

Tonbridge and Malling Climate Change Forum

Meeting – 14.07.2022

Minutes

Present

Andrew Stevens – Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Anthony Bales - Tonbridge and Malling Friends of the Earth
Cllr Anita Oakley - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Cllr Georgina Thomas - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Cllr Kim Tanner - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Cllr Mark Hood - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Cllr Robin Betts – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council **(Chair)**
Cllr Wendy Palmer - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Eleanor Hoyle – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Fran Long – Tonbridge Community Forum
Gill Fox – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Guy Nevill – Birling Estate
Henry Saunders - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Jennifer Lewis – Tonbridge Town Team
Karena Harmer – Youth Forum
Sarah Deakin – Kent County Council
Tom Shelley – Parish Council Representative (Aylesford PC)

Apologies:

Cllr Kim Tanner - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Cllr Michael Base - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Cllr Paul Hickmott - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Derek Whitehead – Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
Elizabeth Milne – Kent Local Nature Partnership
Gemma record – Youth Forum
Lizzie Lowery – Volunteer and Community Sector
Mario Caccamo – East Malling Research
Rev David Green – Faith Sector Representative

Tudor price - Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

1. Introduction & previous minutes

RB introduced the meeting and attendees introduced themselves to new members.

Previous meeting minutes were agreed.

2. Update on air quality grant & initiative

EH provided an update on the £36,000 DEFRA grant for new air quality monitors and anti-idling signage. This project is based on previous work, hoping to lead to behavioural change and awareness. The grant covers the purchase and operating costs for 5 sensors for air quality monitoring for 5 school sites.

The following 8 primary schools are interested, providing a good geographical spread:

1. Cage Green - Tonbridge
2. St Margaret Clitheroe – Tonbridge
3. West Malling CEP
4. Offham Primary School
5. East Peckham Primary School
6. Borough Green Primary School
7. Ditton Infant School
8. Watlington Primary School

If the project progresses as expected the sensors will be installed in late August and engagement with the schools will begin in the first term of the new school year, with the sensors remaining in place at least six months from installation.

SD asked EH about the type of sensors order for this project, whether clothing sensors were taken forwards and highlighted an opportunity with regards to vulnerable communities and health professionals.

EH highlighted that diffusion tubes are not used as they are not best for targeted use. Riccardo worked to get the most appropriate sensors for this purpose. Further details of the sensors are to be provided along with the minutes. EH noted that clothing sensors were not taken forwards due to concerns with the type of data that its measuring.

AO mentioned that the Aylesford local school has a large area between the school and local crossing for children to walk. Cars at the level crossing idle, with no surrounding signage to encourage against this. Signs in this area would be appreciated.

These comments were noted by EH who will see if can be included in this campaign.

WP asked about obtaining data before schools go back for comparison for when they return.

EH highlighted that they were currently waiting on installation and power to the sites. The intention is to measure and collect data to form a baseline to compare against. Due to the 6-week funding announcement delay, project timelines were pushed back, which make it harder to get the sensors installed to collect baseline data, although this is still the aim.

MH noted that it was not entirely clear about school selection, asking if the project could be tied in with the KCC walking buses scheme.

EH highlighted that education and awareness is ongoing around issues with poor air quality. Many schools partake in KCC schools on Wednesdays.

RB noted that we must not get two items confused, anti-idling and improving air quality. This scheme is targeting a specific problem.

3. Update on group representatives

Covered during introduction. It was also highlighted that college representation is required, due the previous representative leaving.

4. Terms of reference discussion

GF mentioned to the group that the terms of reference need to be updated, noting that from now on papers, and minutes will be published on the council's website.

RB raised with the forum that we need to be aware that the forum is for the community and the representatives, not so much TMBC, with TMBC assisting with developing and holding the forum. The purpose is wanting to give more focus on what the forum can do, rather than it being more led by the TMBC.

AO asked whether minutes be published on mod.gov for all councillors

GF agreed that this can be arranged.

AB suggested that we think about overlap with the forum

GF clarified that this forum is separate to council action plan, focusing more on awareness raising, and being group led. This forum doesn't need to fit with council actions.

5. Update on TMBC climate change action plan

HS provided update on the TMBC climate change action plan, running through progress from the previous year and key actions for year 3 (2022/2023).

MH suggested that TMBC re-evaluate the stalled active travel strategy.

EH highlighted that the local transport note 5 has changed the funding landscape. There is a need to rethink this, to make sure schemes are eligible for funding.

MH asked if TMBC use up all of the GHG 300k, and if not, where has this gone.

It was noted that the funding was use it or lose it funding. There will be new schemes / funding opportunities in the future.

MH mentioned the previous TMBC recycling mascot, and the possibility to resurrect so as to help improve recycling in the district. MH also raised the issue that TMBCs major emissions

contributors are from the leisure centres and waste services. TMBC should start to look at waste services as an emergency.

MH also raise the point of new developments, with not all planning committees interpreting planning rules. Would like to see improved uniformity with regards to biodiversity and sustainability / energy efficiency.

EH commented that a single planning committee could improve uniformity. EH explained that biodiversity 10% net gain rules don't come into effect until the end of the year, with TMBC currently working with KCC about how to manage this. We have until Dec 2023 to fully implement. Whatever is need locally will go to the local plan.

FL mentioned to officers that TBUG was disappointed by the latest active travel strategy.

RB suggested that the TBUG rep report back at the next meeting with some key points to improve with the active travel strategy.

TS queried what the plan was for working with developer on new housing developments, in view of the 30% requirement and how this will be measured.

EH noted part L of the building regs and mentioned that the team will be delivering a presentation to members soon on this subject, which will be circulated with the group. In terms of monitoring, most local authorities are trying to grapple with this enforcement. Some of this will be done through building control, which we will also have to look at more carefully. Guidance is currently being developed to look at how to monitor this.

MH mentioned AONB for climate change development options.

EH notes that there was currently no policy steer for solar / renewable / energy efficiency measures.

AB asked for examples on outcome of the local shop funds and parades fund.

It was highlighted that the fund was mainly directed towards re-doing the shop fronts to make them look nice in the parade.

AO mentioned the need for improved communication about reducing energy use and engagement though website.

HS explained that some of this will be covered by TMBCs new climate change web page.

SD updated that group that KCC and engaged local authorities (including TMBC) had received funding for the behavioural insights project. This project will look into reducing energy usage and improving efficiency for those on low and middle incomes.

WP queries the current Larkfield Leisure Centre Solar PV scheme and why this was not done during the refurb.

RB highlighted that the replaced roof was just the curved roof. This the unique design it wasn't possible at that time, however the new roof has improved energy efficiency.

WP asked how we ensure that what we would like to see is included in the local plan.

EH highlighted that a consultation was coming soon. Climate change will be asked about in this, in terms of priorities.

6. Future agenda items

HS talked through the submitted agenda items and it was agreed that our next meeting will cover the building regulation changes, their enforcement and active travel.

7. AOB

None.

Actions

- Information on the air quality sensor to be circulated with the minutes.
- Link to building regulation presentation to be circulated with the minutes.
- TBug to provide a list of suggestions for the active travel plan.