



Tonbridge Grammar School

Local Residents' Meeting

Mon 15th July. 2019 19:30 – 20:30hrs

Meeting Notes & Action Points

Attendees: Cllr Frani Hoskins and Cllr. Garry Bridge, Mr. T Holbrow, Mr Nick Hebditch, Ms. Deborah Wilcock, Mrs O'Shaugnessy and Mr Peter Ingrams.

TGS: Mrs Rosemary Joyce, Head Teacher (HT), Mr Adrian Pitts, Assistant Head Teacher (**AHT**) and Mr. Jeremy Kenyon, Facilities & Estates Manager (**FEM**).

Apologies: Mrs Sally Dyson, Chair of Governors, Mrs Kay Topliss, Mr & Mrs Bragg, Mr & Mrs Paulson, Mr John Flitton and PCSO Mary Coe.

Welcome and Introductions.

Travel Action Group Update.

The AHT gave an overview of the work of the Travel Action Group and an introduction to the purpose of the Travel Plan. A school travel plan is a living document that sets out several practical ways to help reduce the amount of car trips made to a school, encourage more use of public transport, walking, cycling and scooting and to improve safety on the school journey.

The travel plan aims to raise awareness among pupils and parents of the harmful effects of increasing car use on children's health, safety and independence. It highlights the implications of travel choice and the benefits of encouraging more sustainable active travel to school. Once a year the School conducts a survey of students and staff to record specific data year-on-year.

This survey aims to:

- *Identify current travel choices*
- *Identify which modes of transport could be promoted considering the annual survey findings*

The results of each Annual Travel Survey provide information on the established travel choices of pupils and hence will provide a basis for the review and setting of targets in the School Travel Plan.

The Travel Action Group has met three times during the year most recently in May 2019 to review the initial travel survey results and progress on the agreed action plan.

Student survey -

- **Car journeys** Car sharing has stabilised at 8%. Disappointingly, there has been another overall increase in the number of students coming to school by car this year. A major factor in student responses is a clear link to rising costs of public transport, which is not a factor the School can realistically control.
- **Trains and Buses** Total numbers of students taking public transport has gone up slightly this year (from 64% to 66%). Until students and parents can rely on the trains and buses, cars will always be seen as the most convenient means of transport. The School has played an active role in the Schools Travel Forum meetings this year with Borough councillors, representatives from our MP's office and staff from Local schools.
- **Overcrowding and congestion** at the end of the day at the intersection of Deakin Leas and Pembury Road remains an issue. The School provides some staff presence in this area which has many pupils from different local schools alighting services. It is difficult to supervise and maintain a safe environment, Mr Pitts has liaised with Councillor Hoskins to look into temporary bus markings for the end of the day. Cllr Hoskins updated the meeting to feedback that she had been in contact with both TMBC and Highways on the issue. Highways informed Cllr Hoskins that an additional bus stop was already under review, but on further investigation this turned out to be further up Pembury Rd in the vicinity of the Vauxhall Inn. Cllr Hoskins to progress further if possible.
- **Cycling.** Cycling amongst pupils has remained small number. The good take up from this year's 'Bikeability' training sessions at school is noted, with plans to encourage this more in the future as part of the Action! programme. The School actively supports safety initiatives to reduce congestion on local roads. From the survey results the distance many students travel to school is also prohibitive.
- **Walking.** The numbers of students walking to school this year has returned to more expected levels.

Staff survey

- **Cycling/Walking** There has been a slight increase in the numbers of staff cycling to school (3%) and 11% again choose to walk to school.
- **Car** Where staff drive to school, car sharing has risen to 8% this year cutting the overall number of single use traffic movements. The number of staff coming to school in single journeys by car has fallen to 60% this year.
- **Public Transport** The numbers of staff using public transport has continued at about 3% this year.
- **Electric & hybrid vehicles** Currently only 1% of staff use an electric or hybrid vehicle for their journey to school. Around 8% are considering changing to an eco-friendlier vehicle in the next 5 years. Plans for developing charging points on site are underway.

In response the HT thanked the AHT for all his hard work on The Travel Action Group over the past years as API was retiring from the School at the end July after 30 years of service. From September the TAG meetings will be Chaired by the FEM with the HT in attendance as the senior representative from the School.

Lettings & Events Update

The FEM gave an overview of the larger events which had occurred in Terms 4 & 5.

Yr 5 Open Morning – Thu 27th June. 3 x minibuses utilised, with an estimated 400 attendees. No negative feedback received from residents.

Empathy Action – experiential event into the journey refugees endure – no negative feedback received.

Yr 6 Induction Evening 4th July. No negative feedback received. Cllr Hoskins did comment that Deakin Leas traffic was heavier on that evening.

The FEM reminded those present that the annual Foundation Day Celebration was this coming Thursday. (Details had been posted on the “Neighbours” page on the School website.) Marquee on the field with dance, drama and Musical performances between 1- 3 pm.

Lettings Policy. The School continues to give careful consideration to size/traffic implications and timings of all lettings – and decline a number of enquires which we feel would be too intrusive.

The FEM shared the expectation from the DfE that the school is proactive in generating income where possible. There is also a genuine desire that as a public funded school we wish to encourage local community groups to access the range of facilities we can offer at the School.

Recurrent term time lettings are:

OU/ Yoga/Pilates during the week & Little Kickers / Active Sports and OU on Saturdays. Sunday lettings only by exception and generally avoided.

Holiday Lettings (Barracudas)

After feedback from December’s meeting we initiated a new access arrangement for Barracudas at Easter. Those staff who had to enter the site prior to 08:00hrs parked on the road and entered the site by foot. This enabled us to keep the gates closed until 08:00hrs and prevents contractors/parents tail-gaiting staff onto the site prior to 08:00hrs.

Deborah Wilcock confirmed this arrangement was an improvement, but stated her concerns about whether the Camp would grow further in size. The FEM responded that he was not in possession of booked numbers, but felt that the size was unlikely to increase as no more physical spaces had been booked than on previous occasions.

Building Development / Planned Maintenance.

There are a number of planned maintenance and development projects over the summer.

The most significant project is to replace the inefficient diesel oil boilers with cleaner energy-efficient gas fired ones. Majority of the work are within the boiler room **BUT** a new pipeline has to be run from Deakin Leas to the school perimeter. This will be carried out by SGN, and we have been advised will entail a temporary road closure on Deakin Leas. SGN have shared a plan with the FEM which indicates the new feed will be teed off an existing pipeline under the road right in front of the school gates. SGN will be writing to all residents affected and will be putting in the required diversions to minimise disruption. Anticipate 1st or 2nd week in Aug. **[Subsequently confirmed for w/c 5th Aug.]**

Phase 2 of Fire Safety Project. Majority of work was completed last year, but Phase 2 will finish off the last remaining elements. All work is internal to the building (Fire Doors etc.) and does not involve any heavy construction.

The overflow parking area to the front of the Hands Building and the first 60 metres of roadway leading to it are to be re-surfaced as they are in a very poor condition. The new surface will be of a similar construction (plastic terram matting), but infilled with limestone chippings instead of soil. This will be more weather resistant during the winter months.

Overall the construction programme will be far smaller than last summer, with significantly lower numbers of contractors on the site.

External Lighting (Pitch Lights)

Some concerns were raised by residents at the Dec. 19 meeting. Following a site meeting where JKE shared the concerns raised about spill levels, the Principal Contractor has agreed that they will return to site in the Autumn (when the clocks go back) and have committed to look at ways the design can be enhanced to further reduce light spill – possibly with the addition of shutters on specific lamps. The final exit light which was directed towards a resident in Taylor Close has been changed and lowered already.

AOB – Parking in Treetops/Hilltops (Mr Burton.) The School continue to monitor car use by students and educate them about considerate parking. When reported to us by residents, we do take action to get cards moved straight away.

Mr Peter Ingrams mentioned that attendance of the Residents' Meeting had been falling and that many new residents had moved into Deakin Leas recently and may not be aware of them if not on the circulation list. The HT responded by stating that her Residents' Letter and School Calendar information will be hand-delivered so should include anyone new to the area.

Meeting Closed at 20:35hrs. The FEM thanked those present for their contributions – notes of the meeting will be posted on website. The next meeting dates (Dec 19 and June 20) will be included in the HT's Residents' Letter which is circulated in September.