

Minutes of a Public Services Committee meeting held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 31 March 2008

PRESENT Councillors **Granville Bantick (Committee Chairman)**, Lorna Hall, Sonia Holmes, Paul Osborne (Mayor), Shaun Rogers, Sam Souster (Deputy Mayor)

PS John Berry (Sussex Police), PCSO Ruth Brunton (Sussex Police), Cllr Keith Glazier (ESCC), John Izod (RTC Age Concern rep), David Reed (Landgate Association), Professor Keith Taylor (RTC Marsh Link Action Group rep), Mandy Turner (Tilling Green Residents' Association), Captain Paul Tyler (Church Army Schools & Churches Liaison Officer), David Wright (Landgate Association)

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; 3 members of the public; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*

The meeting commenced at 7.08

34 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr David Russell and Gina Sanderson (RVA).

35 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

36 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 3 December 2007 (PS03) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

37 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk advised that all the Recommended/Resolved items had been actioned.

38 CRIME & DISORDER

(a) Rye & District Police-Parish Liaison Group/Meeting

Cllr Rogers advised that, because of work commitments, he had not attended any meetings since the Committee last met.

b) Rye Local Action Team

The LAT Chairman, Cllr Holmes advised that the LAT had met on a number of occasions recently and was concentrating on reconstituting itself. An AGM/open meeting would be held on 4 June, venue TBA.

(c) Policing in Rye

PS Berry's report included reference to: his being responsible for 7 PCSOs plus one Specialist Neighbourhood Officer (PC); Sussex Police identifying funding to recruit an additional 46 officers (one of which, hopefully, would be for Rye); another PCSO joining the Rye area within the next few months; new shift patterns being introduced from tomorrow which would provide greater resources later in the evening – particularly at weekends; high visibility policing in the town on Friday and Saturday nights; Operation Temptation – involving PCSOs addressing issues involving younger people during school holidays; work having been commenced on establishing Neighbourhood Panels.

PCSO Brunton reported that there had been a particular problem with graffiti at the TPCC, Rye Harbour and the Gun Garden – but 4 offenders had been identified and 'dealt with'.

Responding to a question from Cllr Souster, PS Berry acknowledged that there had been a number of instances of persons unknown setting fire to rubbish over the years. He did not believe that the arson attack on a property in New Road recently was linked.

The Police were always pleased to receive any information that could assist their enquiries.

Replying to a question put by Captain Tyler, PCSO Brunton stated that she believed one individual had been arrested in relation to last weekend's burglaries at the TPCC and Freda Gardham.

Speaking from recent personal experience, Cllr Glazier praised Police Officers generally for their efforts.

39 VOLUNTARY SECTOR ISSUES

No matters were raised.

40 MARSH LINK

Professor Taylor apologised for the fact that the upcoming Marsh Link AGM (when 3-4 railway operator representatives would be present) coincided with the Annual Town Meeting.

In relation to the award of a new rail franchise (commencing November 2009) he advised that the MLAG had agreed a 'wish list' as follows:

- (a)** Improved connectivity at Ashford
- (b)** Reducing overcrowding at the Brighton end (and sometimes between Rye and Ashford)
- (c)** Restoration of an adequate service at Winchelsea, Three Oaks and Doleham.
- (d)** A late night service from Hastings

A period of public consultation on the franchise would follow shortly.

MLAG's long term aims included:

- (i)** Two trains an hour (rather than one)
- (ii)** Electrification

- (iii) A faster journey time between Ashford and Brighton

There was a possibility of 'Continental interest' in running a 'non Eurostar' service through Ashford.

The Mayor observed that, during peak times, it was cheaper to drive to Tonbridge to catch the same train leaving Rye for London. It was noted that the other option was to drive to Ashford.

RECOMMENDATION That the Council supports the MLAG's wish list and long term aims – and backs the Mayor's observation that the fare structure does not encourage travelers to reduce their car use.

41 BUS SERVICES

(a) 711

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow Mary Smith (MS) to address Members.

MS advised that the service was important because it served the Conquest Hospital; however, it could no longer be described as 'efficient'. Apparently, EU Driver Working Time Regulations had necessitated a break in the service – currently at Lydd or Camber. There is a change of drivers and risk of journey delays. Although passengers are not required to decant, any introduction of this would cause difficulties because of the absence or inadequacy of bus shelters.

The meeting reconvened.

RECOMMENDATION That the Council seeks to consider the precise legal situation before pursuing this concern further.
Clerk

It was noted that, with the relocation from the area of Pauline Kingswood, the Committee had a vacancy for a 'bus specialist'.

RESOLVED To co-opt Mary Smith. **Clerk**

(b) Rye Medical Centre

Cllr Holmes invited the meeting to consider whether to request an extension to the bus service serving Military Road/North Salts to include the Rye Medical Centre. This would benefit older people and those with mobility difficulties.

Cllr Wright – a Rye & District Community Transport driver - suggested that the 326 service might have sufficient 'slack' to incorporate this suggestion, subject to there being sufficient demand and it not antagonising other bus operators serving the Care Centre.

RECOMMENDATION To ask RDCVS to consider extending the 326 service on a trial basis. **Clerk**

42 REPRESENTATION

Cllr Homes asked Members to consider inviting an organisation involved in delivering/providing/monitoring public health services to nominate a representative to the Committee.

The Clerk suggested that a group with a monitoring/scrutiny role would be appropriate and observed that Patient & Public Involvement in Health Fora were about to be replaced with Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) which would monitor both health and social care services.

Cllr Glazer advised that the East Sussex LINK contract had just been awarded to the East Sussex Disability Association (ESDA).

RESOLVED 1 (Once it is established) To invite the local LINK to nominate a representative to the Committee. Clerk

RECOMMENDATION That the Council should express interest in participating in the local LINK. Clerk

43 EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Clerk advised that, to finalise the Draft Plan, the Team had decided it needed assistance from Rother's Emergency Planning Officer, Charles Sharrod. The Clerk was currently canvassing him – and team members – for dates when they could attend a meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.53.

Date.....

Chairman.....