

# *The Wincheap Society*

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## **Minutes of the Committee Meeting of The Wincheap Society at 7.30pm on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2016 at 94 Wincheap (thanks to Joe)**

Present: John Osborne (Chairman), Gillian Bull, Joe Passey, Ed Craven, Pat Marsh, Nick Eden-Green

1. Apologies for absence: Eddie Peake, Sarah Walter
2. Minutes of the last Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2016

The Minutes were signed as a correct account.

### 3. Matters Arising

#### i. Wincheap Playground

Ed has been informed by the Council that a refurbishment of the playground will take place before July 2017, ready for the summer holidays. The Council thinks a back access might be possible but the conifer will have to come down. They will have to consult on their plans for the playground but would like our ideas. Suggestions were made for picnic tables and a basketball hoop, as well as themed play equipment. Ed will be meeting Rebecca from the Council to put forward our ideas and listen to hers.

**Action: Ed**

#### ii. Quinn Estates Meeting

John stressed that Quinn Estates are the developers for the extra houses at Cockerling Farm, not for Thanington Park. They were originally with Pentland, the developers for Thanington Park, but the two companies have split the site up, so we are now dealing with two developers.

John felt that Quinn seem to be more willing to engage with residents than Pentland. They have had two meetings so far. At the second, Quinn put forward a plan for traffic modelling with the entrance from Milton roundabout. It was considered this might alleviate congestion. The whole development depends on traffic improvements by KCC, so a meeting with KCC is of paramount importance.

Nick reported that a meeting has been arranged on Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm at County Hall. He hopes to persuade Thanington PC of its importance. He thinks it is

vital that both they and transport consultant, Bruce Bamber, are present and extremely useful if a member of WinSoc committee could be present as well. John cannot attend but Gillian might be able to. Nick intends to be there but he can only really go in support of Thanington PC, as they lodged the original challenge.

Thanington PC have spent a considerable sum of money pursuing a possible legal challenge to the planning decision granted last January to build 750 houses in Thanington. They also commissioned the Railton Report from Bruce Bamber.

Last August their solicitors indicated there was a less than 50:50 chance of a successful judicial review and that the costs would be £20,000, which they might not get back. Understandably they wrote to CCC saying they would not proceed with the review on condition that a meeting be held with CCC, KCC and the developers to thrash out the problems. This would involve calling Bruce Bamber down as their expert witness. Since then, they have said they cannot spend any more taxpayers' money.

Bruce Bamber's presence will cost money. Nick understands Thanington PC cannot spend more. However, to pull out now does mean that all that has been done to date will be wasted and the developers and KCC will proceed unchallenged.

Nick is personally willing to put up £100 towards Bruce Bamber's fee (£300 + expenses - around £150?). He knows one or two other residents in Thanington may well do the same. Hilltop, Iffin, Merton and New House Lanes (HIMN), Chartham and SCA will be asked if they can contribute. Nick asked whether Winsoc might also do so. John said we could only contribute a small amount but some members might want to help. Gillian gave Nick a contribution, which was gratefully received, and John will also be making one.

The objective at the meeting on 25th November is to find out how the developers are going to deal with the junction between the new development and the A28, the slip-road traffic, traffic lights, prioritisation, etc. (A vital factor in all this is that traffic on the slip road cannot be allowed to back up onto the A2 for safety reasons).

Nick stressed the importance of setting transport priorities:

- 1) KCC must deal with the bottleneck of the junction of Wincheap with the ring road first before traffic increases. They must consider the options again, such as building a new tunnel under the railway line.
- 2) The Wincheap relief road through the industrial estate must be implemented.
- 3) A new Park & Ride of adequate size must be put in place with capacity for 1,200 cars rather than 900.

- 4) The fourth slip road off the A2 should be the last traffic improvement implemented.

**Action: Gillian?**

iii. Hollow Lane Development

Sarah and Nick spoke at the Planning Committee meeting but the application was granted with only Nick opposing.

iv. Litter Campaign + Litter Pick

John went to the litter round table on 11th October. Cllr Terry Westgate is now in charge of urban litter and Cllr Ben Fitter-Harding of rural litter. John took two copies of the Council's Litter Action Guide for groups and residents' associations in the Canterbury city area. The guide gives the Serco Freephone for reporting any kind of litter, flytipping, supermarket trolleys, etc. It is 0800 031 9091.

The problem for the Council taking action is financial, though Pat saw a litter picker on Martyrs Field Road the previous Sunday – the first time she has seen one in the area.

It was thought we could ask to litter pick land owned by Network Rail around the East Station where it would not be dangerous to work, eg behind the railings down Station Road East. A short council risk assessment must be completed before carrying out a community litter pick and equipment can be obtained from the council. Email: [litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:litter.support@canterbury.gov.uk)

Gillian asked whether dog poo bins could be installed in the Homersham/St Jacob's area.

**Action: John, Nick**

v. Transport Consultation

John filled in the online questionnaire to respond on behalf of WinSoc.

vi. Student (HE / FE) Impact Review. Also "Have Your Say" - University Challenged Group

The consultation on the Council's report from the Review will start on 21<sup>st</sup> November and close on 19<sup>th</sup> December. There will be a drop-in session to view and discuss the conclusions at the Northgate Community Centre from 8.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

The University Challenged group is made up of Canterbury residents. They are a forum for discussion of the impact on the city of the universities. Their website is [www.universitychallenged.co.uk](http://www.universitychallenged.co.uk) You can take the poll on your feelings about further growth of the universities and/or just send in your thoughts.

#### vii. Merger of East Kent District Councils

Pat attended the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November and reported back.

The five East Kent District Councils had produced a Statement of Intent, with their shared view that a merger merits further serious consideration. Consultants are currently working on a proposal for how the merger would take place and make a business case for it.

The purpose of the merger would be to:

1. Deliver opportunity and prosperity for East Kent;
2. Achieve better social outcomes and reduce inequality;
3. Improve value for money and consistency of core services;
4. Empower communities and create a platform for further innovation.

The principles for examining the business case are:

1. Decisions about East Kent must be taken at the right level to maximise engagement and empowerment of local communities, whilst also ensuring that strategic issues are considered at the right scale. East Kent expects meaningful involvement in devolution discussions between Kent County and central government.
2. Any merger would proceed hand in hand with the opportunity for devolution of appropriate responsibilities to town and parish councils to the greatest extent that is possible, practical and legally permissible.
3. The identity, civic responsibilities and heritage of the districts, towns and parishes of East Kent must be respected and protected under any new arrangement.

4. Further careful examination of the implications for local council tax would be required.

The meeting raised a number of questions which will be put to the consultants preparing the business case:

- What will happen with Neighbourhood Plans, produced in accordance with the Localism Act of 2011? Will they be respected by a new merged council and what will be their validity?
- Potential democratic deficit:
  - a) What will the governance model for the new council be (the leader + executive model previously at CCC has been replaced with a committee system because it is considered more democratic)?
  - b) Risk of weaker links with local councillors (NB constituency for each councillor would rise from an average of 3,000 voters to 15,000)
  - c) There might be a change in the roles of councillors and officers and their input into planning and licensing.
  - d) Desire for referendum on final decision.
  - e) A fairer voting system such as proportional representation would have to be decided at the national level and could not be introduced at this level.
- Creation of new town/parish councils – we need to look carefully at their powers/functions and devolve those which are more appropriate at this level from district councils. This has financial implications for the funding of town/parish councils.
- At what level will planning decisions be made? They should be made as locally as possible, especially for liquor licensing, housing density, historic built environment issues, social housing, social care, parking, parking restrictions and road repair. However, strategic planning for the region will need to be made at the macro level and the issue of developers' land banking must be addressed at a national level.
- Care must be taken to establish the right staffing levels to maintain staff morale.
- Transitional arrangements will need to be considered carefully as 'dangling' decisions will be inherited by the new merged council.

The business case will be considered by each of the five district councils in March 2017 and a consultation on the merger will only take place if all five are in favour.

viii. Wheelie Bins – Enforcement

The Council have been round to put notices on bins left on the street on Martyrs Field Road and York Road. Some are still regularly left out, however. Pat will ask for further action.

Nick stressed the need for a proper survey of those residents who cannot use bins but need purple sacks.

**Action: Pat**

4. Licence for former Lotus House Chinese Take Away.

The owners are asking for opening hours to be extended to 10am-12 midnight and 12 midnight to 3am. John wrote a response to the consultation but it was closed when he put it in. The application is to be heard on 29th November but he will not be allowed to speak if his representation has not been received.

5. Obituaries – Deaths recorded since our last meeting

**Leonard Cohen**, Canadian poet and singer-songwriter (*Suzanne, Dance me to the end of love, Hallelujah*); **Robert Vaughn**, American actor (Napoleon Solo in *The Man from Uncle*); **Jimmy Young**, English DJ and singer, best known for his long-running afternoon show on BBC Radio 2; **Jimmy Perry**, English actor and scriptwriter, best known for devising and co-writing the BBC sitcoms *Dad's Army, It Ain't Half Hot Mum and Hi-De-Hi*; **Bobby Vee**, American pop singer of early 1960s (*Take Good Care of My Baby*); **Dave Cash**, British radio presenter who latterly worked for BBC Radio Kent, having had previous spells at Radio London, BBC Radio 1 and Capital Radio; **Jean Alexander**, British television actress (Hilda Ogden in *Coronation Street*); **Raine, Countess Spencer**, British socialite and local politician (daughter of novelist Barbara Cartland).

6. Any other business

- i. There is a new Mountfield Park consultation on the new documents submitted by the developer. The Governance Sub-Committee has decided that the number of speakers can be extended from 3 to 10 on this application. Nick will propose

that WinSoc should be on the list of RA consultees because of the likely impact of the development on traffic on the ring road.

7. Date of next Meeting

Monday, 5th December at 7.30pm at 53 Wincheap (thanks to John)