

Notes on the Meeting of the Faversham Future Forum held on Monday 21st May 2018

Present: Councillor Geoff Wade (new chairman) Shiel Campbell, (retiring Mayor), Trevor Abrams, (Mayor), Professor Christopher Wright (Faversham Society), Chris Oswald-Jones, Councillor Ben Martin, Jenny Reeves (Labour Party), Gareth Reeves, Carole Jackson (Labour Party), Debbie Lawther (Creek Trust and Labour Party), Julian Saunders (Labour Party and Footpaths Group), Pauline Gerosz (Resident), Frances Beaumont (Resident), Sue Akhurst (Chair, Creek Trust), Councillor Anita Walker, Dr Alastair Gould, Janet Turner.

1. Councillor Geoff Wade introduced himself, having been invited by Shiel Campbell and Trevor Abrams to take on Chairmanship of the meeting. A discussion followed, in which concerns were expressed that Mr. Wade was new to the group and may not be aware of the guidelines for housing development (collated by Professor Wright) the result of previous discussions. COJ spoke of Councillor Wade's previous experience and Shiel Campbell and Trevor Abrams both spoke of their confident belief that a person like Councillor Wade (a long term borough employee and councillor) should take on the Chairmanship. His appointment was proposed by COJ, seconded by Jenny Reeves, and accepted by a unanimous show of hands.
2. Councillor Wade went on to say that, putting politics aside, the group could form a channel, taking concerns forward, and in particular he wanted to be able to contribute to the new consultation for the future of Swale, Looking Ahead, beginning on 8th June.

Proposed Action: Geoff Wade to speak with Councillor Lewin, Cabinet Member, and to continue discussions with the Head of Planning, James Freeman, which started with the Forum's guideline initiatives in January 2018.

3. COJ, Debbie Lawther and Frances Beaumont outlined their concerns, based on discussions and workshops:
 - a) COJ asked that Air Quality should be added to the committee's portfolio of concerns. Agreed unanimously
 - b) Frances Beaumont highlighted the need for improved footpaths, mentioning the Oare development and the path behind Goldfinch Close.
 - c) Debbie Lawther and Frances Beaumont highlighted the need to absorb the BIMBY approach in all planned development (Beauty in My Backyard) an initiative of the Princes' Foundation.
 - d) Developers should be encouraged to consider solar panels, and perhaps enter into a supply agreement to negotiate best price and practice.
 - e) Bus routes and possible provision of smaller buses

- f) Concerns about water, sewage, and possible impact upon flooding
 - g) The importance of contributing to the Consultation commencing on 8th June
 - h) Provision of safe crossings (Pauline highlighting Love Lane)
 - i) Connectivity- developers need to be aware of links to other developments, not work in isolation.
 - j) New technology – electric buses, solar panels.
 - k) Julian commented that the Faversham Footpaths Group was alert to the needs to preserve and improve footpath routes.
 - l) Jenny Reeves raised the importance for mothers with children of safe passages.
 - m) Debbie reasserted the need to consider the BIMBY guidelines which are definitive and structured.
4. The Chairman proposed asking the Head of Planning to join us and this met with approval with the following points arising:
- a) Geoff expressed the view that we had learned lessons from the dangers of “bolt-on” developments. Once planned it proved difficult to effect changes as had been shown in recent discussions about road provision at Perry Court. He was sympathetic to the way in which residents of Ashford Road were being overwhelmed by Perry Court and Preston Fields proposals, transforming the rural aspect of their homes.
 - b) Geoff said the Duchy of Cornwall was bringing a different perspective their approach being endorsed by Debbie Lawther. The emphasis is on community, using best practice, design, and considering, for example, solar tiles.
 - c) Debbie reiterated that, if we wish to further build on our guidelines, we need to adopt the BIMBY approach.
 - d) COJ pointed out the key difference between the Duchy and other developers – the Duchy already own the land.
 - e) Professor Wright emphasised the need to feed our views into proposed developments before it is too late.
 - f) Ben Martin commented that the group’s work and that of the Town Council are valuable but are hampered by the fact that Developers only have to comply with the requirements of the NPPF. The Duchy’s land ownership means they do not have to pay for land as do other Developers, the price putting constraints upon them.

- g) Sue Akhurst pointed out that Faversham is constrained as it is bordered by Parishes who may not engage in the same processes.
- g) Geoff Wade suggested that the Faversham and District Engagement Forum could be a useful place for the discussion of such issues.
- h) Trevor Abram informed the meeting that the Town Council Planning Committee had tonight unanimously voted for refusal of the Reserve Matters for Perry Court.
- i) They were not satisfied on the grounds of connectivity and on lay-out with additional issues concerning a gas main and a secure road corridor to Brogdale Road.

5. The role of Highways and KCC:

- a) The Chairman pointed out that the responsibility for connectivity was not that of developers alone.
- b) There is no clarity about the impact on the A251 of Perry Court and Preston Fields and in addition Professor Wright pointed out that Crest Nicholson (Love Lane Phase I) development had not responded to a request for information about the impact upon traffic.
- c) No figures have been supplied but Professor Wright believed these figures must be available and proposed that *“The traffic generated by each development must be assessed and made public as a precondition of planning permission. KCC must be responsible for gathering and disseminating this information.”*

The Chairman agreed to take this matter forward with Highways Officers.

- d) Shiel queried how this information could be used: *“What happens when we have it?”*
- e) Professor Wright felt that the information would give us power in influencing decision-making.
- f) Jenny Reeves suggested that the figures must in fact be well known as they feed into health issues, such as asthma caused by pollution.
- g) Dr Gould raised the issue of how changes could be made by households to limit car use. Do schools make enquiries about how children come to school? Could there be initiatives to encourage walking?

Geoff Wade agreed to have a discussion with Highways and to make his findings available to a future meeting.

6. Looking Ahead: The consultation period for Swale Borough Council’s next planning phase begins on 8th June and everyone was urged to submit

their views on the website. Chapter 7 of the document is the most relevant to the concerns of this forum.

7. Any Other Business:

a) Dr Gould asked if the 20's Plenty survey had yet been published. COJ said he understood that the study was to be redone.

b) COJ highlighted changes to Stagecoach services and Jenny Reeves urged consideration of improved public transport. She will contact the Campaign for Better Transport who will be able to identify particular black spots and poor provision.

The Chairman thanked those attending and closed the Meeting at 9 pm.

Date of Next Meeting: (subject to agreement by Louise) **23rd July, 2018.**