

Notes on Kent Association of Local Councils meeting March 30th 2023

Mike Taylor in the chair. 16 participants by Zoom

Inspector Mark Stubberfield:

Re 101 service: We have put more staff into the control room and are recruiting.

Re PCSOs. Will be starting a new community safety structure on June 7th. The number of PCSOs is reducing. Terry Newman will be taking the place of Mike Stubberfield. The task force for T&M will be 4 PCs and 4 PCSOs. There will be a child centred unit. Going back to beat officers but they won't be just walking the streets. Will have 50% of the beat officers we want in June.

I asked about the priority for addressing rape. I was assured that it was very high priority. I referred to an alleged incident at our village hall and the fact that it was more than a week before I was contacted re possible evidence. Mike said that this response was unacceptable. He also said that the widely reported poster that suggested that reporting rape was a non-emergency matter was a "Mistake".
<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/maidstone/news/anger-as-police-poster-lists-rape-as-non-emergency-284014>

Wendy Palmer asked for a special contact number for parishes and about laughing gas cylinders. Mike said he would try to have a named officer whose number will be given to the clerk of the parish council, but they may or may not be on duty.

Mike Taylor asked for more speed cameras.

Buses: Mike: Have finalised an agreement between Borough Green and Nu Venture re community bus service. Norman Kemp. Have got funding for the Wouldham area. Go Coach service is being extended. Bus Service Improvement Service is about to give fruit. Harry Rayner said he had the impression most of it would go to urban areas although there is another tranche to come.

Wendy Palmer and Harry Rayner referred unfavourably to David Brazier's negative letter to the Joint Transportation Board (attached).

Climate change. I presented my notes on the last meeting of the Climate Change Forum. From responses, I learned that every county councillor has £5000 to spend on trees in their area. The project will be extended to next year. Jenny Bate hopes to be shortly achieving objectives in their strategy for Shipbourne. She expressed support for carbon offsets and credits. I pointed out that as a member of the Sector Council for the Institution of Plant Engineers, part of the Society of Operations Engineers, the IPlantE has prepared an official paper, with which they hope to lobby

government, which is not keen on carbon offsets or credit schemes as too many have been found to be questionable or downright scams. The Institution is pressing instead for hardware measures to produce more 'green' power. I agreed to circulate the paper when it is released for publication. I also mentioned my recent trip to Pakistan where people are very concerned to do what they can to mitigate the effects of climate change on their agriculture and blame the West for their problems.

Local plan. Trudy Dean wants an extension of the green belt. Others supported this.

Mike Taylor asked why we are providing 50% of the new houses for people from other parts of the country who already have houses.

Norman Kemp said Tonbridge and Malling have yet to revive their working party on transport matters to present views to KCC.

Mike Taylor said that Matt Boughton is raising an amendment to the TMBC constitution to put planning decisions back into the hands of council committees rather than officers.

Dates for next meetings. It was suggested to have zoom meetings interspersed with in person. There were no strongly expressed opinions.

Incidentally, Mike Taylor was showing a poster promoting himself and Wendy Palmer as candidates for the Independent Alliance whenever he appeared online in the meeting. Nobody else did this.

Tom Shelley