

## TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL – INTERNAL COMMITTEE

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

#### NOTES OF A MEETING ON 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2018 AT 7.00 PM

**Present:** Cllr. Sue Ferguson, Cllr. Ken Mulholland, Cllr. Justin Nelson, Cllr. Alan Sugden, Lorna Jones, Matthew Meredith, Tash Mahoney, Peter Rosling, Roger Quinton, Sue Quinton, Seren Welch and Richard Harvey. Richard Powell attended for a short while. Deputy Town Clerk, Claire Gilbert, took notes.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Cllr. Callum Knowles, John Crawford, Samantha Reed, Graham Wise and James Sinclair.
2. **Minutes.** The notes of the first meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were agreed.
3. **Matters Arising.** None.
4. **Update on Action Points from Last Meeting.**
  - 4.1 Structure of Council Standing Committee Meetings. Claire Gilbert reported that this item would be discussed by the Committee Structure Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee would be looking at the Frome Town Council 'panels' system to see how it could work for us. The panels would be separate to the normal running of the Standing Committee/Town Council meetings. The 'panels' could be set up to discuss particular projects/topics, however, this would not be until the current focus groups had started to reach completion. It was suggested that experts in the particular area being discussed could be called in to advise.
    - 4.1.1 Richard Harvey reported that the Kentish Express (KE) currently had a circulation of 5,000 copies, of which 2,000 were in Tenterden. Receipt of the local paper was particularly important to older residents in order to retain contact with what was going on in the Town. Richard also reported that the deadline had changed for submitting articles to the KE for the Tenterden pages; it has moved from Tuesday lunchtime to Friday afternoon/Monday morning. It is being proposed that the KE are contacted on a Friday to give them an idea of what items might be of interest at the following Monday night's meetings and then the Office can follow up with any additional information on the Tuesday morning if necessary.
    - 4.1.2 Cllr. Justin Nelson reported the idea to move the Council meetings to a Wednesday evening and to once a month rather than three-weekly. The Meet Your Councillors Coffee Morning could then take place beforehand which would help address any issues raised on Agenda items.
    - 4.1.3 Seren Welch reported that the Wealden Advertiser (WA) was dropped through 4,000 doors in Tenterden via a newspaper delivery service. Additional copies are spread throughout the Town, i.e. supermarkets, etc. Seren advised that inserts can be put in the WA and specific areas stated for distribution, i.e. St. Michaels and Tenterden copies only. This could be used for the mini newsletter.

- 4.1.4 Cllr. Alan Sugden suggested that minutes of the Council meetings needed to be available to the public sooner and Claire Gilbert advised that a new system had started whereby the Office would try and produce the draft minutes of the Committees and upload them to the Town Council's website the Monday the following week. Richard Harvey had sought costs from the KE to advertise headline minutes and it would cost £340 plus VAT for a quarter page and £595 plus VAT for a half page per release.
- 4.1.5 Alan Sugden read out the 'Clerk to Clerk' report from Frome Town Council which was sent listing the pros and cons of the panel system. The response would be circulated to members for information. Justin Nelson advised that the Council were already running panels in the form of focus groups.
- 4.1.6 Richard Powell advised that District Councils have Scrutiny Committees who can make recommendations.
- 4.1.7 Peter Rosling enquired whether videoing Council meetings was a possibility, given that it was raised at the last Internal Committee meeting, along with the issues around the audio recordings of meetings. Given the new laws around Data Protection, this would probably not happen and not many were keen on the idea, including the public who would also be recorded. Alan Sugden reported that as part of the Town Hall refurbishment, the installation of a large projector screen and a new audio and IT system were being considered.
- 4.2 Surveys. Richard Harvey had suggested the Council contact Facts International (FI) for conducting the face to face interviews with residents. Given the demographics in Tenterden, it would have been a way of finding out how residents were getting their information, i.e. online, popping into the Town Hall, KE. Lorna Jones was concerned at the quotation from FI given that a postal survey to all residents (not just 385 on the street) could be under £2,500.
- 4.2.1 Seren Welch advised that would you expected to get a 1-3% return on a mail survey and, although FI is expensive (but not as expensive as some), it's a guaranteed sample. Seren suggested using all platforms to promote a survey and perhaps put a perforated page on the next Newsletter or just send out a survey direct to all residents. This could also be inserted in the Wealden Advertiser. Seren did advise that a professional should write the questionnaire.
- 4.2.2 It was agreed that Facts International were too expensive and a paper survey and online survey (survey monkey) would be carried out. Distribution of the survey would be via the Wealden Advertiser, Facebook/Twitter, Council Website, Schools, Residents Association, Tenterden Social Hub, Library and Leisure Centre. Volunteers would be sought to help input the data. Seren agreed to obtain costs for printing and distribution. A freepost address could be put on the questionnaire, but residents would be encouraged to drop them into the Town Hall.
- 4.2.3 It was also agreed that Claire Gilbert would contact Maidstone Borough Council for their feedback regarding using Facts International for future reference.

- 4.2.4 Roger Quinton reported that he had looked at both Ashford Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council's websites on how they were laid out. He commented that Maidstone's site gave a good breakdown of what Councillors' qualifications were.
- 4.3 TV Monitor in Foyer. This had been referred to the Town Hall Focus Group.
- 4.4 Advertising of Headline Minutes. See Minute 4.1.4.
- 4.5 Traffic Light Minutes. Seren Welch had forwarded an example copy of traffic light minutes which Claire Gilbert agreed to circulate to members. Claire reported that a system had already been set up to monitor actions for the Council. It is hoped that when Ashford Borough Council adopt the Modern.gov system it can be rolled out to parishes. This would cover easier tracking of actions/outstanding actions.
- 4.6 Articles/Media Responses by Councillors. Cllr. Justin Nelson reported that the latest Mini Newsletter included articles by other Councillors. Richard Harvey reported that if the main Committees were moved to Wednesdays, then press and public releases could include more from specific councillors. The Committee agreed that the latest Newsletter was great.

The question was asked as to whom proof reads the Newsletters and it was agreed that Claire Gilbert would circulate the agreed Council process for proof reading (agreed at an Internal Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017).

- 4.7 Meet Your Councillors Coffee Mornings. There was a great turnout on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> January of 43 public, nine Town Councillors and Cllr. Mike Hill (KCC). Issues that residents had raised have been sent to the Office for collation and action. There were various themes, one of which was the Smallhythe Road speed limit and the Council needs to ensure they are supporting residents. The latest Newsletter and a list of which Council is responsible for what was also available; the list needed to be uploaded onto the Council's website. Although many issues were not in the Council's remit, the Council could potentially lobby.

Roger Quinton suggested that a banner should be put up at the Recreation Ground as many people either walk or drive past, therefore a great place to advertise. There also needed to be a sign in the foyer directing people upstairs.

Overall, the coffee morning was a great success.

## **5. Website/s**

- 5.1 Peter Rosling reported that currently there were three main websites for Tenterden: Town Council, MyTenterden and Tenterden Chamber of Commerce; and it was difficult to know which one to go to for information. Seren Welch reported that Visit Ashford & Tenterden had a responsibility to publish all businesses as it was community funded. It was suggested that there could be a Community Website for Tenterden funded by the Council and residents could be asked if this would interest them as part of the survey.

- 5.2 It was agreed that Peter Rosling, Seren Welch and Claire Gilbert would meet to produce a 'mind map' of where information can be found online, i.e. various sites/pages on social media and websites.
- 5.3 Richard Harvey reported that Zoe Cairns, one of Kent's leading social media experts, would be meeting with Cllr. Justin Nelson, Phil Burgess, Claire Gilbert and Richard Harvey to advise on to secure a better presence of the Council on social media.
- 6. Council PR.** Cllr. Alan Sugden reported that Richard Harvey had been taken on to assist the Council on improving its press releases and assisting in producing the Council's Newsletter. Ideas for the Newsletters were put forward by both Richard and the Council.
- 7. Any Other Business.**
- 7.1 Cllr. Alan Sugden asked whether the Sub-Committee should set a budget for the ideas discussed at this meeting. It was agreed that costs would first need to be sought for the survey production, printing and distribution.
- 7.2 Seren Welch suggested the Sub-Committee should come up with, and agree, three goals to work towards in 2018.
- 8. Date of Next Meeting.** Three dates at six-week intervals will be circulated.

Meeting Closed at 9.15 pm.