

Elected Member Annual Report and Review 2015



Name of Member: Councillor Tom Dawlings

Ward: Benenden & Cranbrook

Section 1: Attendance at Council/ Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

This section has been completed by Democratic Services and lists all Council and Committee meetings, including how many meetings of each, you attended for the period from January to December 2015.

1 January – 27 May

Name of Committee	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during the year
Full Council	4	4
Audit & Governance Committee	2	2
Licensing Committee	2	2
Licensing Sub-Committee (only 3 of the 15 members are called at any time)	0	6
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	3	4
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	2	2

28 May – 31 December

Name of Committee	No. of meetings attended	No. of meetings held during the year
Full Council	3	3

Audit & Governance Committee	3	3
Licensing Committee	1	3
Planning Committee	9	10
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4	4
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	4	5

Please list how many County Council, Parish/Town Council and Town Forum meetings you have attended.

County Council	Parish/Town Council	Town Forum
	Benenden Parish Council - 8 meetings Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council - 8 meetings	

Section 2: Community Involvement

Please list details of organisations within the community with which you are involved, including any outside bodies that you have been appointed to by the Council in order to promote joint working and improved service delivery to the public.

Organisation	Brief description of your role
Benenden CE Primary School (until October 2015)	Clerk to Governors
Cranbrook Tourism Forum	Chairman - planning (with the Parish Council) how to encourage more tourism in and around Cranbrook
Benenden Parish Plan	Part of a Group reviewing the ownership and management of 'Village Assets' and the implementation of the Parish Plan
Queens Hall Review Group (from May 2015)	I am on this Group to represent the Borough Council (but it has not met since my appointment)
Helen Grant MP (from August 2015)	Assisting Helen Grant MP with some of her constituency matters

Section 3: Assisting Constituents

Please give an illustration of the ways in which you have assisted or liaised with your constituents, or other residents of the Borough (i.e. resolving problems), including details of any surgeries you have held.

I am always available to discuss local concerns by telephone or by email and in person as I walk around the ward. I am a regular attender at both Benenden Parish Council and Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council meetings.

My Borough Council workload has increased since May 2015 as with my appointment to the Planning Committee and as Vice-Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee – these roles in addition to serving on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Licensing Committee and being on the Finance Cabinet Advisory Board. Notably Borough Council successes include work on the access to North Farm and the dualling of the A21, the upgrade to the Assembly Hall theatre and successful HLF awards, in particular the £12m Cultural and Learning Hub to extend and integrate the Library, Museum, Art Gallery and Adult Education Centre. For the future, work is underway to assess the feasibility of providing a new theatre on the Great Hall site and to relocate the Council into new offices (big enough to sub-let part to generate income) freeing up the Town Hall site to better economic use. Importantly for the Benenden & Cranbrook ward is the continuing work to deliver a new Community Centre in Cranbrook – I follow this closely.

Significant planning matters affecting the Benenden & Cranbrook communities have included the approval of the application to extend the Cranden site and the approval of plans to demolish the non-listed buildings on the Cranbrook Engineering site – this and the adjacent Wilkes Field site is crucial to the regeneration of Cranbrook town centre. The much opposed plans for an anaerobic digester in Benenden are now to be determined by KCC. There is welcome news on the financing of a new Primary School in Benenden where work should start in 2016 and the school ready for September 2017. On housing, the Inspector's decision to approve the Highgate Hill development in Hawkhurst was a huge disappointment and I hope for a very different outcome to the appeal against the Gladman plans for excessive housing in Sissinghurst. There are plans (supported by Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council) for 250 houses in Cranbrook (on the land to the east of the High Street and south of the Co-op going down to the Crane valley) and I attended a workshop with the appointed town planners seeking local views on this potential development.

Section 4: Special Responsibilities

Please list any other positions of responsibility that you may hold within this Council (for example: Portfolio Holder, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Lead Member, or Mayoral duties).

Responsibility	Nature of your duties
Vice-Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee	I attend briefings with the Chairman and am ready to stand in for him at meetings.

Section 5: Learning and Development

This section has been completed by Democratic Services and lists dates and details of attendance at training sessions, conferences, seminars etc during the period January to December 2015 which have supported you in your duties as a councillor. Please check this with your own records and contact Emily Metcalf if you have any queries.

Details of event	Date attended
Licensing Committee Training	13 January 2015
Member Briefing 5 year Plan Transforming the Museum	25 February 2015
Member Briefing MKIP Update	17 March 2015
Audit & Governance Training	24 March 2015
Planning Short Bite: Material/Non Material Planning Considerations	03 June 2015
Audit and Governance Committee Training	23 June 2015
Hidden in clear view	25 June 2015
Counting the Cost of Difficult Planning Decisions	22 July 2015
Planning Short Bite: "Applications for works to protected trees"	29 July 2015
Planning Short Bite	19 August 2015
Planning Short Bite: 5 Year Housing Land Supply, the NPPF and Wider Implications	09 September 2015
Planning Short Bite: 5 Year Housing Land Supply, the NPPF and Wider Implications	30 September 2015
Universal Credit	14 October 2015
Planning Short Bite: Kent Air Ambulance	21 October 2015
Planning Short Bite: Overview of Highgate Hill appeal decision and implications	11 November 2015
Update of Review of Care Quality	19 November 2015
Planning Short Bite: Site Inspections and Call-Ins	2 December 2015

Do you have any other learning and development needs that have not been identified or met by the Council? If so, please set out below.

I will attend training and briefing sessions organised by the Borough Council.

Section 6: Internal Meetings Attended

Please give details of role and attendance at internal meetings, including Working Parties/Groups and Political Group meetings.

Details of event	Role and purpose
Conservative Group meetings	Attend all these meetings as a Conservative Councillor
Audit and Governance Committee briefings	Briefing and discussion with Auditor, Director of Finance and Legal Advisor for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

	in advance of each Audit & Governance meeting.
Panel for appointment of independent Member and Independent Person	Chaired this recruitment panel
Overview and Scrutiny Task & Finish Group considering the strains on infrastructure in areas where significant development is being planned	Member of Group
Overview and Scrutiny Task & Finish Group established to administer a fund to help with any financial difficulties encountered with devolving responsibilities from the Borough Council to Town/Parish Councils.	Member of Group

Section 7: Supplementary Information

Please feel free to add any information you consider may assist in defining your role as an elected Member, any outside obligations that may impact on your role or any additional information you wish to add.

Dated: 9 January 2016