

BOBBING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 18 October 2017

Cllr. R. Ball – Vice-Chair
Cllr. G. Randall
Cllr. N. Clare
Cllr. L. Major

Cllr. E. England
Cllr. P. England
Lynda Fisher, Clerk
3 Members of the Public

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair formally welcomed everyone. Apologies received from Parish Cllr. Dewar-Whalley, County Cllr. Whiting, Borough Cllrs. Stokes, Hunt, Baldock, Hampshire and the Community Warden. No apologies received from Parish Cllr. Bartlett.

2. **Visitors/Public Time**

1. **Residents** – A resident referred to the Howt Green MOT Centre application, it has been approved.
2. **County and Borough Councillors** – None present. County Cllr. Whiting sent in the following written report:

Meadowfield - KCC is consulting on expanding Meadowfield Special School.

Junction 5 - Highways England's consultation on their proposals for Junction 5 closed yesterday. I will be raising this at a full council meeting at KCC on Thursday, and can confirm KCC has also objected. Swale Borough Council opposes option 12a, as does Gordon Henderson MP. All parties support either option 4 or 10, or both, which provide a flyover or underpass for A249 through traffic.

Demelza - I attended the developer's exhibition in respect of the Demelza House enabling development in Rook Lane. No application has been submitted to planning, however, when/if there is one is then I foresee areas of difficulty for the developer such as the land not being allocated for housing in the local plan, road safety and the junction with the A2.

Parking outside schools - I am pleased the Police and Crime Commissioner is now considering giving PCSOs powers to issue parking tickets to illegally parked cars outside of schools. I always advocate education over enforcement, but clearly, there are issues around some of our rural schools where education has not worked and enforcement may be the only solution.

Footpaths - Engineers are to examine and report back on the stile at footpath ZR112, being the Premier Inn, following my enquiries on behalf of Cllr Dewar-Whalley. It appears the footpath still officially runs through the pub and was never realigned when building works took place. I await further details from the public rights of way team and the engineers. Officers are also looking into issues relating to barbed wire on footpath ZR113, again raised with me by Cllr Dewar-Whalley, and I will come back to the Parish Council when I have the engineer's report.

3. **Community Warden/PCSO** – Community Warden – Reported several vehicle thefts and thefts from vans during September. Checked fly tipping in outlying areas in Bobbing.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Proposed by Cllr. Ball and seconded by Cllr. Clare the Minutes of the monthly meeting held on 6 September 2017 were agreed and signed as a true transcript.

4. **Declarations of Interest** – Cllr. Herbert declared an interest in Item 11.5.1.

5. **Matters Arising from the Minutes and Last Month's Meeting**

1. **Speeding and Parking on Grove Park Estate** – Clerk still trying to arrange a site meeting and is awaiting feedback from a KCC Officer. It looks as though yellow lines might not be possible and any bollards on the footpath would need sufficient room between to allow a car to mount the pavement in the event of meeting a vehicle head-on in the Sandford Road area under review. **Action: Clerk**

2. **M2 Junction 5 Improvements – Public Consultation** – the following response was sent out:

- Presenting the scheme as ‘options’ is a misnomer because the public do not have any options; it is a fait accompli, unlike some other road schemes we have not been asked to consider options. The general view would have been a preference for an underpass.
- How much thought has been given to the proposed scheme in relation to the bigger picture in Sittingbourne and Sheppey going forward (i.e. the next 15 years) as opposed to only solving the problems of the past 10 years. How has Highways England considered:
 - a) The Thanet Gateway planned expansion and extension to 2050.
 - b) The expansion and development at Sheerness deep-water port.
 - c) The additional industrial developments at Queenborough, Ridham Dock, Kemsley and Eurolink all of which will feed on to the A249 and generate considerable HGV traffic.
 - d) In addition, there is all the extra housing planned for Sittingbourne and Sheppey every house with a car and many with two and maybe a works van.
 - e) Not forgetting the lower Thames crossing which will feed increased traffic to the A2 and M2.
- Chestnut Street is used by the main Sittingbourne/Sheerness/Faversham bus service, farm traffic e.g. combine harvester movements, tractors and trailer attending local and distant farms and also serves as a relief road when the A249 is blocked. How will the new proposed Chestnut Street diversion cope with HGV's (many of which are foreign), Double decker busses and large slow farm traffic given there would be two sections of steep gradients on the new route.
- When approaching the Stockbury roundabout from Maidstone the slip road leading up to the M2 (i.e. Coast bound) needs to be as long as possible, longer than shown on the proposal. The current problem will only be perpetuated if a long slip road is not included. It needs to allow free flowing traffic and not be hampered by any A249 traffic waiting at the lights to enter the roundabout otherwise the slip road access will be blocked.
- To actually stop the A249 through traffic at the roundabout with traffic lights is not an improvement. That is what happens now. This is more of the same. There is an increasing amount of HGV's with trailers using the A249 and A2. If one (or maybe two in convoy) of these is stopped at the lights will the overall length project out across the carriageways?
- Given the intention to stop up the road to Stockbury, what are the options for traffic intending to go to (and from) Stockbury Village. Will the access road be improved, lengthened and widened?
- Coming from the Medway Towns towards Junction 5 the proposal is to build a dedicated slip road going north towards to Sheppey. Fast traffic leaving the motorway will enter a downhill section of road gather even more speed and join the A249. Unless this joining slip road is of considerable length allowing for a safe integration then accidents will happen. An example of this is where the M26 joins the M20. This junction was an accident black spot and has been redesigned several times.
- Just how much time did Highways England traffic engineers spend on site before coming up with this plan. We suspect they were not present at morning and evening rush hours.

6. **Councillors' Report**

The Chair asked for it to be recorded that both he and other Councillors were not happy that the Parish Council had not been invited to attend the meeting between Network Rail and our County Councillor. The Parish Council has been fighting to get safety improved on this crossing over the past twenty years. Clerk to approach County Cllr. Whiting to ascertain who sent out the invitations. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Major raised awareness of roofing scammers.

Cllr. Randall – raised the use of pet scanners being utilised by the Community Wardens. Clerk to place on the next Agenda. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. P. England has had complaints from residents about a build-up of discarded food wrapping around the McDonald area. He advised that a dustbin shed had been turned into a storage area by Moat; he has contacted Moat as residents believe the area is being used for drugs. Moat has now sealed the storage area.

Cllr. Clare referred to discussions on drug usage in the Meads Community Woodland and discarded drug paraphernalia. Despite reports to Kent Police and the PCSO, they appear to be slow in taking any action. The Parish Council agreed residents must report any findings and push the Police to take action. Clerk to bring this matter to the attention of Borough Cllr. Hunt. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Clare also raised residents' concerns about trying to turn right from Staplehurst Road/Sandford Road onto the A2; it's quite dangerous and will only get worse with the additional planned housing. She mentioned the Gadby Road noticeboard and Members agreed to consider installing a replacement on the footpath, as previously. She will try to determine where the old board was sited. **Action: Cllr. Clare**

Cllr. Ball advised that UK PowerNetwork would not be giving any funding to reinstate the grassed area to the foot of Keycol/Bobbing Hill. He also mentioned parking on the pavement at the bottom of Bobbing Hill.

7. **Correspondence**

1. **DCLG Consultation - Planning for the right homes in the right places** – Bring back to next meeting. **Action: Clerk**
2. **DCLG Consultation - Disqualification Criteria for Councillors and Mayors** – Noted.
3. **Broadband Universal Service Obligation** – Noted.
4. **Bobbing Church Christmas tree Festival 2017** – Bring back to next meeting. **Action: Clerk**
5. **Proposed Changes to Meadowfield School, Swanstree Avenue Sittingbourne** – Agreed to write supporting the proposed changes. **Action: Clerk**

8. **Planning Applications**

1. **17/504946/FULL**: Loft conversion with rear facing dormer. Removal of chimney and hip ends on main roof: 54 Keycol Hill Bobbing Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8ND – No comments.
2. **17/503891/FULL**: Installation of air-conditioning condenser unit (retrospective): 27 Quartz Way Sittingbourne Kent ME10 5AA – no comments.
3. **17/504908/OUT**: Outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for demolition of 3 residential dwellings with associated garaging, landscaping and access: Bobbing Kennels Quinton Road, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8PH – agreed to object on the following grounds:
 - The Local Plan has now been adopted and this site is outside the development boundary.

To support Members' objections Bobbing Parish Council would refer the Planning Officer's attention to Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/W/16/3153537 Land at Church Farm, Sheppey Way, Bobbing, Kent, ME9 8RJ; the Planning Inspector's comments contained within are also relevant to this application and were as follows:

- The site is Grade 1 Land and the scheme would conflict with emerging SLP policy DM31 which is consistent with the Framework in so far as it seeks to direct development to areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.
- The site is located in an area that is identified as an ‘important local countryside gap’ within the LP policy E7 and SLP policy DM25. The aim of the countryside gaps is to prevent settlement coalescence. LP policy E6 also seeks to protect the quality, character and amenity of the countryside. This is consistent with an aim of the Framework which is to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- Within the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal (LCA) the site is located within the ‘Iwade Arable Farmlands’. The LCA describes the area as a gentle undulating rural landscape. It also identifies that housing is clearly evident in views across the surrounding landscape and that several major transport routes cut through the area. One of these routes is the A249 which is adjacent to the appeal site. Nevertheless, it goes on to set out that ‘...in spite of the intrusive effects of these heavily trafficked routes, many parts of this character area retain a sense of isolation and tranquility.
- The proposed development either side of the existing dwellings and commercial buildings would completely remove this sense of openness, which is currently experienced along this section of Sheppey Way. This would be in direct conflict with LP policies E6, E7 and SH1 which seek to protect the countryside and SLP policy ST3 in so far as it sets out that development proposals outside of built up areas should enhance the intrinsic value, landscape setting, tranquillity and beauty of the countryside.

The Inspector, in their decision, went on to conclude:

- That the development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would be in conflict with LP policies E6, E7, SH1(6) and SLP policies DM24, DM25, DM31 and ST3(6).
- The Inspector’s relevant comments on Planning Balance were:
- The Framework indicates in paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 that the purpose of planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development has three roles economic, social and environmental which cannot be undertaken in isolation.
- In addition, I have found that there would be harm to the character and appearance of the area if the development were to go ahead. LP policies E6 and E7 seek to protect landscape character. In this regard, they are not out of date and relevant to the consideration of character and appearance. As such, I have attached significant weight to the significant and demonstrable harm that the development would cause to the character and appearance of the area and the conflict with the development plan in this regard.
- Therefore, in this case the adverse impact of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits such that the proposal would not represent sustainable development when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.

9. **Coffee Mornings – Village Hall** – take off the Agenda.

10. **KALC REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr. Clare volunteered to be the Representative and will be attending the AGM on the 18th November.

Action: Cllr. Clare

11. **Finance**

1. **Noticeboard – Gadby Road** – Agreed to look at site outside the shops in Gadby Road; Cllr. Clare to investigate. **Action: Cllr. Clare/Clerk**

