

TUNSTALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 7th October, 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
14 member of the Public
Marisa White, KCC Area Education
Officer

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

Marisa White, AEO, KCC – Marisa explained that part of her role is to take forward school place issues that cover Swale. She referred to the conditions placed on the planning permission for the mobiles on the school site and commented that the Diocese has been working with others to pull together a strategy to look at the position. As a one form entry school, 30 children in each year group, it cannot continue to serve the children without the mobiles; it also struggles because the building is not really suitable for 21st century education. There are a lot of issues with parking and traffic (most schools have this). The catchment area no longer exists and parents can put forward their preferences. In 2012 there were 430 applications for the school and the furthest away from the school was just over 2.6 miles.

She circulated a map showing the new site location and explained that the land marked in red is owned by Kent County Council (KCC). Figures indicate that there is a pressure for school places in the South of Sittingbourne. KCC are expanding Lower Halstow, Lansdown and Westlands Schools and are just about to start on Iwade's consultation process; Rodmersham have decided against this course of action. KCC have also secured a site for both new secondary and primary schools on the A249.

Capital funding has been made available for the expansion of Tunstall School; if this does not go ahead the funding will go. There is a requirement on KCC to expand 'good and popular' schools. The reasons for expanding Tunstall are:

- Had to find a solution for the current Tunstall School
- Tunstall is a 'good and popular' school
- Are looking to address the deficit in the North of Sittingbourne and other parts.

There will be a public consultation and at the meeting KCC will put the case forward and everyone will be provided with an opportunity to put their case. This meeting will be fully recorded. This will then go to a meeting of the Education Cabinet Committee who will make their recommendations to Roger Gough. He will look at all the responses and queries and listen to the recording of the public consultation meeting.

Any proposals will be subject to the usual planning process, which will provide people with the opportunity to respond on the planning issues as well as the education views.

The Chairman thanked Marisa for her input and open up the session to the public.

A resident asked why was the site for a new school at the Great East Hall development given back to the developers before the Tunstall proposal. Marisa explained that there is usually a time limit to take up the site and during this period evidence for the population numbers in the locality was not there. She referred to not too many years ago when schools were being closed down and amalgamated in this part of Kent.

Cllr. Mitchell asked if KCC owned any land at all in the North of Swale and referred to the Persimmon development site in the Local Plan. Marisa responded that KCC have secured a site for secondary and a primary school there and are discussing with Swale Borough Council possible sites that can be developed. Cllr. Mitchell commented that the criteria for choosing the site in Tunstall was the Diocese's wish and KCC owned land. This proposal will mean a massive increase in traffic. A resident referred to other areas where KCC have had the opportunity within developments and then have backed out.

Cllr. Spicer referred to a previous comment relating to the Great East Hall site that KCC had decided not to build a new school due to insufficient pupil numbers at that time. As most of the population in Tunstall are senior citizens and no houses have been built here for several years, we too have insufficient numbers. She asked if the suggestion to build a new school had to happen why not build it somewhere else and just call it Tunstall School; it would seem silly to bring in 370 children into Tunstall rather than take out 40. She referred to the safety of the children; there are no footpaths near the site; heavy vehicles use the road and doubling the size of the school will increase traffic.

A gentleman from Cranbrook Drive who has a child in the school wants to see the Parish Council present the facts on this; he does not want people to form an opinion based on incorrect information. The Chairman assured residents that the Parish Council will seek out facts; will work on behalf of the whole community and will be obtaining views from all residents.

A gentleman mentioned that some of the children from outside of the village might be attending due to their connections with the church; it is a faith school. He commented that it is not only people living in Tunstall Road, there are also others living in different areas that would have a vested interest. If the plan for the new school on the proposed site does not go ahead he wanted to understand the consequences for the current school if it closes; what are the ramifications on Tunstall and the community?

Another gentleman raised objections to the road, not the school. He felt it has not been consulted properly to the Parish, or the way it had gone out. He asked how KCC would stand if in six months' time everything Diocese school across Kent became an academy. Marisa responded that this would make no difference. The same gentleman had heard something about compulsory purchase? Marisa stated that there was no proposal for this.

A resident referred to past expansion of the existing school and the impact this had already had on traffic as most children reside outside Tunstall. Doubling the size of the new school means doubling the traffic; there could be 370 cars coming into Tunstall twice a day. Marisa stated that there would have to be a traffic impact assessment as part of the planning process.

Two further points were raised: parents will not use any 'drop-off/pick up' points because they don't want to queue; development in Woodstock Road was turned down because of the traffic.

A resident referred to the wildlife on the site; the Diocese is having an Eco Survey carried out, this will also check for the presence of Great Crested Newts. He asked what would happen to the land if the school does not go ahead. Marisa responded that KCC can't say what the possibilities are, but there is not a plan at this stage. The land is Grade 2 Agricultural land.

Cllr. Mitchell queried the current status of the designs in the strategy document; Marisa stated those contained in the document are not set in stone; the actual proposal will be put forward by KCC and the Diocese at the Public Consultation meeting, when there might be some outline designs on display. She added that they would be looking for the new school to open in 2015.

Borough/County Councillors/PCSO – None present.

The Chairman thanked Marisa White for attending; closed the public session and opened up the monthly meeting.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman formally welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from the Cllr. Spencer and Borough Councillors Jean and Alan Willicombe and the PCSO.

Members understand that Borough Cllrs. Jean and Alan Willicombe will be moving to Maidstone; they asked the Clerk to query whether they will still be the Ward representatives. **Action: Clerk**

Members also expressed their concern that County Cllr. Truelove, who was newly elected to Tunstall in May of this year, has not been present at any of the Parish Council meetings since his election, and Borough Cllrs. Jean and Alan Willicombe last attended in April.

2. Declarations of Interest – Cllrs. Mills, Spicer, Browning, Davison and Burgess declared an interest in Item 5.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. Spicer and seconded by Cllr. Mitchell; the Minutes of the Monthly Parish Council meeting held on the 2nd September, 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, within the grounds of the Village Hall is being considered; once decided a date can then be set for the commemoration ceremony.

2. **Bulbs** – The Daffodil bulbs have arrived and it was agreed to plant them outside the Church, Tunstall Road, Sterling Road, Hearts Delight Road and Ruins Barn Road. Cllr. Browning suggested planters on the large verge to the left-hand side of the Village Hall entrance; the Chairman to speak to Mr Bartholomew regarding discarded tractor tyres that can be used as decorative planters. **Action: Cllr. Burgess**

5. Tunstall School Consultation

Now that details of the public consultation are known, Members agreed that it was important that this be brought to the attention of all residents in the Parish of Tunstall, plus residents that were in close proximity but outside the parish boundary, some of whom attended the meeting tonight.

It was agreed Clerk to check with Kent County Council to get approval to print and circulate to all residents mentioned above, the consultation document and site location map.

Clerk to draw up a leaflet from the Parish Council seeking residents' views on the proposal and to circulate the draft to all Members for approval prior to printing. This leaflet to show the site location map (which does not appear on KCC's consultation document); to give convenient methods by which residents can return the completed form to the Parish Council; to draw attention to the date of the public consultation meeting and to urge residents to not only send their views to KCC but also to the Parish Council. The agreed closing date for return of the form is 1st November.

Once everything has been agreed, Clerk to contact Swale Borough Council Printing Section asking for the documents to be printed as a matter of urgency and Members agreed to delivery to every household personally. Clerk also instructed to advise the Parish Correspondent, so that details of the Public Consultation appear in the local newspapers and to write to Gordon Henderson, M.P. advising him of the meeting. **Action: All Members/Clerk**

6. **Finance**

1. **Coffin Pond** – Clerk to check on insurance; contact BW May Builders and request a quotation and ascertain if it is possible to obtain grants for the reconstruction work. **Action: Clerk**
2. **Annual Return 2012/13** – Clerk advised that the Annual Return for the year ended 2012/13 has been signed off by the External Auditor and she has posted the necessary notice advising of the completion.
3. **Dog Waste Bin** – Proposed by Cllr. Spicer and seconded by Cllr. Browning, agreed to purchase a dog waste bin for the area at the bottom of Tunstall Road (near to the junction of Woodstock Road) for the sum of £170.16p. Swale Borough Council will install the bin and have agreed to take over emptying it at no cost to the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk**
4. **Cheques raised at this meeting:**

The following cheques were signed and the accounts to the 30th September, 2013, approved.

Date	Cheque	Details		Amount
07.10.13	0958	H.M. Revenue & Customs	Tax – August 2013	£44.80p
07.10.13	0959	L. Fisher	Expenses – Telephone/Broadband; home as office, Refreshments Rose Planting Ceremony – Sept. 2013	£19.17p
07.10.13	0960	Tunstall P.C.C.	Hire of Midwinter Room October, 2013	£12.50p
07.10.13	0961	A. Spicer	2 Stainless Steel Plaques & Engraving; Hazard Tape and 'Keep out' Sign for pond	£72.99p
07.10.13	0962	Associated British Bulbs	3 x 25kg Nets Daffodil Bulbs & Carriage	£103.20p
07.10.13	0963	McCabe Ford Williams	Quarterly preparation of salary period ended Sept 2013	£39.00p
07.10.13	0964	Swale Borough Council	Supply and installation of Litter Bin, Doves Croft, Tunstall	£210.00p
Seven Cheques in total				

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

6 Correspondence

1. **Swale Borough Council Draft Economic Development Strategy 2013-2016** – Bring back to November meeting. *Action: Clerk*
2. **Unsuitable for HGVs Sign – Request from Resident** – Clerk received a request from a resident asking if it was possible to install these signs, due to the amount of Lorries passing through the narrow Tunstall roads. The response the Clerk received from KCC Highways was the same as that when a 7.5 tonne weight restriction was sought – ‘there have been no personal injury crash records I in the last 3 years and therefore the location would not receive priority for a Prohibition of HGV restriction at this time’.
3. **Openness and Transparency on Personal Interests: A guide for Councillors** – Letter from the Monitoring Officer noted by Members. Clerk reminded Members that they needed to advise her or the Monitoring Officer of any changes in their circumstances that would affect their Declaration of Interests form. *Action: All Councillors*
4. **ZR153 Footpath (Church Car Park)** – Clerk advised that the gateway access to this footpath had been closed to stop cars/quad bikes from gaining access to the old school playing field and causing damage. There had also been reports of bonfires on the field. However, this had then caused access problems for the elderly and disabled who wanted to use the footpath. In light of this the PROW Officer has had this gate unlocked and he will try and liaise with KCC’s Property Services to see if they can find a solution to securing the gate for pedestrian access whilst restricting vehicular access.

7. **Planning** – No applications to consider.

8. **Any Other Matters Arising**

1. Clerk to ask Swale Cleansing if a litter pick can be carried out in Hearts Delight Road.
2. As a resident, Cllr. Spicer has written to Roger Gough raising her concerns about the impact the new school site will have on the highways infrastructure – he has responded that a traffic impact assessment is being commissioned and a strategy will be included in the planning application. The majority of pupils live in south Sittingbourne so it is likely there will be more pupils walking to the new site and this will be encouraged in the school travel plan.
3. Cllr. Mills raised the issue of potholes outside Flint Cottages; Hearts Delight Road and opposite Tunstall House. Clerk to lodge a fault report with KCC. *Action: Clerk*

11. **Next Meeting(s)**

The next Meeting will be on Monday 4th November, 2013, commencing at 6.45 p.m. in the Midwinter Room, St. John the Baptist Church, Tunstall.

The meeting closed at 09.40 p.m.