

Minutes of the Kennington Community Forum Open Meeting, which started at 7.50pm on Tuesday, 27 September 2016 at St. Mary's Community Centre, Rylands Road, Kennington, TN24 9LL

Present: Core Group members: Chris Morley (Chair), Sandra Dunn (Secretary), Lee Robinson.
Members of the community: Cyril Marsh, John and Madeleine Perriss, Graham Skinner.
Michelle Byrne (Liaison Officer, ABC), Councillor Andrew Buchanan, Helen Brown (Home Start).

1. Chris Morley (CM) welcomed everyone to the Open Meeting section of the evening.
2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 27 July 2016 were accepted as a true record of events.
Matters arising:
 - 2.1. Antisocial behaviour at Bockhanger Square: It has since been discovered that dispersal orders had been put in place.
 - 2.2. Chris Morley still has the display boards from the Orchard Farm presentation.
3. **Update from PCSOs.**
 - 3.1. No PCSO was available for the meeting. Nikki Potter sent an email explaining that they were now advising all meetings they attend to visit the police.uk website for information on all crimes in their area. She said, however, that she would attend meetings when possible as it keeps her in touch with what is going on. The secretary said that she had looked at the website and found that the last available update was for the month of July. This showed a total of 40 crimes in the Kennington/Bybrook/Bockhanger wards. The Chair said that he posted the crime map on the Forum's website.
 - 3.2. She was aware of problems with antisocial behaviour in Bockhanger Square and was expecting a meeting with Councillor Buchanan about the issue.
4. **Chair's report (Chris Morley).**
 - a) The Local Government Boundary Commission for England have recently held a consultation regarding the ward boundaries for councillors in Ashford borough. We have submitted suggestions based on comments received during the recent Governance review and in line with the planned Community Council. Our proposal suggested four wards covering the community council, with a new ward covering Little Burton Farm and Conningbrook, and the original Great Burton estate and Bybrook combined into one ward. ABC have also submitted similar proposals, but with Goteley Mere and Towers View being part of their proposed Trinity ward. This would require these streets to be a separate parish ward within Kennington Community Council with their own Community Councillor. We have concerns about the practicality of effective representation from a relatively small ward.
 - b) The Local Plan to 2030 generated a significant number of comments from residents, especially in opposition to policy S2 which proposes 700 houses behind the Conningbrook Hotel which received 1482 comments, mainly opposing this policy. Opponents included Kent County Council (ALP/2559), as this site may be in conflict with the recently adopted Minerals and Waste Policy; Southern Water (ALP/2348) as this site could be affected by odour from the sewage works; Natural England (ALP/2369) as the draft plan "does not give a clear rationale why the importance of the development outweighs the weight that should be given to Best and Most Versatile [land]"; and Highways England (ALP/2687) because "This site is likely to adversely impact both the Strategic Road Network in terms of congestion and safety". We welcome proposals to extend the Green Corridor in Bybrook and in Little Burton, but are concerned that although the draft plan support local community facilities it regrettably does not make any reference to Bockhanger Community

Centre. We will monitor the plan as it progresses and plan to make representations at the public inquiry in early 2017.

- c) The state of Bockhanger Square is causing concern. While we understand the difficulties of progressing the redevelopment plan, the area currently has the feeling of neglect. Cllr Buchanan is planning to arrange a meeting with community representatives in the near future to understand the issues.
- d) Following comments on various social media platforms, the Forum has arranged a visit to Bybrook Wastewater Treatment Works on 10 October, to gain a better understanding of the processing that takes place and of transport of waste to and from the site.
- e) We are represented on the NHS Ashford Clinical Commissioning Group's Community Network, and through this I recently gave a presentation to the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board. We expressed concern at the apparent lack of communication between ABC and the Clinical Commissioning Group in relation to planning of primary healthcare in the draft Local Plan. The Community Network will be actively involved in local consultations on the NHS's Sustainability and Transformation Plan which could see very significant changes in provision in East Kent. The consultation is expected to commence before the end of 2016.
- f) I will be attending the National Association of Local Councils meeting for new parish councils on 20 October in Birmingham.
- g) With the retirement of Robin Britcher, we are currently considering the future of Kennington News. We have the technical capability to produce a quarterly edition, and we are very grateful to Geoff Stanborough who organised distribution of the last edition and has offered to co-ordinate the next edition and he also wished his thanks to be passed on to the volunteer helpers who have assisted with the delivery of the News. We are, however, in need of an editor who can track down all the interesting stories in our area and write them up for our readership.
- h) Equally pressing is the need for a Treasurer. Chris has done a fabulous job of accounting for the Forum's monies, and will be a hard act to follow – but without a Treasurer the Forum will find it very difficult to continue. We would welcome volunteers who could help us with this, and of course, we are always interested to hear from residents who would like to join our Core Group and help make Kennington a better place to live.

5. Updates from councillors.

Councillor Andrew Buchanan (ABC: Bybrook Ward)

- 5.1. Cllr Buchanan has organised a meeting with Matthew Scott (Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent) and PCSO Nikki Potter at Bockhanger Square to discuss the problems with anti-social behaviour in the area.
- 5.2. He is also holding a meeting with ABC officers to discuss the future of the Bockhanger community centre. He said that it was not possible to get grants for the work needed to bring the hall up to standard, as the area was 'not deprived enough'. Also there are other amenities nearby such as St. Mary's Community Centre. The hall needs £200,000 for the necessary improvements. He is in discussions with Cllr Neil Shorter, who is now the portfolio holder, to bring it up higher on the agenda. They will continue patching it up but nothing additional is planned in the near future. It was suggested that the hall is no longer fit for purpose for modern use and the whole area needs an uplift. Perhaps a 'Friends' scheme to keep the area tidy might help and the school might be encouraged to get involved.

6. Any other business

- 6.1. Home Start: Helen Brown said that the organisation, which relies heavily on donations and grants, supports young families. They have a home-visiting service and also offer support to

fathers with 'chill with dad' sessions. They have been nominated by the Kennington Co-op to become their charity of the year but people have to vote to ensure that they are successful in their bid.

6.2. Kennington News: this will be ready for distribution by 1st December.

7. **Next meeting.** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 29 November 2016 at St Mary's Community Centre, Rylands Road.