



## Tonbridge Grammar School

### Local Residents Meeting

Fri 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016 19:30 – 20:30hrs

#### Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Mrs Kay Topliss, Mr. & Mrs. Terry, Mr. Bill Seakins, Ms. Deborah Wilcock, Mr Nick Hebden, Mr & Mrs Paulson, Mr Chris Payne, Mrs Sarina Hateley

**TGS :** Mrs. Rosemary Joyce, (Head Teacher), Mr Adrian Pitts (Assistant Head teacher), Mr Jeremy Kenyon (Estates Manager), Mrs Pippa Blackstone (Development Director)

#### **Welcome and introductions**

**Apologies:** Cllr. Maria Heslop, PCSO Mary Coe, Mr Michael Guttman-Kenney, Mrs Sarah Luffingham

#### Traffic Management

Mr Pitts informed the meeting that the results of the annual travel survey were currently being collated, and the information will be used when reviewing the Travel Action Plan. It is intended that the results will be shared at the forthcoming Travel Action Group scheduled meeting, (Thu 19<sup>th</sup> May.)

TGS are participating in the National “Walk to School Week” (w/c 16<sup>th</sup> May), and will also be taking part in the “Car Share Day”, scheduled for October.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the TGS Travel Plan was available on the KCC website, (<http://jambusterstpm.s.co.uk>) but that subsequent reviews and survey results uploaded annually by the School were only accessible to those registered as Administrators to the site. This data will be shared as usual at the TAG meetings however.

In response to a question about student access and egress routes, Mr Pitts restated the objectives of the rules for student entering and leaving the site, which were designed to alleviate the congestion on the Pembury Road. The initiative to encourage students travelling to Tonbridge Station to turn left out of the main gates and walk down The Drive as opposed to Deakin Leas has proved to be unpopular with students and parents, who have cited that the slight delay causes an impact when taking onward transport.

There followed discussion as to how and where students were best to cross over Deakin Leas. It is the continuing policy of TGS to have staff outside of the main entrances both mornings and afternoons to monitor this.

In response to a question relating to pick-ups and drop-offs by taxis, TGS will review whether these could be allowed to wait on School property, dependant on circumstances.

## **Lettings**

### Policy.

Jeremy Kenyon informed the meeting that the continued pressure all schools face on funding gaps meant that Lettings remain a critical requirement for the School. However, the School's policy remained unchanged from the November meeting, in that prospective lettings are reviewed much more carefully and selectively, with any impact on local residents a key part of the review process. (The organisers of the annual chess competition which has been held at the School for a number of years now, have been persuaded to switch from a Sunday to a Saturday for example, and a recent request for a large dance show at the School on a Saturday evening has been turned down.)

Jeremy confirmed that the regular re-occurring lettings list (previously shared with residents), remained largely unchanged.

### Summer Camp.

The School has accepted a repeat booking from Barracudas Summer Camp during the summer break. (Set up commences Thu 21<sup>st</sup> July, Camp Dates w/c 25<sup>th</sup> July – w/e 19<sup>th</sup> Aug.) Although the School acknowledges this is not as desirable as no activity whatsoever, it remains our position that as the Summer Camps were weekdays only, and were held between the hours of 08:30 – 18:00hrs, they are not viewed as being unreasonable.

In response to concerns raised last year by two residents, the School will ensure that the signage advertising the Summer School is kept to a minimum, and will monitor arrival times to ensure they are adhered to. External activities on the playing fields will be kept to the lower end of the field wherever possible.

### Polling Station

The School has been booked for the EU Referendum vote, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Because this clashes with planned Yr. 5 Open Morning already scheduled in the calendar, after discussions with TMBC and internally, the School has taken the decision to move the Open Morning event to **Wed 29<sup>th</sup> June**. We believe this will ease congestion, and assist with the smooth running of both events.

## **Building Development Update**

### Solar Panels

The solar panels installation and commissioning is fully completed, and the energy being harvested is already making a tangible contribution to reducing our energy panels. No concerns by raised by residents.

### Alarm Systems.

In response to a previous resident request, Jeremy confirmed to the meeting that as the alarm systems are now remotely monitored, the external sounders have been reduced from 20 mins to 5 mins. A member of staff from the School will always now attend site to investigate any activation, and to re-set the alarm if appropriate.

### External Lighting

In response to a question from Mr Terry regarding external lighting levels, Jeremy explained that all the time that there were people on-site (pupils/staff/visitors or contractors), external lighting after sunset was a requirement in case of evacuation. The Fire Assembly point for the site is on the Playing Fields, so both this area, and all routes leading to it, had to be lit to a sufficient level to aid safe passage. Mr Hebditch enquired as to whether current regulations allowed for PIR activated lighting in the event of an emergency, which the School agreed to investigate.

In response to a question about the time that the cleaning contractors finished in the evenings, Jeremy explained that the Cleaning Contract would be going out to tender within a few weeks, and the School were open to new ideas from other companies about how the service could be delivered. This could open an opportunity to change the hours currently worked, and the School will certainly take this into account when making any decision on future contractors.

### Summer Programme of Work

Jeremy informed the meeting that there were two planned projects for the summer holiday period; Replacement roofs and fascias to the Science and Music Block, and the installation of new perimeter fencing and an automated access control system to the site.

In response to concerns raised that automated gates and intercoms could create additional noise, Jeremy explained that no contractor had yet been appointed, nor had designs or equipment manufacturers been finalised. The School will ensure that these concerns are given careful consideration before any decisions are made. In addition to this, the School committed to investigate how other organisations and schools operate automated gates, in order to minimise repeated operation during peak times.

Jeremy explained that Safeguarding at the School was an absolute priority, and that there had been repeated incidents of unauthorised access onto the School site, both during the working week and at weekends. The fencing will be 2m high green mesh, typically used in educational establishments, of a similar style to that already used beside the existing front gates. Due consideration will be made during installation to ensure that wherever possible, it is erected in such a way as to be as least obtrusive as possible.

### Artificial Pitch

Mrs Joyce explained that currently there is no update to share with residents, but that an artificial pitch very much remained an aspiration for the School. As the current pitches are on an incline and do not drain naturally, delivering the sporting curriculum during the wetter months presents a real challenge. In response, one resident articulated that their personal concern was over potential community use of a pitch, rather than the School's use. Mrs Joyce explained that an investment required for an artificial sports surface was significant enough to warrant very careful consideration as to how any potential project would be funded, operated and maintained. The commercial element would always be a key factor in assessing the viability of any potential project.

### **Questions.**

Mrs Sarah Luffingham (Taylor Close) raised a concern relating to the lack of salt-spreading/gritting at the bottom of Taylor Close during the Winter months. As the majority of pupils use the Student Pathway entrance, the crossing point at the junction of Taylor Close and Deakin Leas is very busy at the start and end of the School day. Although Taylor Close is out of scope for TMBC salt bins, there are no bins located in either Deakin Leas or nearby along the Pembury Road. **Would Cllr. Heslop be able to assist with requesting some?**

**AOB**

Mr Pitts extended an offer to any of our neighbours who may be interested in attending the next School Open Event, which is a Yr.10 GCSE Music Showcase, to be held in the Recital Room between **17:00 - 18:00hrs on Mon 27<sup>th</sup> June.**

Jeremy informed the meeting that the tennis courts were scheduled to be repainted and re-lined during the half-term break. The School would like to open these up for our neighbours to use free of charge on Saturdays, as from next month. It would be useful to gauge what the take up would be for local residents, so if this is likely to be of interest, please drop an email to the [neighbours@tgs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:neighbours@tgs.kent.sch.uk) address, and register your interest.

**Proposed Date of Next Meeting.**

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Meeting Closed at 21:10