

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE KIG JOINT PARISHES GROUP
Held on Monday 24th September 2007 at 7.30pm.

Present: Richard Jacques – Thurnham PC
Peter Waite – Thurnham PC
John Horne – MBC Ward Cllr & Thurnham PC
Victor Davies – Boxley PC
Geoff Cosgrove – Detling PC
Mark Housden – Detling PC
Geoff Licence – Bearsted PC
Patrick Walton – Bearsted PC
Gill Fort – Leeds PC

The meeting was Chaired by Richard Jacques - TPC.

Also in attendance: Mrs Sherrie Babington.

1. Introductions & Apologies.

Apologies were received from Ward Councillors Mr and Mrs Parvin.
All representatives present introduced themselves to the meeting.

2. KIG – The Current Position.

Richard Jacques spoke on the current situation as he understood it regarding the Kent International Gateway. He asked all present if they had any further updates to report on this matter.

Richard Jacques spoke of the recent discussions that he had held with Steven Scott-Brown of MBC and the anticipated time scale for the proposed development.

John Horne informed all present that following a discussion with Brian Morgan of MBC that to date this matter had not been progressed any further, he reported that the likely timescale for a planning application was December/January. He stated that should a formal planning application not be forthcoming by then that MBC would have to proceed with the Local Development Framework on the assumption that a planning application would be forthcoming.

He reported that it was anticipated that there would be an appeals process and this could end with the Secretary of State.

Geoff Licence suggested that all Parish Councils exchange their submission to MBC on the LDF as this may be of benefit when looking at this matter in the future.

3. Response to formal planning application.

A general discussion took place regarding the response to a formal planning application.

Geoff Cosgrove stated that it would be of benefit to have a formal group.

Councillor Horne reported that although he was unable to offer a view with regards to the LDF this was not the case with KIG. He supported the creation of a formal group as collectively Parish Councils would command more might and respect than a single Parish Council.

Richard Jacques stated that the preference was for a formal group of Parish Council representatives to be formed to make comment on a planning application when it was

forthcoming. He referred to meetings that he and John Horne had held with leading parties such as Lord Bruce-Lockhart and the MEP when the initial proposals were made public and informed the meeting that they had agreed to be patrons to a formal group of Parish Councils if one was formed.

Patrick Walton spoke in support of a formal group, he also suggested that a decision should be as to what course of action should be taken if the formal plans were different to those expected and were for houses or a retail park.

He also spoke about the funding for expert advice on this matter and questioned how such issues would be dealt with.

This was discussed and it was agreed that all of the parish Councils represented would have to be formally consulted regarding the formal set up of the group and for any financial input, it was agreed that any funding would have to be considered per capita.

Richard Jacques spoke regarding the consultant used by Thurnham Parish Council to draft its formal response to the LDF. He asked if it would be helpful if he was to arrange for the planning consultant to attend the next meeting of the group to ascertain the procedures for a response to such a planning application.

He suggested that a clear plan as to the process was needed in relation to the proposals.

Geoff Licence stated that it was inevitable that there would be some development in the area and suggested that the KIG proposals may be a smoke screen for another venture.

A further discussion took place regarding the limited resources of Parish Councils. It was agreed that there was an opportunity to make an impact on this issue and Parish Councils need to start thinking about issues such as emotional impact.

Peter Waite suggested that Parish Councils may need to think about other expert assistance with less technical aspects.

Geoff Cosgrove formally proposed that a formal group of Parish Council representatives was established, this was supported by all present and it was agreed to formally name the group 'KIG Joint Parish Group'.

- ***Formal Group formed called KIG Joint Parish Group.***

Geoff Cosgrove also proposed that Thurnham PC took the lead on this group and chaired the meetings. This was agreed by all present.

- ***Thurnham PC to take lead and chair the meetings.***

It was agreed to notify MBC of the group set up and to put together some headed note paper for use by the group listing its Patrons.

It was agreed that an idea of possible costing needed to be ascertained in order to allow Parish Representatives to approach their respective parish Council with regards to agreeing possible costs.

Richard Jacques suggested that this was a question that could be asked of the planning consultant.

The recent appeal for Slade Green was discussed by the meeting. John Horne informed all that although the Enquiry had concluded as yet there had been no decisions made.

Richard Jacques spoke of the importance for the group members to be able to take immediate action when a planning application was forthcoming and of the necessity to keep the local residents informed of the groups actions and to ensure that they are aware of the details of such a planning application to enable them to respond to this.

It was agreed that the group would need to publicise itself at the right time in order to gain maximum impact.

The publicity of the group was discussed by all present.

Patrick Walton reiterated the importance of the Planning Consultant and the need for the key points to be considered at the appropriate time to make an impact. He stated that information needed to be gathered and suggested that it may be of benefit to make contact with other authorities where parish Councils had been involved in similar situations as this may assist the group in their way forward.

John Horne spoke of Thurnham Castles' inclusion in the Walking the Walls literature and of its global importance as being part of an international consortium.

Richard Jacques summed up the discussion and the following actions were agreed:

- ***Thurnham to make contact with Peter Cooper of Bloomfield's to ask him to attend a meeting to discuss this further. (no cost implications)***
- ***Thurnham to seek a quotation from Bloomfield's outlining their costs for a response to a planning application for KIG.***
- ***Parish Representatives to consider questions for the Planning Consultant.***
- ***All parishes to be informed of the estimate of costs and the cost ratio for all parishes in the group to be calculated.***

4. Other Items.

The various stages of the proposal were discussed and it was agreed that a commitment should be made by the group and their Parish Councils to the whole process through its various stages and any cost commitments should be incorporated in the various budgets.

The groups links with StopKIG were also discussed and its was agreed that although it supported the aims of the pressure group as elected bodies the Joint Parish Group had a different role in representing its local communities in its response to the planning application when submitted to the Borough Council.

5. Date of next meeting.

To be confirmed.

Richard Jacques thanked all present for attending the meeting and closed it at 8.55pm.