

Minutes of a Public Services Committee meeting held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 10 October 2011

PRESENT Councillors Sonia Holmes, Mary Smith (**Committee Chairman**)

PCSO Neil Holden (Sussex Police); John Izod (Age Concern, Rye Community Centre); Captain Paul Tyler (Church Army Schools & Churches Liaison Officer); Sonia Relf (Tillingham Valley & Neighbourhood Group) (**Vice Chairman**); Janet Sherwood (Tilling Green Residents' Association & Ferry Road PPG)

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; 7 members of the public – including Pip Al-Khafaji, Dominic Manning and Christopher Strangeways from Rother Environmental Group - and Daliea Redman (*likely to replace Paul Tyler from 24 October*)

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm

14 APOLOGIES
 Apologies for absence – and the reasons (lodged with the Clerk) – were accepted from Cllrs Granville Bantick, John Breeds (Mayor), Bernardine Fiddimore and Shaun Rogers (Deputy Mayor).

Apologies for absence were received also from Sally Compton (Rye Medical Centre PPG), PC Paul Fielder (Sussex Police), Anthony Kimber and Tony Moore (Ferry Road Health Centre PPG).

15 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST
 There was none.

16 MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the meeting of 4 July 2011 (PS01) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17 MATTERS ARISING

See main agenda items.

18 CRIME & DISORDER
 (a) Rye Priority Setting Panel
 (b) Policing in Rye
 (c) Parking de-criminalisation

PCSO Holden spoke to the notes of the Priority Setting Panel held on 13 September (**Appendix**).

Parking de-criminalisation This may have to await the outcome of an ESCC full parking review – scheduled to be undertaken in Rye in approximately 2 years. Cllr Smith suggested that if a private operator was awarded the contract it was likely to

Smith suggested that if a private operator was awarded the contract it was likely to take an inflexible approach in order to maximise parking violations revenue. It was understood that parish/town councils did not currently have the power to operate such a scheme.

CCTV It was likely that RDC would be seeking shortly the return of the temporary system in The Mint. The Police would like greater CCTV coverage in the town. Systems are now much cheaper and less intrusive.

South Undercliffe – congestion Mark Dunn (Sussex Police) had indicated that the Police would support a move to extend the existing parking restriction to include Sunday. This could be achieved by modifying the existing TRO.

Speaking from the Gallery, Frank Palmer suggested that many of the cars parked in South Undercliffe on a Sunday did not belong to residents. He added that the northern side of Strand Quay used to have double yellow lines but these disappeared after resurfacing work and were replaced with a parking bay. It was difficult for large vehicles traveling in opposite directions to pass the parked cars.

RECOMMENDATION 1 (To P&T Committee) That RTC asks the Highways Agency to prohibit parking in South Undercliffe on Sunday, 8am-6pm.
Clerk

RECOMMENDATION 2 (To P&T Committee) That RTC asks the Highways Agency to reinstate the double yellow lines on the northern side of Strand Quay.
Clerk

Speaking from the Gallery, Professor Taylor observed that the worst spot for drivers parking on the pavements and causing an obstruction/damage was the West Street:High Street junction. PCSO Holden advised that the Police were aware of this and often issued tickets in the vicinity. The Police would be happy to adopt a 'zero tolerance approach' to parking violations in the town if they were given a mandate.

Frank Palmer suggested introducing a 20-minute limit for the parking bay outside LloydsTSB – which could be used by those wishing to use one of the 3 banks in the immediate vicinity. PCSO Holden suggested that, with traffic wardens, this would be difficult to enforce.

19 DISPOSAL OF WASTE

The Committee Chairman welcomed three representatives of Rother Environmental Group (REG).

Christopher Strangeways (CS) was aware of ESCC's position that it did not have funding to provide a local bulky waste 'bring to' facility in the Rye area. He suggested that RTC should approach ESCC and RDC to explore options – and that this should involve the County and District Councillors.

RDC is the collection authority; ESCC the disposal authority. ESCC has a 25-year contract with Veolia.

Pip Al-Khafaji (PA) advised that residents of Watchbell Street are collecting plastic yoghurt/cream pots and sending them to TerraCycle (www.terracycle.co.uk) for recycling – generating 2p per container for Rye Art Gallery.

It was noted that people often did not know where to take less common recyclables. CS advised that there were a large number of web sites with this information but suggested that a good source of information was www.wrap.org.uk.

Paul Tyler agreed to approach Fanny Baldwin regarding obtaining a copy of the St Mary's Ecology Group recycling booklet. **Paul Tyler**

Dominic Manning (DM) reported that, because Jempsons wished to extend its store in Station Approach, the cardboard collection point would need to be relocated by the end of December.

CS suggested that the collection of waste and recyclables was inefficient because residential and commercial waste is collected separately. He added that there was little demand currently for glass. DM added that (aside from the cost) some authorities might not wish to introduce kerbside glass collection because people are in the habit of taking glass to bottle banks. Sonia Relf observed that bottle deposit schemes are common on the Continent.

DM observed that the easier it is to dispose of waste, the greater the quantities that will be generated.

CS suggested that Jempsons or Tesco/Sainsbury's might consider improving their recycling facilities.

RECOMMENDATION That a meeting be arranged with ESCC and RDC – to include Elected Members from all authorities - to explore waste disposal options.
Clerk

20 TILLING GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Paul Tyler and Janet Sherwood reported that:

- Tilling Green Community Centre Steering Group meetings had been reduced to bi-monthly
- The kitchen equipment was operational – although it was awaiting an Environmental Health assessment
- Booking enquiries had risen
- Activities at the Centre included: Tai Chi classes, pilates, a community chef course and bingo – and the premises are available for private hire
- The Centre had a PT receptionist working towards a NVQ
- A laptop was available for local residents to gain internet access – and a projector and screen had been purchased
- The Residents' Association would be asking if it could use part of RTC's grant to purchase an external noticeboard.

21 TRADING STANDARDS

Members were advised that Cllr Smith and the Clerk had attended this year's Transport, Environment and Economy Parish Conference – at which delegates were advised that ESCC's Trading Standards department trains people working (paid or voluntarily) within a range of organisations to offer basic consumer protection advice to others.

RECOMMENDATION That RTC facilitates a 2-hour training session at Tilling Green Community Centre.
Clerk

22 EMERGENCY PLANNING

RESOLVED To note the REACT Chairman's (previously distributed) update and the details of the public meeting at Tiling Green Community Centre, 26 October, 7pm-9pm.

23 MARSH LINK

Ore Tunnel repairs (Jan-March) The Committee Chairman reported that during the closure of the Ashford-Hastings line it was intended that 2 buses an hour would be provided between Rye and Ashford. At a public meeting held at Rye Community Centre on 30 September, Network Rail advised that it might not be possible to take the opportunity to undertake remedial work on a track-side bank at Ashford because it was difficult to arrange a flora and fauna assessment in the winter, when many species were dormant.

MLAG had been advised that it would not be possible to run a shuttle train service between Rye and Ashford because of access to re-fuelling and maintenance facilities. MLAG had countered that it should be possible to provide such facilities at Ashford on a temporary basis.

The Committee Chairman expressed concern that the number of buses proposed would be insufficient - especially during the morning rush hour.

Speaking from the Gallery, DM reported that he had advised Stuart Harland that if the temperature dropped below 3 degrees centigrade the mortar used to repoint the inside of the tunnel would become difficult to work with.

RECOMMENDATION That RTC approaches the Minister of Transport (Norman Baker) and Amber Rudd MP, seeking their support for the provision of a train shuttle service between Rye and Hastings during the period of closure. Clerk

24 BUS SERVICES

Cllr Smith reported that she had received – or had sight of – a number of emails from a Rye Harbour resident who had reported problems with the late running of the 325 service after the last 'services re-organisation'. There had been improvements recently but there remained an issue with poor synchronization of bus and train services.

RECOMMENDATION That RTC's provides ESCC with examples of poor bus and rail connections and asks it to investigate. Clerk

The meeting ended at 8.12pm

Date.....

Chairman.....

Minutes

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Title: Rye Priority Setting Panel Meeting

Date: 13th September 2011 17:00 Hours

Venue: Rye Town Hall

Present

- John Izod - Temp. Chair
- Peter Hillier - Chair
- Cllr Mary Smith - Rye Town Council
- Cllr Sonia Holmes - Rye Town Council
- Richard Farhall - Rye Town Council
- Jonathan Dellar - Chamber of Commerce
- Clive Chizlet
- Pat Hughes
- Chief Inspector Trevor Botting - Sussex police
- Sergeant Warren Downs - Sussex police Rye NPT
- PCSO Neil Holden - Sussex police Rye NPT
- PC Paul Fielder - Sussex police Rye NPT

Apologies

- David Nixon - Mint Residents Association

1. Introduction by JI who kindly agreed to chair the meeting in the absence of PH.
2. Notes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.
3. Update from Chief Inspector Trevor Botting

TB gave an update on the restructure of East Sussex division and reemphasised that there would be no decline in the level of service provided to Rye. TB pointed out that the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) will still occupy Rye police station despite Battle becoming the Neighbourhood Response Team 'hub.' TB also discussed the effects of the London riots on local policing.

4. PF provided an overview of the work that the local policing team had been doing to address the policing priorities agreed at the last meeting.

4a. Parking

Between 1st June 2011 and 31st August 2011 local officers has issued 183 parking tickets (Waiting where prohibited - 90. Overstaying - 61. Unnecessary obstruction - 32.) to vehicles illegally parked in Rye (excluding a backlog of tickets from mid-August - 13th September yet to be processed at the Sussex police ticket office.) PF

and NH estimated that around a further 400 motorists had been given words of advice regarding their manner of parking over the same period. These figures were compared to those of Bexhill (54 tickets over the same period) and Battle (28 tickets over the same period)

There was discussion around whether parking should remain a matter for the local police or whether it should be decriminalised and handed over to Rother District Council. There was also further discussion about the A259 @ South Undercliff and traffic disruption caused by vehicles parking there.

Action

PF to liaise with RF, RTC and to invite representatives of ESCC and RDC to the next panel meeting

4b. Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) along the 'red route'

PF updated that Operation Marble is set to continue despite the restructure. PF also updated that Rye Bar Watch is going from strength to strength and that there are currently six active bans and a further six on warnings.

PF updated that since the 1st June there had been eight violent offences or incidents of disorder in and around the 'red route' of which six had resulted in positive outcomes, one was still under investigation and one which was undetected. Through the same period there had been seven reports of criminal damage of which four had positive outcomes.

PF updated that although there were no plans as yet to remove the CCTV cameras in The Mint, as a moveable resource they could be deployed elsewhere and suggested that alternatives need be looked at for their replacement if it was considered necessary.

PH noted a considerable improvement in the area of The Mint but stressed that the the CCTV had been very successful and that a replacement system should be sought as a priority. RF updated that CCTV for Rye Town was last considered around nine years ago.

Action

PF to liaise with RF and RTC.

4c. Illegal parking in the area of Strand Court

PF summarised the work on this priority since the last meeting.

- Residents at Strand Court were surveyed by the local NPT and business were also spoken to.
- Residents of Strand Court were provided with information on how to contact Sussex police and the local NPT.
- Extra police resources were put in place for the Maritime Festival.
- Signs were given to local businesses requesting motorcyclists park considerately.
- Communication between the Environment Agency, police and Town Council has been improved and RTC now has the final say on what events will take place on Strand Quay.
- RTC are drafting a message to distribute to biker groups/forums again requesting they show consideration for local residents and pedestrians when coming to rye.

5. Panel members decided on the following priorities for the next quarter.

5a. Parking

Those present agreed that parking in the town remains a concern especially in the following areas, the double yellow lines in the High Street opposite Market Road, The Mint, The Landgate and the 1hr limited waits around the town.

As a bolt-on to this priority enquiries should be made as to the decriminalisation of parking enforcement and/or a parking review of Rye Town including disabled parking provision etc.

5b. Anti-social behaviour and criminal damage along the 'red route'

It was agreed that the ASB and criminal damage was not exclusive to The Mint and that the problem was experienced far more widely. The key area's of concern were defined as the 'red route' the route taken by people travelling from pub to pub on a Friday and Saturday night, including the Gun Gardens and Church Square.

Again as a bolt-on to this priority enquiries would be made into a replacement for The Mint CCTV system as well as revisiting CCTV for the whole town.

5c. Parking at South Undercliff

It was agreed that parking at South Undercliff needs to be looked into.

6. Other matters raised

PF provided an update on some other good news stories since the last meeting.

Rye thief jailed

On the 11th August 2011 Mark Page of Hilltop Drive, Rye, was sentenced to 32 months imprisonment at Maidstone Crown Court. Page's sentence reflects several offences including one count of handling stolen goods from a property in Watchbell Street as well as an attempted burglary in Church Square.

This sentence follows Page's recent arrest in Rye after being disturbed in the back garden of a property in Church Square which saw him quickly located and arrested by officers from the newly formed Rye Operations Team.

Three arrested following Iden burglaries

On the 6th September 2011 at around 01:30 am an Iden resident called 999 after she heard banging noises at the rear of her property. The officers that attended quickly located a male hiding in nearby bushes and he was arrested. Whilst the male was in police custody he was continually being called by another person who was subsequently located and arrested a day later. Whilst carrying out searches at the males addresses numerous suspected stolen items were recovered which have since been positively identified by the owners. A further female suspect was arrested at one of the properties bringing to total number of arrests to three. Rother CID is still investigating four burglaries whilst the suspects have been released on police bail with stringent conditions.

7. Next meeting – **13th December 2011** at **17:00** hours at **Rye Town Hall**.

Meeting concluded at 18:30