
EASTERN AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting held via Skype on Tuesday, 22 June 2021 from 7.00 pm - 7.42 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Alastair Gould, Carole Jackson, Denise Knights (Chairman), Benjamin Martin, Hannah Perkin, Julian Saunders (Vice-Chairman), David Simmons, Eddie Thomas and Tim Valentine.

NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES: Parish/Town Councillors Bev Ferrell (Oare Parish Council), Kevin Fraser (Doddington Parish Council), Kevin Hobson (Selling Parish Council), Alan Steward (Graveney with Goodnestone Parish Council) and Jeff Tutt (Dunkirk Parish Council).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Janet Dart, Jo Millard and Larissa Reed.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson, Ken Ingleton, Pete Neal, Ken Rowles and Tony Winckless.

Kent County Councillor Rich Lehmann.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Ben J Martin and Mike Whiting.

96 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Members nominated Councillor Denise Knights to be elected as Chairman for the Municipal Year 2021/22, to be confirmed at the next Eastern Area Committee in September 2021.

97 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Members nominated Councillor Julian Saunders to be elected as Vice-Chairman for the Municipal year 2021/22, to be confirmed at the next Eastern Area Committee in September 2021.

98 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

99 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2021 (Minute no. 572-581) were taken as read, signed and approved subject to the addition of the following additions to attendance by Parish Councils:

“Parish Councillor Kevin Fraser, Doddington Parish Council and Parish Councillors Janet Hill and Beverley Ferrell, Oare Parish Council were in attendance”

100 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members noted the progress on actions.

The Vice-Chairman asked for the background wording under Bus services between Faversham villages and rural areas on the Matters Arising update to be amended to *“At the September 2020 Eastern Area Committee meeting a motion was passed which included the following proposal: That an investigation/report be made into reviewing existing community transport models to see what might be suitable for the Eastern area”*.

101 PUBLIC FORUM

A Parish Councillor said that the Brown Heritage sign on the A2 by Beacon Hill contained redundant information about a vineyard which was no longer there. The Area Committees Coordinator was asked to find out how to get this information removed.

A Parish Councillor for Selling commented that he would be keen to have cycle paths added to the agenda for a future meeting.

A Member asked for an update on the Kent County Council (KCC) verge cutting programme. The KCC Divisional Member for Swale East advised that as part of the Pollinator Action Plan less cutting had taken place this year, however, cutting of specific areas could be arranged if requested.

102 LOCAL ISSUES

No local issues were raised.

103 SITING OF PLAQUES AT PLACES OF INTEREST

The Chair introduced this item and confirmed that following agreement by the Committee to take the proposal forward, she was able to confirm that Cabinet Members were fully supportive of the proposal to site plaques, and that any plaques should be funded by the Area Committee.

The Chair went on to ask for any suggestions of potential sites to be emailed to her and she would bring back costings to the September 2021 meeting.

104 BUS SERVICES BETWEEN FAVERSHAM VILLAGES AND RURAL AREAS - NEXT STEPS

The Vice-Chair reminded the Committee that at the September 2020 meeting a motion was passed which included the proposal that an investigation/report be made into reviewing existing community transport models to see what might be

suitable for the Eastern Area. There had been no progress since that meeting and the Vice-Chair thought it would be useful to have a discussion on public transport. He had put forward three options within the paper for Members to consider.

A discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A Member suggested that at the next Area Committee meeting, the Committee referred the following recommendation to Cabinet – *“To write to KCC requesting more information on how they would be utilising the government’s “Bus Back Better” strategy in Eastern Swale”* as along the A2, both Swale and KCC needed a reliable and regular bus service to encourage more people to switch from private cars to using public transport. This would subsequently assist in reducing air pollution in both Ospringe and Teynham, which both KCC and Swale had shared responsibility. He added that once there was a more reliable and frequent service on the A2, then a connecting shuttle mini bus service to small villages would be worthwhile.
- Another Member noted that bus services along the A2 had got worse. A lot of villages to the south of Faversham had no bus service or transport links to Faversham. A Parish Councillor agreed this was the case in Selling.

A suggestion was made to bring this topic back to the meeting in September 2021 for a full discussion on how to take this forward and to invite Dan Bruce (KCC) who led on the Quality Bus Partnership. The Area Committees Coordinator was asked to obtain details of the services currently available in Faversham.

105 UPDATE ON AREA COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Vice-Chairman who sat on the Area Committee Review Working Group gave an update on the progress of the Review. The Working Group were finalising their report which would be presented to the Committee Chairs. Cllr Benjamin A Martin who also sat on the Working Group added it was important that the Area Committees were recognized for doing more than providing funding.

106 FUTURE FUNDING

As the Working Group had recommended that Area Committees considered what their funding ambitions and priorities were for the year ahead, it was suggested that Members forward any ideas to the Chairman and the Area Committees Coordinator by Friday 23 July 2021 so a proposals report could be put together and considered at the September meeting.

107 MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE BY CABINET

No issues were raised.

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No issues were raised.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel