

Minutes of a Public Services Committee meeting held at the Town Hall, Rye on Monday 30 April 2007

PRESENT Councillors **Granville Bantick (Committee Vice Chairman)**, John Breeds, **Paul Carey (Committee Chairman)**, John Izod, Paul Osborne (Mayor), David Russell (Deputy Mayor), Keith Taylor

Cllr Keith Glazier (ESCC/Rye Partnership), John Holbrook (Freda Gardham), Pauline Kingswood, Mandy Turner (Tilling Green Residents' Association), Captain Paul Tyler (Church Army Schools & Churches Liaison Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Cllrs Frank Palmer and Sonia Holmes; Andy Hemsley – *Rye Observer*; 1 member of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.00

34 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllr Sam Souster and Gina Sanderson (RVA).

35 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this stage.

36 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2007 (PS03) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

37 MATTERS ARISING

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26 Recommendation (access to Postern Gate meeting) See main agenda item 45.

27 Tilling Green representation (co-options) Actioned.

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28c) Policing in Rye (policy on obtaining information from younger people). Actioned. Summary of response from Insp Heather Keating:

Police have to comply with the Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (sets out stop and search principles, powers, recording requirements etc).

If a PC or PCSO requests lawfully a young person's name and address they are obliged to provide it. PCs and PCSOs are obliged legally to make a record of stops and searches on a designated form.

Stop and search must be used fairly, respectfully and without unlawful discrimination.

The legislation does not prevent PCs/PCSOs from talking with people in the ordinary course of their duties.

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31 *Conquest Hospital – possible cuts, Recommendation (responding to consultation)*
See main agenda item – 42.

32 *Speed Management, Recommendation 1 (New Road traffic calming)*. Considered at meetings of the Rye Partnership's Information & Visitor Management Group. Highways Agency has undertaken to incorporate traffic calming within a New Road Town Gateway scheme.

32 *Speed Management, Recommendation 2 (completing Setting Safe Speed Limits questionnaire)*. Actioned. The Mayor advised that the Permanent Indicator Devices for New Road and New Winchelsea Road were only partly installed.

38 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members considered a request from the Landgate Association to join the Committee.

6.07 *The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow the Chairman of the Landgate Association, David Wright to address members. (See Appendix)*

6.15 *The meeting reconvened.*

Cllr Carey suggested that residents associations helped to foster the development of 'community'.

It was agreed generally that future applications from residents associations for membership of the committee should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

RESOLVED To invite the Landgate Association to nominate a representative.

Clerk

39 CRIME & DISORDER

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

Cllr Izod advised that he had not attended one of these informal meetings – held at Rye Police Station – recently; however, although they were of doubtful value, he would be attending the next Crime & Anti Social Behaviour Forum meeting at Ticehurst Village Hall on 2 May.

(b) Rye Local Action Team

Cllr Izod advised that 18 representatives or organisations or interested residents had attended the last meeting. Topics included: anti-social behaviour on Friday and Saturday nights, vandalism at the Gun Garden and Gibbet Marsh and enforcement of street parking regulations.

A discussion followed on the desirability of 'gating' the Gun Garden. In addition to the capital costs, there would be expenses incurred in arranging for someone (probably Rother's toilet cleaning contractor) to lock/unlock the gates. It was concluded generally that installing gates would not prevent younger people gaining entry to the site at night (access could be obtained up the bank from South Undercliff) and it would be more difficult for the police to monitor activity.

(c) Policing in Rye

Cllr John Breeds advised that those going to the police station to report criminal damage/theft had found recently that the police appeared to rather disinterested – citing ‘insufficient resources’.

It was acknowledged that the imminent installation of CCTV cameras in Station Approach should go some way towards addressing anti-social behaviour in that area.

It was noted that no police representatives were present. Mandy Turner advised that Rye’s new PCSO had been very supportive in relation to the Tilling Green Residents’ Association.

RESOLVED To invite the new Rye Police Inspector, Heather Keating to attend the next meeting to address the Committee’s concerns.
Clerk

40 MARSH LINK

The Council’s Marsh Link Action Group representative, Cllr Taylor gave the report following:

- a) To ease overcrowding – especially at the Brighton end of the line – additional rolling stock would be introduced in four months’ time.
- b) Numerous representations – at all levels – had been made to Eurostar to persuade it to continue to operate a service from Ashford, without success. Senior Government Ministers had stated that they considered Eurostar’s decision to be a ‘commercial one’. Although the service was likely to be withdrawn from Ashford by the end of this year, there was the possibility that other operators could provide a replacement service.
- c) The proposed ‘Javelin Service’, to be introduced into St Pancras in a few years time could reduce the train journey from Rye to London by 30 minutes.
- d) Long waits when changing trains at Ashford continued to be a problem. Waits of 40 minutes during the day-time were not unusual and appeared to the result of a lack of co-operation/goodwill between Southern Railways and South-Eastern.

41 VOLUNTARY SECTOR ISSUES

Gina Sanderson had advised the Clerk that, apart from patient access to/from the relocated Postern Gate Surgery, there were no significant voluntary sector issues.

Cllr Glazier declared a personal interest in the item following by virtue of being a non-executive director of the Hastings & Rother Primary Care Trust.

42 FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Members were advised that the deadline for responses to the review of maternity services was 6 July 2007 and were asked to consider how to respond in the light of:

- a) the Primary Care Trusts Public Consultation Summary (including Options 1-4)
- b) the Saving the DGH/Hands off the Conquest alternative proposal (‘Option 5’).

The Clerk advised that the Primary Care Trusts' options were based on there being just one consultant-led maternity unit at either Hastings or Eastbourne; whereas, the two main campaign groups were pressing for a consultant-led unit in each town.

The discussion ensuing included the points following: although the PCTs could make a convincing case for not being in a position to afford to run two consultant-led units, it was impossible to put a price on health; travel times from the eastern end of the County to Eastbourne were far in excess of those recommended – particularly during the rush hour and at weekends in the summer; *Creating a NHS Fit For the Future* does not mention Rye or Camber; it would be quicker to travel to Ashford rather than Eastbourne; the Rural Rother Public Consultation meeting is on a weekday afternoon; there is a 2-3,000 national midwives shortage; midwives are reluctant to intervene when relatively minor complications arise; the PCTs are considering arranging an additional meeting in Battle; GPs would not be able to refer a patient to a Kent unit; the Working Time Directive meant that more consultants were needed to be employed to provide 24/7 cover – 24 consultants would be needed to cover two consultant-led units (there are 8 currently in post)

It was noted that the nearest consultation public meetings are;

Rural Rother	30 May, 2pm-4pm	Thomas Peacocke Community College
Hastings	25 June, 2pm-4pm	White Rock Theatre

RESOLVED To re-consider the Council's response after Members had had the opportunity to attend one of the Trusts' public meetings (and, given the consultation deadline, to ask the full Council for delegated authority to submit a response on its behalf). all, Clerk

43 SPEED MANAGEMENT

a) **County Review**

The Clerk advised that the Council had responded to the County's review of village speed limits in November 2006. The Mayor outlined his response on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED To note that the County Council's Revised Draft Village Speed Policy will be issued for comment by 4 May.

b) **Tilling Green Estate**

Cllr Osborne advised that a resident of the Estate had expressed concern about vehicles – especially couriers - traveling too quickly along the Estate's roads – many of which were narrow and full of parked cars. When he had raised this matter at the last Visitor & Information Management Group meeting, the Highways Officer present advised that the department had currently 93 traffic calming schemes in the pipeline.

During the discussion ensuing signage, physical traffic calming measures, the absence of road markings and professional assessments were discussed but it was concluded overall that the key was to raise driver awareness of potential hazards (such as children emerging unexpectedly from between stationary vehicles).

RESOLVED To accept Mandy Turner's offer to raise the matter at the Next Tilling Green Residents' Association meeting in order to establish the extent of the problem. Mandy Turner

Depending on the response, the Council could then seek guidance from County Highways.

44 EMERGENCY PLANNING

a) Exercise

Members thanked Cllr Bantick for his full report on his attendance at the Rye Bay Flood Emergency Planning Exercise held on 16 March.

Cllr Bantick highlighted the importance of establishing a Rye Emergency Planning group. The Clerk advised that a Council working group had developed the basic format for a local emergency plan but more individuals were required in order to ensure any plan could be put into effect.

The membership and work of the sub group would be reviewed shortly.

b) Workshop

Unfortunately, neither Cllr Bantick nor Council Carey had been able to attend the Emergency Planning Workshop held at Battle Memorial Hall on 6 March

45 POSTERN GATE SURGERY

RESOLVED To note that a meeting between stakeholders to consider patient access by public/community transport to the Memorial Care Centre site had been arranged for 1 May.

(Cllr Glazier tendered his apologies for the meeting.)

46 HOUSING

The Committee Chairman suggested that there was some confusion about the allocation of social housing – especially when those from outside an area appeared to ‘queue jump’ locals – and suggested inviting a housing officer to address the meeting.

Cllr Glazier advised that Rother District Council’s Housing Department’s definition of ‘local’ was ‘within Rother’.

Mandy Turner reported that the Tilling Green Residents’ Association was working with Rother Homes to ensure that those with tenancies abide by their contractual and social obligations.

RESOLVED To invite a Rother District Council Housing Officer to make a presentation on his/her department’s work to the next meeting.

Clerk

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.33

Date.....

Chairman.....

38 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman of the Landgate Residents' Association, David Wright (DW) explained that the Association's main object was to safeguard the interests of those living (and running businesses within) an area comprising the Landgate, Burnhams, Eagle Square, Bridge Place, Ailsworth Lane and Tower Street. There were currently 30 members.

Responding to a question from John Holbrook, DW acknowledged that, although the owners of licensed premises could join the Association (as associate members), there might be occasions when the interests of business and residents conflicted.

Addressing a question on the Association's fourth object, DW advised that it was envisaged that any representations made to the County Council would be via the Town or District Council.