



BROADSTAIRS & ST. PETER'S  
TOWN COUNCIL

# **ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY**

**Monday 12th March 2018**

**PRESENT:** The Town Mayor Cllr. Peter Shaw, Chairman  
Cllrs. J. Bayford, Binks, Buckley, Dexter, Hayton, Leys,  
Matterface, Moore, Savage, D. Saunders, M. Saunders, Taylor-  
Smith.  
Town Clerk: Danielle Dunn  
Members of the public

Introduction: The Chairman welcomed members of the public and introduced all Councillors present to the Assembly.

The Chairman announced that the Council had no objection to the proceedings being filmed, subject to any person at the Assembly objecting to being personally filmed.

**1. Apologies for Absence.**

Cllrs Parsons and R. Bayford.

**2. Minutes.**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Town Assembly held on Monday 13th March 2017 were received, approved, and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Matters Arising.**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**4. Annual Report of the Work of the Town Council.**

Cllr. David Saunders, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes committee gave a general overview of the work and activities of the Council.

The Town Council consists of 15 elected councillors representing five wards (Beacon Road, Bradstowe, Kingsgate, St. Peter's & Viking) and an administrative support team of six. The council has two main committees, Finance & General Purposes, and Town Planning, who report to the main Council, and seven sub-committees, which are: Allotments & Land, Assets & Budget Review, Community Buildings & Assets, Staff Management, Leisure & Tourism, Internal Audit

Effectiveness Review and Neighbourhood Planning. There are 3 further groups and working parties: Standing Orders Working Party, Town Forum, and the Joint Committee for Broadstairs. The Council convenes a minimum of six ordinary council meetings per year, co-ordinates the quarterly town forum and is legally bound to arrange the annual Town Assembly during the month of March.

**Staff:** The Town Council has the following staffing structure: the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Senior Administrator, Mayor's Secretary, Town Sergeant, Caretaker and a recent addition of an EKC Administration and Marketing apprentice. All staff including the Town Clerk are part-time.

**Finance:** the Town Council has resolved to increase the precept by £9.90 (19p a week) for a Band D council payer for the fiscal year 2018 – 2019, which is an increase of 19.98% on the 2017-2018 precept, and to instruct Thanet District Council to collect a precept of £562,301 (£59.49 per year for a household paying Council Tax Band D). This will enable the council to provide extra services for residents and to continue some services which TDC will no longer provide. Plans include taking ownership of Pierremont Hall, Retort House and other assets that TDC will be disposing of, in addition to removing the old Community Hall building (formerly Age Concern) and putting plans in place for a replacement community building on its footprint. Concentration will be on maintaining the appearance of the seafront, continuing to provide free entertainment, enhancing floral displays and decorative lighting, as well as ensuring a litter-free environment.

**Grants:** During the civic year 2017/18, grants totalling £58,505.00 were allocated by the Town Council. Thanet District Council provided £18,000 event funding, which the Town Council matched and added further funds to. Funds were allocated to: Folk Week, Water Gala, Food Festivals and Summer fireworks (totalling £31,500). Other events received a total of £11,950. Organisational support grants, including Friends of Mockett's Wood and the Tourist Information Kiosk, received £15,055.

Thanet District Council has already announced that it will no longer be providing an event funding grant for the 2018-19 civic year. However, the Town Council has already resolved to award grants at the same level as 2017-18 using its own funding. Details of the community groups and charities that will be receiving grants in the next Civic Year are listed in the Newsletter.

**Policies and Business Plan:** The Town Council has worked hard over the year updating and reviewing its working policies; during the civic year the Town Council has adopted 6 new policies, including: Public Relations, Web & Social Media, Equalities & Diversity, Lone Working, Blue Plaque Policy, and Staff Eye Tests. The Town Council

will start working on its Business Plan for the next 4-5 year period at the end of April 2018.

**Newsletter:** The Town Council is launching a newsletter which will be produced quarterly and will set out the main projects and items of interest that the Town Council will be working on. Hard copies are available at the end of the meeting, and at the Town Council offices, and it will also be available to download on the website.

Cllr Saunders listed the Town Council's activities, projects and services:

Statutory: to convene public meetings (Council, Planning and Finance and General Purposes); Town Council Website; 17 Town Council notice boards; Allotments (Norman Road and Prospect Road); Accounts and Audit.

Civic and Mayoral: Civic Events, Civic Service, Remembrance Service, Annual Town Assembly, Annual Council meeting and Mayor-Making. Mayor's promotional activities (community events, official visits to other towns).

Major Projects: Pierremont Hall and Retort House purchase; Neighbourhood Plan and Design Statement; Grants programme; decorative lighting (Broadstairs High Street Christmas and decorative lights, Promenade festoon lights, and the St. Peter's Christmas lights); Broadstairs and St. Peter's in Bloom.

Other projects and services include November 5th Fireworks; Town Trail notice boards; the Broadstairs Bandstand, Kiosk and Arena; Summer entertainment programme (programme of bands from Easter to mid-September, special events, Punch and Judy); Mockett's Wood; quarterly Town Forum, JCB and Newsletter; funding extended opening hours of toilets and beach lift; Town Crier; replacing street furniture.

## **Planning Matters.**

Cllr. Dexter, Chair of Planning, gave a report on the activities of the Planning Committee and explained that the committee consists of six members plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor who attend ex-officio. Dates of meetings are available from the Town Clerk's office, or the 'Calendar of Meetings' can be read or downloaded from the Town Council's web site. General planning information can also be obtained from the Town Clerk's office. Thanet District Council's new Planning Portal is also available to access full details of all current and recently determined planning applications.

The Town Council, as a Statutory Consultee, receives a weekly list of all Broadstairs & St. Peter's planning applications. Members personally review all new and amended applications and, if concerned, they will request the application be presented to the Town Council's planning

committee for consideration; the committee will then discuss and make recommendations to the District Council's planning department. To assist the committee when determining reserved applications, members will take into account written support and complaints, feedback from District Council planning officers, and will listen to public, neighbours or developer's representations at meeting. Members also make use of a number of planning guides, for example the 2016 Thanet Local Plan, Flat Conversion Guidelines, and the Broadstairs & St. Peter's Town Design Statement. The impending Broadstairs & St. Peter's Neighbourhood Plan, which will become an integral component of the new Local Plan, will also become an important reference document. (The Neighbourhood Plan is due to be submitted to District Council in December 2018.)

Over the past year 12 planning meetings considered a total of 254 applications which equates to a 28% decrease on the previous year. Approximately 85% of the applications relate to home improvements which included single and two storey extensions, conservatories, loft conversions and dormer windows; the remaining 15% included new housing, school and retail developments, flat conversions and signage. There were 39 recommendations for refusal which equates to approximately 15% of the total applications. Examples of concern included over-development, detrimental to the street scene, cramming in an area of 'High Townscape Value', not in keeping with the character and pattern of surrounding development, overlooking, loss of trees, highway issues, poor elevation design, density of housing, and encroaching on the Green Wedge. However many refusals just require a minor change to resolve concerns, for example design improvements, boundary clearances, or a change of scale, location and materials. Applicants that cannot mutually resolve issues and object to a resolution of refusal have a right to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

Recent communication with Mr Iain Livingstone, the District Council's Planning Applications Manager, confirmed that currently his department is resolving on average 95% of all applications; the remaining contentious applications are referred to the District Planning Committee for consideration. If necessary a district councillor also has the power to 'call in' and refer a Broadstairs & St. Peter's application to Thanet District Council's committee.

The planning committee also considered 76 applications for tree works last year ranging from crown thinning and pollarding to felling. Felling of healthy trees are always recommended for refusal unless the tree is dying or diseased, the roots are affecting foundations and/or drains, or the tree is encroaching on the highway. New developments are encouraged to plan around existing trees, and diseased trees that require felling are usually subject to the re-planting of a suitable replacement. All trees in a conservation area are protected and other trees that have 'street scene amenity value' have, or will incur, a

Preservation Order. Trees along the highway come under the control of Kent County Council. However, KCC will listen if there are any concerns relating to road tree works.

Cllr Dexter advised that should any member of the public have concerns regarding eyesore land and buildings or is aware of any mature tree under threat, to notify the relevant ward councillor or the Town Clerk.

Over the past year there have been 2 large developments that have attracted significant public interest:

**i. Proposed development to be built on land to the rear of Mockett's Wood, and the adjacent former British Gas site, Northdown Road (St. Peter's Ward), planning application no. 16/0394**

This application is for a mixed development of 140 houses, a 70 bed care home, land set aside for a scout hut, plus recreational facilities. It is also proposed, as a part of the overall plans, that there will be improvements to the pinch-point at the railway bridge in Northdown Road together with a new road that will run from the bridge, through the development at the rear of Mockett's Wood and eventually join with Hopeville Avenue, thus bypassing the junction on the corner of Northdown Road and Church Street.

The Town Council's planning committee recommended refusal on the grounds of incursion into the green wedge, in contravention of the Local Plan; highways issues; housing density; increased pollution, and detrimental to the well-being of village residents.

In April 2017 the application was considered by TDC's planning committee that resolved to 'refuse to permit' also on the grounds of 'incursion into the green wedge'. The applicant appealed to the inspectorate against the decision of refusal. On the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 after a site visit and public hearing, the inspector appointed by the Secretary of State **dismissed** the appeal. Good news for our community!

**ii. Proposed development to be built on land formally used as the Club Union Convalescent Home, Reading Street (Beacon Road Ward), application no 16/0924**

The proposed development for 34 new dwellings with vehicle access in Convent Road and Reading Street was first considered by the Town Council's planning committee, in September 2016. The application was recommended for refusal due to over-development, highway safety issues and detrimental impact on the Conservation Area. The amended application 16/0924, with a reduction of properties from 23 to 30 was considered by the planning committee in December 2016

and was once again recommended for refusal. The application was subsequently refused by TDC's planning committee in March 2017. The decision went to the inspectorate for appeal, and was dismissed. However, the developer has deposited a new application 18/0142 that has a further reduction of dwellings from 30 to 25 with changes to landscaping and design of dwellings. This new application was considered by the Town Council who once again recommended refusal. We now await the decision from the district council.

## **5. Answers to Questions Session.**

**Albion Street car park:** TDC have now resurfaced the car park. A suggestion was made for a footpath to be incorporated from the church to Alexandra Road, but Cllr Binks confirmed that this was unlikely to be implemented.

**Dickens House Museum:** The Town Council were asked to put pressure on TDC regarding the poor state of this building. It is hoped that the new administration at TDC will address this issue. It was confirmed that there were no plans for the Town Council to take over the building. Cllr Shaw advised that Heritage Lottery Funding was looked into by TDC but there is nobody in post to take this further.

**Community Centre:** The question of money raised by public donation in the past for this project, and the £500,000 loan, was raised. Cllr Binks confirmed that the £500,000 loan will be used for the purchase and refurbishment of Pierremont Hall and Retort House. The Community Centre Trust is still in existence, and the money donated was used for the drawing up of plans, surveys, consultants etc. Audited accounts were kept.

**Retort House:** It was asked whether there would be a consultation regarding Retort House, given the number of users it has. It was advised that some consultation has taken place already. It was also advised that there were no plans for public toilets in Retort House. There will be disabled-accessible toilets provided. Works will include: new central heating throughout; refurbishment of the changing rooms, toilets and kitchen facilities, adjustments to the acoustics of the hall. The whole project could take 5 – 10 years. It also has an asbestos roof which will need replacing. There are not enough funds to carry out all the work in one go.

**Stroke Unit at QEQM:** There is much public concern about the closure of this unit, and it was advised that the Town Council will agree an official response at the next council meeting.

**CT10 Parochial Charities:** The issue of land owned by the charity and designated on the Local Plan as a 'green open space' was raised. It was felt that this action could devalue the land, although there was

no intention to build on it. Cllr Saunders explained that the lease the Town Council has on the land goes beyond the life of the Local Plan, and as such the Town Council was in a position to designate it as a green space.

**The Chairman Cllr. Shaw thanked members of the Town Council, the Town Clerk and members of the public for attending the 2018 Annual Town Assembly.**

**Meeting Closed at 20:28 pm**