate effect. Standing Order 34 (f) will be applied where the person fails to comply with the Mayor or Chairman's instruction.
- h) Oral commentary during a meeting is prohibited. Any person who contravenes this Standing Order, will be asked by the Mayor or the Chairman to desist from such behaviour with immediate effect. Standing Order 34 (f) will be applied where the person fails to comply with the Mayor or Chairman's instruction.

35. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA.

~~Councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media unless prior approval has been given by the Town Council or Town Clerk.~~

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356. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS.

- a) No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall disclose to any person not a Member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or the sub-committee as the case may be.
- b) Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Standing Order may be removed from any committee or sub-committee of the Council by the Council, subject to any decision made as per Standing Order 14 (e).

367. LIAISON WITH COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

- a) A list of the scheduled meetings, as agreed at the AGM shall be sent, as way of an invitation to attend, to the County, Borough, Unitary or District Councillor for the appropriate division or ward.
- b) At the discretion of the Clerk a copy of each letter ordered to be sent to the County or District Council shall be transmitted to the County Councillor for the division or to the District Councillor for the ward as the case may require.

378. PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, keep a records of the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:

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6

T/C 18/12/14



The Parish News

AGENDA ITEM



<http://kentalc.gov.uk>



KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS 2015 LAUNCHED



We are delighted to announce that on 30 September, we officially launched our 2015 KALC Community Awards scheme, which recognises members of the public who make significant contributions to their communities. The scheme is supported by the High Sheriff of Kent, the Chairman of Kent County Council and The Mayor of Medway.

As you can see, all of our supporters attended the event, along with Terry Martin, our County Secretary and Laura Dyer, our administrator.

Hugo Fenwick, the current High Sheriff of Kent, said: "After its successful inaugural year, the KALC awards are now fully established to recognise both the selfless dedication and the invaluable contribution made by volunteers in our local communities". Cllr. Raymond Evison, KALC's Chairman echoed this sentiment when he commented that "Our Association represents those who are closely involved with their local communities and our members are therefore ideally placed to recognise those individuals who give themselves tirelessly and selflessly to the great good of their towns and villages across the county. The Association is therefore pleased to support and administer the Awards Scheme." Highlighting the impact of the Awards, Peter Homewood, Chairman of Kent County Council, remarked that "Individuals across Kent are making vital contributions to their communities which often go unrecognised, so I am delighted to support these awards which will recognise the efforts of these people. Their hard work and selfless dedication helps make Kent a great place to live." Likewise, the current Mayor of Medway, Cllr Barry Kemp, was equally enthusiastic about the scheme and said "I am pleased to support these awards as volunteers make a very positive impact on the well being of their communities and it is important to recognise their input. I would encourage all Parish and Town Councils in Medway to adopt the scheme." The 2014 Awards Scheme was adopted by 32 member Councils. The feedback was extremely positive and we would strongly encourage all member Councils to adopt the 2015 Scheme

From L to R:

Terry Martin, County Secretary KALC,
Cllr Raymond Evison Chairman KALC,
Cllr Barry Kemp, Mayor of Medway, Hugo
Fenwick, High Sheriff of Kent, Cllr Peter
Homewood, Chairman, Kent County
Council and Laura Dyer, Administrator
KALC launch the
2015 KALC Community Awards

Training Matters and Event Updates


**Important
DATE!**

- Dynamic Councillor
Kingswood and Broomfield
Village Hall, 20 October
- An Introduction to
Planning, Great Chart with
Singleton Parish Council,
27 October
- Openness of Local
Government Bodies 2014 -
A Workshop, Lenham
Community Centre, 6
November 2014
- Community Resilience and
Emergency Planning
Workshop - Canterbury
Cricket Ground, 18
November 2014

Interested?

Visit our website [here](#) for booking
details and further information.

What's Going On?

Our Finance Conference is now fully booked and looks to be a success on Friday 17 October. Those who have booked on to the event will receive emails in the near future to confirm everything and we look forward to seeing you on the day.

At the time of going to press, there are a few places left on our November events that may interest member Councils. Of particular note is our *Resilience and Emergency Planning Workshop* which takes place on 18 November. We are using a new venue for this in Canterbury at the cricket ground and would appreciate your feedback if you attend. As the event is free, you might like to book your place as soon as possible!

Our pilot workshop on the recently released "Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014" could be just what you need to clarify what the new procedures mean to local councils.

The Regulations can be found in more details in NALC Legal Topic Note 5, which was issued in August of this year. The Link below will take you to that document. It might be wise for our local councils to brush up on the regulations for the future - we know it is bound to be a hot topic over the coming months, especially with elections looming for us all!

URL: <http://kentalc.gov.uk/Resources/Documents/Legal%20Topic%20Notes/5%20-%20Parish%20and%20Community%20Council%20meetings%20-%20revised%20August%202014.pdf>

Elections 2015



None of us really need reminding that 2015 is Election Year.

It will be a very busy time for most of us, and KALC is committed to making the process a little more accessible not only to our Member Councils, but to the general public too. You will see that we have various strategies planned in order to do this, and we have already started by sending out some primary resources in the form of posters and flyers to get "the ball rolling" in your Councils.

Let us know if you are doing anything in particular in your areas to promote Local Elections in 2015. Pictures and narratives are especially welcome as we know that this topic is going to be "hot" over the coming months. We look forward to hearing from you!

What Are We Sending You?

You will have, or will shortly, receive a dedicated Election Resource Pack from us here. It will include posters that you can put on your notice boards, along with smaller information flyers that go into further detail regarding the role of modern Local Councils and being a Councillor. Make sure you use them - they could be a lifeline in your publicity campaigns!

What's Going Online?

A 21st Century Election Campaign needs 21st Century resources - so KALC is launching its own Election blog site in the near future for the public to use as a vital tool during the coming months. Expect to see downloadable resources and information that is not only relevant to our Councils but to members of the public who are interested in being a local councillor for the first time too.

Where Will We Be?

KALC is committed to helping promote Elections. With that in mind, we are arranging 13 Awareness Events for each of the 13 areas that exist in Kent and Medway between January and April 2015. These will be aimed at the public to explain what Local Councils do - and to encourage them to stand for election. We will also run Foundation Dynamic Councillor events in each of our 13 areas between May and July 2015 aimed at new councillors. These dedicated sessions will be around 90 minutes long and will be at the very special rate of £20 INC VAT.

Is Your Community Prepared for an Emergency?

Preparing for emergencies is at the very heart of our business and is something that Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) is well rehearsed in, but, with winter on the way, we want to know how prepared your community is?



Kent Fire &
Rescue Service

The first step local parishes and communities can take is to make sure they have plans in place and know what to do in an emergency, so that they are properly prepared for the unexpected things that can cause disruption to daily lives.

Last winter saw some of the worst flooding in a decade to hit Kent and Medway. Alongside other partner agencies, KFRS worked relentlessly using specialist water rescue equipment and training to help evacuate people from their homes or trapped in vehicles on flooded roads.

Flood, fire, high winds, snow and extreme cold are just some of the emergency situations that could have a significant affect on your community. By identifying local hazards and making plans now you can help protect your community.

The Kent Resilience Team (KRT) is a countywide integrated emergency planning team based at KFRS's headquarters in Tovil, near Maidstone. The team brings together emergency planning officers from Kent County Council, Kent Police and KFRS, who are responsible for developing and reviewing key emergency plans for the county.

This specialist team can help your parish prepare an emergency plan for your area, call 01622 212409 for advice. Your parish can also order free copies of a handbook that could save lives - "What should I do in an emergency" - email: KRF@kent.fire-uk.org if you can help with distribution. It gives important information so that you know how local people can help themselves in an emergency situation and be properly prepared. One hard copy is being sent to member Councils.

Ashford Borough Council launches CCTV Monitoring



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Ashford Monitoring Centre now offers CC TV services to businesses and householders.

As part of an ambitious drive to establish the Ashford Monitoring Centre as the South-East's leading remote CC TV monitoring facility, Ashford Borough Council is offering a unique service to Parish Councils looking for added security.

The Ashford Monitoring Centre (AMC) is offering a free consultation with Parish Councils looking to upgrade or implement CC TV, recommending an appropriate solution and even arranging for three quotations from approved suppliers to be submitted directly to the client. This not only provides free and genuinely impartial advice, but also saves the inconvenience of finding a suitably qualified and reliable CC TV installer.

In addition, the AMC can protect people and premises when most needed, for example when buildings are unoccupied or at their most vulnerable. By remotely monitoring CC TV cameras around the clock, the AMC provides a proven and cost-effective deterrent to vandalism, anti-social behaviour, and burglary.

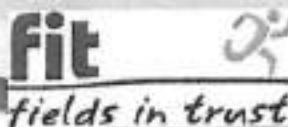
James Hann of the Borough's Community Safety Team said, "The team of operatives in the centre currently monitor hundreds of cameras throughout Kent, both in public and private spaces. However, there are tremendous opportunities for us to offer this service to new customers from our state-of-the-art, local monitoring centre. By offering reliable, value-for-money monitoring, we can not only reduce crime and anti-social behaviour for Parish Councils, but also save them money in the process.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Mr James Hann, Assistant Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager:

Tel: 01233 642095 Email: cctv@ashford.gov.uk

Worth Knowing About...



The Fields in Trust annual awards are now in their third year and are increasingly popular as a way to get your field and your community recognised nationally as outstanding examples.

Fields in Trust protects outdoor recreational spaces and there are many across Kent.

You can enter until the 24 October, and there's a range of awards open.

Anyone connected with the site can complete the application. For the fields themselves, there's 'Most Improved' 'Get Active' and 'Best Have a Field Day'. More information is at:

http://www.fieldsintrust.org/Fields_in_Trust_Awards.aspx

And there's also 'Community Champion' – which is a wonderful chance to show your appreciation for the individual who is tirelessly working away. We all know someone like that so if they're connected to your Fields in Trust site, why not nominate them?

Those shortlisted for the awards will be invited to the Awards Ceremony, held at Lords Cricket Ground in London 3 December.

How can we say it better than this:

Thank you so much for such a wonderful evening.

You made it so special, I am sure it will be a highlight of my life for years to come.

It was an incredible honour to be named as a Community Champion, especially after hearing of the other wonderful people and projects that had been put forward. I have come away with a head full of excellent ideas.

Kate Dunbar, Regional Winner, Community Champion

Our tips?

Make sure you answer all the questions we ask in each part of the application form and give as much detail as you can.

Good luck!

Text about the awards themselves:

1. Most Improved Fields in Trust site

If you have been successful in getting funding for your field, this one's for you! What was your site like before? How have you improved it? Tell us the story behind any improvements your site has had and the impact they've had on those who use it.

2. Getting Active on a Fields in Trust site

Has your Fields in Trust field seen more people using it? Whether it's been a weekly walk that's grown in popularity, a regular 'bootcamp', football tournament or other activity, if it got more people active on your site, then get writing for this award.

3. Best Have a Field Day - On a Fields in Trust site

So many of you had fantastic Field Days this summer, we can't wait to read all the applications for this award! Tell us about who came, what happened, what people thought of it - everything that makes it the Best Have a Field Day.

4. Fields in Trust Community Champion

Is there someone who's really made a difference to your protected sites? Someone who's gone the extra mile protecting sites, or encouraging others to get involved? Tell us all about them by submitting an entry for this award. Your chance to get the recognition you feel they deserve!

5. Love your Field

Online voting! From 29 September until 3rd November you can show you value your favourite local Fields in Trust protected site with one quick click. It's easy and anyone can do it, so if you value your local protected site, spread the word! Find out more at: http://www.fieldsintrust.org/Love_field.aspx

Fields in Trust
AWARDS si

Boxley Gets Digging!



Long Awaited New Allotments Have Their Grand Opening!

The weather was fabulous for the grand opening of Boxley Parish Council's new allotments at Dove Hill on Sunday 24 August. Tenants and guests were extremely proud to be at the event that was attended by Radio Kerc's Andy Garland, who presents the Sunday Gardening Show. He generously gave his time and advice to many of the tenants - some of whom have never grown a vegetable! The Chairman of Boxley Parish Council, Ivor Davies said, "The Parish Council has long aspired to providing allotments for residents but couldn't find appropriate land." He added that once that land had been found, it would require an access road with water supply, along with fencing and so on. With the great help of the Royal and Ghurka Engineers, St Paul's Scouts and County Councillor Paul Carter, Boxley now has its very own productive allotment area. Cllr Bob Hinder, Chairman of the Allotment Working Group commented that "there is still some work to be done on the entrance and we are dealing with issues as and when they arise, but anyone who had seen the original bare field can only be amazed at the change in the seven months since the tenants started digging." Facilities at the site include plots for those with disabilities, along with parking and toilet facilities. Well done to Boxley. We look forward to their first harvest!

News from Our Parishes and Towns...

New Scheme to Bring Communities Together and Support Vulnerable Residents Launches in Medway

Volunteers are set to play an important role in further developing neighbourhoods in Medway – starting with the Hoo Peninsula.

As part of a new pilot scheme, money is to be invested in community organisations, and trained volunteers will provide enhanced contact with older residents and people with disabilities.

Medway is one of seven councils in England involved in the programme set up by community interest company Developing and Empowering Resources in Communities, also known as DERIC.

Medway Council will be supporting the programme with Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). It will initially focus on the Hoo Peninsula.

The first event to discuss support available to vulnerable adults and families on the Peninsula will be held on Wednesday, 15 October at 1.30pm at the Queens Hall, Corn Exchange in Rochester.

Anyone who lives or works on the Peninsula is welcome to join the discussion, particularly people with personal experience of receiving or giving care or support.

It will be an opportunity for statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and local residents to get together and share ideas.

Social investment bank, Big Society Capital, has lent DERIC £1 million to invest in community organisations, set up to support people who receive personal care budgets.

Personal care budgets are given to eligible people by local authorities and the NHS to enable them to have choice and control over the support they receive.

There are now four DERIC schemes in Leeds, one in Sandwell, Birmingham, in Belfast, and now in Medway.

Together these programmes positively support more than 3,000 people.

The schemes draw in community supporters – local, trained volunteers who will provide appropriate support to people receiving personal budgets, enhancing their care and support arrangements.

The pilots in Leeds and Belfast showed a 25 percent increase in personal contact time for older people and vulnerable adults which is an important element of how we as a society address social isolation and loneliness.

Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Adult Services Cllr David Brake said: "The council already provides a wide range of services to support our vulnerable residents with the help they need but we are always keen to innovate to ensure people get the best care and support.

"This new scheme will enhance our well established local support network at a neighbourhood level and develop volunteers with training and support. A cost effective and truly worthwhile investment that has shown tremendous outcomes elsewhere, and no doubt will in Medway too."

And In Other News....

Fundraising Opportunities



The Prince's Countrywide Fund has been established

to support the sustainability and protection of farms and rural communities. The aim of the scheme is for funding to have a long term positive impact on rural communities helping those who live and work there sustain the countryside by tackling key rural issues. There are currently grants available - *with a deadline of 23 October.*

All grants must result in things that relate to the fund's objectives such as:

- Improving the viability of British farming, targeting the areas of greatest need
- Improving the sustainability of rural communities, targeting the areas of greatest need.

Grants are available up to the sum of £50000 for individual projects and this current round is worth £600000. It is worth getting your application organised for this particular grant - please bear in mind the cut off date is soon, so you will need act quickly!

Kent Wildlife Trust - Here to Protect Our Local Wildlife



The Kent Wildlife Trust exists to protect Kent's precious wildlife and its habitats. There are 30000 members across our county and its influence continues to expand among individuals, communities and Kent's decision makers. If you would like to support the Trust, there are many ways of doing so. Take a look at their website [here](http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/) for further information on their membership options.

<http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/>

Vacancies

Take a look at our website [here](#) for details of our latest parish and town council vacancies.

2014 Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting takes place on Saturday 22 November 2014 and will be at Ditton Community Centre. At the time of going to press, your papers and reports are being sent out, so you should all receive them soon. Don't forget to let us know who will be attending from your council. All the instructions for this will arrive in your packs, but should you need further advice on the matter, do let us know.

We look forward to seeing you at our biggest event for the year.

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SOUTHFLEET PARISH COUNCIL

T/C 18/12/14

Tuesday 21st October 2014

2.00pm, Southfleet Village Hall, Dale Road Southfleet

Present: Councillor N Salway, Southfleet Parish Council
 County Councillor M Balfour, KCC
 David Munn, KCC West Kent PROWs
 Councillor J Kite, Dartford Borough Council, Longfield & New Barn Parish Council
 County Councillor T Maddison, KCC Dartford North East
 Councillor C Armstrong, Sutton at Hone Parish Council
 Councillor R Lees, Swanscombe & Greenhithe Town Council
 Councillor J Rickwood, Wilmington Parish Council
 Keith Holmes, Clerk, Darenth Parish Council
 Kathryn Gale, Clerk, Sutton at Hone Parish Council
 Jackie Hardinges, Clerk, Southfleet Parish Council
 Ken Dare, Meopham Footpaths Group

Apologies for absence

Councillor A Sakellariou, Bean Parish Council, Councillor I Gutteridge, Darenth Parish Council.

1) Cllr Salway introduction:

Cllr Salway explained the background and the purpose of the meeting, and introductions were made by those present.

2) Mr David Munn addressed the meeting:

- 2.1 **KCC responsibilities for PROW's:** vegetation on surface of PROW, landowner for vegetation encroaching on the sides.
- 2.2 **Resources:** There has never been enough money allocated to Countryside access and situation worsened due to cut backs. Even though last year there was a £8000 uplift in funds the department has only 2/3 of the funding compared to 3 years ago and 1/2 of the vegetation is cut back compared to 3 years ago.
 2013/2014 all paths were cut once, however this did not work.
 2014/2015 The number of PROW's cut was reduced, but those that are cut received 2 cuts in June and Sep/Oct. Ideally this should be about 3 to 4 cuts per year. Priority is given to urban routes and PROW's widely used by walkers.
- 2.3 The fixed clearance PROW's of 2 cuts cost £75,000 in the area and £25,000 is spent on reactive cuts. KCC have a budget of approx £150,000 for the West Kent area. Vegetation cuts are affected by various conditions including the weather. Main contractor carries out the work, along with volunteer groups, affiliated individuals and KCC Officers who are equipped and trained. Costs involved: training, health and safety, insurance etc. 300 affiliated individuals at present but not all active. More volunteers needed.
- 2.4 **Other options for PROW maintenance**
 Tonbridge Area: A group of PC's have taken on the work themselves with a budget from KCC.
 Pros: Possible cheaper, more localised priorities
 Cons: May not be viable for small PC's, insurance, liabilities etc. Overall if KCC devolve the maintenance it may then become unviable for KCC in negotiating contracts etc.

3) **County Councillor Matthew Balfour addressed the meeting:**

In favour of devolving the PROW maintenance and encouraging more community involvement. Priority should be given to routes for local people accessing Schools, churches pubs etc, not necessarily walkers from outside of the community.

4) **Parish/Town Councillor discussion:**

- 4.1 Jeremy Kite: Keen for Parish/Town Councils to work together to achieve local priorities. If KCC devolve budget, ideally this should be for a 10 year period to ensure sustainability.
- 4.2 Parish/Town Councils reported their individual issues: Discussion took place on the viability of a group working together to achieve devolution of the budget and responsibilities. There were concerns with finance, insurance, health and safety, sustainability, the availability of volunteers etc.

5) **Meopham Footpaths Group and KALC Dartford Area**

Ken Dare explained the history of the Group and its contribution in assisting KCC and local communities with PROW issues. He is of the opinion that we should strive to ensure that all our public rights of way are available to all potential users and we should strive to protect our heritage.

Cllr Richard Lees reported on the devolvement of PROW maintenance in the Ashford area, and it was agreed a good idea to ask for a report on the workings of the arrangement.

Cllr Salway thanked everyone for attending and hoped they found the meeting useful. Mrs Hardinges will provide some basic notes of the meeting and it is hoped representatives will report back to their Parish/Town Councils.

Graham Blew

From: administrator <administrator@kentalc.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 December 2014 08:34
Subject: DCLG Consultation on Parish Polls
Attachments: Parish_Poll_Consultation.pdf

Dear Member Councils

DCLG has just published its consultation on Parish Polls. It can be accessed via the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/parish-polls> and is also attached as a pdf. The deadline is 30 January 2015.

For ease, the list of questions (pages 18 and 19) are as follows:

Q1. What are your views on the proposed trigger? The proposal is to provide in regulations that: *No poll shall be taken unless the poll is demanded by the majority of local government electors present at the meeting and the electors demanding a poll constitute not less than – 1) 10% of local government electors for the community, or 2) 60 electors (if 10% of electors exceeds 60)*

Q2. What are your views on the Government's proposal to modernise voting arrangements?

The proposal is to provide in regulations:

- that a poll must be open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.;
- that the same facilities for disabled people as used in other polls/referendums must be provided (*e.g. allow documents to be translated into braille and provided in audio format, and the use of ramps at polling stations to make them accessible for disabled voters*);
- that the poll may be conducted in accordance with such rules as applicable to the conduct of other polls as the Returning Officer considers appropriate, subject to the inclusion of postal and proxy voting for the poll being with the agreement of the parish council;
- that at the discretion of the principle council's Returning Officer, a parish poll may be combined, if timing permits, with another poll. In this situation a parish poll must be conducted according to the rules of the other poll.


Q3. Do you consider that the proposed criteria sufficiently tighten the subject matter so that a poll can only be held on a parish issue? The proposal is to provide in regulations that:

poll can be called on any question arising at a meeting which concerns affairs which relate to a parish council/meetings functions and meets the following criteria: 1. The subject matter was discussed at the parish meeting. 2. The subject matter directly affects those who live and/ or work in the parish; and 3. the parish council/meeting has the capacity to make a decision on the subject matter including any decision as a statutory consultee, but not including a decision simply to agree a declaratory statement on the matter.

Q4. What are your views on the proposals to:

A: Change the calculation date for the number of electors on the electoral register to 1 December - bringing calculation time in line with other legislation.

B: Provide that only one poll can be called on the same subject in a 12 month period.

-  C: Provide that principal councils should place the results on their website and also on parish and town council websites, where these are available.
- D: Issue guidance and encourage Returning Officers to provide a parish with an estimate of costs once a poll has been called and election arrangements agreed.
- E: Provide that after a poll has been called, the parish council should be able to publish a short, factual, balanced and objective statement about the question of the poll.

KALC will be finalising its response to the consultation at its Executive Committee meeting on 24 January 2015. If you do respond to the consultation, please send us a copy as we are particularly interested in your views on the proposed trigger set out in Q1.

Kind Regards

Terry Martin
County Secretary
Kent Association of Local Councils
Tel 01304 820173
Website: www.kentalc.gov.uk



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Parish Polls

Consultation on the Government's intentions to modernise
parish poll regulations



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This consultation document and the consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Government Code of Practice on consultation.

An impact assessment has not been prepared for this Instrument as it has no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

Background and purpose

Topic

This is a consultation on the modernisation of parish polls, with the aim of bringing the process up to date and ensuring that parish polls continue to provide a legitimate method for local communities to have a voice on issues that directly relate to parish matters.

Scope of Consultation

This document sets out our proposals and seeks the views of the public, local authorities and the parish sector on questions regarding:

Section one: The trigger – the number or proportion of electors required to demand a poll.

Section two: The voting arrangements for parish polls.

Section three: The questions on which a poll can be held.

Section four: Consequential related matters.

Geographical Scope

This consultation relates to England only.

Basic Information

Who are we consulting?

This consultation paper invites comments from:

- Members of the public who live and/or work in parished areas.
- Parish council members.
- Parish council clerks and other employees.
- Parish meeting chairmen.
- Representatives of parish bodies.
- Principal local authorities and their officials especially those who have a role if a parish poll is called.

How to respond

Your response must be received by 30 January 2015.

Email responses should be sent to: parishgovernance@communities.gsi.gov.uk
or by post to Hannah Brook, 2nd Floor, Fry Building NE, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.

For further information regarding this consultation or to request a hard copy please contact Hannah Brook by email: hannah.brook@communities.gsi.gov.uk or phone: 0303 444 1858.

We would encourage people to give a direct answer to the questions asked, but please feel free to comment on the other intentions expressed in this document. A government response outlining the findings as a result of this consultation will be published online in February 2015.

Confidentiality and data protection

Any responses to this consultation may be made public. If you do not want all or part of your response or name made public, please state this clearly in the response. Any confidentiality disclaimer that may be generated by your organisation's IT system or included as a general statement in your fax cover sheet will be taken to apply only to information in your response for which confidentiality has been specifically requested.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). If you want other information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Background information

What is a parish poll?

A parish poll is a democratic tool which allows for a ballot of local government electors in the parish to be called on any question arising at a parish meeting. Accordingly a parish poll should only be held on a question which it is appropriate for a parish to consider. Although non-binding, meaning that the results of the poll do not have to be followed, they provide an indication of support for, or opposition to, specific parish matters which helps to guide parish council decision-making.

What is a parish meeting?

There are two types of parish meetings; statutory parish meetings and extraordinary parish meetings. In parishes which are too small to have a parish council there must be two statutory parish meetings a year. For parishes with a parish council, one parish meeting a year must be held in addition to the meetings of the parish council. In all parishes extraordinary parish meetings can be convened throughout the year, by a parish chairman, by two parish councillors or, importantly for the calling of parish polls, by six or more local government electors.

Parish meetings are public gatherings where local electors can raise any matter affecting parish business; local electors also have the ability to vote on any question put before the meeting. In parishes without a parish council the parish meeting also forms the decision making body; whereas for parishes with a parish council, the elected members of the council are the decision making body—decisions and votes can only be taken by council members. Whilst the public have a right to attend, public participation is governed by the council's standing orders.

What procedures have been used in the past?

The legislation that governs parish polls is found in Section 150 of and Schedule 12 to the *Local Government Act 1972*¹ and *The Parish and Community Meeting (Polls) Rules 1987*². Amongst other things, that legislation states that:

- If a poll consequent on a parish meeting is required to be taken, the chairman of the meeting shall notify the principal council in which the parish is situated of the fact and that council shall appoint an officer of the council to be returning officer and shall run the poll.
- Polling is to take place between the hours of 4 in the afternoon and 9 at night on the day fixed by the returning officer, which shall not be earlier than the fourteenth day or later than the twenty-fifth day after the day on which the poll was demanded.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/contents>

² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1987/1/made

- The expense of a parish meeting, including the cost of any poll consequent on a parish meeting, shall be paid for by the parish council.
- A poll may be demanded before the conclusion of a parish meeting on any question arising at the meeting; but no poll shall be taken unless either the person presiding at the meeting consents or the poll is demanded by not less than ten, or one-third, of the local government electors present at the meeting, whichever is less³.

There is no provision for polling cards, postal or proxy votes, and although often provided, there is no requirement for adjustments for the disabled.

What issues have been identified?

Parish polls are a high cost consultation method; a survey of 150 parishes found that polls cost in the region of £5,000 - £8,000⁴. It is therefore important that they are properly run, are relevant to the parish residents, and form a real way to ascertain views and aid decision making. A number of problems have been identified with the system.

The trigger: the number of electors needed for a poll to be taken was very low. There is evidence that this low threshold has resulted in the poll process being inappropriately exploited. In one case a poll was called by 11 residents, the minority of those present at the meeting, and resulted in a poll turnout of 13%.

The voting arrangements: There are no provisions for proxy or postal votes and voting can only take place between the hours of 4-9pm. These procedures are out of date and may result in reduced participation.

The questions on which a poll can be held: Individuals have abused the current wide definition to call for polls on matters which are unrelated to the local area or the functions of a parish.

In response to representations on the above matters, provisions were added to the *Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014* to modernise parish polls. Section 42 of the Act allows the Secretary of State to make new regulations about polls consequent on parish meetings, including:

- the questions arising at a meeting on which a poll may be demanded;
- the circumstances in which a poll may or must be taken (including provision as to the number of local government electors who must demand a poll for a poll to be taken); and
- the conduct of a poll.

³ This requirement was removed by section 42(2) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

⁴ Figures from 2012 Society of Local Council Clerks survey.

The Act also removes the current trigger requirements and allows for the creation of new regulations covering the poll process, which may cover the application of existing electoral legislation to parish polls (such as procedures for postal voting).

Intentions for Regulations

As set out by Ministers to Parliament, the Government intends to issue new regulations to modernise the parish poll process whilst maintaining the essence of this important democratic tool and preserving the mechanism of calling a poll at a parish meeting. The new regulations will replace The Parish and Community Meeting (Polls) Rules 1987.

In modernising parish polls the Government is minded to:

- increase the trigger for the number of electors needed to call a poll, to limit vexatious, unnecessary and otherwise inappropriate use;
- update the voting arrangements to improve access and modernise the polling procedure to bring mechanisms in line with other local government polls; and
- more closely define the question on which a parish poll can be held to ensure questions posed are on appropriate local issues.

Previous Engagement

The enabling provisions in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 were debated in Parliament. We have also discussed the policy with the National Association of Local Councils, the Society of Local Council Clerks and certain other interested parties prior to this consultation.

Section One - The trigger

- 1.1 Under the Local Government Act 1972 a poll may be demanded before the conclusion of a parish meeting on any question arising at the meeting.
- 1.2 The previous trigger requirement in operation stated that no poll shall be taken unless either the person presiding at the meeting consents or the poll is demanded by not less than ten, or one-third, of the local government electors present at the meeting, whichever is less. In a parish meeting with only six people in attendance, a poll could be called by as little as two people. This trigger was particularly minimal when compared to the average parish size of 150-70,000 people. This led to a number of instances where polls have been called by individuals exploiting the trigger threshold to vexatiously or inappropriately pursue particular personal agendas which are not shared by a majority of other local people. As mentioned in one case, 11 people called for a poll resulting in a turnout of 13% of voters. In another parish of over 25,000 electors, 10 people out of the 100 present at a parish meeting, called for a parish poll which resulted in a turnout of 4%. As all costs of the poll are met by the parish and normally paid from precepts, such abuse can have large financial consequences for parish councils and tax payers.
- 1.3 The Government proposes to create a new trigger which increases the numbers of electors needed to call for a parish poll, in order to ensure that polls are not inappropriately pursued by small groups of people but rather held on matters of genuine local concern. We also propose that the trigger preserves the mechanism of calling a poll at a parish meeting,
- 1.4 The Government proposes to make regulations about the circumstances in which a poll may be taken. In these regulations, the Government proposes the following provision:
No poll shall be taken unless the poll is demanded by the majority of local government electors present at the meeting and the electors demanding a poll constitute not less than –
1) 10% of local government electors for the community, or
2) 60 electors (if 10% of electors exceeds 60)
- 1.5 This trigger would mean that a parish poll is triggered when the majority of electors present at the meeting demand a poll, and the electors demanding the poll also constitute 10 percent of the electors for the parish. Using this trigger we estimate that the smallest number of people needed to trigger a poll would be 15.
- 1.6 This option provides a higher trigger threshold than the previous trigger in use and offers a solution which is representative to parish size. We intend to have

a requirement for a maximum limit, as even a very small percentage of the larger parish populations could create administrative difficulties in organising meetings and the counting of hands/verification. A similar form of trigger is currently used to trigger community polls in Wales.

1.7 When formulating the trigger, a number of factors were taken into consideration, including the number of people who could be reasonably expected to physically fit into a room which is available for a parish meeting; the number of votes by show of hands that could be practically counted at a meeting; and the number of people who could be verified against the electoral register as local government electors to satisfy that the trigger has been reached.

1.8 In addition to changing the trigger, the Government proposes to remove the ability for the person presiding at the meeting, alone, to call a poll. The Government considers that this should be replaced by a provision which allows for a poll to be called on an appropriate issue if the majority of the members (councillors) of a parish council agree, in order to make the process more democratic. These measures will help to stop vexatious use and ensure that tax payers' money is used appropriately.

Question:

Q1. The proposal is to provide in regulations that:

No poll shall be taken unless the poll is demanded by the majority of local government electors present at the meeting and the electors demanding a poll constitute not less than –

- 1) 10% of local government electors for the community, or
- 2) 60 electors (if 10% of electors exceeds 60)

What are your views on the proposed trigger?

Section Two - The voting arrangements

- 2.1 The polling rules are found in *The Parish and Community Meeting (Polls) Rules 1987*⁵. The Rules state that voting can only take place between the hours of 4 p.m. - 9 p.m. There is no provision for polling cards, postal or proxy votes, and although often provided, there is no requirement for adjustments for the disabled. Once a poll has been called it must be held within 14-25 days.
- 2.2 It is the Government's view that these polling procedures operate as barriers to participation and are in need of modernisation. The Government believes that polls of genuine local concern warrant modern polling procedures which are transparent and accessible.
- 2.3 Parish polls are carried out on behalf of the parish by their principal council⁶. All costs incurred by the principal council in carrying out a parish poll are met by the parish concerned. Parishes will normally pay for the poll from their precept, so costs are funded directly from tax payers' money.
- 2.4 Additional voting arrangements are likely to increase the cost of a poll, for example, extending voting hours will require polling stations to be rented for longer periods of time, with polling clerks paid to cover the extra hours. However, increasing the trigger and guaranteeing that the subject matter on which a poll can be called is relevant will ensure that polls are only triggered on matters of genuine local concern and therefore are more likely to represent value for money.
- 2.5 When considering the proposal below, please bear in mind the non-binding nature of parish polls which differentiates them from some other local referendums.

Proposal:

In the proposed regulations about the conduct of a poll the Government intends to provide:

- that a poll must be open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.;
- that the same facilities for disabled people as used in other polls/referendums must be provided (*e.g. allow documents to be translated into braille and provided in audio format, and the use of ramps at polling stations to make them accessible for disabled voters*);
- that the poll may be conducted in accordance with such rules as applicable to the conduct of other polls as the Returning Officer considers appropriate, subject to the inclusion of postal and proxy voting for the poll being with the agreement of the parish council;

⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukssi/1987/1/made>

⁶ A principal council is the district, unitary or borough council to whom local residents in the parish pay their council tax.

- that at the discretion of the principle council's Returning Officer, a parish poll may be combined, if timing permits, with another poll. In this situation a parish poll must be conducted according to the rules of the other poll.
- 2.6 This approach would modernise arrangements and increase accessibility. Other arrangements that may be included in a poll include postal, proxy voting, polling cards and any other statutory conduct measures consequent on a local government referendum.
- 2.7 Postal and proxy voting would potentially increase flexibility and access to polls, allowing those who are unable to vote in person to do so. However, due to the time needed to administer them, if these arrangements were selected as an appropriate procedure for any poll, we intend to allow for the period of time between calling and holding that poll to be extended from 14-25 days to 22-35 days. Given the expense of providing for postal and proxy voting, the proposed regulations would specify that any decision to use postal and proxy voting must be agreed by the parish council.
- 2.8 If polling cards were selected, they would need to be sent to the residents of all local electors and would help in advertising the forthcoming poll. However, providing polling cards would increase costs and they are not required for parish council elections. The proposed regulations would therefore not make polling cards mandatory for parish polls, but instead give discretion to the Returning Officer of the principal authority to judge whether it would be appropriate. Due to the time needed to produce the polling cards and deliver them, if this method were chosen we intend to allow for an increase in the period between calling and holding a poll.
- 2.9 If timings permitted, combining a parish poll with other polls (for example local elections) could reduce costs as the costs of polling stations and staff, for example, would be shared with other councils.

Question:

Q2. The proposal is to provide in regulations:

- that a poll must be open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.;
- that the same facilities for disabled people as used in other polls/referendums must be provided (*e.g. allow documents to be translated into braille and provided in audio format, and the use of ramps at polling stations to make them accessible for disabled voters*);
- that the poll may be conducted in accordance with such rules as applicable to the conduct of other polls as the Returning Officer considers appropriate, subject to the inclusion of postal and proxy voting for the poll being with the agreement of the parish council;
- that at the discretion of the principle council's Returning Officer, a parish poll may be combined, if timing permits, with another poll. In this situation a parish poll must be conducted according to the rules of the other poll.

What are your views on the Government's proposal to modernise voting arrangements?

Section Three - The questions on which a poll can be held

- 3.1 Currently a parish poll may be demanded before the conclusion of a parish meeting on any question arising at the meeting. The question for the poll is decided at the meeting. Accordingly, a parish poll should only be held on a question which it is appropriate for a parish to consider. However, individuals have misused the current wide definition to call for polls on matters which were unrelated to the local area or the functions of a parish. For example, polls have been called on national policy issues which a parish council cannot change. This has resulted in inappropriate polls at substantial cost to local tax payers.
- 3.2 Once a poll has been demanded at a parish meeting the chairman of the meeting notifies their principal council. Following a number of parish polls on national political issues, guidance was issued recommending that parish chairmen advise their principal council if they do not feel the topic of the poll is a parish affair, and suggesting that the Returning Officer of the principal council could then refuse to hold a poll on this question.
- 3.3 It is necessary to ensure that polls are called on topics that were discussed at the meeting, affect those who live and work in the parish and relate to parish functions. Placing previous guidance into legislation and adding defining criteria aims to guarantee the electors' voices are protected but prevent tax payers' money from being wasted.
- 3.4 In the proposed regulations about the questions arising at a meeting on which a poll can be demanded, the Government intends to provide that:
A poll can be called on any question arising at a meeting which concerns affairs which relate to a parish council/meeting's functions and meets the following criteria:
1. The subject matter was discussed at the parish meeting;
2. the subject matter directly affects those who live and/or work in the parish; and
3. the parish council/meeting has the capacity to make a decision on the subject matter including any decision as a statutory consultee, but not including a decision simply to agree a declaratory statement on the matter.
- 3.5 To further prevent inappropriate polls being called, the Government intends to allow the Monitoring Officer of a principal council to have discretion to reject a poll which they feel does not meet the legal criteria. The Monitoring Officer's proposed role would not be to monitor citizens' democratic rights, but to solely judge whether the subject matter on the poll is within the range of subject matters for which the legislation provides.
- 3.6 It is suggested that the discretion to make this decision goes to the Monitoring Officer, rather than the Returning Officer as it is the Monitoring Officer's

responsibility to oversee a principal council's compliance with its legislative obligations.

- 3.7 If it was deemed by the Monitoring Officer that a poll did not meet the legislative requirements, it is proposed that they should inform the parish meeting/council, along with the listed poll requesters of their decision and reasoning.

Question:

Q3. The proposal is to provide in regulations that:

A poll can be called on any question arising at a meeting which concerns affairs which relate to a parish council/meetings functions and meets the following criteria:

1. The subject matter was discussed at the parish meeting.
2. The subject matter directly affects those who live and/ or work in the parish; and
3. the parish council/meeting has the capacity to make a decision on the subject matter including any decision as a statutory consultee, but not including a decision simply to agree a declaratory statement on the matter.

Do you consider that the proposed criteria sufficiently tighten the subject matter so that a poll can only be held on a parish issue?

Section Four - Consequential related matters

4.1 Following discussions with representatives from interested parties we have identified other areas which could be updated to strengthen polling procedures and improve people's knowledge of and access to parish polls.

A) Calculating the number of electors on the electoral register

4.2 The date for calculating the number of electors in parishes differs from other local authority areas. We therefore intend to change and standardise the date for calculating the number of electors on the electoral register to 1 December. This will bring the calculation time in line with other legislation.

B) Multiple polls

4.3 A further concern was where multiple polls on the same question have been called in succession, as people were unhappy with the result or the council's actions. In line with other legislation⁷ on referendums we intend to prevent this outcome. We suggest that only one poll can be called on the same subject in a 12 month period. This will prevent inappropriate use while recognising that situations may change over time which warrants holding a poll on a similar topic.

C) Announcement of the result

4.4 Following the conclusion of the parish poll and the count of the votes cast, the Returning Officer from the parish's principal council, who is in charge of the poll, must announce the results. So that the outcome is made available to as many residents as possible, we propose that principal councils should place the results on their website (many do so in any event) and also on parish and town council websites, where these are available.

D) Poll cost estimates

4.5 Another issue is that it is difficult for parishes to know how much a poll will cost, and to plan for this expenditure. Conducting a poll without knowledge of the cost implications for the parish and its taxpayers is not conducive to the efficient management of resources. We therefore intend to issue guidance to Returning Officers encouraging them to provide a parish with an estimate of costs, once a poll has been called and election arrangements agreed.

⁷ Local Government Act 2000: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/22/contents>

E) Informing voters

4.6 Lastly, once a poll has been called a parish council enters a period of heightened sensitivity limiting what information the authority can communicate regarding the poll. Councillors themselves and the local campaigners can publish and disseminate material on the questions. While taxpayers' money should not be spent on campaigning by the council, feedback has indicated that allowing a short, factual, balanced statement to be issued by the parish council could be helpful in creating more informed voters. It would be necessary for the principal council's Monitoring Officer to approve such a statement.

Question:

Q4. What are your views on the proposals to:

A: Change the calculation date for the number of electors on the electoral register to 1 December - bringing calculation time in line with other legislation.

B: Provide that only one poll can be called on the same subject in a 12 month period.

C: Provide that principal councils should place the results on their website and also on parish and town council websites, where these are available.

D: Issue guidance and encourage Returning Officers to provide a parish with an estimate of costs once a poll has been called and election arrangements agreed.

E: Provide that after a poll has been called, the parish council should be able to publish a short, factual, balanced and objective statement about the question of the poll.

List of Questions:

Q1. What are your views on the proposed trigger?

The proposal is to provide in regulations that:

No poll shall be taken unless the poll is demanded by the majority of local government electors present at the meeting and the electors demanding a poll constitute not less than –

- 1) 10% of local government electors for the community, or*
- 2) 60 electors (if 10% of electors exceeds 60)*

Q2. What are your views on the Government's proposal to modernise voting arrangements?

The proposal is to provide in regulations:

- that a poll must be open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.;
- that the same facilities for disabled people as used in other polls/referendums must be provided (*e.g. allow documents to be translated into braille and provided in audio format, and the use of ramps at polling stations to make them accessible for disabled voters*);
- that the poll may be conducted in accordance with such rules as applicable to the conduct of other polls as the Returning Officer considers appropriate, subject to the inclusion of postal and proxy voting for the poll being with the agreement of the parish council;
- that at the discretion of the principle council's Returning Officer, a parish poll may be combined, if timing permits, with another poll. In this situation a parish poll must be conducted according to the rules of the other poll.

Q3. Do you consider that the proposed criteria sufficiently tighten the subject matter so that a poll can only be held on a parish issue?

The proposal is to provide in regulations that:

A poll can be called on any question arising at a meeting which concerns affairs which relate to a parish council/meetings functions and meets the following criteria:

1. The subject matter was discussed at the parish meeting.
2. The subject matter directly affects those who live and/ or work in the parish; and
3. the parish council/meeting has the capacity to make a decision on the subject matter including any decision as a statutory consultee, but not including a decision simply to agree a declaratory statement on the matter.

Q4. What are your views on the proposals to:

A: Change the calculation date for the number of electors on the electoral register to 1 December - bringing calculation time in line with other legislation.

B: Provide that only one poll can be called on the same subject in a 12 month period.

C: Provide that principal councils should place the results on their website and also on parish and town council websites, where these are available.

D: Issue guidance and encourage Returning Officers to provide a parish with an estimate of costs once a poll has been called and election arrangements agreed.

E: Provide that after a poll has been called, the parish council should be able to publish a short, factual, balanced and objective statement about the question of the poll.

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266/14-15. **FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENTS (FRA's) 2015 – 2016.**

Members were reminded that officers had begun work on the estimates for 2015 – 2016 and that they were invited to contact the RFO, outside of the meeting, and inform her of any suggestions and/or items they feel should be included.

The draft Annual Estimates 2015 - 2016 would need to be approved and endorsed by the full Council in January 2015 before setting the Council Tax Base for the 2015 - 2016 financial year.

Members considered the deliberations of the FRA Working Group (who had met on 8 October 2014). It was unanimously agreed that there should be no amendments or changes to the current FRA's. Members thanked the FRA Working Group and officers for the diligent manner in which the FRA's had been progressed and managed since their inception.

Recommended:

- 1 That the work of the FRA Working Group to date be noted and that it be agreed that the FRA's remain the same with no amendments or alterations at the present time.
- 2 That the FRA figures be submitted to full Council (18 December 2014) for endorsement and inclusion in the Annual Estimates for 2015 – 2016.

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