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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE KIG JOINT PARISHES GROUP
Held on 21st February 2008 at 7.30pm.

Present: Representatives from the following Parish Councils:
Bearsted
Broomfield & Kingswood
Boxley
Chart Sutton
Detling
Downswood
Harrietsham
Hollingbourne
Langley
Leeds
Lenham
Otham
Sutton Valence
Thurnham
Ulcombe

The meeting was chaired by Peter Waite - TPC

Also in attendance: Mrs Sherrie Babington and Paul Carter – Leader KCC.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Vic Davies, Richard Jacques, Peter Titchner and John Middleton.

Bill Stead proposed Peter Waite as Vice Chairman of the JPG; this was seconded by Dick Morley and agreed by all present.

Peter Waite formally took on the position of Vice Chairman of the Group.

2. Minutes of previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting was accepted by all present.

3. Paul Cater – KCC.

The Chairman welcomed Paul Carter to the meeting as elected KCC Member for Rural North.

Paul Carter addressed the meeting, he informed all present that KCC was opposed to the planning application and he stated that some of the information that he would speak about at the meeting would be confidential.

He spoke of KCC's actions with regards to the planning application and stated that as consultees they were prepared to do everything in their power to oppose the application.

He stated that it was possible that the application would be subject to a planning enquiry and he spoke of the three possible scenarios:

1. The applicant could appeal against a refusal from MBC.
2. The Secretary of State could call the planning application in.
3. The applicant could apply for non-determination of the application.

Paul Carter referred to the letter sent to KCC by the JPG outlining the areas they wished to discuss at the meeting, and he answered these questions as follows:

1. *What progress is being made by KCC with regards to the KIG planning application and what action has been taken to date?*

He confirmed that KCC had made a full response to the consultation sent out by MBC. He stated that they had given good reasons why the application should not be supported and this letter had been submitted by 27th November 2007.

He spoke in confidence about issues regarding this.

2. *What action will KCC take should the application go to Public Enquiry?*

Paul Carter confirmed that KCC would wish to produce evidence and witnesses at the enquiry. He stated that they would look at the strategic planning and transport issues.

3. *Would KCC consider the allocation of resources to the Joint Parishes Group in order to continue to fight the KIG proposals from a local level?*

He stated that KCC did not have a formal budget for such funding. He stated that if it were legal then KCC would consider this.

4. *Would KCC consider hosting a conference to give some interface between local groups?*

Paul Carter referred to the planning response put forward by KCC, he confirmed that this covered 15 – 20 planning reasons why the application should not succeed, and agreed that this letter could be circulated to the group if necessary.

Peter Waite thanked Paul Carter for answering the questions put forward in advance by the JPG and he opened the meeting up for further questions.

John Horne spoke regarding the JPG's employment of Mark Watts, and he spoke of the air quality and monitoring at Junction 8, he asked if this could be put in place by KCC. Paul Carter confirmed that this would be possible, and he spoke of the current air quality and stated that he would into the monitoring for the section of the motorway at Junction 8.

Peter Waite updated Paul Carter on the progress that the JPG had made regarding KIG.

Gavin McLaggan asked whether the JPG would be able to have access to the work undertaken by KCC to avoid duplication of work. Paul Carter confirmed that Mark Watts could have access to the information held by KCC.

Bill Stead spoke regarding the development at Junction 7 and suggested that the details of the Article 14 placed upon this would be useful to the JPG.

Paul Carter asked if the capability of the railway to take the additional freight had been tested and he suggested that this was an important area to address. John Horne confirmed that Mark Watts work would cover this area.

A discussion took place regarding the recent permission given to a similar application in Bexley and the consequences of this and the ideal location for a third crossing of the Thames.

Paul Carter spoke regarding the current systems in place and the funding of infrastructure improvements and the location for a third crossing of the Thames. He confirmed that a report had now been commissioned to look at this matter and various locations for a third crossing. He spoke of the Governments current Ports Strategy and the implications of this.

Mr Hay suggested that the absence of a published business plan could indicate that the proposals were not what they wished to do.

A discussion took place regarding the Local Development Framework and the implications of the KIG on this.

Members discussed the way forward should the application go to appeal and the role that the JPG would play in this.

4. KIG Planning Hearing.

Councillor Horne spoke on the report by MBC on the KIG planning hearing, he stated that MBC was proposing to put a structure in place to deal with the hearing and he spoke regarding their proposals.

He suggested that the JPG should consider how the JPG would be represented at the committee.

This was discussed and it was suggested that some liaison should take place with CPRE and StopKIG, this was agreed.

Bill Stead spoke regarding the planning hearing process and advised on how he considered that this should be approached by the JPG.

Peter Waite suggested that these areas did need to be clarified; however this would become clearer when MBC had considered the report at the forthcoming meeting.

The JPG debated how they thought that the group should be represented at the planning meeting, it was agreed that a further JPG meeting should be called when further details on the hearing were known.

A question was raised regarding the water issues in the area and Councillor Horne spoke in response to this, he stated that the air pollution was not so well documented and air quality monitoring was essential for Junctions 7 – 8.

Bill Stead was asked to draft a paper for the JPG regarding the planning hearing process.

A further discussion took place and it was suggested that Peter Cooper spoke for 15 minutes at the hearing and representatives from the JPG spoke for the other 15 minutes, placing emphasis on local issues.

This was agreed by all present and it was agreed that Peter Cooper should be asked to give a list of points that required more local emphasis for the planning hearing.

5. Date of Next Meetings.

18th March 2008.

The meeting closed at 9:40pm.