

TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL – INTERNAL COMMITTEE

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

NOTES OF A MEETING ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7.00 PM

Present: Cllrs. Sue Ferguson, Justin Nelson (Chair), Ken Mulholland and Alan Sugden; Richard Harvey, Tash Mahoney, Sue Quinton, James Sinclair, Seren Welch and. Deputy Town Clerk, Claire Gilbert, took notes.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Cllr. John Crawford, Cllr. Callum Knowles, Matthew Meredith, Roger Quinton and Graham Wise.
2. **Minutes.** The notes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2018 were agreed.
3. **Matters Arising.** None.
4. **Chairman.** Cllr. Justin Nelson chaired the meeting.
5. **Resident Survey Data – List of Priorities.**
 - 5.1 Graham Wise was unable to attend this meeting; however, he had forwarded his list of comments to the Committee to be tabled. In his comments, Graham was mainly raising issues of how the Committee seemed to have lost its way. James Sinclair commented on Graham's comments in that the Committee was set up to improve communication with residents, of which the survey had been produced. The Committee should focus on communication, not in-depth conversations about reporting potholes. Justin Nelson responded that this Committee needs to make sure the Council takes responsibility for the actions. James enquired as to whether Councillors will be invited along to future meetings to report back? Alan Sugden suggested the Committee's Terms of Reference was revisited; the Committee is supposed to be run by the residents with the Council there to help.

Seren Welch reported that it is key for the Council to report back to the community. However, it was not the job of this Committee to say what the Council should do. The task will be lobbying on many issues raised in the survey and will need residents behind the Council to gain momentum.

Ken Mulholland reported that feeding back information to the public needs to be addressed by the Council as the months tend to fly by. Claire reported that there is a checklist which the Council office update on action points from meetings. Claire will ensure the updated checklist is circulated to Councillors.

Seren suggested producing a check list chart on deliverables so that each item can be checked off once complete. Seren reported that she had already started a spreadsheet regarding the appearance of properties on the High Street, which Alan could progress further.

Richard Harvey suggested that feedback from the Lead Councillors on the top priorities could be included in the next Council newsletter.

It was agreed that the list of recommendations and actions was not intended to be for the sub-committee to implement, but for it to recommend to the town council as a list of actions the survey of residents had demonstrated were wanted by residents, and examples of how they could be progressed, with the intention that the council should accept and implement them.

5.2 Youth Provision. Justin Nelson was assigned as Lead Councillor if Cllr. Matthew Freeman declined.

5.2.1 Justin explained that there was already a Youth Policy Sub-committee. The current plans so far could be published, and more information would be available by Christmas.

5.3 Affordable Housing. Justin Nelson was assigned as Lead Councillor and possibly Cllr. Mike Carter.

5.3.1 Justin reported that the Council had helped a local Trust to get started called the Community Land Trust who will help address some of the issues around affordable housing. Alan Sugden reported that the Council had already been very active in ensuring that 35% of the new housing on Tent1a was for affordable housing. Sue also reported that the Council had been very active in ensuring that Tenterden residents were given priority over new housing, which Ashford Borough Council had initially not allowed.

5.4 Summer Events. The Sub-committee did not assign a Councillor as 'Lead Councillor'.

5.4.1 Tash Mahoney suggested that the Council looks at the kind of events they allow on the Recreation Ground. What an event gives to the wider community needs to be checked. Sue Quinton reported that the problem with events on the Recreation Ground/in the Town are that the public do not know which are run by the Council. Justin suggested a list is produced of what events are run by whom.

5.4.2 Seren suggested asking Ashford if we could have 'Create Tenterden' and hand over the running of the event to them. There needs to be 3/4 core events a year based around community and local needs.

5.4.3 Justin reported that the availability of the Recreation Grounds for events could be publicised as open for anyone to run an event and maybe a call could be put out for ideas.

5.5 TTC Management & TTC Website. The Sub-committee did not assign a Councillor as 'Lead Councillor'.

5.5.1 It was suggested that the 'Which Authority Does What' leaflet should be posted on social media/the website three times per year to remind residents.

5.5.2 With the Council's website, it was suggested that at the next Meet Your Councillors Coffee Morning, some laptops could be available to get residents to point out any issues they have with the current website. The question could also be shared on social media along the lines of 'what needs improving – let us know'.

- 5.5.2.1 Seren suggested that the Town Hall office could usefully monitor when social media posts are published on the various topics that the residents' survey indicated were important to residents, to ensure full coverage of all those topics
- 5.5.3 Seren asked whether the Council received any statistics for the website. Claire confirmed that they had started receiving Google Analytics and currently have three months' worth of data. Seren reported that it was important to focus on users' 'dwell' times. It was also important to look at the spikes in the stats and Alan confirmed that most of the spikes on the current data were when there were controversial issues.
- 5.5.4 Seren suggested one of the Admin Team attending a Website Analytics Course to put the statistics to better use. Ken reported that social media seems to be the most popular way of obtaining information, however, Seren pointed out that social media is more of a highlighter pen tool and the website should be the source of official information.
- 5.6 Congestion. The Sub-committee did not assign a Councillor as 'Lead Councillor'.
- 5.6.1 Alan reported that the current computerised traffic light system was out of date and KCC Highways had indicated that Tent1 should pay for it to be updated. Illegal parking and disabled parking in inappropriate areas all contribute to the Town's congestion.

James reported that, with issues like congestion, the Council can report that it is a reality and it will only get worse. It is a KCC issue and the public should be encouraged to write to KCC, and the Council could forward on the letters for residents.

6. Any Other Business.

- (a) Richard suggested that a response strategy should be developed for social media; he suggested uploading the 'core' of press releases. It is hoped that this might calm inflammatory statements on social media.

Claire reported that she was going to try and set up a TTC admin profile on Facebook as currently when she shares Council posts, it will only share it via her personal profile. Sue was not sure this was possible, but Claire will investigate.

- (b) Two members have withdrawn from the Sub-Committee: Lorna Jones and Cllr. John Crawford.

7. Date of Next Meeting. Monday, 7th January 2019 at 7.00 pm.

Meeting Closed at 8.45 pm.