

Notes on Tonbridge and Malling Area KALC Zoom meeting July 23rd 2020

Charmaine Keatley is the new KALC new learning and support officer

Sarah Barker chaired

The AGM is postponed until 2021.

Wendy Thomas brought up the subject of travellers for the next Parish Partnership Panel. Sarah Barker said that travellers would come up anyway

Mary McKinley. Kent AGM. Zoom or Room? Likely to be on November 28th.

Various people said that the Parish Partnership Panel is "Not working for us". It was said that planning is now much more officer lead

Harry Rayner. "District councils are now on their last legs" and "The government wants to do away with the 3 tier system." He also said they, "They want to see enhanced Parish Councils and merged county and borough councils: unitary councils. We should be spending our time saying that, "We should love the idea of enhanced parishes."

*I presume that he was referring to the Devolution White Paper promised in the Queens speech on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2019. There have been a number of "White paper" reports on this subject such as <https://www.centreforcities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Where-next-for-devolution-in-England.pdf> and <https://www.ippr.org/files/2020-02/the-devolution-parliament-feb20.pdf>*

*The actual white paper, according to Simon Clarke MP, speaking to the Local Government Association's annual conference on July 3<sup>rd</sup> will be coming out in the Autumn.*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/local-government-association-annual-conference-2020-minister-for-regional-growth-and-local-governments-speech>

*The Key parts are: "With many more elected mayors and more unitary councils following in the footsteps of Dorset, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. So that we can remove the complexity of governance and reduce costs to the taxpayer while making space for town and parish councils to be genuinely empowered. I'm acutely aware of the vital contribution that town and parish councils make to everyday life, whether it's keeping public toilets open, running car parks or maintaining natural spaces which have been a lifeline to many throughout this time."*

Mike Taylor said, "We should write to the minister and support the idea".

Charmaine spoke about various planned webinars

Sarah Barker said that, "As soon as we can, we will be having room events."

Sarah from Shipbourne PC was concerned about lack of parking enforcement at weekends. Could parishes club together to pay for a traffic warden?, she asked.

Janice Massy from Hadlow made similar comments.

Harry said that parking in most places is in the hands of County Councils. It is normally self financing. In Kent, it was passed back to boroughs on condition that they met minimum standards. TMBC is in the process of withdrawing from providing various services, e.g. toilets. Harry recommended writing to KCC's Michael Payne and the leader and deputy leader to say the parishes have lost confidence in the borough's ability to deal with parking. It was clear that does not apply to all parishes. Sarah Barker asked that if parishes wanted to be involved in such a scheme, they should let her know. She also said that she would ask that it be raised at the next PPP meeting.

Planning issues: David Thornewell said that officers are proposing approval of a scheme to develop 40 acres in East Malling if money were given, but none was to be spent in the relevant parishes. He said there had been no consultation with Parish Councils. Sarah Barker said her council had managed to get some of their proposals into the S106 agreement . She said perhaps she had shouted louder than others.

Sarah Barker said that the Parish Charter is "Not working" and Patrick Thomas said, "We are not being listened to".

David Thornewell asked, "Will we be told if applications have been amended?" There were more complaints about time restrictions re planning. Mike Taylor commented, "We just have to think smart". Mary McKinlay was concerned that, "We are not consulting our parishioners".

Harry Rayner said Wrotham had been successful in getting money under S106 agreements by talking directly to the developer, before TMBC had a chance to get involved, citing an S106 agreement on a solar farm that led to getting "Money in in 6 figures", adding that "The borough council has no way of preventing Parish Councils talking directly talking to parishioners and developers".

Sarah Barker. Back to the Parish Charter. Harry Rayner said it is not worth the paper it is written on. Jenny Bate. We don't have to take any notice of the TMBC report. We need to tell parishioners about anything that is likely to concern them.

The general view of the Meeting was to reject the Parish Charter.

Local Plan. There would be an update on Tuesday at the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board (PTAB.)

(The official position on progress and revised timings are at <https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/services/planning-and-development/planning/planning-local-plans>

Harry Rayner said, "There is a new housing arrangement" and that "They won't be ready until September or October".

Jenny Bate said that, "The new numbers will be available at the end of August".

Those present were concerned that there would be a very short period in which to comment.

Who are the consultants? David Thornevell said he would find out tomorrow morning

On the issue of climate change aims, Jenny Bate, asked what parishes thought about climate change issues, especially under regulation 19. Parishes should consider what they can do at the grass roots level.

Harry Rayner said that he expected the inspector to reject the TMBC local plan and had asked David Lettington if he has a plan B. Sarah Barker suggested a meeting on climate change mitigation.

There was mention of a boundary review in which TMBC Could lose up to 19 councillors.

Harry Rayner. Government has changed the rules re traffic changes. Schemes have to be in by August 8th. Highway improvement plans. It was agreed that there would be highway improvement seminars for parishes. The government is planning to give tier 1 authorities powers over HGV traffic, which would enable KCC to do this, and this would be trialled in an area South of Maidstone.

Matters to be raised at the next PPP: Highway improvement plans. Mary McKinlay praised a traffic improvement plan in her parish.

The next PPP will be on Thursday September 22nd. There will be a climate change update Sarah will take up the parish charter with Nicholas Heslop. PPP items will go to the officer, copy to Nicholas Heslop. She also proposed to bring up parking, and how parishes receive section 106 funds. How can parishes ensure their schemes go forward? Improvements are required for the TMBC planning website. List B issues should go onto social media and noticeboards for those who do not use social media.

Next T&M KALC meeting. This will be Zoom again unless restrictions are lifted. Date: Thursday October 1st.

Tom Shelley