

Minutes of a Public Services Committee meeting held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 13 October 2008

PRESENT Councillors **Granville Bantick (Committee Chairman)**, Brian Elliott, Lorna Hall, Sonia Holmes, Frank Palmer, Sam Souster (Mayor)

PS John Berry (Sussex Police), Cllr Bernardine Fiddimore (Marsh Link Action Group), Cllr Keith Glazier (ESCC), John Izod (RTC Age Concern rep), Mandy Turner (**Committee Vice Chairman** - Tilling Green Residents' Association), Cllr Mary Smith (bus services)

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*

The meeting commenced at 7.09.

12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs John Breeds (Deputy Mayor), Paul Osborne, Shaun Rogers and David Wright.

13 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

PS Berry offered to follow up the arrangements for the proposed presentation by Sussex Police's Traffic Department. **PS Berry**

14 MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting of 7 July 2008 (PS01) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15 MATTERS ARISING

Page 3

6d) Crime & disorder – Neighbourhood Watch (including details within RTC's newsletter) actioned.

Page 4

9a) Bus services – 711 Stagecoach had confirmed that the Hastings-Dover route was no longer split part way.

9b) Bus services – Rye Medical Centre Cllr Smith had spoken with Pat Hughes but was aware of an increasing number of complaints from patients having difficulty accessing the Centre – to the point of changing their appointments around available transport. Mr Izod – a member of the Rye & District Community Transport Management Committee – advised that a number of RDCT's drivers were of the opinion that the 326 timetable could be modified to permit the route to be extended to include North Salts. Cllr Glazier highlighted the need for a formal assessment of such

a service and suggested approaching the Chairman of the Rye Medical Centre Patients Group, Alistair Mitchell-Innes. Cllr Smith suggested that the *Rye Observer* might like to help ascertain need.

Page 5

10 East Sussex LINK (*urging it to be more accessible*) See main agenda item – 19.

16 CRIME & DISORDER

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

Cllr Rogers was not present.

(b) Rye Local Action Team

Cllr Holmes advised that the LAT's reconstitution was complete. A Fear of Crime Survey form had been distributed via *Fixtures* – eliciting a good response so far. It was aimed at those living/working in Rye and Rye Harbour. The questionnaire had also been publicised within RTC's newsletter.

PS Berry added that the purpose of the survey was to identify the top three crime and disorder-related issues affecting local people. Similar exercises – including the establishment of Priority Setting Panels – were being undertaken across Sussex.

Cllr Hall suggested that future forms could usefully include a bigger response area for actual crime experienced.

(c) Policing in Rye

Recruitment PS Berry advised that a new police officer, PC Paul Fielder had commenced employment on 6 October. The aim was to have three Neighbourhood Specialist PCs in place in Rye by January.

Vandalism Working with RDC, the Police had identified 8 young people associated with criminal damage in the Gun Garden.

Neighbourhood Watch A second attempt at recruiting volunteer co-ordinators had met with success. The plan was to divide the town into sectors.

Speeding A couple of suitable sites had been identified which would be suitable for speed checks. Cllr Smith remained concerned about vehicle speed on Rye Hill.

Burglaries There had been a couple of arrests and convictions in relation to a spate of burglaries.

Rye Bonfire Preparations were in place. Unfortunately, last year's arrest figures were comparable with those at the Lewes Bonfire. Mr Izod advised that the final multi-agency planning meeting had been held but there were concerns about 'problematic' individuals being 'trained in' from Hastings. It was anticipated that, on the night, Rye could be gridlocked for an hour – a problem exacerbated by irresponsible parking. PS Berry responded that, last year, section 27 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act had been used extensively to disperse 'problematic' groups of people. Cllr Fiddimore expressed concern about the large amount of public drinking in evidence last year which could deter families comprising younger children. Ms Turner

reported that last year groups were alighting at the railway station with alcohol. PS Berry advised that officers would be monitoring the situation well before the official start time.

Rye Health Check, Hilden Fitness Centre, 30 October PCSO Brunton would be present.

Operation Temptation This was an ongoing response to youth issues, particularly during school holidays. One of the main issues during the upcoming half term would be misuse of fireworks.

Cllr Hall highlighted reports of theft from, and the untying of boats at Strand Quay. PS Berry advised that there had been problems at the end of the school summer holidays but added that the presence of CCTV in the vicinity was useful.

Cllr Palmer flagged up continuing problems with vehicles damaging footways and observed that some permitted parking bays impeded the passage of LGVs. PS Berry advised that many more parking tickets had been issued over the last 6 months in an attempt to re-exert control over unlawful parking in the town.

Cllr Smith suggested that emergency vehicles would have difficulty entering Tillingham Avenue because cars are frequently parked at the entrance. Waste collection vehicles are being impeded. PS Berry was aware of the problem, which would be monitored.

(d) Neighbourhood Watch

It was noted that the LAT's had suggested that the Rye ward could be divided into sectors for Neighbourhood Watch organisational purposes – with Town Councillors be 'allocated' to each.

The Mayor considered this idea had merit – it would enable Councillors to become more familiar with a 'patch'.

Cllr Smith drew attention to the rising number of residents' groups in the town – notably, the newly formed TiVang (comprising Love Lane, The Grove, Tillingham Avenue and Ferry Road) which was not yet constituted.

17 VOLUNTARY SECTOR ISSUES

Cllr Glazier reported that Cllr Kirkham had advised him that Mrs Sanderson was at – or on her way from – another meeting.

18 MARSH LINK

Cllr Fiddimore reported that although she had been unable to attend the last two meetings of the Marsh Link Action Group she could speak to the notes of the meetings.

Of the four rail franchise contenders, it was considered generally that GoVia was the frontrunner. MLAG was attempting to obtain a copy of the tender specification to use as a basis for suggesting service improvements to the bidders. The Group was concerned that the current franchisee appeared to have reneged on a promise to make available replacement rolling stock in the event of mechanical failure.

MLAG's membership had dwindled over time. Consequently, it intended to devote more time to promoting itself.

Cllr Bantick advised that the Marsh Link Community Rail Steering Group had not met since April – the next was scheduled for 23 October.

Mr Izod highlighted the common complaint from passengers that they had missed the Rye connection at Ashford through the late running of the outward London service. He suggested that, in this instance in particular, it would be reasonable for the Rye service to be held back. He was aware that if a passenger missed the last Rye service for this reason Southern was willing to reimburse their taxi fare. The Committee Chairman undertook to raise this matter. **Cllr Bantick**

The Mayor would be meeting the children's Fun Train on 29 October, which would run from Eastbourne to Rye and back. Although entertainment would be provided on the train, there was some uncertainty about the extent of the activities planned in Rye.

19 EAST SUSSEX LINK

The Clerk advised that the next public meeting of the East Sussex Local Involvement Network in Health & Social Care (LINK) would be held on Thursday 6 November at Pett Village Hall, 1-4pm. Cllr Glazier emphasised the importance of the organisation in terms of scrutiny of health and social care. Cllrs Bantick and Smith indicated they were likely to attend.

If anyone was interested, the Clerk had requested a nomination pack for election to the LINK Core Group.

20 EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Clerk advised that John Holbrook had offered to attend the Community Emergency Planning Conference at the East Sussex National Golf Course on 28 October (6pm-9pm) on RTC's behalf.

The Emergency Planning Officer for Hastings & Rother, Charles Sharrod had supplied a draft Rye Town Emergency Plan which would be considered by the Rye Emergency Action Team (REACT) at its next meeting (TBA).

The meeting ended at 8.00

Date.....

Chairman.....