

**Minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Forum Meeting held at
Sevenoaks Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks
On Wednesday 14th March 2018 at 6.30 p.m.**

NOTED PRESENT FROM COMPLETED SIGNED DELEGATE FORM

Cllr Peter Fleming OBE, Chaired the Meeting.

Cllr Merilyn Canet	Sevenoaks Town Council
Cllr Andrew Eyre	Sevenoaks Town Council
Cllr Richard Parry	Sevenoaks Town Council
Cllr Elizabeth Purves	Sevenoaks District Council / Hollybush Residents Association
Mrs Helen Wills	National Council for Women
Edward Oakley	St John's School / Hollybush Residents Association
Jonathan Drury	White Hart Residents Association
Dr Geoff Brown	St John's Residents Association
Mike Bamforth	Hitchen Hatch Lane Residents Association
Linda Larter MBE	Sevenoaks Town Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Avril Hunter, Henry Pound, Mrs Fiona Pagnell, Roger Walshe, Cllr Pam Walshe.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th December 2017

It was noted that Edward Oakley represented Hollybush Residents Association not White Hart Residents Association. With this amendment included, the Minutes were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Bradbourne Residents Association had been in communication with KCC Cllr Crabtree about the poor condition of the concrete roads in the area. The response provided from KCC was that the roads were not on the maintenance list in the foreseeable future. Subject to permission from Cllr Crabtree Byron Brown would forward the information to Cllr Fleming.

4. Sevenoaks District Council Updates

i) Premier Inn Hotel

The hotel was scheduled to be completed in the summer. Three rooms had been completed as a design specification. The District Council had requested that local residents had a preview of the facilities prior to the public opening. It was also noted that the hotel would be able to provide some limited meals.

ii) Southeastern Trains Car Park

Travellers had recently set up encampment in the car park. It was noted that unauthorised encampments were happening across the district earlier in the year than had traditionally happened.

- iii) Shuttle Bus
A shuttle bus was operating from Morewood Close temporary car park to Blighs / Town Centre during peak times at a cost £1 each way with car parking free.
- iv) Farmer's Site
Two or three planning conditions had recently been discharged by starting some initial work. It was noted that the Government was considering changes to legislation for stalled sites.
- v) Salmon Site
Berkeley Homes had obtained planning permission via an appeal. Hoardings had been erected and construction work was due to start soon.
- vi) Bentley Garage
It was noted that the owners of the garage have submitted planning applications in other towns and are probably looking to consolidate their business on those sites.
- vii) Pembroke Road – Edwards Electrical / Ideas Site.
A planning application had been submitted to use the land as a temporary car park for three years. It was believed to be for approximately 70 spaces without disabled car parking spaces.

Cllr Elizabeth Purves enquired how the planning application would impact the other temporary car park planning application at the Vine Waste. Cllr Fleming stated that they had to be reviewed independently. The Vine Waste application was currently with the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspector was due to have a site visit shortly. It could be that the District Council may no longer require the Vine Waste for car parking but a decision would be made at that time.
- viii) Buckhurst 2 Car Park
Building work had started after a short delay in the beginning due to poor weather and additional piling work required. Access for site traffic was originally planned for via Buckhurst Avenue. Following consultation with local residents this had currently been reviewed to be via the car park.
- ix) Snow
The recent snow had created some disruption in particular with refuse collection, however on the whole the district managed well. Street cleaning operators cleared pavements and traffic wardens helped with water delivery to Dunton Green residents when their supply was interrupted.

5. Open Forum

- i) Bradbourne Lakes
Byron Brown reported that Sevenoaks District Council had appointed landscape architects to look at the future of Bradbourne Lakes. It was hoped that an overall plan would assist in attracting future funding.

ii) Grass Verge and Footpath Parking

Byron Brown reported that the incidence of inconsiderate behaviour in the Bradbourne Lakes area was of growing concern to some residents mainly due to the destruction of grass verges whilst turning them into a 'mud bath' with slippery mud migrating to footpaths. In the absence of any Police/Local Authority control of this behaviour it has led to some residents driving 'stakes' into the verges to deter parking on them. Clearly the lack of control had led to people taking understandable measures to protect what should be pleasant green spaces. The situation was further exacerbated by some properties having insufficient width 'lowered curbs' to accommodate seemingly unauthorised widened driveways. The end of Robyns Way and Betenson Avenue near the A25 Junctions provides good examples of the problem.

CLlr Fleming stated that KCC could make an order to stop verge parking. He would be happy to work with Bradbourne Residents Association on initiating this. Once an order was in place Sevenoaks District Council could enforce.

Jonathon Drury mentioned that ownership of the verge needed to be taken into account and that enforcement would be discretionary.

iii) Littering

Byron Brown reported that he thought the incidence of littering was disgusting behaviour and becoming intolerable to many people who feel thoroughly ashamed that we have human 'low life' amongst us who seemingly enjoy wallowing in their own and other peoples detritus.

Byron wanted to make it clear that whilst local authorities do their best, within limited budgets, to clear up this totally unnecessary mess he thought they had a duty to run an effective campaign that :-

- Publicised and focused the blame on 'Litterers' pointing out that it was a National disgrace, absent in many other Countries, unacceptable to decent people and an avoidable cost to Local Authorities and taxpayers
- Quantify the costs to the environment of all and sometimes toxic and non-recyclable litter and publicise the cost to taxpayers of **all** litter picking, sorting and disposal.

CLlr Fleming sympathised however stated that it was difficult to provide an overall cost.

iv) White Hart area and Broadband

It was noted that it was thought the cabinet in the vicinity had been upgraded and assisted some residential properties in receiving improved broadband speeds. It was thought that there might be problems with the cables between the cabinet and some residential properties.

Cllr Fleming requested that he be informed of postcodes where broadband speed was low to enable the issue to be further investigated.

v) Personal Snow Ploughs

It was queried whether it was possible for residents to obtain their own personal snow ploughs and operate them.

Cllr Fleming stated that although this was public spirited there was concerns about damaging roads and compacting of snow to cause additional problems.

It was noted that in some areas of Kent farmers assisted KCC in clearing snow. These farmers were contracted by KCC and had relevant insurance and training.

Further discussion took place about private operators gritting roads. Residents were asked to report problem roads to KCC however to bear in mind that KCC would prioritise gritting primary routes.

There was also a discussion about the availability of Grit Bins and grit. It was believed that KCC 's local member would assist with this.

vi) Royal Wedding 19th May 2018

It was noted that national guidance had been produced in relation to enabling Street Parties to celebrate the royal wedding. The guidance was available on KCC and Sevenoaks Town Council websites.

vii) Future Speakers

It was agreed that the officer from KCC Highways had provided an interesting and helpful talk.

Jonathon Drury stated that some maps had not been provided relating to the Fire Hydrant talks.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to have the Sevenoaks District Council Car Parking Officers speak at a future meeting.

6. Date of Next Meeting – 20th June 2018

Cllr Elizabeth Purves and Linda Larter provided apologies for the meeting. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting.