

Parish Partnership Panel May 26th 2022

Chairs pre-meeting at 4pm

Present: Roger Dalton, Tom Shelley, Michelle Tatton, Janet Shenton, Alison Finch

The meeting would mainly be a presentation by Inspector Elizabeth Jones followed by a Q&A.

This would be followed by progress with a progress report on the new local plan by David Davis, the cabinet member for planning who has been in post 3 weeks. The local plan will be an item on the agenda for all PPP meetings in future.

Roger Dalton insisted that parishes will have a much better input than before. I expressed the hope that this would be true, and remarked that Cllr Barry Smith, our parish planning chair had long complained about TMBC planning committees paying little attention to the opinion of the parish in the past.

Roger said that this is our opportunity to address issues such as building large numbers of houses on the East bank of the Medway where there is now no bus service. I did comment that there were constraints from higher up, such as the reduction in central government grants for bus services and the 60p payment for senior citizens not having been raised since it was introduced.

Janet Shenton outlined the plans for future PPP meetings, which are: September 1st, online, which will include fly tipping, November 3rd, face to face, which include climate change and January 26th, online, which will include enforcement of building regulations, in the light of carbon saving regulations which come into force on June 15th 2022.

Roger said he was not aware of these meeting plans, (and neither was I)

Michelle Tatton said all parishes should get in their issues to be discussed at the November meeting ASAP with copies to democratic services.

Main meeting.

This was planned to be face to face in the council chamber although I and 9 other people, including Matt Boughton and Elizabeth Jones, took part via Microsoft Teams.

Elizabeth Jones began by repeating her claim that crime in our part of Kent is down by 12.9% although violence against the person, including domestic abuse, still takes top slot.

ASBOs are now ABOs or Appropriate Behaviour Orders.

Nuisance off road biking is dealt with by S59 notices.

Public consultations will take place as regards Community Support Units. However, if you are unable to attend these, views can be sent to the CSU inbox.

Alison Finch gave a presentation about the Community Safety Partnership, which is chaired by Des Keers and meets 4 times a year.

The CSU, based at Kings Hill, has 2 TMBC staff and police staff as well as KCC Community Wardens and a Safer Town Coordinator

Anti Social Behaviour is no longer restricted to noisy teenagers and quarrelling neighbours but now includes fly tipping, vandalism, nuisance vehicles, road safety and drug abuse and the work of CSU includes scam awareness and helping victims of domestic abuse.

The police have been stopping waste carriers and one fly tipper has been arrested.

Hadlow asked why they had not received any PCSO police reports for 6 months.

Andrew Kennedy said lots of crimes were reported to him by people in his part of Kent but when he asked Lizzie Jones about them, she said that most of these crimes are not reported to the police. She asked that people report all crimes so she could assign resources to deal with them.

Mike Taylor complained about relying only on "Intelligence led policing" and I supported this up by saying that this approach did not address problems such as bad driving and speeding e-scooters which affect a lot of people but do not cause people to file individual reports.

Lizzie Jones agreed that driving standards were much worse than before Covid and she was particularly annoyed by tail gating. She said these were, "Not easy problems to fix". However, she said they had set up a "Couple of operations" to catch people using mobile phones at the wheel, which she regarded as being as bad as drink driving, and also drug driving.

Sarah Barker asked if the number of police had kept up with the rise in population. Lizzie Jones said she did not know.

Somebody else mentioned e-scooters. Lizzie Jones said they have had "Days out" where they have warned people and confiscated machines but there had been a "Mixed response" from the community.

All PCSOs apparently now have speed guns and the force is trialling noise guns.

Fly tipping came up again. Alison Finch said concerned people should contact the TMBC waste department. Covert cameras are being looked at.

Sarah Barker asked what was the best way to report crime. Lizzie Jones said Community Voice should only be used to raise issues. If crime is

seen, reports should be made to 101, and if it is actually in progress, to 999.

Somebody asked that the Police and Crime Commissioner be summoned before the PPP.

It was said that "Speedwatch" has no clout. Lizzie Jones responded that she could not change their powers, but she did get collision data every month and targeted enforcement where appropriate.

Des Keers, who used to be a police commander made various comments, observing that the police had "More things to do" than before.

David Davis and the local plan.

The 839 new dwellings per year has been increased to 890. There is another call for sites. Regulation 18 consultations will begin in 10 to 14 weeks. This will be about general principles but parish councils should bring forward their green site requirements, and do this now.

Regulation 19 consultations will be Autumn 2023. The plan will be submitted to the inspectorate in 2024. Comments will come back in 2025, with adoption hopefully in Summer 2025. The plan will cover the years 2021 to 2040.

TMBC is having detailed discussions with Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells and all discussions are being carefully recorded and minuted.

Tom Shelley. May 26th 2022