

Notes on Parish Partnership Panel meeting held at TMBC Council Offices on November 14th 2019

Cllr Nicholas Heslop in Chair

SPEEDWATCH

A quick glance at the report on Speedwatch showed that Aylesford Parish was the only one of the 15 parishes to have no assessed sites at all and one of the 5 who had no active volunteers.

The functioning and successes of Speedwatch initiatives elsewhere in the Borough were described by PSE 55566 Alan Watson who is the Speedwatch manager. Contact details are csw@kent.pnn.police.uk tel 01622 653781.

While Speedwatch volunteers cannot punish speeding motorists, they can initiate the sending of warning letters, and by entering licence plate numbers, can reveal unlicensed vehicles, vehicles which are not insured, and use of false number plates to the police. Alan Watson said that match funding is now spent, but they do have some available equipment. 5 or 6 volunteers are required to set up a scheme and cost is about £2,500. About an hours online training is required followed by on site training. He said, "Its all about playing mind games with the drivers" and "92% of vehicles (whose keepers have been warned) we don't see again."

POLICING

Sergeant ??? said the latest crimes to become common were;

1. Keyless car thefts, mainly due to keys being left behind front doors where they could be accessed by scanners. He said they should be left in shielded pouches, or as someone else tentatively suggested, put in a tin (provided the tin has a metal lid which fits firmly).
2. Stealing of catalytic converters off vehicles
3. Burglaries of gold from Asian families
4. Exploitation issues

RUBBISH COLLECTION PROBLEMS

While some people have had no problems with the new Urbaser contract, others had. Most of the meeting was spent on this. Harry Rayner asked about a dozen serious questions. Answers were given by Cllr Heslop and David Campbell-Lenaghan. We learned that there were 54,000 properties from which rubbish has to be collected, some in urban environments while others were up tracks and down long drives. Urbaser are apparently "Not finding some properties". The contractor has had to increase the number of vehicles by 50%. Urbaser assured TMBC that familiarisation rounds were taking place prior to the implementation of the new procedures. This turned out not to be true. The main problems are in rural areas. Crews are unable to get round all assigned properties in the course of a working day. Some rounds comprise 2000 properties. The mobile IT systems have not been working. Some crews have not been using them. TMBC have been loading 'White space' data which Urbaser should have done. 4 to 5 kg of food waste has being collected per property, as

opposed to a projected 2 kg. Urbaser has to cover all extra costs. There are issues with disabled people whose bins have to be collected from within their properties. Urbaser has gone from 8 hours a day for a 5 day week to 10 hours a day for a 4 day week. Urbaser's contract manager has recently been replaced. Some brown bins have not been collected. Online reporting has been overloaded. Residents are reporting cardboard and plastics going into the same sections of trucks. Peters Village has not received their bins yet. Roads there have not yet had their names put up and are also not on sat nav maps. Cllr Heslop said that if Urbaser does not improve by Monday November 18th, TMBC will invoke the penalty clause.

Compostable bags for food waste should have a seedling logo on them, so they compost quickly. Co-op bags were said to be good but Tesco bags were said to be less so. If bags are used which break down slowly, micro plastics are liable to get into the environment. I was unaware of this myself and presume most other people are equally unaware. I have since looked at my Coop compostable bags and they do indeed have the seedling logo.

A single sheet of instructions for all residents was requested that would set out exactly what should be put into which bins and what should not.

All paper and card goes to Smurfit Kappa at Snodland. The boxes may be replaced by yet another set of bins with lids in the future.

The household waste recycling centre in TMBC: KCC expect to award a contract in March 2020.

There will be an anaerobic digester at Kings Hill for food waste.

When the TMBC HWRC comes on stream, TMBC residents will be unable to use the one at Cuxton.

LOCAL PLAN

The consultation is supposed to finish on December 16th. The Council has purchased INOVEM software. It was said that the consultation would be extended to December 23rd.

Tom Shelley