



A G E N D A

Thursday 19 March 2020 at 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Substitute Members**
- 3 Membership Changes**
 - a) Changes to Membership
 - b) New Membership Applications
- 4 Minutes of the meeting dated 30 January 2020** (Pages 3 - 10)
 - a) Approval of the Minutes as a correct record
 - b) Matters Arising from the Minutes
- 5 Update from the Leader of the Council**
- 6 Updates from Local Residents' Groups**
- 7 Reports from the Town Forum Working Groups**
 - a) Strategic Planning Working Group
 - b) Transport Strategy Working Group
 - c) Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group
 - d) Wellbeing Working Group
 - e) Finance and Other Issues Working Group
 - f) Water in the Wells Working Group

FOCUS ON TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Presentations and facilitated discussion on the following topics, lead by a panel likely to include:

- Steve Baughen (Head of Planning Services)
 - Hilary Smith (Economic Development Manager)
 - Karin Grey (Sustainability Manager)
 - Duncan Haynes (Environmental Protection Team Leader)
 - Paul Mason (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle User Group)
- 8 Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plans**
 - 9 Local Plan Update**
 - 10 Outcome of Inspectors conclusions on the Sevenoaks and Wealden plans**
 - 11 Tudeley Village Charrette**

- 12 Car Club**
- 13 Clean Air for Schools and Anti-idling Campaign**
- 14 De-carbonising Transport**
- 15 Electric Vehicle Charging Points**
- 16 Any Other Business**
- 17 Future Meetings**
 - 18 June 2020 – Focus on the Economy
 - 17 September 2020 – Focus on Culture and Arts
 - 19 November 2020 – AGM and Focus on Inequalities
 - 28 January 2021
 - 18 March 2021

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 30 January 2020 held at
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, starting at 6.30pm**

Members: Stuart Anderson (Beulah Road Residents' Association), Caroline Auckland (Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells and District), Sally Balcon (Friends of The Commons), Tim Ball (Calverley Park Crescent), David Barnett (Friends of Grosvenor & Hilbert Parks), Jenina Bas-Pendry (Dudley Road Residents' Association), Adrian Berendt (Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group), Lorna Blackmore (Grantley Court Residents' Association), Mark Booker (Culverden Residents' Association), Stephen Bowser (Residents' First), Jocelyn Cheek (Tunbridge Wells Dementia Friendly Community and Trinity Theatre), John Cunningham (Warwick Park Residents' Association), John de Lucy (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery), Andy England (Tunbridge Wells Access Group), Margaret Ginman (Friends of Woodbury Park Cemetery), Carolyn Gray (The Forum), Dorothea Holman (Boyne Park Residents' Association), Michael Holman (Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association), Delphine Houlton (Hawkenbury Village Association), Linda Lewis (Tunbridge Wells Puppetry Festival), Brian Lippard (Civic Society of RTW), Marianne MacDonald (Nourish Community Foodbank), Katharina Mahler-Bech (Telephone House Neighbours' Association), Atlan Omer (Benhall Mill Road Land Association), Don Sloan (Molyneux Park Gardens), Angus Stewart (Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group), Anne Stobo (Friends of Tunbridge Wells Museum, Library and Art Gallery), Tim Tempest (Friends of the Grove), Alastair Tod (Poona Road Residents' Association), David Wakefield (Tunbridge Wells Twinning and Friendship Association), Denise Watts (Tunbridge Wells Over Fifties Forum), and Carol Wilson (Inner London Road Residents' Association).

Borough Councillors: Councillors Cobbold (Broadwater), Lidstone (St John's), McDermott (Brenchley and Horsmonden), Pope (Park), Pound (Sherwood), Rutland (Culverden), Scott (Culverden), and Woodward (Broadwater).

Others in Attendance: Big Bilski (Dudley Road Residents' Association), Ben Hallett (Hawkenbury Village Association), Mark Lavenstein (Molyneux Park Gardens), Angela McPherson (Soroptimist International of Tunbridge Wells and District), Councillor Rankin (Kent County Council), and Sarah Raine (Banner Farm).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1 The following apologies were received:
- Diana Butler (Banner Farm Residents' Association);
 - Robert Chris (Grove Hill House Residents' Association); and
 - Jane Fenwick (Calverley Park Residents' Association).

DECLARATIONS OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

- 2 The following substitute members were representing their respective organisations:
- Jocelyn Cheek (Trinity Theatre);
 - Angus Stewart (Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group);
 - Steve Walter (Tunbridge Wells Friends of the Earth); and
 - Carol Wilson (Inner London Road Residents' Association).

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

3 a) Changes to Membership

The following changes in membership were noted:

- Beulah Road Residents' Association – Chris Morris had replaced Dr Whitbourne as deputy.

b) New Membership Applications

New membership application had been accepted from:

- Camden Hill, Oakford Court Road and Cambridge Gardens Residents' Association (COCA) – represented by Sue Pound and Tony Miller (substitute); and
- Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom – represented by Katharina Mahler-Bech.

MINUTES OF THE AGM ON 27 NOVEMBER 2019 (FOR NOTING)

- 4 The minutes of the AGM meeting held on 27 November 2019 were presented for noting. No amendments were proposed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the AGM held on 27 November 2019 be noted.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 27 NOVEMBER 2019

5 a) Approval of the minutes as a correct record

No amendments to the minutes were proposed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 be approved.

b) Matters Arising

None.

UPDATE FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

- 6 Councillor McDermott (Leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council) gave an update and answered questions which included the following:
- The Local Plan consultation received over 8,000 comments all of which would be available on the website shortly.
 - Draft Local Plans for Sevenoaks and Wealden had been abandoned – to be reviewed and resubmitted.
 - Work had started on the Amelia Scott building.
 - The Cross Party working group looking at alternatives to Calverley Square was continuing with a report submitted to Full Council in December 2019.
 - A new 5-Year Plan with consideration given to engagement and the way forward.
 - Work on the cinema site was expected to start in February 2020.
 - It was accepted that opposition to large scale housing developments in rural areas would be received but it was unlikely to affect their progress.

- An update on the reasons for the Dispersal Order being issued would be followed up by email which could be disseminated to the members of the Forum.
- Kent CC recognised the concerns raised regarding the crossing point at the corner of Mount Pleasant and Monson Road and had undertaken a safety audit the results of which would be provided at a later meeting.

Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities, TWBC) gave an update on the Public Realm which included the following:

- Dressing on the steps either side of the war memorial was underway and due to be completed in early April.
- The installation of street furniture was unlikely to be completed until the Amelia Scott building reopened.
- Additional signage was due to be completed by 3 February 2020.
- Replacement trees, tree surrounds and the replacement wall outside the library had now been completed.
- Cycle stands were due to be completed shortly.
- Bus bays had been removed and parking re-instated.
- Loops had been installed to measure traffic for a 7 day period starting the weekend of 1st and 2nd February 2020.
- A measured approach would be taken to enforcement of the area. But nothing would happen until all the road signs had been installed and tested. Formal enforcement would only commence once there was confidence that the signage was fit for purpose and time given to motorists to learn the new restrictions.

Discussion included the following matters:

- A suggestion was made that the old bricks removed be reused at the cemetery where an old wall was in need of repair.
- Information was requested regarding the removal and the now whereabouts of 2 Horse Troughs, one outside Brighton Lake, the other in Southborough.
- The new waste management contract was being closely monitored. Comments were actively encouraged as this would help ensure the improvement of the service so that it worked as efficiently and as effectively as possible.
- The waste management contract was a joint contract between TWBC and Tonbridge and Malling. There was currently no contingency plan should the contractor go into administration, however this was now being considered.
 - There was no provision for the contractor to terminate the contract.
 - Social Media that showed both the good and the bad was monitored.
 - Where repeat missed collections occurred, penalties were being imposed.
- Figures for Fly Tipping were requested.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

- 7 Councillor Pound (Sherwood ward and member of the Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group) gave an update which included the following:

- Councillors had expressed concern about the level of consultation and engagement that took place at the Council.
- The Group was gathering evidence of what had been done previously and considering the way forward.
- The Group would soon be seeking the views of the Portfolio Holder for Engagement, Councillor David Scott and the Town Forum.
- The most recent Communication and Engagement Strategy Paper was published in 2013 and was therefore in need of updating.
- The last Residents Satisfaction Survey was undertaken in 2015, with the results presented to Cabinet in March 2016.
- It had been several years since the last Annual Members Survey had been undertaken.
- Parish Council Chairs met on a regular basis. The Group were keen to learn from their experience.
- The overall consensus was that budgetary constraints had played a major part in the dilution of these roles.
- Local Magazine did well and was the preferred communication channel for 18% of residents with 37% preferring the website.
- Residents Walks had been a popular method of information gathering but had been discontinued in 2013/14.
- Town Forum were keen to engage in the process.

UPDATES FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS' GROUPS

8

Tunbridge Wells Anti-Aircraft Noise Group:

- Following the end of the Noise Management Board' s (NMB) initial 3 year term in May 2019, Community Noise Groups, including TWAANG, remained dissatisfied with the lack of improvement achieved by the NMB.
- A Review Committee had now been formed, with the support of Gatwick Airport. An induction meeting was held on 30 January, attended by TWAANG who reported that it was very constructive. The principle bodies comprised in the revised NMB included an Executive Group and a Community Forum Group. Gatwick had appointed new Chairs.
- Letters of invitation would be sent to Councils and other interested parties asking if they would like to be included as part of the Community Forum Group – Membership would be dependent on the number of applications against set criteria.
- A 'Gatwick's Big Enough Campaign had been formed by the Communities Noise Group. They were tasked with opposing the expansion plans as contained in Gatwick Airport's recently published Masterplan. The main concern was the proposed increased use of the existing runway by up to 60% without any formal scrutiny.
- Consideration to be given as to who would represent Tunbridge Wells at the Forum, the Council, Town Forum and /or TWAANG.

Culverden Residents' Association:

- There had been limited progress on the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Culverden.
- The residents continued to support the scheme.
- To give an idea of timescales, the 20mph Zone in Farmcombe Road which was equally well supported took 2 years to implement.

Boyne Park Residents' Association:

- Concern raised as to the state of the roads and pavements in the area.
- The adverse weather conditions experienced this winter had contributed to the poor state of the roads and pavements, making it difficult for the Council to keep them clean and tidy.
- There was currently a road maintenance backlog of approximately £650m in Kent. More money had been allocated to road resurfacing rather than just dealing with potholes. The effect of this policy would take time to filter through, but in the longer term this approach should prove better.
- Kent CC had a portal on their website that could be used to report any issue associated with a road or pavement – potholes, overhanging trees, broken signs etc. Reporting issues ensured that they were logged.
- A working group had been set up at Kent CC to look at the red brick pavements in Tunbridge Wells. Input from the Town Forum would be very welcome.
- The 'My Council' App was another method that could be used to report issues.

REPORTS FROM THE TOWN FORUM WORKING GROUPS

9

Strategic Planning and Working Group:

- A written report had been provided.

Transport Strategy Working Group:

- The Town Forum had been asked to comment on an Explore Kent map for Tunbridge Wells. The draft document contained a number of errors so a meeting with Kent CC was needed to iron out the issues.
- A Transport for the South East Group was being set up with the aim of doing some strategic planning for the whole of the South East. A response which was available on the website had been submitted by the Chair on behalf of the management group.
- Contingency issues post Brexit would need to be raised with Kent County Council.

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Working Group:

- There was currently no Chair for this group. A replacement was needed.
- A walking trail called 'Tales of Tunbridge Wells' was being put together which would be accessible via your phone. It would be trialled at Easter.

Wellbeing Working Group:

- The current Chair was stepping down so a replacement would also be needed. A request for additional members was also made.

Finance and Other Issues Working Group:

- A report from Kent County Council was expected which would be given at the next meeting.

Water in the Wells Working Group:

- The Council was currently still looking for Dippers at The Pantiles.
- The sculpture for Union House was ready and now just waiting for a date for installation.

- A drinking water fountain was expected to be opened at Easter in Dunorlan Park.
- A drinking water fountain in the Calverley Grounds was also being considered.
- St Johns Park and Meadows was putting a group together to help with a funding request to the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore the fountain and to help improve the park generally.
- Due to other competing priorities, the Business Improvement District Management Board were no longer able to support the introduction of drinking fountains in the town.

HAWKENBURY PUMP TRACK

- 10 Ben Hallett from Hawkenbury Village Association provided an update and answered questions on the proposed Hawkenbury Pump Track which included the following:
- A design for the Pump Track which was supported by Kent CC was now in a position to be put forward for planning permission.
 - The track which would be suitable for all ages and abilities would be tarmacked and consist of straight stretches and banked corners.
 - The benefits included providing a safe urban facility that would help users develop cycling skills. In addition it promoted a healthy active and social lifestyle.
 - There were currently only 2 other pump tracks in Kent, one in Gillingham, the other in Hawkinge.
 - Other leisure activities would be able to utilise the facility including roller blades, scooters and skateboards.
 - The track would be very low maintenance and could be used year round.
 - The tracks were designed to be self-regulating, as such a Warden at the site was not required, although there was a Warden at the Rec. Younger users were likely to be accompanied by an adult, e.g. parent.
 - Use of the Pump Track would be at the individuals own risk, the same as for any other public space. Notices to this effect and to remind users to wear the correct safety gear would also be installed.
 - It was expected that most users would be local, but it was not unreasonable to expect some additional traffic from those driving to make use of the new facilities. There were plans to extend parking provision.
 - Next steps would be a leaflet to local residents to get their views and address any concerns raised. An application for planning would then follow.
 - It was noted that British Cycling offered grants – Places to Ride – for this type of track, they would offer match funding. The Hawkenbury Residents' Association were planning to submit an application for funding.
 - The scheme was being supported by local cycle shops.
 - The main funding stream would be £80,000 of S106 money. But this was subject to at least 50% of the new houses being built at Hollyfields being occupied (which was expected).
 - Concern was raised that the site was too small and in too closer proximity to houses. The added noise from people using the facilities and the use of floodlights was an added concern.
 - Consideration should be given to the addition of table tennis tables.

RE-PURPOSING PHONEBOXES

- 11 Discussion included the following:
- Initially it was thought that BT wanted to charge for the removal of surplus phone boxes. But this was not the case, as they were used so little BT were obligated to take them away.
 - BT wanted to remove the phone box on Newcomen Road, however the residents were keen to keep it and were now looking into the possibility of purchasing the phone box. The purchase would need to be done either by a Residents' Association or by the Council – the cost would be £1. The Residents of Newcomen Road wanted responsibility for the maintenance of the phone box and were then minded to turn it into a library or a location for a defibrillator.
 - It was further reported that because the phone box continued to be used, it was now being considered for protection by the planning department.
 - The phone box in Nevill Ground was still in use but was now in a dilapidated state. It was suggested that there were only 4 of this type left in the country. The Council should repair/restore it so that it remained fit to use.

TRANSPORT FOR THE SOUTH EAST

- 12 The next meeting of the Town Forum would focus attention on Transport and the Environment.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 13 Calverley Square Cross Party Working Group:
- A interim report went to Full Council in December 2019.
 - It was suggested it was added to the agenda for the next meeting.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- 14 19 March 2020
18 June 2020
17 September 2020
19 November 2020 (AGM)

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm.

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