

TUNSTALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 4th November, 2013

Present: Cllr. L. Burgess – Chair
Cllr. P. Mitchell – Vice-Chair
Cllr. C. Browning
Cllr. A. Spicer
Cllr. J. Mills
Cllr. I. Davison

Lynda Fisher, Clerk
Borough Cllr. Sylvia Bennett
Borough Cllr. B. Stokes
41 Parishioners

The Chairman welcomed visitors and Borough Cllr. Sylvia Bennett to the meeting and because many had come to discuss the school extended the normal 15 minutes put aside for the public session.

Residents – Residents attended to raise their concerns/support regarding the proposals outlined at the Tunstall School Public Consultation meeting at Minterne School on the 22nd October, 2013.

A resident asked if the Parish Council had seen any plans; the Chairman responded that none had been received from Kent County Council (KCC) or the Diocese. As KCC's Shadow Cabinet Member for Education he had not seen any himself, nor had any KCC Officers.

A resident queried the markings on Tunstall Road; the Parish Council has not been informed as to what these are for. A resident believed a West Midlands firm was surveying for water, gas and electricity services.

A resident stated that the birth rate in Swale will be the highest in Kent. Pupils are likely to come from the North of Sittingbourne therefore the need to increase this school will be due to taking pupils from the other side of the railway line.

A query was raised why Tunstall School had increased numbers without regards to the catchment area, bringing in children from other areas? It was noted that the School is Church of England and the catchment area is very large.

Several residents spoke regarding traffic: problems with parking and associated issues at the current location; the small amount of allocated staff parking at the Village Hall; concern with parking issues if the school locates to the lower end of Tunstall Road and the knock on effect this will have in that road, Cranbrook Drive, Ruins Barn Road and other areas close to the new site. A maximum of 500 cars could be going in and out of the proposed entrance opposite Cranbrook Drive.

A Chegworth Garden resident raised the issue of flooding in their road; this area is outside the Parish boundary but residents living here do need to raise this when the plans come forward.

Concern was expressed that the proposed site could also be used for housing; the Chairman stated that although this was put forward in Swale Borough Council's S.H.L.A.A., it did not get past Stage 2 and was thrown out. There are no plans at the moment and KCC cannot comment on housing as this comes under Swale Borough Council.

Residents stated that other sites were available in Sittingbourne; at Eden Village, the Trading Estate and the old Paper Mill land closed to the actual need that could be used for a new Primary School. The area owned by Fulston School does not belong to KCC and they would have to purchase it.

A gentleman stated that it is a good School as it is now; a larger school could destroy this.

A gentleman representing the School mentioned that there is a lot of talk about things not on the table at the moment; there are only two items being discussed:

1. Were people in favour of the school being relocated;
2. Are people in favour of the school being increased to two form entry?

A resident raised the issue of building on Grade 2 agricultural land; although the site is owned by KCC arable land is being taken for building. The Chairman commented that rules have possibly changed due to the new National Planning Policy Framework.

A resident pointed out that the land is a strategic countryside boundary which separates Tunstall from Sittingbourne and concern was raised at the destruction of rural life.

The Chairman commented that when this proposal reaches the planning stage residents both for and against need to write to the Education Cabinet Committee, local Councillors, etc, airing their views. If they are objecting to the proposal they need to write individual letters not send in a single petition.

Residents generally agreed that if this proposal goes ahead Tunstall School will no longer be for Tunstall it will be for other people; it should remain a small school situated in Tunstall.

Borough/County Councillors/PCSO – Borough Cllr. Sylvia Bennett was in attendance; she and Borough Cllr. Derek Conway are standing in for Borough Cllrs. Jean and Alan Willicombe, to represent the Woodstock Ward.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman formally welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from the PCSO. None were received from Borough Cllrs. Jean and Alan Willicombe and County Cllr. Roger Truelove.

It was proposed by Cllr. Spicer and seconded by Cllr. Browning; 5 for 2 abstentions, agreed that an item be placed in the next newsletter regarding the Willicombes and that the Parish Council write to Swale's Leader, Councillor Andrew Bowles expressing concern that the Parish Council has not been officially informed of their moving to Spalding; commenting that the people in Woodstock Ward need help and support from their Borough Councillors, particularly at the moment with the proposed new school project. It was also disappointing to see that for the seventh month County Cllr. Truelove has not attended the Parish Council's meeting. **Action: Clerk**

2. Declarations of Interest – See Item 5 below.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. Mitchell and seconded by Cllr. Spencer, the Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council meeting held on the 7th October, 2013, were agreed by Members and signed as a true transcript.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

1. **Commemorating Frank Panton** – A site for the Magnolia tree has been agreed and awaiting a date for the Ceremony from Mrs. Panton.
2. **Swale Borough Council Draft Economic Development Strategy 2013-2016** – noted.

- 3. Updates: Bulbs Planting, Dog Waste Bins, Potholes, ZR153 Footpath (Church Car Park):**
Most bulbs have been planted; there is only one sack left. The Dog waste bins have been installed; one opposite Coffin Pond and the other at the lower end of Tunstall Road on the footpath to the rear of the trees. KCC have issued orders for potholes in Hearts Delight Road to be repaired and the Clerk has also asked Swale Borough Council to undertake a litter pick along this road. The gate to ZR153 is now open for residents and the Footpaths Officer is still chasing KCC Property Services to find a suitable method of restricting vehicle access to the old school playing field.

5. Delegation of Authority to Grant Dispensations

A Dispensations Procedure Guide for Parish Councils and Request for Dispensations form has been circulated to all Members. Members discussed the implications and it was resolved that the Council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis set out under section 33(2).

A discussion then took place on the future consultation of the plans for Tunstall School and the Clerk agreed to grant a dispensation to each Member of the Parish Council as there could be a pecuniary/non-pecuniary interest with effect from 4th November, 2013 until 1st May 2015 (unless revoked by the Council before then) as follows:

“Matters relating to Tunstall Primary School – so many Members of the decision making body have disclosable pecuniary interests that it would impede the transaction of the business, i.e. the meeting would be inquorate.”

6. Tunstall School Consultation

As a result of the leaflet sent to every residence within the Parish Boundary the following number of responses has been received relating to the proposed relocation and expansion of the School:

Those who agree to the proposal: 11 Those who disagree: 58

The leaflet was also circulated to some properties abutting the Parish boundary (KCC consultation document was circulated within the Ecclesiastical boundary) as these properties were in similar proximity to the site and the following number of responses has been received:

Those who agree to the proposal: 7 Those who disagree: 29

Taking into account only those responses from within the Parish boundary; it was proposed by Cllr. Spicer and seconded by Cllr. Browning that the Parish Council takes on board the majority of its resident’s views and does not agree with the proposed relocation and expansion of Tunstall Primary School. Clerk to complete KCC’s consultation form and send the responses received from residents in case some of these have not been forwarded to County; to be sent by registered post.

Action: Clerk

6. Finance

- 1. Coffin Pond** – Clerk advised that this is not covered by the insurance. A third quote has now been received and it was agreed prior to making a decision, Clerk to contact the company that submitted the lowest quote to arrange a meeting to discuss the work: Cllr. Mitchell agreed to be in attendance.
Action: Clerk

2. Cheques raised at this meeting:

The following cheques were signed and the accounts to the 31st October, 2013, approved.

Date	Cheque	Details		Amount
04.11.13	0965	H.M. Revenue & Customs	Tax – August 2013	£44.60p
04.11.13	0966	L. Fisher	Expenses – Tele/Broadband; home as office, Mileage; 12 x 1 st Class Stamps	£24.12p
04.11.13	0967	Tunstall Village Memorial Hall	Hire of Hall 4.11.13	£32.00p
Three Cheques in total				

Paid by Direct Debit – L. Fisher – Wages, October, 2013: £178.90p

6 Correspondence

1. **Parish or Town Council Highways Survey 2013** – Agreed Clerk to complete survey. *Action: Clerk*
2. **Brandon Lewis Response to KALC Letter** – Noted.
3. **CLG ‘Our Place’ Programme** – Noted.
4. **Gypsy & Traveller Consultation – Part 2 Local Plan** – Clerk to respond stating that there are no suitable sites within the Parish/Conservation Area. *Action: Clerk*
5. **Electoral Commission Consultation – Standing for Election in the UK** – Clerk instructed to bring this item back to the December meeting. *Action: Clerk*

7. Planning – No current applications to consider.

1. **SW/13/0921** – Oakwood Barn, Ruins Barn Road, Tunstall, ME9 8AA – Conversion of existing building from parking to single residential unit – approved by Swale Borough Council

8. Any Other Matters Arising

2. Clerk to chase KCC regarding delivery of salt bags for the village.
3. Councillor Spicer is looking at details of land owned by the KCC (relating to the School proposals); she needs to make four applications to Land Registry at a cost of £11 each, totalling £44; would the Parish Council agree to this expenditure? Members were ‘minded to’ support this cost, but asked the Clerk to ascertain first whether this service was free to the Parish Council. Clerk to place an item on the December Agenda. *Action: Clerk*
4. Cllr. Davison suggested holding the next meeting in the Village Hall again, in light of the possible high number of residents attending because of the school proposals. Clerk to check to see if the hall is free. *Action: Clerk*

11. Next Meeting(s)

The next Meeting will be on Monday 9th December, 2013, commencing at 6.45 p.m. possibly in the Village Hall, if not in the Midwinter Room, St. John the Baptist Church, Tunstall.

The meeting closed at 09.25 p.m.