

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FOR SANDWICH**  
WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018 AT 7PM, GUILDHALL

**Attendees:**

**From Sandwich Town Council**

The Mayor, Cllr Graeme (in the chair)  
Cllr HJ Bragg  
Cllr Mrs VA Lioté  
Cllr RA Daw  
Cllr JE Franklin  
Cllr D Friend  
Cllr JEM Gisbey  
Cllr MJ Holloway  
Cllr C Felton  
Cllr MW Moorhouse  
Cllr JO Sneller  
Cllr JJ Watts  
Cllr DMA Wood  
Cllr PI Carter  
Mrs F Butcher (Minutes)  
Miss M Beardmore

**From Dover District Council:**

Cllr Bernard Butcher  
Mr Roger Walton, Director of Environment & Corporate Assets  
Cllr Sue Chandler, Chairman, was also in the audience

**From Kent County Council:**

Stephanie Wadhams, Dover District Manager Operations

**From the Town Team:**

Mr Richard Ralph, Chairman of the Town Team

**From Kent Police:**

No attendees – report given to read out

**Sandwich Community Events Association**

Steve Laslett, Chairman

**1. MAYOR'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO REPRESENTATIVES**

The Mayor welcomed those present and reminded everyone that the Neighbourhood Forum meeting would follow the Town Meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the following were read out from:

Mr Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport – Kent County Council  
Mr Clive Pearman, Deputy to Mr Balfour - Kent County Council  
Matthew Scott, Police & Crime Commissioner – Kent Police  
PCSO Kerry Spirrow – Kent Police  
Mr Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive – Dover District Council  
Craig Mackinlay MP – Parliament  
Ms Julie Foley, Area Manager for Kent South London and East Sussex – Environment Agency  
Tim Read, Head of Transportation – Kent County Council  
Tim Middleton, Principal Transport Planner - Kent County Council  
AJ Kluczynski, Environmental Crime Team Leader - Dover District Council  
Paul Neagle, Environmental Protection Manager - Dover District Council  
Hannah Osbourne, Community Warden - Kent County Council

**3. MAYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT**

The Mayor reported that the last year has been a really eventful year for Sandwich with many exciting projects getting underway, such as refurbishment of the Guildhall Museum and the A New Vision for Sandwich Project Board was making progress. A full copy of the Mayor's Annual Report was available in hard copy at the meeting and available on the Sandwich Town Council (STC) website. The Mayor stated that there were plenty of positive things in the Town and thanked the residents for their contribution.

**4. MINUTES 2017**

The Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting of Sandwich, held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017, were approved with no questions.

**5. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The un-audited financial statements as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 for Sandwich Town Council and Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund were noted with no questions.

**6. TOWN & PARISH UPDATES**

Brief presentations were given on the following subjects, time was taken to receive and answer questions after each topic:

**(i) A New Vision for Sandwich – Project Board:** Update by Councillor Holloway – the Project Board was working closely with Dover District Council and Kent County Council. It was important to harness the potential of Sandwich as a Heritage destination for visitors. The project had been split into smaller groups to achieve this. A consultation with the residents had been undertaken and the responses were positive. During the last month a bid to the Heritage Fund was submitted and we would be notified in June if the bid was successful.

The second part of the project is the redevelopment of the forecourt. This had also been included in the consultation process. The existing bus shelter would be re-sited and the current bus stops would be redesigned with the aim was to make the Forecourt a multi-functional area creating a café culture and making the area more accessible for disabled users. The plans would be submitted by Dover District Council shortly.

A question was asked about how the bus stops would be adjusted. Councillor Holloway stated he would show the design plan after the Meeting.

Mrs Carole George asked why the bus stops should move. Councillor Holloway advised that it was part of the New Vision plan was to re-embrace the river by evolving to the Quay. A local resident stated that the Quay is a lost opportunity for visiting yachtsmen and the moorings were "pathetic" A floating pontoon was a missed opportunity that needed to be addressed. Councillor Holloway agreed.

**(ii) Town Team :** Richard Ralph, Chairman of the Town Team, gave an update on the role of the Town Team and the projects that they were involved with. Traffic was a major concern particularly the number of HGVs.

He noted that the litter clean ups had been undertaken by residents and there was concern about the amount of rubbish on the by-pass and the Delf Stream. He stated there would be another one on the following Sunday and invited residents to participate.

He invited Voluntary organisations to become involved with the Town Team.

On behalf of the Town Team Mr Ralph thanked the Mayor, the Town Councillors, Jan of the Fleur and all Partners of the Town Team for their support.

Richard Ralph was concerned about the 2020 Open Golf impact on traffic in Sandwich, particularly coaches. Mr Mayor noted the comments and stated that there would be a presentation on the Golf after the Town meeting that evening.

Issues around the Butchery Surgery pavements, the one-way system in Potter Street, and increased parking charges (because this had increased the number of people parking on Millwall Place) were raised. Richard Ralph stated that the Town Team were addressing these issues as they were a concern. He suggested that Mr Mayor joined the Town Team to address these issues. The Town Team were trying to maintain a balance between business and shoppers parking facilities.

Cllr Sue Chandler accepted that parking was a growing concern and was being looked at to see how some of these could be addressed. Mrs Carole George stated that the parking wardens were not around at the crucial times of day when double parking issues were high. Mrs George suggested that if they were to come out in the evening this would alleviate some of the problems.

Q: At the previous meeting there had been an indication that concentration on issues arising would extend to all of Sandwich not just the Town Centre. This does not appear to be happening. Richard Ralph stated that the Town Team were ready to help other parts of the Town and invited concerned bodies to make representations.

Q: The Town Team have been advised of the problem for agricultural traffic St. Georges Road and nothing has been done to improve the situation. Richard Ralph stated this had been discussed at Town Council Meeting and that St George's Road were been asked to work with the Town Team to alleviate the problem.

**(iii) Museum & Archives:** Miss Beardmore announced that there had been 12300 visitors to the museum in the first 3 months with 3 successful events. There was still a large amount of archivists work to be done but positive progress was being made. There were forthcoming events [planned for the next few months] and it was hoped that the support would continue to be given. Miss Breadmore thanked the volunteers, Councillors and residents for their continued support. Volunteers were always required.

**(iv) Dover District Council Help Desk:** Mr Mayor stated that the closure in December of the office in the Guildhall had impacted on residents. It had now been agreed with DDC and Age Concern that they would have a DDC staffed desk within Age Concern on Market Day – Thursday between 9.30 and 12.30 with the ability to talk in confidence.

**(v) Delf Stream:** Councillor Bragg gave the history of the Delf Stream through the ages. A working group created in order to bring this heritage asset back to life, clean and flowing.

**(vi) Kent Police:** Mr Mayor read out Chief Inspector Mark Weller's report. (Copy attached) Mr Richard George stated that the latest Council tax bills had an increase in the police payment but would that mean that more police officers would be seen on the streets. Councillor Holloway advised that the 8% increase would cost each household £12.00 per year and this would pay for 200 extra uniformed officers across the county which would equate to 15 extra officers. Mr George would prefer to have a PC instead of PCSO on the streets in Sandwich.

**(vii) The Historic Boatyard:** Cllr Holloway reported that DDC's aim is to get the property next to the Quayside brought back into public ownership as soon as possible. DDC's Chief Executive has had meetings with all sides, including the Action Group. Negotiations are progressing with the current leaseholder. Conversations have been had with those who continue to support a medieval boat building/visitor centre on the site about the viability of such a project. The priority is to get the property back into public ownership first.

**(viii) Litter Clearing:** Cllr Sue Chandler reported that a programme of litter clearance on the verges of our main roads within the District is now underway, starting along the A2. This will continue apace with the warmer weather approaching. The time slots when litter picking can take place are restricted because of health & safety considerations which require lane closure and co-ordination with Kent Highways. Often this needs to wait for highway repairs so that maintenance and litter picking can be done at the same time to minimise traffic disruption. Litter picking along the Sandwich bypass is planned by DDC for the second half of May or sooner if possible.

**(ix) National Planning & Policy Framework** Question: "Following the Government's announcement of a new National Planning & Policy Framework aimed at increasing the rate of house building in England does STC and DDC believe they have sufficient policies and powers to prevent a developer "free for all" in the coming years?"

Answer: This is only a draft policy at the moment. Consultation on the draft runs until 10 May 2018. The current expectation is for the Government to publish the final revised National Planning and Policy Framework before the Summer Recess in July 2018.

The new framework is aimed to help deal with the country's housing shortage. It's likely to bring in powers to stop developers from land-banking and encourage the development of more affordable housing. It should also give more certainty around the 5-year land supply, which will hopefully stop land promoters from engaging in "permission by appeal" on unallocated sites.

A "developers free for all" is not expected, DDC is currently reviewing the District's 5-year local plan, so the timing of both the new Framework and District's review couldn't be better. It gives DDC the opportunity through the review of its policies and site allocation to develop a balanced approach.

**(x) Abbey Homes Development, Woodnesborough Road:** This application for 120 houses is going to Committee this Thursday with what we understand is a recommendation by officers to approve. DDC appreciates the concern that Councillors and residents have raised about access to the site and impact on the adjacent and surrounding roads. There have been 28 objections to this application. District Councillors and members of the public are looking to speak at Planning Committee on Thursday to highlight concerns.

Both Kent Highways and Highways England have made no objections, and so it will be a challenge to get the application refused on highways grounds.

**(xi) 57 New Street:** DDC's Enforcement operation was re-organised early this year and it will now pursue a more aggressive approach. Section 215 Notice was served on the owners of this property last week which is now subject to an appeal. Further details cannot be provided.

**(xii) Sandwich Showground:** An enforcement case is currently open with DDC concerning the accumulation of building materials and the building on the road side. The owner has permission to build a barn and access route to the barn on the site and says these materials are for the purpose of this development. DDC enforcement officers will be reviewing this case shortly and Councillors will be looking for Officers to take a tougher line than being shown for 57 New Street.

**(xiii) St. Peter's Church Chimes:** DDC's Leader still awaits a reply to his letter from Sajid Javid's office, there has been a reply from Dr Coffey, a Minister in the Environment Department; unfortunately, this letter shone no new light on the matter. When DDC has both replies it will decide on what further action the Council might take at a national level to challenge the legislation.

In the meantime, the initial Noise Abatement Notice expired on 18 February and following the CCT's request for extra time, this was extended until the 29<sup>th</sup> April. DDC's environmental Health Team remains in contact with the Churches Conservation Trust and between them they are working towards a positive conclusion to the matter. It is understood that neither the clock nor the chimes are working at the moment. This is the CCT's responsibility as are opening hours for visitors of St. Peter's Church because they own the building.

## 7. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Mayor closed the meeting at 20:33hrs and thanked:

- all the speakers and all those attending from outside bodies;
- The Guildhall staff for arranging the meeting;
- And lastly all local residents who attended for their continued interest in the town.