

Communications:

In writing to Trish Hamilton, Proper Officer, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council,
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By telephone to: (01795) 873831
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Councillor Roger Truelove
Leader
Swale Borough Council
Swale House
East Street,
Sittingbourne
Kent ME10 3HT

Dated: 28th May 2020

Dear Councillor Truelove

Re: Interim Planning Policy for Holiday Homes

Minster-on-Sea Parish Council has asked me to contact you urgently as the Leader of Swale Borough Council regarding a decision you are being asked to make at the next Swale Borough Council Cabinet Meeting on 3rd June 2020 when you will be asked to support the Local Development Panel's (LDF) recommendation for a revision to the current policy for holiday homes. To summarise its position, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council objects in the strongest possible terms to the proposal for a revision to the current policy for holiday homes. Its reasoning includes:-

Firstly, the consultation behind the decision-making process is flawed. For example, despite submitting a formal representation ahead of the deadline, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council's representation was not available on line for consideration until just a few hours before the meeting. As the third largest council in Kent, serving a population in excess of 17,00, this is simply unacceptable.

Secondly in allowing this change of policy to go through under the umbrella of a 'flawed consultation', you are permitting what is classified as 'sub-standard construction' to be approved as residential accommodation. This will not only severely damage the tourist economy on which the Isle of Sheppey relies, it will set a precedent for other parks to follow particularly those in flood risks areas placing the emergency services under unacceptable pressure. It could also lead to hardship for anyone considering purchasing those properties because such properties are ordinarily not mortgageable.

Thirdly, it is clear from the representations from the other councils on the Isle of Sheppey that they oppose this move for the reasons they have each outlined in their representations. The fact that the Panel have failed to listen is not conducive to working in partnership on this initiative. The Parish Council asks for an investigation to be carried out into how this particular consultation was conducted so that lessons can be learned.

Minster-on-Sea Parish Council would urge that no changes be made to Swale Borough Council's planning policy for holiday homes as set out within its adopted Local Plan (Bearing Fruits 2017). The Parish Council questions why Swale Borough Council through the LDF would put forward a proposal that offer people residencies that fall below the standards expected and places them in situations of risk whilst being detrimental to the tourist offer on the Isle of Sheppey as a whole.

For these reasons and more, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council objects in the strongest possible terms to the LDF's recommendation for a revision to the current policy for holiday homes and asks that you and your Fellow Cabinet Members to support its position.

Yours sincerely

SENT UNSIGNED TO AVOID DELAY

Trish Hamilton BSc FdA CEG FSLCC
Proper Officer

APPROVED 28/05/20