

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of meeting held in Plaxtol Memorial Hall on Monday 18 April 2016 at 8.00pm

Present: Cllr P Thomas (Chairman), 7 Parish Councillors; Boro Cllr S Perry; L Thomas (Clerk) and 46 members of the public

Apologies: Mrs P Court

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 27 April 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2. Presentation by TMBC Senior Planning Policy Officer, Ian Bailey

Mr Bailey gave a presentation on planning reforms, which were intended to increasing housing supply and generate economic growth, and which had led to the development of the new Local Plan. Outlined reforms were:

- the introduction of duty to co-operate and Neighbourhood Planning through the 2010 Localism Act;
- the National Planning Policy Framework introduced in 2012 with the aim of simplifying the planning process and incorporating Neighbourhood Planning, Parish Plans and Village Design Statements;
- the introduction of greater permitted development rights in 2013;
- National Planning Practice Guidance for town and country planning in 2014;
- new reforms proposed via the Housing and Planning Bill in 2015 aimed at speeding up the planning process.

The Housing and Planning Bill, which entailed increased density of housing, was still a live consultation and incorporated the following issues:

- the provision of low cost starter homes for first time buyers without local connection criteria;
- automatic technical details consent for the granting of planning permission in principle;
- prioritisation of brownfield sites for development;
- self and custom house building requiring Local Authorities to offer sites with services and permission to those who register;
- Secretary of State intervention in plan making as a last resort to speed up slow progress.

In order to achieve new housing and development targets, TMBC had launched the Call for Sites as required by Government to identify development land that was suitable, available and on which development would be achievable. The outcome was due to be published shortly with a public consultation in September 2016, further consultation in 2017 and adoption of the Local Plan in 2019.

In response to questions from the floor, Mr Bailey advised that:

- there was already a 5.4 year land supply, although as the current plan proposals would run to 2031, the call for sites should identify the remainder. It would be possible for a developer to take a case to appeal should there be a shortfall in land provision;

- there was a duty to co-operate with neighbouring Authorities to help make up any shortfall they might experience because of planning restrictions, eg a high proportion of Green Belt land in their area;
- additional infrastructure, such as schools, would be dependent on where housing was eventually situated;
- the Parish Plan had been welcomed and would be factored into the Local Plan and that parishes were encouraged to work with the Local Authority on the Local Plan;
- strategic assessment of housing requirements would determine what kind of dwellings were needed in what location. There was a need for sufficient appropriate family housing as well as flats and sustainability and the character of an area were also considerations; there would be more density in towns than in villages;
- special circumstances were required to develop on Green Belt land, although boundaries could be redefined, and that development within AONB could only take place if small scale and not detrimental to the area.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bailey for his presentation and thanked TMBC for their openness and transparency in the local planning process.

3. Chairman's Review of the Year, including Parish Plan review

The Chairman reported on the following issues:

- changes in Parish Council membership with a current vacancy to be filled;
- thanks to the Parish Clerk and internal auditor, Marian Hemsted, for their work for the Council and to the new Borough Councillors for their help and support;
- TMBC's proposal to combine area planning committees, which had met with resistance from the parishes and had been withdrawn as a consequence;
- that the Parish Council was awaiting the publication of the outcome of the Call for Sites before planning any possible action;
- that the new dwellings at Shrubshall Meadow had all been let or sold to people with a local connection and that an application for further development at the site had been refused;
- that the failings of the pumping station at Basted were being taken up with the water authority, with special regard to any future development in the area;
- parking problems in Plaxtol village, especially in relation to road closures, small scale developments to local properties, delivery vehicles and the impact on the bus services. Comments and ideas for a parking strategy were requested;
- speeding cyclists and the need to identify individual clubs so that action could be taken;
- that the local business register was constructed via mapping on the website;
- that £3k had been reserved by TMBC for local regeneration and that a proposal to widen the car park entrance for easier access was under consideration;
- improvements to the parish, including maintenance work at the recreation grounds, restoration work at the GML including a planned new entrance,

work on the BMPOS committee, refurbishment to benches, new noticeboards, WI's Clean for the Queen initiative;

- that local crime figures remained low, contact details for the PCSO were available from noticeboards, contact with senior police officers was maintained through the Parish Partnership Panel.
- improvements planned to the Spoute recreation ground with £7,500 matched funds from the PC to add to a £1,000 donation. Volunteers and ideas welcome;
- programme of defibrillator training carried out by the Community First Responder and the continued development of the Emergency Plan;
- that as a result of funding cuts by central government, TBMC was reviewing its funding methodology with the possible withdrawal of the Financial Arrangement made annually to parish councils. Changes could result in a reduction in Council Tax being offset by a substantial increase in precept to maintain services.

4. **Open Forum**

Questions and comments from the floor were as follows:

- discussion of the merits of Facebook and Twitter as means of communication in the parish;
- an endorsement of the WI initiative in the Clean for the Queen campaign with Plaxtol WI being featured on the DCLG website;
- the need for highways repair.

5. **Any Other Business**

Boro Cllr Steve Perry congratulated the Parish Council on its refreshing approach and the community for its wide variety of activities and good community feel Mrs Clare Harrison thanked the Council, and especially Cllr Fermor, for support with setting up the Youth Club.

6. **Date of Next Meeting:**

Monday 24 April 2017 at 8 pm.