

BORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 21st July, 2016

<u>Present:</u>	Cllr. C. Masters – Chair	Cllr. J. Emery
	Cllr. J. Bolas – Vice-Chair	Cllr. E. Harrison
	Cllr. M. Millican	Cllr. C. Sims
	Cllr. M. Downes	Cllr. K. Lainton
	Cllr. J. Evans	Lynda Fisher, Clerk
	Cllr. P. Paige	Borough Cllr. Hampshire

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone; apologies were received from Parish Cllrs. Baldock (attending a Planning Meeting at Swale House) and Hepburn, and PCSO John Cork.

2. **Public Time**

Borough Cllr. Hampshire again reminded regarding the Local Plan Consultation and the importance of making a considered response; possibly putting forward alternative sites if objecting to any proposed in Borden. All responses will ultimately be going to the Planning Inspector.

3. **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Proposed by Cllr. Paige and seconded by Cllr. Millican: 1 abstention, the Minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 16th June 2016 were agreed and signed as a true transcript.

4. **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Cllr. Bolas declared an interest in Item 6.2.

5. **Matters Arising**

1. Lorries Parking in Chestnut Street – Agreed to go with 3 Brunel litter bins with tops at a cost of £411.50p plus £25 installation, plus V.A.T., each and to monitor the situation; Cllr. Sims to meet on site to discuss the location of the bins with Swale's Officer. **Action: Cllr. Sims/Clerk**
2. Traffic Calming – Following a discussion on the issues surrounding this the Clerk was delegated to respond to the request for traffic Calming in The Street. **Action: Clerk**

6. **Correspondence**

1. **Swale Borough Local Plan – Proposed designation of Local Green Spaces** – Pleased to note that the Nature Reserve has been included.
2. **Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications June 2016** – Proposed by Cllr. Emery and seconded by Cllr. Sims; 1 abstention, agreed to send the following response:

We particularly support the following modifications:

3.0.10 We will look to protect and enhance the nation's (and our own), most important environmental assets – coastal habitats, down land, dry valleys, ancient woodlands, agricultural land and historic resources. As well as providing custodianship, we will take all opportunities to expand the range of biodiversity and habitats and take responsibility for ensuring that wider growth does not place unsustainable pressures on our resources of European protected wildlife habitats around the coast. In so far as it is compatible with our settlement strategy and other sustainability objectives, we will also allocate sites for development on land of the lowest

environmental value, in so doing encouraging the effective use of previously developed (brownfield) land and minimising the significant loss of high quality agricultural land.

Main Modification 26 Environmental capacity

4.2.14 We have significant environmental constraints across 63% of the Borough which affect the potential to accommodate growth. However, due to the amount of land not affected, it is difficult to show that housing growth within the lower and middle bands of the 600-900 per annum range, at the level of the objectively assessed need, would not significantly adversely affect the Borough's principal environmental assets, ^(4.9) including its local landscape and biodiversity designations. However, with an increase in housing target, this level of growth, other constraints come under pressure, notably high quality agricultural land, locally designated landscapes and those with low capacities to accommodate change, alongside the spaces between towns and villages and the heritage value of certain settlements. Some constraints would come under greater pressure if development were to be steered to the most economically viable areas to build.

Main Modification 43

4.3.4 These differences in emphasis and what they have meant for the development strategy have been explored by successive sustainability appraisals and have been found to be the most appropriate and sustainable approach. As a result, we have evolved our local strategy through the creation of the two planning areas identified by para. 4.2.48 and by the indicated and varying scales of growth directed at them. As well as reinforcing the emphasis on regeneration with the Swale Thames Gateway area, a reduced scale of growth at Faversham:

- avoids significant adverse impacts on heritage assets, limits the release of high quality agricultural land, limits upward pressures on out-commuting, whilst boosting housing provision;
- there is no overriding housing market evidence indicating a need for a housing led strategy;
- limits pressure upon the Kent Downs AONB;
- allows for a greater range of less constrained sites in more sustainable locations to be allocated with the Gateway, especially on previously developed land;
- supports, in the Gateway, the significantly greater levels of employment land and the largest proportions of the Borough's economically active residents and share of local GDP. This helps to compensate for forecast declines in the working age population; and
- assists in the stimulation of demand for improved retail/leisure facilities at Sittingbourne.

Main Modification 96

Statement 3

The importance of Swale's agricultural sector

- Swale has 37,000 ha of land; of which 23,000 ha is farmed and approximately 15,000 ha (around 70%) is classified as best and most versatile (BMV).
- For arable farming (e.g. winter wheat), the output from BMV land is estimated at £900 – £1,300 per ha. The estimated gross margins are between £4.9 and £9.5 million.
- For soft fruits, the output from BMV land is estimated at £43,000 – £109,000 per ha. The estimated gross margins are between £1.5 and £66 million.
- These Gross margins are similar (but not equivalent) to Gross Value Added (GVA), and are worth between 0.3% and 3% of the £2 billion of GVA in Swale.
It is estimated that there are between 1,250 and 2,500 FTE jobs in agriculture and food and drink manufacture in Swale. This represents approximately 3 - 5% of Main Modification 107
- the 47,400 FTE jobs in Swale.
- BMV can also provide other 'ecosystem services' benefits such as flood water storage, ecological and landscape values.

Main Modification 107

5.2.51 Whilst the development strategy of the Plan and supporting Transport Strategy is focused on locating development where the supporting transport can be provided in the most sustainable way, the Borough also has a rich heritage of rural lanes which contribute greatly to amenity. These may come under pressure with inappropriate development proposals. The issues are considered in the context of Policy DM26.

Main Modification 189

6.6.46 Community facilities will be required and shall include those within the Local Plan Implementation and Delivery Schedule. These shall include contributions to the expansion of primary school provision at Murston and community learning and skills and youth services at Sittingbourne. Contributions to the expansion of GP health services at Sittingbourne will also be required.

The Parish Council is concerned that the following modifications are not sufficiently robust:

Main Modification 7

4.3.67 Parts of the town and the wider A2 corridor experience poor air quality and Air Quality Management Areas have been declared for St. Paul's Street and East Street, Teynham, Green street and Newington High Street. Development affecting air quality in these areas will need to be consistent with the local air quality action plans and bring forward innovative mitigation measures.

The proposed level of development and associated traffic will increase the extent of areas not meeting required air quality standards and these should be included in air quality action plans.

Main Modification 120

Policy CP 7

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment - providing for green infrastructure

The Council will work with partners and developers to ensure the protection, enhancement and delivery, as appropriate, of the Swale natural assets and green infrastructure network and its associated strategy. Development proposals will, as appropriate:

1. Recognise and value ecosystems for the wider services they provide, such as for food, water, flood mitigation, disease control, recreation, health and well-being;
2. Protect the integrity of the existing green infrastructure network as illustrated by the Natural Assets and Green Infrastructure Strategy Map, having regard to the status of those designated for their importance as set out by Policy DM25 and Policy DM29;
3. Where assessment indicates that it is necessary to enhance and extend the network (including when management, mitigation and/or compensatory actions are required to address adverse harm), be guided by the Green Infrastructure Network and Strategy Map, prioritising actions toward identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas;
4. Minimise and mitigate impacts on European designated wildlife habitats, including, in the case of habitats across the North Kent Marshes, contributing to its Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS);
5. Ensure that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of a SAC, SPA or Ramsar site, alone or in combination with other plan and projects, as it would not be in accordance with the aims and objectives of this Local Plan;
6. Require the completion of project-specific Habitats Regulation Assessment, in accordance with Policy DM8, to ensure no likely significant effect upon any European designated site;
7. Require the completion of project specific Habitats Regulations Assessment, in accordance with Policy DM28, to ensure there are no likely significant effects upon any European designated site. For sites within 6km of the North Kent Marshes development must contribute to its Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy;
8. Contribute to the objectives of the Nature Partnerships and Nature Improvement Areas in Kent;
9. Make the enhancement of biodiversity and landscape as their primary purpose;
10. Promote the expansion of Swale's natural assets and green infrastructure, including within new and existing developments, by:
 - a) delivering a high standard of design quality to maximise the social, economic, health and environmental benefits of green infrastructure;
 - b) providing a focus for social inclusion, community development and lifelong learning;
 - c) taking into account the guidelines and recommendations of relevant management plans and guidance, Biodiversity Action Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents;
 - d) contributing to the protection, conservation and management of historic landscapes, archaeological and built heritage assets;
 - e) achieving, where possible, a net gain of biodiversity;

- f) providing new recreational facilities in accordance with Policy DM17, exploiting opportunities to link urban and countryside areas and to create new footpath and cycle links;
- g) taking account of and integrating with natural processes, such as flood risk and utilising sustainable urban drainage; and including proposals to 'green' existing and proposed developed areas by increasing opportunities for nature in domestic gardens, streets and buildings, including street trees and in and around formal open spaces and sports provision.

Swale Borough Council does not meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient allotment space to meet demand. Provision should be made to do this.

Main Modification 107

5.2.51 Whilst the development strategy of the Plan and supporting Transport Strategy is focused on locating development where the supporting transport can be provided in the most sustainable way, the Borough also has a rich heritage of rural lanes which contribute greatly to amenity. These may come under pressure with inappropriate development proposals. The issues are considered in the context of Policy DM26.

Rural and semi-rural areas around development are already suffering from high volumes and speeds of traffic seeking to avoid congestion on the main roads. There is no effective enforcement of speeds or vehicle width /weight and this adversely affects safety, air quality, amenity and leisure use, walking and cycling.

The Parish Council has strong reservations about the following modifications:

Main Modification 191

Land at south-west Sittingbourne

6.6.47 Located to the east and west of Wises Lane and to the south of Brier Road and Westlands School, in the Parish of Borden, some 33.7 ha of farmland is identified for a major mixed use expansion of Sittingbourne comprising some 565 dwellings, together with commercial development, a new primary school, major open space and landscape enhancements. The site has been identified as having significant potential to meet the Borough and town's future growth needs in a sustainable location, close to existing services and the strategic road network.

33.7 Ha of well drained Grade 1 agricultural land suitable for horticultural use would be a significant loss to development. If used to its full potential, it could generate c£3.3 million Gross Margin and offer 6-8 full time equivalent jobs and many more for regular seasonal workers. Its use appears to be contrary to planning guidance. *“Paragraph 112 of NPPF states that: “Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.” (DCLG, 2012)”*

The main text of Bearing Fruits 2031 states that:

4.1.12 Although the number of jobs in agriculture and horticulture is relatively small, our strategy anticipates forecast growth in this sector. For this and the wider rural economy, we will respond positively to the new opportunities for diversification and improved resilience for food production, as well as activities in other rural sectors, including growth in community based jobs and services, where they can be successfully integrated within their locality.

4.1.54 Our strategy aims to both promote local food production and local sales and help these sectors sustainably adapt to the challenges of climate change. We have a wider responsibility for ensuring that our agriculture and food based economies continue to put food on the nation's plate. This means supporting these sectors as they grow and change and safeguarding the national resource of the highest quality soils – both as a means to increase food security and reduce food miles.

Including this area in the Local Plan appears to be contrary to these statements.

6.6.48 The area is arable farmland and has a predominantly rural and open character, with a relatively flat to gently undulating landform. Beyond it, the landform rises more steeply southwards, climbing to the village of Borden which is located on a ridge overlooking the site. Wises Lane itself is a narrow road linking the village of Borden to Sittingbourne, with a junction at the A2, whilst Cryalls Lane, a narrow route again, runs eastward from Wises Lane back into the residential areas of Sittingbourne.

Wises lane and Cryalls lane are unsuitable for any increase in the volume of traffic.

6.6.57 Although located close to a good range of services and public transport choices, there is other provision, such as a convenience store, which could be provided if further assessment demonstrates them to be necessary and viable. A one form entry primary school (on a two form entry site) is likely to be required and this should be provided on the southern boundary to the site where it can support the landscape initiatives described above. The location of the school is shown indicatively on the southern edge of the allocation where its design and layout would need to avoid increasing adverse impacts within the countryside gap. The Masterplan/development brief and planning application process should consider the most suitable location in relation to these issues and its general accessibility for pupils.

6.6.62 With the site located relatively sustainably in terms of access to local amenities and services, opportunities should be taken to ensure that connections to existing walking routes to the A2 and town centre are made, new footpaths created and that opportunities to travel on foot to destinations to the south such as local primary schools are created and/or enhanced. Provision of local bus services might also be required, but this will need to be examined in the context of options as to how the overall site is to be assessed.

KCC have recently scoped the need for new primary school provision in the area and have found that there is insufficient demand, even including new development. They are of the opinion that Tunstall remains the preferred KCC school for expansion. One school entry primary schools are currently uneconomic and most unlikely to be viable given the current economic situation and shortage of teachers.

A development can either be sustainable, or not. The expression 'relatively sustainable' effectively means unsustainable. A sustainable transport strategy for this development would need to include provision for cycling. Access to either Sittingbourne or Newington station is difficult from this area during peak hours. Development which effectively precludes the use of sustainable rail travel is not in our opinion sustainable.

6.6.63 Transport infrastructure issues are of major importance. Firstly, given the likely timing of interim and longer term major improvements to J5 of the M2 at the A249, an assessment of the level of development able to come forward before completion of the improvement will need to be undertaken at the Masterplan/development brief/planning application stage. Secondly, improvements to the A2 at Key Street with the A249 will also be necessary. An assessment will also be required of other junctions in the A249 corridor between and including Key Street and the Grovehurst Interchange. Thirdly, the most appropriate form of accessing the site will need to be determined (see below) and finally, some of the roads serving the area may require localised improvements and/or traffic management. These could include the junction of Wises Lane with the A2, Adelaide Drive with the A2, Brisbane Avenue with Adelaide Drive, Auckland Drive with Borden Lane and Borden Lane with Homewood Avenue.

Road infrastructure:

- Provision for traffic management will also need to be made for Chestnut street, Danaway, and Oad street, which already suffer from high volumes of fast traffic during peak hours which would reasonably be expected to increase as a consequence of the proposed development.
- Traffic exiting this development onto the A2 will cause further congestion to an already inadequate road system. Any traffic management system imposed at the bottom of Wises lane will impede traffic travelling both to and from the main town centre.

- Currently traffic the A249/A2 (Key Street) is unable to cope with existing traffic at peak times which will only worsen with the Iwade and Sheppey developments. Traffic from the main Sittingbourne town and the Northern residential areas of Sittingbourne i.e. Sonara Fields, Kemsley, Iwade etc. converge on this junction. The current layout and traffic movement measures are completely inadequate to deal with the amount of traffic let alone a considerable increase.
- The same can be said of the A249/M2 (Stockbury Roundabout) junction. Whilst there is a proposed relief to this main route any development should be postponed until this junction has been developed.
- The surrounding lanes, Wisers Lane, Cryalls lane, The Street, School lane etc., are all too narrow to deal with an increase in traffic. Passing on all of these routes is difficult and the proposed increase in vehicles would exacerbate this problem.
- Any designed road running through the proposed estate parallel with the existing A2 will create a 'rat-run' for traffic evading the current bottlenecks. As a consequence, there will be a detrimental impact on the safety and quality of life for residents/public.

Policy New MUX 1

Land at south-west Sittingbourne

We believe that the policy is not appropriate for inclusion in the local plan. It uses a significant area of prime land when the demand for such land for the produce grown on it, and consequent employment are increasing. In doing so it is contrary to National guidance, SBC's own policies and detracts from the areas resilience to climate change.

There is no evidence to support the need for or viability of the proposed school.

The development is not sustainable with regard to transport or air quality, since it will lead to further congestion on the A2, A249 and rural lanes.

There are alternative sites available on grade 3 soils. These could also be closer to employment sites and means of sustainable transport. One such site is Brenley Corner Faversham SW778, which would be a more suitable option for housing development.

Further comments to support not including this area of land:

Break down of the barrier that differentiates the village of Borden from the town of Sittingbourne thus losing rural village individual identity. This is a great concern and cannot be understated. The influx of housing planned would bring Sittingbourne closer to Borden and in fact the plans already list the area as South West Sittingbourne.

Key Street and Borden are both areas of historical value particularly the land between. These afforded ancient settlements some of which lay undiscovered. There is evidence of early settlements in this area next to the river Bourne and this should be fully explored and investigated prior to any building work.

There is currently insufficient provision for appropriate healthcare for residents of Borden and surrounding areas, further provision should be accommodated within the local plan modifications.

The land itself is excellent agricultural land; as mentioned previously Grade 1 and should be protected. Uncertainty about the availability, price and quality of food within the UK arising from climate change, development of the Asian/Chinese economies and population growth has been exacerbated by the recent decision to leave the EU. Further loss of production capacity and the local economic development opportunity to construction would not be prudent.

The current commercial development mentioned in the report sits comfortably in unobtrusive previous farm buildings. Further expansion on this site will negate this observation.

What if any discussions have taken place between Swale Borough Council and other bordering boroughs? Maidstone Borough Council is considering developing Detling industrial area into housing and commercial and are only giving a roundabout as an improvement to the A249. This is in addition to the 18000+ houses planned for Maidstone. That planned development at Maidstone, and particularly at Detling, needs to be considered when planning traffic flows and potential junction improvements for roads within Swale.

3. **HMRC Consultation - off-payroll roles for personal services companies working for a public sector engager** – Noted, Clerk to discuss this with the Internal Auditor. **Action: Clerk**

7. **Finance**

1. The Playstool Play Equipment – Fencing installed and equipment installation imminent.
2. Information (Heritage) Boards – Put on August Agenda. **Cllr. Hepburn/Clerk**
3. SLCC Membership 2016-2017 – Proposed by Cllr. Paige and seconded by Cllr. Bolas; agreed to renew at the one-third cost of £55.67p.
4. 2015/16 Internal Audit Report – Proposed by Cllr. Paige and seconded by Cllr. Millican the report was noted and accepted. Agreed to invite David Buckett to the September meeting. Cllr. Downes to look at investing/opening up a new account for any funds that exceeded the £75,000 FSA Compensation Scheme. **Action: Cllr. Downes/Clerk**
5. To authorise cheques raised at the meeting and approve the Accounts – Proposed by Cllr. Millican and seconded by Cllr. Emery, 1 abstention; Members agreed that the following cheques be signed and the accounts to the 30th June 2016, be approved:

Date	Cheque	Details		Amount
21.07.16	102519	L. Fisher	Expenses: Tele, Office Use, mileage, 12x1 st & 12x2 nd class stamps	£35.39p
21.07.16	102520	H.M.R.C.	Tax Due for July	£102.40p
21.07.16	102521	Fryer Group	Grounds maintenance for June	£439.40p
21.07.16	102522	J. England	Playstool Inspections for June	£40.00p
21.07.16	102523	Four Jays Limited	Toilet Maintenance June	£43.20p
21.07.16	102524	Steve Wakeling	Clear area by Oak Tree; strim footpath near Homestead Vie2 and Playstool Maintenance 2 nd payment	£718.38p
21.07.16	102525	McCabe Ford Williams	Quarterly Payroll Preparation	£39.00p
21.07.16	102526	B&K Masters LLP	Repairs to Playstool equipment; Re-fit Village Sign; Move, supply and fit play area fencing Playstool; supply & replacing swing strut; supply and fit two new bench seats	£4622.40p
Eight cheques in total				

Other Payments:

Clerk - Wages July 2016	-	£409.96pp	-	Paid by Standing Order
E-on - Energy supply June	-	£35.91p	-	Paid by Direct Debit
E-on – Feeder Pillar Supply June	-	£11.00p	-	Paid by Direct Debit

8. **Reports and Minutes from Portfolio Holders and Representatives**

1. Finance – Nothing to report. To look at holding a meeting in September. **Action: Clerk**
2. KALC – E-mail sent to Chair of Area Committee; no response as yet. Clerk to forward copy to Cllr. Sims. **Action: Clerk**
3. Borden Sports Association – Meeting held. Still in Premier League; second senior team in the area. They are also holding their own as regards the Cricket Club.
4. Heritage – The Group had a stall at the Borden Fete and as a result of this enrolled new Members.
5. Borden Fete – Cllr. Harrison advised that the final figures will come out in September. The Fete

Committee wished to thank the Parish Council for the funding it gave.

9. **To receive and consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified:** - None.

10. **Planning Applications**

1. **16/505633/FULL:** 134 Borden Lane Borden Kent ME9 8HR: Amendment to previously approved application: 15/505615/FULL (Demolition of existing garage and cat slide roof over and rear conservatory. Erection of two storey side and rear extension with roof conversion together with internal alterations. Proposed single storey rear extension.) to alter the design of roof and insertion of additional roof lights – no objections.

11. **Any Other Matters Arising**

1. Cllr. Bolas advised that he had looked at the seat on the triangle by Hengist. All of the wood is rotten and held together by steel bars which are rusting; these could be replaced at a cost of £160. Clerk to place on next Agenda for approval. **Action: Clerk**
2. Cllr. Millican advised that the shrubs from the flats owned by Amicus have not been cut back; Clerk to chase KCC. **Action: Clerk**

12. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on Thursday 18th August, 2016, commencing at 7.00 p.m. in the Barrow Room at Borden Parish Hall

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.