

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Tandridge Local Committee held at 10.15am on Friday 6th March 2009 at Tandridge District Council Offices, Oxted.

County Council Members

- * Mr David Hodge - Chairman
- * Marian Myland - Vice-chairman
Mr Peter Langham
- * Mrs Sally Ann B Marks
- * Mr Ken Rimington
- * Mr N W Skellett

District Council Members

- * Cllr Lisa Bangs
- * Cllr Michael Cooper
Cllr Tony Elias
- * Cllr Martin Fisher
- * Cllr Eric Morgan
- * Cllr Brian Perkins

* = Present

01/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Mr Peter Langham and District Councillor Tony Elias. District Councillor Glynis Whittle substituted.

02/09 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2008 [Item 2]

Accepted.

03/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were none.

04/09 PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were none.

05/09 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS [Item 5]

There were none.

06/09 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS [Item 6]

There were none.

07/09 **COUNTY COUNCILLORS ALLOCATIONS FOR 2008/09** [Item 7]

The Local Committee considered 13 applications for funding to take it up to the end of the financial year 2008/09, committing all the available funds for that year.

RESOLVED that the Tandridge Local Committee consider new requests for funding from the Members' Allocations budget as set out in Annex A of the report and approved the following:

Chaldon W.I	£745.00
Ramblers Assoc	£100.00
Skaterham	£4,980.00
Whyteleafe Tennis Club	£650.00
Tandridge Access Group	£2,500.00
Tatsfield In Bloom	£800.00
Taxi Vouchers	£4,340.00
Lingfield Football Club	£3,450.00
Bletchingley in Bloom	£840.00
Buses 4 U	£5,500.00
TVSC	£3,000.00
Caterham Business Partnership	£1,000.00
CR3 Soldiers	£380.00

RESOLVED that the Tandridge Local Committee formally agreed in-principle agreements from 5 December 2008 as at Para 2 of the report ie Marden Lodge Play Equipment £2,500.00 [Minutes 5 December 2008 Para 62/08].

Reason for Decision

All projects under consideration have been sponsored by, and have the support of, the appropriate Local Member. As funding for Tandridge Local Committee is pooled, Members are requested to consider them as a group and to decide on whether or not to approve them.

08/09 **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE IN TANDRIDGE** [Item 8]

This report sought to update Members on the educational progress of young Tandridge people in the care of Surrey County Council.

The Development Manager for Looked After Children (LAC) and Young People gave an overview of progress of LAC educational attainment and the contributing factors against a background of resources available to support them to improve. Although children in care do not perform as well as other children, Surrey's performance overall is better than other authorities and Surrey County Council continues to look at ways of improving. Some of these include the appointment of a Head Teacher of the Virtual School for looked after children whose role is to review each case and to ensure that each of our LACs have a personal education plan which will list those resources most relevant to each child to help them to achieve their full potential, either in mainstream or more personally directed education, such as tutoring. The attending officer offered to bring the post holder to a future meeting of the Local Committee.

Members were interested to know how such a positive report could co-exist with the findings of the Joint Area Review, which raised concerns about Surrey County Council's performance overall but particularly in relation to children. In his capacity as Leader of the Council, Mr Skellett was able to explain in some detail that Ofsted individually rated the majority of Surrey County Council's services as good to excellent and that included Fostering, Adoption and Children's homes where Surrey looks after a high and increasing number of vulnerable children.

Children's Service is appropriately staffed by qualified staff. 80% of all children in care receive regular dental and health checkups and 90% have a personal education plan in place. There is a higher incidence of school exclusion among children in care nationally so, taken in context, Surrey County Council is performing well and continuing to improve.

Where the assessment has uncovered poor practice is in management of recording and meeting of government timescales for dealing with new referrals. He does not dispute these findings and has made every effort to address this by meeting on a weekly basis with senior managers to review progress and by diverting resources to achieve significant improvements in a thorough and consistent manner. Surrey County Council has responsibility for approximately 5,500 children, of these roughly 1,000 fall into the high need category and are being catered for well. The remainder have been reviewed, not by sampling, but on a case by case basis so that he is confident that the problem is being effectively dealt with.

He feels that Ofsted has been inconsistent in its findings and its rating and the Council is contesting this while accepting and addressing those areas where problems have been identified.

He also confirmed that, while the government encouraged the integration of Education and Children's Social Care, this model was flawed and Surrey County Council now employs three heads of service to deal with Children's Social Care; Schools and Learning and more recently Services to Young People, which is a more efficient model.

This report called for free access to leisure and, on behalf of the District Council, Martin Fisher explained that leisure services locally had been contracted out to Tandridge Leisure which runs as an independent company. However, he was open to finding ways for the District Council to support this and the Development Manager for Looked After Children and Young People agreed to provide information from another district in order to quantify what might be needed.

Finally, in respect of recommendation (ii) below, the Chairman identified ways in which the Committee would continue to offer support by: promoting recruitment of foster carers locally with support from the Head of Communications and looking for ways to be more pro-active, for example, encouraging foster parents to participate in local radio interviews to give a view of what fostering children entails. He also called for more to be done to support young care leavers into work.

RESOLVED that the Local Committee (Tandridge) **AGREED** to:

- (i) note the information provided on the position of children and young people in care in Tandridge, and to
- (ii) consider ways in which it might support children and young people in care in Tandridge.

Reason for Decision

The recommendations support efforts to narrow the attainment gap between Children and Young People in Care and other children.

09/09 **CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN TANDRIDGE** [Item 9]

This report was withdrawn pending the issue of the operator's license for the Children's Centre rural bus as the purpose of the report was to introduce the new service to rural Tandridge.

[NOTE: Adjourned for coffee at 11.25 and reconvened at 11.40 am]

10/09 **PETITIONS** [Item 10]

There were none.

11/09 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS** [Item 11]

There were none.

12/09 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** [Item 12]

There were none.

13/09 **LOCAL COMMITTEE TASK GROUPS TERMS OF REFERENCE** [Item 13]

This report sought approval from the Local Committee to adopt a code of practice in accordance with recommendations made by the Ombudsman to bring its task groups into line with best practice across Surrey County Council.

It was duly noted that the name of the existing task group, Decriminalised Parking Enforcement was no longer appropriate and would change with the review of this task group at the first post-election meeting of the Committee in July.

RESOLVED that the Local Committee for Tandridge AGREED to:

- (iii) approve the terms of reference template at annex A, to be used for all future Local Committee task groups, and
- (iv) formally endorse the Parking Task Group's terms of reference at Annex B, due for review at the first meeting of the new municipal year in July 2009.

Reason for Decision

To comply with best practice following an Ombudsman's recommendation.

14/09 **ADOPTION OF THE TANDRIDGE PARKING STRATEGY** [Item 14]

This report sought the approval of the Local Committee to adopt the Tandridge Parking Strategy while taking into account certain points concerning time scales for delivery, which may need to be extended to allow for budgetary pressures and commitments.

After some discussion it was agreed that the strategy, which had previously been approved by Tandridge District Council should be adopted. However, there was concern at the use of language and it was noted that in Para 2.2 of the report, the word 'aspirational' was ambiguous and should be replaced with 'proposed,' which more accurately reflected the County Council's position.

RESOLVED that The Local Committee (Tandridge) AGREED that:

- (v) the points detailed below be noted, and
- (vi) the Tandridge Parking Strategy be adopted.

Reason for Decision

The parking strategy needed to be formally adopted by the Local Committee but with the points raised in the report duly noted as the scope of the proposals detailed in the Strategy may need to have the timescales extended to allow for resource and budgetary allocation to be determined.

15/09 **TANDRIDGE BUSES 4U SERVICE** [Item 15]

This report sought to update Members on progress of the Buses 4 U scheme in Tandridge and its future direction.

Mr Nick Skellett asked if there were costings per passenger per mile that could be used to more fairly compare different types of passenger transport and the attending officer agreed to supply this information to the Chairman to be disseminated to Members.

The Chairman then moved to change the recommendation from 'noting the content' on this information report to reflect the Committee's on-going commitment to the scheme as follows:

RESOLVED that the Local Committee (Tandridge) **AGREED** to continue to support Buses 4 U in the Tandridge area.

They also noted their appreciation for the hard work of the officers involved in providing such a necessary and popular service.

16/09 **CATERHAM HEALTHCHECK: AN UPDATE** [Item 16]

This report provided an update on the community-led Caterham Healthcheck (ABC : A Better Caterham) and progress on the Surrey County Council's work as part of the Health-check's key project 'Shabby to Smart'.

The Highways Group Manager East gave a brief overview of the Annexes to this report outlining the proposals to deal with drainage and updating Members on progress with costing the schemes suggested by the Healthcheck volunteers. In considering the recommendations, Members included an additional item (v) to ensure that work progressed on drainage as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED that The Local Committee (Tandridge) **AGREED** to:

- (i) note the ongoing work of the Caterham Healthcheck and the county council's support in relation to specific projects.
- (ii) continue to contribute through Member representation at the ABC Steering Group meetings and the proposed Caterham Partnership once this is established.
- (iii) agree the proposed list of streetscene improvements supplied by the Caterham Healthcheck group and costed by Surrey Highways.
- (iv) consider the initial drainage issues report from Highways, with a possible bid to the Integrated Transport Scheme funding in allocations for 2009/2010.
- (v) undertake work at Annex 3 Paras 4, 5 and 6 now, with costs to be taken from the LTP budget.

The Committee also noted its appreciation for the work of the Area Director and the Highways team in moving this forward.

Reason for Decision

The community-led Caterham Healthcheck is now complete, giving a community profile of the area, sharing local views and highlighting priorities for the town and area. The priorities of the Healthcheck group are now being taken forward; partly through a bid to SEEDA which requires county council support. The information and recommendations in this report clarify the county council's involvement in the future work of The Caterham Partnership.

17/09 HIGHWAY SCHEMES IN TANDRIDGE PROGRESS REPORT [Item 17]

This report sought to update Members on progress of schemes prioritised in the Local Transport Plan.

The Local Highways Manager drew particular attention to the significant progress on Judges Corner and to the works about to commence in Chalkpit Lane which begin on Sunday 8th March 2009 for a week and which may result in road closures on the 8th and 15th.

RESOLVED that The Local Committee (Tandridge) **AGREED** to note the report for information.

[NOTE: The Chairman closed the meeting by publicly thanking those Members of the County Council who will be retiring from office at the next election on 4 June for their contribution to the Local Committee: Mr Peter Langham; Mrs Marian Myland and Mr Ken Rimington.]

[Meeting Ended: 12.30 pm]

Chairman