

KALC Councillors' Conference 2018 at West Faversham Community Centre – Tuesday 10th July 2018

Report by Rory Silkin

Engagement is good for you! Rachel Marshall, Engagement Officer, Kent Police (Special Branch, with particular responsibility for Aviation and Maritime terrorist, gang, smuggling and similar activity). Rachel's message boiled down to a plea to let the police know of any suspicious or "out of the ordinary" activity, especially (in her case) along the coast, rivers or at airports, air strips or even large fields. Kent has the longest coastline of any English County, loads of Ro-Ro ferries (and fields). Baddies are increasingly using inflatables or RHIBS to smuggle illegal immigrants, drugs or weapons onto unsuspecting Kent beaches, and light aircraft or drones for smaller objects. An example she mentioned was the interception of three dozen Kalashnikovs. Call 101 for suspicious behaviour or in emergency the Special Branch Coastal Ops. Room: 01303 297 320. (Deals with marine or aviation incidents only).

She mentioned the free "Country Eye" app for smartphones, which allows people to take snaps of suspicious sights in the countryside and automatically sends them to the police.

Forming Strategic Partnerships: Simon Ryan of GEN2 Property Ltd. A wholly owned property management company formed from KCC's property department. The Company works mainly with KCC and other local authorities to arrange joint ventures to develop and run developments of council property for social purposes (and for profit to the council). Examples include the Southborough Hub, where a GP surgery, council offices, social facilities and some housing (I think) are being put up on an old, tired site. GEN2 are facilitating with the council, NHS and developers. The council gets to keep the site at the end of a lease. The Company is now looking for smaller plots of land in parishes to build social housing on long leases. Simon is also associated with Mary's Child, a charity supplying temporary housing for homeless families, and is similarly interested in parish or other property for those purposes too.

Forming Social Capacity: Nick Silvester KFRS (Kent Fire and Rescue Service). They're current project concerns dementia, as the demented are particularly prone to start fires and also to go wandering and need KFRS and others to find them. They are quite happy to fit smoke alarms or provide advice to help carers keep the demented safe: it's cheaper than putting out the fire or finding lost people! Could also help with defibrillators.

Time to Borrow? Terry Martin, CEO of KALC. Explained the procedure for Parishes to apply for development loans at cheap (government borrowing) fixed rates. Very dull. Info in pack. NB. rates are historically low and parishes are uncapped for at least three years.

Financing Energy: Suki & Beth, SALIX Ltd. A not for profit company with access to government money to lend, interest free to public authorities for projects to replace aging energy infrastructure and reduce carbon footprint. E.G. replacing aging streetlamps with LEDs. They provide advice too.

Other material in pack available from the office.