

SANDWICH ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 19TH MARCH 2014: Q&A SESSION NOTES

Question	Response	Action	Update
Under item 6 (Accounts): has expenditure on CCTV doubled and if so, why?		Town Clerk to provide information.	Because of when the annual invoices from DDC were received and when the Town Council was able to approve payment two years' of CCTV rental were paid within the same financial year. The annual cost has not doubled.
Under Item 6 (Accounts): would it be possible for the accounts to be available on request at the Council offices for one week before all future Annual Town Meetings? The information presented is too complex for digestion in a few minutes before the meeting.	The Mayor responded that this was a fair point.	Sandwich Town Council to inform members of the public through future Annual Town Meeting notices that accounts are available on request for one week before the meeting.	This will be done, via the notice that is delivered to each household.
Mr Laslett (Sandwich Community Events Association & Chamber of Commerce): The Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund accounts provided do not include the total value of the Fund, but with this information it appears the Fund spends a quarter of 1% on grants to local organisations although it continues to	The Mayor responded that the decision to provide staffed toilet facilities has been revisited twice already and that the cost of staffing the toilets had to be offset against the potential cost of repairs following vandalism in unstaffed facilities. Coin or key-operated systems are still vulnerable to vandalism. Staffing the toilets meant	NB. that <u>Sandwich Town Council</u> in fact funds, staffs and manages the Quay Conveniences.	The Council remains committed to maintaining staffed toilets at the Quay. The Quay Conveniences recently achieved Platinum grade in the 2014 Loo of the Year Awards. The audited accounts for Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund will be made available online prior to the Annual Town Meeting 2015, which include the total value of the fund.

provide toilets. Can the issue of toilet provision be revisited, including an auditor's recommendation to keep the toilets open but minimise costs using a coin-operated system?	provision of three jobs in Sandwich.		
A member of the public stated that the Cattle Market toilets are not open all the time –said they were closed on a Sunday afternoon. Another member of the public asked whether toilet need on Sunday afternoons had been assessed. A third member of the public stated that more policing would prevent vandalism issues.	The Mayor replied that a survey had been undertaken and toilets were open at peak times (NB this includes Sunday afternoons until 4pm in Winter). No council had a duty to keep the toilets open but Sandwich Town Council had decided this would be the right thing to do.		The Cattle Market toilets are open on Sunday afternoons unless staff sickness or vandalism / other incident means that they have had to be closed. The Town Council continues to press for a more visible police presence in Sandwich.
A member of the public questioned the Mayor's assertion (in response to the previous question) that keeping the Cattle Market toilets open until 6pm year-round would double the cost.	The Mayor responded that the Cattle Market toilets are looked after by the Guildhall caretaking staff and paying them to come back at 6pm from Deal or wherever they live when their working hours end at 5pm would significantly increase costs.		This remains the case. However the Cattle Market toilets are kept open later on weekends where there are community events in town (e.g. Christmas Community Lights carnival).
There appears to be no job description or list of duties for town and district	The Mayor explained that the rules governing the behaviour of councillors are		Re. how people who want to stand as councillors can know what will be expected: STC's Jan. – March 2015 newsletter highlighted on its front page forthcoming

<p>councillors. How do people who want to stand as councillors know what will be expected of them, and how can members of the public judge councillors' performance?</p>	<p>very general: all interests must be declared and any transgressions of this rule or "bringing the council into disrepute" are reported to the Monitoring Officer and if need be investigated by the Standards Committee.</p> <p>Mr Aziz stated that defined roles for backbenchers, committee chairmen, portfolio holders and the leader do exist and he believed they were on the DDC website. DDC holds information events for prospective candidates and if the questioner or any other member of the public would be interested in standing for election in future, they were invited to contact DDC and register their interest to receive further information.</p>		<p>awareness-raising days for people considering being councillors, which were being run by the Kent Association of Local Councils.</p>
<p>The 20mph speed limit flashing sign in the High Street and the "Twenty is Plenty" campaign are great but the limit is still broken regularly. The Police philosophy is that these</p>	<p>The Mayor replied that the member of the public's points were valid. The bottom line regarding the 20mph zone is enforcement. He urged residents to drop their speed which will force</p>	<p>Sandwich Town Council to continue to raise speeding issues across the town and work with Kent Police and Kent Highways wherever possible to find</p>	<p>Speed checks have been carried out by the local community policing team along Sandown Road. Permanent measures (traffic calming tables) on the High Street and New Street are to be provided by Kent Highways.</p>

<p>limits are 'self-enforcing' and transgressions are not prosecuted - although I have seen them with speed guns, can we agree the problem is not solved and can the Council continue to press for other traffic calming measures?</p>	<p>other people to do likewise. The Town Council had paid for the Police speed guns so it was doing all it legally could and a bit more besides.</p> <p>PC Woodland said that the Police cannot enforce the limit 24/7. He said he supported the High Street flashing sign as speeding is a particular problem there but cannot promise more enforcement. He concluded he would like to see more permanent traffic calming measures in place but that costs money.</p>	<p>solutions.</p>	
<p>There are a lot of complaints about HGVs coming through town, possibly directed through by satnavs – the 7.5t signs at the edges of the towns don't seem to stop them and they are knocking chunks off our historic architectural heritage.</p>	<p>The Mayor emphasised that Sandwich Town Council is contacting Highways and the Police on an almost monthly basis as this and other traffic issues keep coming up.</p>	<p>Sandwich Town Council to continue to raise the issue of HGV through traffic with Kent Police and Kent Highways as required.</p>	<p>The Town Team's "Lorry Watch" traffic survey pulled together a great deal of statistical and photographic evidence to back up local concerns. Volume of traffic, lack of parking, parking charges and pedestrianisation / pedestrian priority are all issues on which the Town Team has been gathering information and presenting proposals to the Town, District and County Councils. Sandwich Town Council supports these initiatives and will continue to support them. Kent County Council has approved a number of recommendations already and is considering others.</p>
<p>Double-decker and long single-decker buses keep</p>	<p>The Mayor replied that Sandwich Town Council is</p>	<p>Sandwich Town Council to continue to work on</p>	<p>See above: bus routes were another issue of concern to the Town Team (exacerbated by the one way</p>

<p>coming through the centre of town – other historic towns have smaller buses, park & ride systems or route buses around the town centre. What can be done here?</p>	<p>working with bus companies and Highways on bus-related issues, e.g. there was a recent meeting between these parties regarding pedestrian safety on the Toll Bridge.</p>	<p>the issue of buses in town with bus companies and Kent Highways as required.</p>	<p>system).</p>
<p>Why can we not improve pedestrian safety and help calm traffic by having pedestrian crossings at key points throughout the town?</p>	<p>The Mayor responded he had been championing a crossing in front of Malcolm Waites' filling station but had been told by Kent Highways that pedestrian crossings were not allowed within 20 metres of a junction (thus rendering them all but impossible in Sandwich).</p>		<p>Building on the work of the Town Team, the Council has committed to support for further examination of measures such as pedestrianisation or pedestrian priority to improve pedestrian safety and the visitor experience in Sandwich.</p>
<p>Following publication of the Land Allocations document (LAD) I wrote to the then Mayor and the DDC Monitoring Officer complaining that the three Sandwich district councillors had not met the requirements of their office and had not informed Sandwich Town Council in a timely fashion but instead late in the day regarding LA12 / LA17, thus restricting debate. The</p>	<p>County Councillor Ridings explained that Monitoring Officers are always council employees, whichever council they work for, but are held to account by Standards Committees. Members voting on a subject at any Council meeting are told to declare interests.</p> <p>Mr Aziz stated that there is a Standards Committee at Dover District Council.</p>	<p>No further action.</p>	

<p>Monitoring Officer, who is an employee of DDC, told me that my complaints were not upheld and I had no right of appeal. He said that the three councillors were not obliged to inform Sandwich Town Council, local residents or representative organisations of information in their possession as district councillors. DDC has annexed the “seven principles of public life” in the Localism Act so they have no force in law although they are enshrined in an Act of Parliament which seems to me to be undemocratic. I ask Council officers to amend their Standing Orders so that any “dual hatters” have to report to the Town Council any matters they know of through their duties elsewhere which directly or indirectly affect the people of Sandwich – and I would urge DDC officers to do</p>	<p>The Mayor said that the whole system had recently been changed by Government so that whereas Standards Committees used to be chaired by a non-councillor, now a councillor chairs them. Monitoring Officers look at complaints based on law, determine according to that whether further action may be required and if necessary put them before the Standards Committee. “Late in the day” referred to the application but the “dual hatter” councillors helped turn down the proposals as Sandwich Town Council owned the car park land and would not give up the lease of that land to DDC as the lease brings in considerable revenue. The proposals were withdrawn before they reached the Planning Committee stage thanks to our representations.</p>		
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likewise, as well as asking the DDC officers to re-examine their complaints procedure.			
If I have a complaint regarding our local county councillor, how can I be sure that KCC's Standards Committee will investigate it properly if that county councillor chairs the Committee?	The Mayor stated that the County Councillor would have to declare an interest and step aside from the part of the meeting dealing with the complaint.	No further action required.	No further updates.
Regarding the Dover Road supermarket planning application, will the Mayor represent Sandwich Town Council's view (which was recommend refusal – why was that?) at the DDC Planning Committee?	The Mayor explained that Sandwich Town Council had recommended refusal based on highways issues and visual impact on the way into town. If the Town Council's position is legally compliant, he will support it at the District Council's Planning Committee. However as Mr Aziz went on to explain, all Planning Committee members, including the Mayor, have to listen to all presented views. Theirs is a quasi-judicial role and so they have a legal duty to listen to all arguments including but not limited to those put forward by		DDC's Planning Committee approved both applications in Sept. 2014 and sent them to the Secretary of State for consideration. The Secretary of State has raised no concerns and both applications have now been approved.

	<p>Sandwich Town Council. Councillors cannot come to the Committee with a predetermined view. Mr Aziz said that he appreciated the point that the member of the public was trying to make but there were lots of cases where people could sit on different bodies, e.g. on a council and a board of school governors. They have to fulfil the role where they are undertaking that role.</p>		
<p>When will the decision regarding Waitrose or Sainsbury's be made?</p>	<p>The Mayor explained that although many local residents seemed to think it was a case of either Sainsbury's or Waitrose, in fact the town could have both or neither. If both applications meet all the legal criteria then they could both be approved. Every planning application has to be judged on its own merits. At present neither application had got to the Planning Committee stage.</p> <p>Mr Aziz added that</p>		<p>DDC's Planning Committee approved both applications in Sept. 2014 and sent them to the Secretary of State for consideration. The Secretary of State has raised no concerns and both applications have now been approved.</p>

	<p>representations have been made to the Planning Inspector by all sides and his initial findings should be issued at the end of March / early April. He said it would be inappropriate to rush any decision before receiving the Inspector's views.</p> <p>Applications may go to Planning Committee in late April, and may well both be brought forward at the same meeting.</p>		
<p>The issue of parking along Ramsgate Road continues, the state of the verges is disgusting. Can we not put boulders on the verges to prevent vehicles mounting them to park? Rubbish is a related problem. Also, the lamppost is still missing on the other side of the Toll Bridge.</p>	<p>The Mayor said that the Council had a meeting with Kent Highways and had considered the situation resolved but that the DDC conservation officer rejected the proposed solutions, including a layby and raised kerb. The Council continued to press for remedial measures. With co-operation, boulders could be helpful. The bottom line however is that this is a Kent Highways issue and only KCC can take action, the Town Council can only press for this. The lamppost</p>	<p>Sandwich Town Council to continue to press for remedial measures to deal with inappropriate parking along Ramsgate Road.</p> <p>Kent Highways to examine remedial measures in co-operation with the Town Council.</p>	<p>KCC is installing double yellow lines along Ramsgate Road following footway and carriageway improvement works over Winter 2014/15; the lines are expected to go down in March 2015.</p>

	should be reinstated once the rest of the work in that area is completed.		
Can we have more bins around the town, including along Ramsgate Road?	The Mayor stated that the Town Council had been looking to get more bins but that costs were prohibitive, e.g. £600 per year for emptying.		STC continued pressing KCC and DDC for installation and regular emptying of bins as part of the Ramsgate Road improvement works (see above). KCC and DDC have now agreed to installation and emptying of two litter bins along the road.
A Delfside resident stated that since parking was restricted on the Quay due to flood defence works, there has been a big problem with parking beyond the Salutation and along Sandown Road. A Sandown Road resident added that she had spoken to Kent Highways and they had said that although they are painting the yellow lines in town, they could not extend them.	The Mayor said re. yellow lines, any extension had to go through KCC's system.		At County Councillor Ridings' request, 115m of extra double yellow lines have been added by KCC on the north side of Sandown Road near the junction with Manwood Road.
Mr Phil Scott (Phoenix Youth Centre) asked Councillor Trussler for an update regarding the Delf Stream.	Councillor Trussler outlined the Council's progress to date – that the Delf had (with funding from County Councillor Ridings' member	Sandwich Town Council to press ahead with plans for work on the Delf Stream, bearing in mind the effect on	The Town Council is taking forward plans to clear the Poplar Avenue to Galliard Street stretch in 2015, with a view to linking in with DDC's proposed work on the Butts.

<p>NB. Following the responses given in the column to the right, Mr Scott came back to say that he had immense respect for the work of the Environment Agency but that something had to be done about the Delf Stream. It had played a crucial role in carrying away water running along New Street and Mill Wall in the recent flooding event and Mr Scott feared that if it were not dredged, it might not have capacity to play this role in future.</p>	<p>grant) been de-silted and vegetation cleared between Worth and the former Poplar Avenue, and now the Council wished to de-silt from the former Poplar Avenue to the junction of New Street and Galliard Street. Mr Ridings had once again secured funds for this in July 2013. After a long process of discussions with the Environment Agency, very recently it was looking as though the work might go ahead before the end of March but then the Agency asked for various permits and Kent Highways informed us that traffic measures would cost around £3000. Cllr Trussler said he was concerned that the funding for this work might be lost at the change of the financial year and in any case environmental considerations might prevent work proceeding after the end of March. He asked the Environment Agency whether it supported the</p>	<p>timescales of environmental requirements.</p> <p>Environment Agency and Kent Highways to support this work as necessary.</p>	
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	<p>work and if not, what would they do? Meetings had been had last year, viewing the completed first phase and the area of the proposed second phase, and no issue of flood defence consents, Highways problems etc. had been raised.</p> <p>Ray Foster (Environment Agency) responded that the Agency had procedures to follow which applied to anyone, including the Agency itself. The Agency experiences similar problems when it undertakes work but the system can't be short-cut. The work will be done but it must be done properly.</p> <p>Cllr Bragg stated that he felt the main obstruction to progress of the work originated in Natural England and that the Quay area is silting up because the Environment Agency won't dredge it.</p>		
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When the Planning Inspector visits, please could he do so at 08:30 am in order to see the traffic chaos in and around town?	No response was made to this question as the Planning Inspector was not present.		The Inspector visited in January – March 2014. A consultation on main modifications to the LAD Local Plan took place in August to September 2014 following the Inspector's visit.
I fly the flag for KCC but work for a company called Amey. Recently a company called Jacobs came in to survey our yard – there is a rumour that the yard is to be sold and we are to move in November. What is happening?	<p>Mr Brazier said that the plan is for the Highways yard in Sandwich to be closed and for the depot to move to the Richborough waste site in order to maximise the use of that site and help keep it open. The Highways yard site will then be sold to offset the costs of the Richborough waste site. He did not know why surveyors were in.</p> <p>The Mayor suggested that the visitors could have been there on behalf of a would-be purchaser. The Town Council is hoping that its bid to take part of that site as coach parking may work – the Town Council has an interest and hasn't been told that it's been sold.</p>		No further news received as yet.
Has Kent Highways carried	The Mayor stated that the	KCC Highways and	KCC Highways will assess the phasing of the lights

<p>out a risk assessment on the Toll Bridge? Another member of the public raised the possibility of putting an extra phase for pedestrians only into the traffic lights system in the area.</p>	<p>Town Council is currently investigating with Kent Highways removal of the footway on the bridge, as it is very narrow, and providing a replacement as part and parcel of the remedial work on Ramsgate Road (see above).</p>	<p>Sandwich Town Council to continue to work together towards a safer Toll Bridge.</p>	<p>once the Ramsgate Road scheme has been completed. Stagecoach have informed all their bus drivers that they must not use the Toll Bridge if a pedestrian is walking over it. Additionally agreements are in place with Stagecoach to purchase smaller buses at a set trigger within the build-up of the Discovery Park development.</p>
<p>When will work finish on the flood defences? Has the issue with a resident's objections (upstream from Marine Highways) been resolved? Is it the Environment Agency's intention to replace the old cobbles on the Quay as they were or use them in some other part of the works?</p>	<p>Mr Holland responded that it is expected the flood defences will be finished around May 2015, with the Quay currently behind programme after the winter floods it is expected the Quay works will be completed at the end of May 2014. The issue regarding a local resident's objections has not been totally settled yet but is nearly settled – it is not anticipated to impede completion of the project but only to delay work on that section until Autumn this year. The cobbles won't be put back in exactly the same location on the Quay but will be reused within the area.</p>	<p>No further action.</p>	<p>Work on the Quay and behind Aynsley Court was finished by August 2014 and the new Quay was officially opened on 19th September by Laura Sandys MP. Public response to the new-look Quay was generally very favourable. Work continues on other reaches of the Stour locally.</p>
<p>Cllr Wood observed that</p>		<p>Sandwich Town Council</p>	<p>The Toll Bridge Fund Trustee has approved a £5100</p>

<p>there were some young people present and that not many issues had been raised of direct relevance to them – a community had to consist of all local residents of all ages. The Mayor asked one of the young people if they had any questions. Molly (volunteer at the Phoenix Youth Centre) asked that young people should not automatically be marked down as “silly kids” or stigmatised, a local supermarket now demands that young people have cash in their hand when they go in otherwise they are marked out as potential shoplifters. She observed that there are not many activities for young people in Sandwich and said it was important to help the youth club open for more than two nights a week if residents wanted young people off the streets.</p>		<p>to continue to liaise with the Phoenix Youth Club on issues of interest to young people.</p>	<p>grant to the Phoenix Centre as part of the 2015/16 budget, to cover various types of useful activities and training for local young people (e.g. first aid, cooking, harm reduction), equipment and repairs etc., and costs attempting to achieve the Assured Quality for Youth Projects Silver Standard.</p>
<p>The Mayor’s report refers to employment for 1400</p>	<p>Mr Paul Barber (Managing Director, Discovery Park)</p>	<p>No further action required.</p>	<p>Discovery Park recently gained its 100th tenant (http://www.kentonline.co.uk/sandwich/news/discovery-</p>

<p>people at the Enterprise Zone. How many of those jobs are going to local young people? How many new jobs are there for local people?</p>	<p>said he could not give a precise answer to this. At the moment companies are coming into the Discovery Park from out of the area and so they tended to bring some employees with them but then start to recruit. Firms tend generally to prefer to use local people. At the last count 40% of employees at the Discovery Park live in Thanet District and 60% in Dover District, though how many of those live in Sandwich itself is unclear. The prospects look good.</p>		<p>park-secures-100th-tenant-27638/) with the creation of another 20 full-time jobs.</p>
<p>Why can't we have more flashing 20mph signs around the town?</p>	<p>The Mayor replied that one reason is these signs do not generally meet with the approval of the DDC conservation officer.</p>	<p>No further action.</p>	

<p>What about the sell-off of Manston Airport for housing – the Leader of KCC says these plans are being worked on in conjunction with the Discovery Park.</p>	<p>The Mayor explained that any plans for Manston would come under the Planning remit of Thanet District Council, and Sandwich Town Council would probably not be consultees.</p>	<p>No further action. STC has not been a consultee re. developments at Manston.</p>	<p>The Manston Airport site was sold for manufacturing and homes to developers in September 2014. It was recently reported that a Government review has been ordered into Thanet District Council's decision in December 2014 not to go ahead with a Compulsory Purchase Order. NB that STC has had no involvement in any of these events.</p>
<p>There are six sections of railing at the Bulwarks which are about three feet high and six feet long and which have sharp spikes on top. Other railings in the same area have rounded balls on top – these spikes are an accident waiting to happen. Even if they can't be replaced, can't a bar or something be put across the top to remove the risk of injury?</p>	<p>The Mayor said that he would look at this personally.</p>	<p>Mayor to examine the railings and then Sandwich Town Council to take further action as necessary, if need be in conjunction with other agencies.</p>	<p>The then Mayor (Cllr Butcher) examined the railings and brought this issue to the attention of DDC. DDC have reviewed the railings, there are a total of 36 railing panels of which 28 have been replaced with 'ball top spike' railings. The remaining 8 panels, the design of which includes the traditional spiked top are in good condition and have been in place for many years without incident. However noting the potential safety concern DDC aim to replace these over the next few months.</p>