

# WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2017, 7.30 PM  
AT WEST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, WEST MALLING

**Present:** Mrs Trudy Dean (Chairman)  
Miss Gwyneth Barkham  
Mr Keith Bullard  
Mr Richard Byatt  
Mr Larry Collins  
Mrs Linda Javens  
Mr Ben Merchant  
Mrs Yvonne Smyth  
Mr Peter Stevens

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
17/617	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> were received from, Mrs Sasha Luck (Borough Council), Mrs Molly Potts from the Malling Society.			
17/618	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> – none, other than those routinely declared			
17/619	<b>CASUAL VACANCIES</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to the resignations of Steve Harriott and Richard Selkirk, it was noted that there were now two casual vacancies.</li> <li>T&amp;MBC has notified the Parish Council that both vacancies can now be filled by co-option. An interviewing panel interviewed 5 candidates during the week commencing 30<sup>th</sup> October, with all candidates having a common set of questions; the interviewing panel reached a unanimous decision that Mr Nick Stapleton and Ms Min Stacpoole be co-opted onto the Parish Council. Mr Stevens proposed that members accept the recommendation of the interviewing panel and this was seconded by Mr Collins. It was unanimously agreed that Nick Stapleton and Min Stacpoole be co-opted onto the Parish Council.</li> </ul> <p>Mrs Dean noted that all candidates would have brought different skills to the Parish Council and that they would be welcome to assist with any projects which they had showed an interest in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerk to write to contact successful candidates and ask them to come into the office to sign the relevant paperwork.</li> </ul>	Clerk	✓	
17/620	<b>MINUTES</b> of the meeting held on 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2017 were approved and signed			
17/621	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda –			
621.1	<b>(552.3) Byelaws</b> – Mr Byatt asked if the proposed updated byelaws would only be for Macey's Meadow; Mrs Dean confirmed that they could cover a number of areas within the Parish and that they would need to be approved by the Borough Council. Mrs Smyth agreed to undertake research on the subject	YS		
621.2	<b>(17/554) – Drs Surgery</b> – Miss Barkham asked if there had been an opportunity to meet with the practice manager; Clerk confirmed that she had not yet received a response to her request for a meeting. Mr Collins reminded members that flu jabs are available at the West Malling chemist and Lunsford Lane Tesco; free to those who are normally eligible for a free jab at the Drs surgery.			

621.3	<b>(555.1) Lobster Pot</b> – It was reported that despite there being lights on the hoardings, the lights were not being turned on at the end of the working day. Clerk to contact KCC again	Clerk	✓	
621.4	<b>(555.3) – Blaise Farm</b> – Mr Byatt, Mrs Javens and Clerk visited Blaise Farm for a tour of the facility. It was agreed that the visit was of great interest and that it would be useful for local schools to visit, so as to improve their knowledge of recycling. Members were in agreement that it would also be useful for a representative to come and speak to the Parish Council so as to learn more about their work and the high level of contaminated waste from our area. There was a general discussion about the smell which would appear to come from Blaise Farm and Mrs Dean noted that it would be useful to have a Parish Council member on the Blaise Farm Liaison group. Clerk to note agenda for next Full Council.  Noise from quarry blasts - Clerk to contact Gallagher to see if the pilot scheme has finished and if so, if the results have been made public.	Clerk Clerk	✓	
17/622	<b><u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b>			
622.1	<b>Macey's Meadow</b> – Mrs Dean reported that a young man has been sleeping rough in the meadow; both Police and Social Services are aware. A letter has been served by the Clerk asking that he leave the Parish Council land and offering Social Services assistance. It was agreed that once the rough sleeper has left the meadow, there will be costs incurred to clear the meadow of plastic bags and rubbish that has been left.  <i>Subsequent to the meeting, the Clerk was informed by the Police that they had been to the meadow on 7 separate occasions and that the rough sleeper had not been present. On the basis that he had been served a notice and that it would appear that he had left the area, costs were obtained from T&amp;MBC for clearance of the area.</i>			
622.2	<b>Meeting Membership –</b> Mrs Dean asked that consideration be given to attendance and membership of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking Liaison Group</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Plan sub groups</li> <li>• Blaise Farm Liaison Group</li> </ul> Clerk to note for the next Full Council agenda  <b>Vice Chairman</b> Following the resignation of Mr Selkirk, Mrs Dean asked that the election of a new Vice Chairman be noted for the next Full Council agenda.	Clerk Clerk	✓ ✓	
622.3	<b>The Lobster Pot, Swan Street</b> – Complaints regarding parking bays being blocked off overnight as the building company were awaiting a concrete delivery first thing in the morning. Both T&MBC and KCC state that the builders had no authority to block the bays. T&MBC have been asked to take enforcement action.	Clerk	✓	
17/623	<b><u>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</u></b> None			
17/624	<b><u>QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS</u></b>			
624.1	<b>Parking</b> – Mr Stevens reported that a van regularly parks in the last space just outside the vets in the High Street, reducing visibility. Mr Stevens also reported that vehicles park overnight in the Tesco loading bay, making it impossible for Tesco delivery vans / lorries to park first thing in the morning. There are no enforcement officers on duty first thing in the morning which allows this situation to continue. Mrs Dean agreed that enforcement officers ought to undertake early shifts and also felt that enforcement officers should be on duty on the Farmer's Market dates.			
624.2	<b>Ashey Path / Woodlands Close</b> – Mrs Javens reported that T&MBC have done a lot of clearing of conifer branches which had been dumped. A discussion regarding registered / unregistered land followed; Mr Merchant discussed community rights to claim land back and reference was made to the patch of green near the Startled Saint. Mr Byatt commented that he had started the survey of grass verges.			
624.3	<b>St Leonards Tower</b> – Mr Bullard asked if English Heritage had made contact with the Parish			

	Council with regards to upkeep etc. The Clerk explained that we are hoping to have a meeting with English Heritage to discuss the future maintenance of the tower. Clerk to chase English Heritage.	Clerk		
<b>17/625</b>	<b><u>POLICING MATTERS</u></b>			
<b>625.1</b>	<b>Policing report</b> – updated Kent Police crime figures had not been received			
<b>625.2</b>	<b>Other Policing Matters</b> – It was noted that West Malling did now have a new PCSO – Clerk to confirm details. Mrs Dean discussed the possibility of Local Authorities being able to fine motorists who jump red lights; currently only the Police can enforce moving traffic. Mrs Dean to meet with PCC			
<b>17/626</b>	<b><u>LOCAL PLAN</u></b>			
<b>626.1</b>	General discussion regarding the Government proposed nationwide formula and how this will impact on Tonbridge & Malling; there is all party agreement that this proposal is counter – productive.			
<b>626.2</b>	Planning for the right homes in the right places. Draft response had been formulated by Mr Byatt, any additional comments from members, should be emailed to the Clerk by Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> November at 5pm.  <i>No further responses were received – see below for the submitted response.</i>			
<b>626.3</b>	London Road site –T&MBC have stated that there is a need to demonstrate that a contractor is interested in the purchase of the land and running a car park. Mrs Dean reported that a commercial interest in the purchase of the land had been received; the contractor would need 2 houses on the site to make the project viable. Mrs Dean to write to T&MBC to say that the car park proposal is deliverable by this (and potentially other) contractors.			
<b>626.4</b>	It was agreed to invite West Kent Housing Enablement Group to attend a meeting of the planning committee to discuss the provision of affordable housing in West Malling. Mrs Dean reminded members that the meeting would be open to all members.			
<b>17/627</b>	<b><u>STREETLIGHTS</u></b>			
	It was agreed to accept both UKPN and contractor costs for the replacement of 2 columns which are outside the phased repair programme. Quoted UKPN costs are £2670 +VAT & quoted maintenance contractor costs are £1785 +VAT. Clerk confirmed that this money was in the Highways budget, but that the costs had not been available to agree at the recent Highways meeting. It was agreed that all new columns be black There was a general discussion regarding Highways budget and way forward.			
<b>17/628</b>	<b><u>2018 BOUNDARY REVIEW</u></b>			
	It was agreed that the Parish Council would not respond to the boundary review consultation For link see <a href="https://www.bce2018.org.uk/">https://www.bce2018.org.uk/</a>			
<b>17/629</b>	<b><u>KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2018</u></b>			
	It was agreed to adopt the KALC 2018 community awards scheme. Miss Barkham proposed that Eileen and Bob Vago be nominated due to all their work within the community. This was agreed unanimously.	GB		
<b>17/630</b>	<b><u>CHAIRMAN OF HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE</u></b>			
	The election of Ben Merchant to the position of Chairman of the Highways Committee was ratified.			

<b>17/631</b>	<b><u>FINANCIAL MATTERS</u></b>			
<b>631.1</b>	<b>Accounts for payment</b> - totalling £13062.68 were approved - see attached. It was noted that payments totalling £7550.64 had been approved at a quorate meeting of the Amenities Committee on 9 <sup>th</sup> October since the previous Full Council.			
<b>631.2</b>	<b>Financial Statements</b> – for the month of October were received – see attached.			
<b>17/632</b>	<b><u>MATTERS FOR REPORT</u></b>			
<b>632.1</b>	<b>Amenities Committee</b> – receipt was noted, for information of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2017. <b>(570.2) War Memorial</b> – awaiting third quote for the remedial works; Assistant Clerk has completed a grant pre-application <b>(575.2) Allotment deposit</b> to be increased to £50.00 for all new tenants, to take effect from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2018. This has been referred to F&GP for approval. <b>(577.1) Pitch fees</b> – it has been agreed not to increase pitch fees as ours would appear to be in line with other parishes. <b>Parish Walk</b> – it was noted that our denial of liability has been challenged. The insurers have asked for further information.			
<b>632.2</b>	<b>Highways &amp; Transportation Committee</b> – receipt was noted, for information of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2017.  Mr Merchant reported that as the new Chairman of the committee, he is to meet with Steve Harriott to discuss the way forward on certain items that Mr Harriott had been dealing with prior to his resignation. Speedwatch training to take place either 19 <sup>th</sup> or 25 <sup>th</sup> November (the hope is to have a core set of trainers who can then go on to train new volunteers) , the Parish Council is purchasing its own equipment. Streetlight structural survey report has been received.			
<b>632.3</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b> – receipt was noted, for information of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2017.  Neighbourhood Plan – Mr Merchant had been looking into funding - £9000 in grant can be obtained but there is a tight deadline of January 2018  <b>607.1</b> Mr Byatt drew members attention to application <b>TM/17/01693/FL</b> – 5 Pointed Star 100 High Street West Malling. Members stood by their previous comments that they had concerns about the retrospective application for fencing / pergola.			
<b>632.4</b>	<b>Malling Action Partnership</b> – no report.			
<b>632.5</b>	<b>Rotary House</b> – no report.			
<b>632.6</b>	<b>School Governors</b> – no report			
<b>632.7</b>	<b>Malling Society</b> AGM is to be held on Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> November at West Malling Primary School. St Leonards Well – KCC state that they do not own the land.			
<b>632.8</b>	<b>Chamber of Commerce / Christmas Lights Committee</b> – Christmas lights festival to take place on Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> November.			
<b>632.9</b>	<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling Borough Council</b> – Parish Partnership Panel - the next meeting date of the 16 <sup>th</sup> November was noted. Members asked to consider attendance,			
<b>632.10</b>	<b>KALC/NALC/ACRK</b> – KALC, draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> October were noted, the Draft Parish Charter was a substantive item – KALC and T&MBC are to discuss the draft			

	charter further aiming for agreement by the next Parish Partnership meeting of 16 <sup>th</sup> November.			
<b>17/633</b>	<p><b><u>MEETING DATES</u></b></p> <p>Amenities Committee – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017 (concentrating on allotments)</p> <p>Finance &amp; General Purposes Committee – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017 (at The Clout, 9 High Street)</p> <p>Planning Committee – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017</p> <p>Village Hall Management Committee – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017</p> <p>Macey’s Meadow Advisory Committee – Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018</p>			
<b>17/634</b>	<p><b><u>REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR</u></b></p> <p>In her absence, Cllr Luck had reported one item to the Parish Clerk; a resident has expressed concern about a tree on the green (the tree with fruit) which the resident believes is unstable.</p> <p><i>Subsequent to the meeting, the Clerk ascertained that KCC have been out to look at the tree and will undertake remedial work.</i></p>			
<b>17/635</b>	<p><b><u>REPORT OF COUNTY COUNCILLOR</u></b></p> <p>See attached report</p> <p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.59</p> <p><b>Signed</b>.....</p> <p><b>Dated</b>.....</p>			

<b>West Malling Parish Council</b>					
<b><u>Accounts for Payment 6th November 2017</u></b>					<b>cheques to be drawn</b>
-					
<b><u>Payments authorised under section 137</u></b>					
The Royal British Legion (cheque 5395)					<b>£ 20.00</b>
Wreath - donation					
Casement Signs & Graphics (cheque 5396)					<b>£ 59.28</b>
(road closure signs)					£ 49.40
					VAT £ 9.88
<hr/>					
Mr M Pearce (cheque 5397)					<b>£ 106.89</b>
petrol £5.90/ diesel £85.03 & paint £15.96)					
KCC Laser (cheque 5398 )					<b>588.06</b>
Electricity supply 1/9/17 - 30/9/17)					£ 508.40
					VAT £ 79.66
Outdoorsy Living Ltd (cheque 5399)					<b>£ 180.00</b>
(Invoice 2468 play equipment inspection and report)					£ 150.00
					VAT £ 30.00
Apogee (cheque 5400)					<b>£ 30.00</b>
Invoice 759813 September photocopies)					£ 25.00
					VAT £ 5.00
Viking Direct (cheque 5401 )					<b>£ 58.31</b>
(invoice 427863 stationery)					£ 48.59
					VAT £ 9.72
CK Office Furniture (cheque 5402)					<b>£ 366.00</b>
(office furniture - desks)					£ 305.00
					VAT £ 61.00
Malling Memorial Insitute (single cheque 5403)					<b>£ 30.00</b>
(Invoice 63/17 - room hire on 16th October)					
(Invoice 70/17 - room hire on 30th October)					
Mr R Selkirk ( cheque 5404)					<b>£ 19.30</b>
(Mailchimp reimbursement)					
Four Seasons (single cheque 5405)					<b>£ 294.00</b>
(Invoice 1545 Village green cut x 2, bench strimming					£ 245.00
Strim / weed kill of tennis courts)					VAT £ 49.00
(Invoice 1610 Village green cut 3)					£ 40.00
					£ 8.00

Streetlights ( single cheque 5406)		£ 1,093.87	<b>£ 1,312.64</b>
(Inv 9159 maintenance contract payment 3 out 4)	VAT	£ 218.77	
(inv 9056 repair to column 96 Churchfields)		£ 97.75	<b>£ 117.30</b>
	VAT	£ 19.55	
(Inv 9051 repair to column 76 Offham Road)		£ 70.00	<b>£ 84.00</b>
	VAT	£ 14.00	
John Collins (Cheque 5407)			<b>£323.81</b>
(Litter picking - 35 hours @ £7.50 per hour for month of Oct, plus reimbursement for workwear & first aid kit 262.5 + £61.31			
Kent & Essex Installations Ltd (cheque 5408)		£ 60.00	<b>£72.00</b>
(Inv 1440 PAT test @Twitch)		<u>£ 12.00</u>	
CF Corporate (cheque 5409 )		£ 102.23	<b>£ 122.68</b>
(Invoice MI/0208830 photocopier lease for period 1/12/17 - 28/2/17)	VAT	<u>£ 20.45</u>	
Cable Test Ltd (cheque 5410)		£ 1,625.74	<b>£ 1,950.88</b>
(Inv 106156 - structural survey)	VAT	£ 325.14	
UKPN (cheque 5411)		£ 4,005.00	<b>£ 4,806.00</b>
costs for same day disconnection & reconnection. Column 112 - Alma Road, Column 43 High Street Column 44, St Leonards Street		£ 801.00	
Mrs Claire Christmas (cheque 5412 dated 20/11/17)			<b>£1,383.40</b>
(Clerk - net salary for November 2017 + fax) £1382.20 + £1.20 +			
Mrs Sarah Howard (Single cheque 5413 dated 20/11/17 )			<b>£337.17</b>
(Asst. Clerk - net salary for November 2017 + reimbursement for postage & kettle) £319.29 + £5.88 + £12.00			
Mr John Collins (cheque 5414 dated 30/11/17)			<b>£ 204.00</b>
Handyman - net salary for November			
HMRC - authorisation to pay via Faster Payments (Deductions from salaries November 17)			<b>£ 519.26</b>
Nest - authorisation to pay pension contributions by Direct Debit for November '17			
Employer's contributions			<b>£ 16.50</b>
Employee's contributions (Employees's contributions have already been deducted from salary)			<b>£ 13.20</b>
	Total		<b>£ 13,062.68</b>

<b>WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL</b>						
<b>Financial Statement to be presented to Full Council 6 November 2017</b>						
<b><u>Reconciliation</u></b>						
Balance b/f from 2016/17						£ 98,172.44
<u>plus</u>						
total receipts 1.04.17-31.03.18						£ 128,347.03
<u>less</u>						
total payments 1.04.17-31.03.18						£ 67,471.27
					<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£ 159,048.20</u></b>
Deposit account						£ 90,716.69
Current account				£75,990.53		
				£7,659.02		
						<u>£ 68,331.51</u>
					<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£ 159,048.20</u></b>
<b><u>Direct Debits</u></b>						
Nest				£29.70		
Plusnet				<u>£18.00</u>		
				£47.70		
<b><u>Unpresented Cheques</u></b>						
5317	ELM Ltd			£ 639.98		
5390	Music @ Malling			£ 1,000.00		
5391	Day Tree Fellers			£ 4,200.00		
5392	Outdoorsy Living			£ 793.04		
5394	T&MBC			£ 1,026.00		
				£ 7,659.02		



**WMPC response**

WMPC welcomes the Government's decision to consult on a new approach to housing provision but feels that the proposed methodology for calculating housing need will undermine the work of local authorities to date; would increase development in areas where both land and infrastructure are under intense pressure and risks making the situation worse by encouraging the building of the wrong sort of homes in the wrong places.

The White Paper argues that the current approach to assessing housing need is "too complex." This is because the factors determining housing need in any particular area are complex and a "simple, standard approach", whilst superficially attractive, cannot take account of all these factors and may well produce perverse outcomes.

We do agree that taking account of affordability is important. However, the proposed methodology is based on the assumption that simply increasing the number of houses in an area will reduce prices and therefore increase affordability.

In areas such as West Malling demand is almost limitless. The area attracts people moving out of London, taking advantage of high prices in the capital to "trade up". To date new housing has not been built with a view to accommodating the demands of the local population at "affordable" prices.

In our own area, the proposed methodology would see an increase of over 23% on the housing target included in the draft Local Plan currently going through public consultation.

As the table provided as part of the consultation records, 77% of Tonbridge & Malling is designated either Green Belt, AONB or SSSI, a higher percentage than South Lakeland District Council in Cumbria. This severely limits where new housing can go.

The Borough Council has spent considerable time and effort explaining and consulting on its Local Plan proposals, including housing targets. Parish Councils and other community organisations have expended similar effort. Moving the goal posts at this late juncture will undermine public confidence in the planning system and in the process of consultation itself.

We note that the Government wants to see areas working together and we suggest that dictating housing need on a district by district basis is not the way to achieve this. More planning on a regional and national scale is needed.

We welcome the intention to consider housing types and tenure, as opposed to simply the number of units, when assessing need.

WMPC also welcomes the emphasis on "high quality, well-planned" homes but would like to see more detail on how this commitment can be delivered through the planning system.

**Planning fees**

The White Paper proposes that "local planning authorities delivering the homes their communities need might be eligible for a further 20 per cent increase in fees for planning applications, over and above the 20 per cent increase already confirmed".

This appears to be a straightforward "bribe" to local authorities facing funding shortfalls and could have a distorting effect on planning decisions. Additionally, if planning authorities are under resourced and struggling to deliver their housing needs as a consequence, it seems counter intuitive to only offer this incentive to those who are managing to do so.

**Neighbourhood Planning**

In principle the proposal to amend national policy so that local planning authorities are expected to provide neighbourhood planning groups with a housing need figure, seems a good idea but in practice the sequencing of local and neighbourhood plans will make this difficult.

A formula apportioning housing need to localities based on land area or population is too simplistic. Parish Councils should be free to work with local authorities to determine housing needs within a Neighbourhood Plan area.

## Responses to Consultation Questions

### Question 1:

a) do you agree with the proposed standard approach to assessing local housing need? If not, what alternative approach or other factors should be considered?

No. The standard approach would require an increase of 23% on the Objectively Assessed Need figure of 696 dwellings per year. Over the 20 years of the Local Plan period this is 3,260 homes. Not only would this strain local infrastructure and services to breaking point, it would damage quality of life and is also undeliverable.

Using Household Growth as the baseline has the perverse effect of driving more development to areas that have already accommodated large increases in housing.

Although we welcome the introduction of an affordability measure into the standard approach, the argument that increasing supply will reduce prices is flawed. In areas like Tonbridge & Malling, close to London, building more homes tends to simply encourage more inward migration from the capital.

A definition of “affordable homes” at 80% of market rate will do nothing to help those in need of genuinely affordable housing.

b) how can information on local housing need be made more transparent?

n/a

**Question 2:** do you agree with the proposal that an assessment of local housing need should be able to be relied upon for a period of two years from the date a plan is submitted?

Yes - this seems reasonable but if the figure can be challenged and changed during examination it seems a little academic.

**Question 3:** do you agree that we should amend national planning policy so that a sound plan should identify local housing need using a clear and justified method?

Yes but as far as we know this is currently the practice of local authorities. A “standard approach” ignores important regional and local differences.

Para 56 of the consultation document states:

“Local planning authorities need to plan together to ensure that infrastructure and public services are planned to meet the needs of the wider area; to ensure that the combined impact on the environment is sustainable; to ensure that housing requirements that simply cannot be met in a particular area are met elsewhere; and where appropriate, to ensure that new settlements and garden villages are planned for properly.”

We think that this approach should be broadened to a regional and national level. “National planning policy” does not seem to include a realistic assessment of which parts of the country can accommodate large increases in housing (and indeed might welcome them as part of regeneration efforts such as the much vaunted Northern Powerhouse) and those areas that cannot.

**Question 4:** do you agree with our approach in circumstances when plan makers deviate from the proposed method, including the level of scrutiny we expect from Planning Inspectors?

No. It is unclear why “plan makers may put forward proposals that lead to a local housing need above that” given by the standard method but “there should be very limited grounds” for proposing a lower level of need. Local planners should be able to assess need on a rational basis that responds to the local context.

### Question 5:

a) do you agree that the Secretary of State should have discretion to defer the period for using the baseline for some local planning authorities? If so, how best could this be achieved, what minimum requirements should be in place before the Secretary of State may exercise this discretion, and for how long should such deferral be permitted?

Yes, where a local authority can demonstrate that it has produced a plan which meets the current objectively assessed housing need and has been the subject of proper public consultation, it should be permitted to complete the plan making process if this can reasonably be achieved within 9 to 12 months.

b) do you consider that authorities that have an adopted joint local plan, or which are covered by an adopted spatial development strategy, should be able to assess their five year land supply and/or be measured for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test, across the area as a whole?

n/a

c) do you consider that authorities that are not able to use the new method for calculating local housing need should be able to use an existing or an emerging local plan figure for housing need for the purposes of calculating five year land supply and to be measured for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test?

n/a

**Question 6:** do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements for introducing the standard approach for calculating local housing need?

No. In the case of Tonbridge & Malling it will delay submission of a Local Plan that has already consumed considerable time and money and been the subject of extensive public consultation. This Parish Council and other community organisations have expended similar effort. Moving the goal posts at this late juncture will undermine public confidence in the planning system and in the process of consultation itself.

**Question 7:**

a) do you agree with the proposed administrative arrangements for preparing the statement of common ground?

No. It seems unnecessarily prescriptive and does not allow for the complexity of local authority boundaries and housing market areas.

b) how do you consider a statement of common ground should be implemented in areas where there is a Mayor with strategic plan-making powers?

n/a

c) do you consider there to be a role for directly elected Mayors without strategic plan-making powers, in the production of a statement of common ground?

n/a

**Question 8:** do you agree that the proposed content and timescales for publication of the statement of common ground are appropriate and will support more effective co-operation on strategic cross-boundary planning matters?

n/a

**Question 9**

a) do you agree with the proposal to amend the tests of soundness to include that:

i) plans should be prepared based on a strategy informed by agreements over the wider area; and  
ii) plans should be based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities, which are evidenced in the statement of common ground?

b) do you agree to the proposed transitional arrangements for amending the tests of soundness to ensure effective co-operation?

n/a to both

**Question 10:**

a) do you have suggestions on how to streamline the process for identifying the housing need for individual groups and what evidence could be used to help plan to meet the needs of particular groups?

We welcome the intent to disaggregate total housing need but feel the approach to assessing the housing needs of different groups has been too simplistic, fails to recognise that these needs overlap and can produce “segregation” which does not help build strong communities.

Rather than “streamlining” the process this area needs far more research. For example, in this parish there is a need for homes to allow older people to downsize but without giving up some of the amenities they value. Other countries have demonstrated that older people can live alongside families and single people to mutual benefit.

We do not believe evidence gathering in this area would be “disproportionate to the overall objective”. As the Secretary of State says in his introduction, this consultation is not just about the numbers.

b) do you agree that the current definition of older people within the National Planning Policy Framework is still fit-for-purpose?

Yes

**Question 11:**

a) should a local plan set out the housing need for designated neighbourhood planning areas and parished areas within the area?

No. This is too prescriptive. Parish Councils should be free to work with local authorities to determine housing needs within a Neighbourhood Plan area.

b) do you agree with the proposal for a formula-based approach to apportion housing need to neighbourhood plan bodies in circumstances where the local plan cannot be relied on as a basis for calculating housing need?

No see response to Q11a

**Question 12:** do you agree that local plans should identify the infrastructure and affordable housing needed, how these will be funded and the contributions developers will be expected to make?

Yes - greater transparency would be welcome

**Question 13:** in reviewing guidance on testing plans and policies for viability, what amendments could be made to improve current practice?

n/a

**Question 14:** do you agree that where policy requirements have been tested for their viability, the issue should not usually need to be tested again at the planning application stage?

Yes

**Question 15:** how can Government ensure that infrastructure providers, including housing associations, are engaged throughout the process, including in circumstances where a viability assessment may be required?

n/a

**Question 16:** what factors should we take into account in updating guidance to encourage viability assessments to be simpler, quicker and more transparent, for example through a standardised report or summary format?

n/a

**Question 17:**

a) do you agree that local planning authorities should set out in plans how they will monitor and report on planning agreements to help ensure that communities can easily understand what infrastructure and affordable housing has been secured and delivered through developer contributions?

Yes

b) what factors should we take into account in preparing guidance on a standard approach to monitoring and reporting planning obligations?

n/a

c) how can local planning authorities and applicants work together to better publicise infrastructure and affordable housing secured through new development once development has commenced, or at other stages of the process?

An online register

**Question 18:**

a) do you agree that a further 20 per cent fee increase should be applied to those local planning authorities who are delivering the homes their communities need? What should be the criteria to measure this?

No - there seems no logical reason for this

b) do you think there are more appropriate circumstances when a local planning authority should be able to charge the further 20 per cent? If so, do you have views on how these circumstances could work in practice?

Not sure - possibly on developments of a size or complexity that require more scrutiny or where applicant makes repeated changes.

c) should any additional fee increase be applied nationally once all local planning authorities meet the required criteria, or only to individual authorities who meet them?

Not sure we understand the question - surely once all LPAs meet criteria that is de facto national compliance?

d) are there any other issues we should consider in developing a framework for this additional fee increase?

If the aim of higher fees is to support planning departments then a different set of criteria is needed to address poor performance, rather than "penalising" authorities for not meeting unachievable housing targets.

The report referred to in response to Q19 includes the recommendation that councils should be free to set fair levels of planning application fees to recover full costs.

**Question 19:** having regard to the measures we have already identified in the housing White Paper, are there any other actions that could increase build out rates?

Yes - please refer to the recommendations in "Unlock the housing blockers - Tackling unimplemented planning permissions and housing delivery barriers in the South East." <http://www.secouncils.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/FINAL-SEEC-report-Jan2017-Unlock-the-housing-blockers.pdf>

## County Councillors Report.

1. Lunsford Green is now fully signed and enforceable as an area where no parking is allowed. Any offending vehicles should be photographed with the registration plate and sent to Andy Edwards at TMBC.
2. The application of restrictive parking hours on the on street parking on New Hythe Lane between A20 and the Fire Station will be consulted on by TMBC around Christmas.
3. The yellow box junction at A20/New Hythe Lane was installed over the period of closure and I would be glad of any feedback on how well it is working.
4. I have asked Tesco to consider upgrading of the bus stop on Chapman Way following complaints about the absence of any form of bench seating, lighting and bad weather protection.
5. I have agreed to fund the moving of bollards to the verge edge near the entrance to Mercer Close on the East side of New Hythe Lane. This should help prevent vehicles parking on the verge. Residents have offered to maintain verge planting which would help to deter parking and I am working with residents to identify and purchase suitable plants.
6. I attended the M20 exhibition and expressed the view that the footbridge reconstruction should take place at the same time as the lane restrictions for Smart Working. I have also asked KCC what measures are to be put in place to discourage and control traffic diverting via Lunsford Lane and New Hythe Lane in particular.
7. The Joint Transportation Board also authorised the acquisition of land to create new footways giving improved visibility splays on the approaches to the Kent Street junction of Malling Road.
8. KCC Members Community Funds
  - a. I have funded from my KCC Community the provision of a live Christmas Tree at Leybourne Park to be decorated at Christmas
  - b. Larkfield Library Garage was assessed for storage of Community Group equipment for Christmas Event. The event will feature in Malling Mail bi monthly insert to Downs Mail funded by Malling Action Partnership.
9. KCC is consulting on an increase of 4% in its Council Tax levels. This includes a number of savings which will impact on local services. Budget cuts are proposed in
  - Cutting back on pothole repair programmes
  - Children's Centres ( Woodlands in East Malling may be affected).
  - Subsidised bus routes, ( This includes the number 59 and
  - Stopping providing accommodation support for offenders
- 10 I am advised that the Amey report on the junction improvements for the A20 between Leybourne and Coldharbour is expected by the end of this month.
11. I have received legal advice that provided the necessary signage is erected and the site enclosed, it is possible for volunteers to work on maintaining and improving Cottenham Orchard. The body maintaining the land could then apply for Possessory Title once they had been in adverse possession for ten years.