

Minutes of a Public Services Committee meeting held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 7 July 2008

PRESENT Councillors John Breeds (Mayor) **Granville Bantick (Committee Chairman)**, Sonia Holmes, Paul Osborne, Frank Palmer, Shaun Rogers, Sam Souster (Mayor)

PS John Berry (Sussex Police), PCSO Dan Bevan, PC Andy Hanson, John Izod (RTC Age Concern rep), Mandy Turner (Tilling Green Residents' Association), Captain Paul Tyler (Church Army Schools & Churches Liaison Officer), Gina Sanderson (RVA), Cllr Mary Smith (bus services)

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Pat Hughes (Rye & District Community Transport); Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*

The meeting commenced at 7.22

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs Brian Elliott, Bernardine Fiddimore, Lorna Hall and David Wright.

2 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED 1 Page 3, final Recommendation Delete RDCVS insert RDCT.

RESOLVED 2 That the Minutes of the meeting of 31 March 2008 (PS04) – as amended – be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk advised that all outstanding matters arising appeared on the main agenda.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN

The Clerk advised that, because the Committee was an advisory one, it would be permissible to elect a non-Councillor as Chairman/Vice-Chairman.

Cllr Osborne proposed, and Cllr Rogers seconded, Mandy Turner.

There being no other nominations Cllr Bantick declared Mandy Turner elected as Vice Chairman.

6 **CRIME & DISORDER**

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

Cllr Rogers advised that there had been no meeting since the Committee last met.

b) **Rye Local Action Team**

The LAT Chairman, Cllr Holmes advised that the last LAT meeting incorporated an AGM – at which a revised Constitution was adopted.

Cllr Souster advised that he had had met with Acting Chief Inspector Heather Keating last week. She had emphasised her support for both the LAT and the production of a Rye Local Action Plan. He had read the Minutes of the last LAT meeting and asked those who normally attend LAT meetings to comment on their value.

Cllr Holmes stressed that the LAT was endeavouring to become more pro-active and to engage further with the public. The Clerk reported that the LAT would be distributing an explanatory leaflet/questionnaire via *Rye Fixtures* and other outlets. Mandy Turner had attended a meeting which had been rather unfocussed – but she had formed the impression that this problem had been addressed.

(c) **Policing in Rye** (*see also page 4*)

PCSO Bevan advised that he had been asked, at short notice, to stand in for PS Berry and PC Hanson – however, both might be able to attend later.

He advised that the travelers on the Fair Salts had been evicted earlier that day; the clamp down on illegal parking (identified by the community as a priority) was continuing; there had been some recent criminal damage and graffiti in the town.

The radar gun had been 'cleared' for use on Rye Hill – 50-60 drivers had been caught exceeding the speed limit thus far. Subject to satisfactory risk assessments, the device would be deployed on other suitable stretches of road – such as New Road, New Winchelsea Road and Udimore Road. Unfortunately, Ferry Road did not provide a minimum of 200 yards of clear view – although the Traffic section at Polegate might be able to assist.

Registration plates were being stolen to clone vehicles. It is possible to purchase tamperproof bolts. PCSO Bevan was asked to ensure the availability of these was publicised. **PCSO Bevan**

The Traffic Department had been visiting the area to address the problem of speeding motorbikes – a widespread problem but particularly evident in Icklesham. He could arrange for a member of the department to attend the next meeting. **PCSO Bevan, Clerk**

Cllr Rogers observed that the (lawful) parking of vehicles on the South Undercliff bend between Shipyard Lane and St Margarets Terrace during weekday evenings and weekends was hazardous.

(d) Neighbourhood Watch

PCSO Bevan advised that this was being revived and that the Police were looking for individuals to act as Street or Area Co-ordinators. PCOS were being instructed on how to train Co-ordinators.

RECOMMENDATION That details of the scheme be included in the Council's newsletter. Clerk

7 VOLUNTARY SECTOR ISSUES

Sussex Police had asked RVA to provide **ward profiles** across Rother.

The voluntary sector was suffering from a lack of **funding** generally. National Lottery funding was being targeted on deprived areas – rather than those areas with pockets of deprivation. Even Awards For All funding applications were increasingly likely to be unsuccessful.

7.46 PS Berry and PC Hanson arrived.

ESCC was becoming increasingly reluctant to commission services – preferring to use its own staff.

The **Youth Services Review** had been extended for another 3 months because of concerns about the potential loss of substantial funding associated with the community colleges.

The existing user groups will transfer when the **Children's Centre** is relocated (to the new Primary School site).

RVA is now issuing monthly e-bulletins and has revamped its newsletter.

8 MARSH LINK

In her absence, the Committee Chairman read out Cllr Fiddimore's report in her capacity as RTC's Marsh Link Action Group representative. Her report made reference to:

- Southern refusing MLAG's request for request stops at the three rural stations which had services withdrawn – despite this facility operating successfully elsewhere
- MLAG continuing to pursue electrification – unlikely in the near future because dual tracking would be required (very expensive)

Cllr Bantick advised that he had attended a Marsh Link Community Rail Partnership meeting on 24 April (notes distributed with the agenda) and the recent receipt of a summary of the South Central Franchise Consultation document. The consultation runs from 22 May-14 August. The successful bidder will be announced in early summer 2009 – with the franchise commencing on 29 September 2009 for 5 years.

In relation to the 'Coastway East' services, the summary notes that *the hourly Brighton-Ashford service is well used but that 'Rye shuttles' have been less popular and demand levels remain low . . . In response to crowding on some Ashford to Brighton trains, especially between Brighton and Lewes, bidders will also be asked to judge whether a viable case exists to lengthen some of these trains, or to alter the service pattern.*

In relation to Winchelsea, Three Oaks and Doleham the consultation document advises that *a minimum service to each of the low use stations will be mandated.*

The summary (prepared by Passenger Focus) suggests two concerns in relation to losing the 'Rye shuttle' service: loss of useful connecting services to Ashford at times when people are seeking to reach school/work; and that it is used as a 'spare' when any problems arise with the main rolling stock.

Cllr Osborne advised that, in the course of considering Hastings' draft LDF Framework, RDC's Cabinet had earlier resolved to support track dualing between Hastings and Ashford.

Gina Sanderson, Chair of the Rother Transport Action Group, advised that the Group had also expressed concerns about the loss of the shuttle service.

6 (c) Policing in Rye

In view of Sergeant Berry's arrival, the Committee Chairman returned to this item.

Sergeant Berry's report included reference to:

- Two individuals being responsible for many recent burglaries in the town – they had been charged with multiple offences
- Two individuals being charged with 14 offences involving the theft of metal (notably lead) from the Rye area – including St Mary's Church and the Gun Garden toilets
- The continuation of Operation Marble
- The training of an additional PCSO
- PCSOs being redeployed on a ward basis
- The Police continuing to clamp down on parking violations (identified as a priority by the community)

9 BUS SERVICES

(a) 711

Cllr Smith advised that she had been advised recently by both a passenger and a Stagecoach bus driver that the Hastings-Dover service is to revert back to a single journey (rather than be 'split' at Camber). She had emailed Stagecoach for confirmation.

RECOMMENDATION That RTC seeks similar confirmation from Stagecoach.
Clerk

(b) Rye Medical Centre

The Committee Chairman invited Pat Hughes (Rye & District Community Transport) to respond to the Committee's request that it considers extending the 326 service to link Rye Medical Centre with Military Road/North Salts.

Pat Hughes commented as follows: there is some 'slack' built into the 326 timetable but this is to allow for any hold ups in the town; she had identified one individual having difficulty getting from Military Road/North Salts to the Centre; the relocation of the surgery has not caused the accessibility problems feared initially; the surgery is well served by buses and the surgery endeavours to make appointments around public transport plans; some Military Road residents walk to the bottom of Rye Hill to be picked up by the 326 outside the entrance to Mountsfield; the Dial-A-Ride service is available

for those requiring a 'door-to-door service'; the majority of those going to the Memorial Care Centre site are accessing chiropody services; both Camber and Icklesham have branch surgeries.

A discussion followed between Cllr Smith and Pat Hughes concerning the dovetailing of certain services. The Committee Chairman suggested that it might prove beneficial if they continued to exchange information after the meeting.

It was noted that the bus stop opposite the Memorial Care Centre entrance is no longer 'hail and stop'.

10 EAST SUSSEX LINK

The Clerk advised that the East Sussex Local Involvement Network in Health & Social Care was still developing and it remained unclear how 'local' its organisation and structure would be. He had not been able to ascertain the date of the next (third) public meeting - the previous two had been in Seaford. There was little enthusiasm for traveling such a distance to attend meetings.

RECOMMENDATION To write to the East Sussex LINK urging it to make the organisation more 'locally accessible'. Clerk

11 EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Clerk advised that, within the last few days, he had received a draft Rye Emergency Plan from the Rother/Hastings Emergency Planning Officer, Charles Sharrod. This would be considered by the Rye Emergency Action Community Team (REACT). **Clerk**

There were no offers to attend the Community Emergency Planning Conference at the East Sussex National Golf Course, 28 October, 6pm-9pm.

The meeting ended at 8.22

Date.....

Chairman.....