

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE KIG JOINT PARISHES GROUP

Held on Monday 23rd October 2007 at 7.30pm.

Present: Richard Jacques – Thurnham PC
Peter Waite – Thurnham PC
John Horne – MBC Ward Cllr & Thurnham PC
Victor Davies – Boxley PC
Dennis Clifton – Harrietsham PC
Cathie Willis – Harrietsham PC
Nick Osborne – Lenham PC
Daphne Parvin – MBC Ward Councillor North Downs Ward
Lynn Bryan – Hollingbourne PC
Bill Stead – Boxley PC
June Harrison – Leeds PC
Geoff Licence – Bearsted PC
Gill Fort – Leeds PC

The meeting was chaired by Richard Jacques - TPC.

Also in attendance: Mrs Sherrie Babington, Anna Bloomfield and Peter Cooper from Bloomfield's Planning Consultants.

1. Introductions & Apologies.

Apologies were received from Detling Parish Council.
All representatives present introduced themselves to the meeting.

2. Minutes from the previous meeting.

The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed by all present.

3. Presentation from Bloomfield's.

Anna Bloomfield addressed the meeting and introduced herself and her colleague Peter Cooper to all present.

She gave a brief background on her company and experience in working with group's similar to the Joint Parish Group.

She stated that it was vital that all Parish Councils in the group were talking with one voice and that they had a common view as to its objectives. She asked whether KIG was something to say no to and whether it was felt that any development in the area was acceptable. She stated that the land between the M20 and A20 was vulnerable and the best should try to be achieved for the land. It was advised that the whole view of Parish Councils needed to be established at the outset. Other issues to address were to establish whether MBC was supportive of the Joint Parish Group. She stated that the group should focus in on the local issues relevant to parishes to enable these facts to be focused.

Anna Bloomfield asked whether all Parish Councils were speaking the same language. Richard Jacques stated that Parish Councils would wish to object to the planning application not to give options of acceptance for development. He confirmed that it was the considered view of Parish Councils in the group that the response to a planning application would be to object. This was agreed by all present.

A discussion took place regarding the timing of the submission of the planning application and the revised program for the Core Strategy.

John Horne spoke regarding the Strategic Gap, he stated that the boundaries of the strategic gap were vague and these were due to be reviewed within the LDF.

Peter Cooper addressed the meeting. He informed all present that he had prepared the submission for Thurnham Parish Council on the LDF Core Strategy. He spoke of the interlinking of the Core Strategy and KIG. He stated that the delay in the Core Strategy by MBC was a serious issue which had implications on other local authorities.

The process of how MBC would deal with the planning application when submitted was discussed. John Horne confirmed that this was not clear at present.

Richard Jacques stated that it would be advantageous for the Joint Parish Group to submit their group response to the planning application; however this should not prevent parish councils from making their own representations. He stated that the more objections to the planning application the better and residents should be encouraged to make their representations.

It was suggested that each parish council should be encouraged to submit their own response to the planning application with guidance from Bloomfield's.

Richard Jacques confirmed that Thurnham Parish Clerk had sought advice on this matter from KAPC and this was explained to all present.

The planning application submitted to MBC was discussed by all present. It was agreed that the representations by parish councils must focus on the issues such as quality of life for people in and around the area – local issues affecting local people.

John Horne spoke regarding a report submitted to the group by Chris Dyke; he stated that this was a useful summary which suggested that KIG was in effect an inland port. The report identified possible reasons why the development had been proposed.

The finances of parish councils were discussed and it was accepted that all parish councils had limited funds and therefore the group should focus their representation on areas not currently being looked at by other parties, the group's submission should 'plug the gaps'.

Anna Bloomfield referred to a recent case that she had dealt with for a group similar to the Joint Parish Group. She stated that the parishes should concentrate on what they knew best.

Richard Jacques addressed all parish representatives present on their current status with regards to their participation in the Joint Parish Group. This was discussed further and all parties were asked to confirm their status as soon as possible to enable accurate costings to be calculated for all involved.

John Horne stated that parishes could back out at any time and all submissions at the first stage of the planning application would be submitted at the appeals stage.

Peter Cooper referred to the planning application submitted to MBC, he stated that the rail link was the key, without this the thrust of the application would be weakened.

The administration and management of the group was discussed further and it was agreed that Terms of Reference should be drafted for agreement at the next meeting.

Action: Draft Terms of Reference.

It was also agreed that in order for each parish to formally take this matter to their respective PC meetings that a report should be put together detailing the potential costings for each parish for the first stage of representation by Bloomfield's should they wish to be included in the group.

Action: Costing report to be sent to all participating Parish Councils.

A discussion then took place regarding the appeal stage should this occur. It was agreed that this would not happen within this financial year and therefore any costs relating to this stage could be looked at and possibly included within parish council's future budgets.

Peter Cooper stated that there was a chance that the planning application could be called in directly by the Secretary of State and this would take the decision out of the hands of the Borough Council. He stated that the Secretary of State was included in the 21-day consultation process and this is when a decision would be made by them.

A discussion took place concerning how this planning application fitted in with SEEDA and SEERA.

Anna Bloomfield stated that Bloomfield would be employed to look at the planning application on planning grounds not technical grounds and they would therefore focus in on local issues.

The Chairman of the meeting thanked Peter Cooper and Anna Bloomfield for their time in talking with the Joint Parish Group and confirmed that it would be in contact regarding the instruction to continue with the representation of the group.

4. Response to formal planning application.

The advice of Bloomfield was noted by all present and a discussion took place regarding the way forward. It was agreed that the Joint Parish Group was opposed to the planning application from KIG and would therefore object to this.

It was agreed that the parish councils involved with the Joint Parish Group would give communication via their representatives to Bloomfield's and that they would then include these concerns in their response to the application.

Richard Jacques suggested that each parish should fetch their areas of concern to the next Joint Parish Group meeting or send them via the Clerk.

5. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting was arranged for 8th November 2007 at 7.30pm.

It was agreed to contact MBC to ask whether they could send representative to this meeting to give a briefing on the planning application.

Action: Clerk to liaise with MBC re presentation at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.