

**Minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2019 at 2.30pm
on the Ground Floor,
The Emmanuel Centre, Harrier Lane, Battle TN33 0FL**

Present: Peter Turner (**RALC Vice Chairman**), Phil Allard (Iden), John Barnes (Etchingham), Pauline Collins (Fairlight), Gill Colquhoun (RALC Secretary), Judith Dean (Pett), Edward Erith (Beckley), Amy Fearn (Rother District Council Affordable Housing Officer), Graham Furness (Guestling), Pauline Glew (Sedlescombe), Inspector Jonathan Hartley (Sussex Police), Issy Horsley (Fairlight), Malcolm Johnston (Rother District Council), Clive Meenham (Guestling), Doug Oliver (Council Leader, Rother District Council), Graham Peters (Bodiam), David Penfold (Pett), Judy Petty (Brightling), Susan Price (Hurst Green), Sue Prochak (Rother District Councillor), Gary Quinnell (Udimore), Karen Ripley (Salehurst & Robertsbridge), Keith Robertson (Crowhurst), David Smedley (Icklesham), Alan Stainsby (Crowhurst), Jonathan Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe), Tom Warder (Action in Rural Sussex), Mark Wey (Broad Oak and Brede)

1 Self Introductions

Cllr Peter Turner, RALC Vice Chair, chaired the meeting in the Chair's absence. He welcomed members to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves. Tom Warder, Amy Fearn, Cllr Doug Oliver and Cllr Sue Prochak were all welcomed to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

John Bradford (Camber), Lisa Cooper (Rother District Council), Isla Dacey (East Sussex Highways Head Steward), Richard Farhall (Rye and Ewhurst), Jacqui Harding (Northiam), Carol Hodgson (Catsfield), David Pankhurst (Peasmarsh), and Hilary Pankhurst (Peasmarsh) had given apologies. Irene Marchant (Dallington and Mountfield), Wendy Miers (Dallington) provided apologies after the meeting.

3 Election of Executive Officers, Committee and Secretary/Treasurer

Members agreed the following appointments:

(a) Chairman Cllr David Pankhurst

(b) Vice-Chairman Cllr Peter Turner

(c) Executive Committee Cllr David Pankhurst and Cllr Peter Turner automatically elected as Committee members in their capacity as Chairman and Vice Chair. Cllrs David Penfold and Keith Robertson also elected.

(d) Secretary / Treasurer Gill Colquhoun appointed for a further year.

4 Appointment/Confirmation of representatives to outside bodies

(a) Battle Area Community Transport – a representative is no longer required.

(b) Rother Local Strategic Partnership Board – 1 representative, RALC Chairman –Cllr David Pankhurst. Agreed.

(c) Rother Audit & Standards Committee – Cllr Alan Stainsby re elected, Secretary to approach Wendy Miers to establish if she is happy to also stand again. [She has subsequently confirmed she is happy to do so].

(d) ESALC Ltd – 3 directors; Hilary Pankhurst and David Pankhurst re elected, Cllr John Barnes appointed to fill the vacancy left by Ann Cook.

(e) **SSALC Ltd** – 2 ESALC directors (to be appointed by ESALC at their meeting on 16 July).

(f) **WARR Partnership** – 1 representative, Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall re elected.

5 Accuracy of Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2019

The minutes were approved with no amendments and duly signed by Cllr Peter Turner.

6 Matters arising from meeting held on 10 April 2019

- Item 5. Timing of meetings. The meeting agreed that the two remaining meetings for 2019 should remain at 2.30pm on Wednesday afternoons. RALC Executive to discuss timings for 2020 meetings after discussion with Rother Parish Clerks (RALC representatives have been appointed for the year to Spring 2020).
- Item 6. Geosphere Parish Online (Online Mapping) renewal to be discussed under Item 7.
- Item 8 Cleaning of low priority signs – no representatives from Westfield present to confirm if Ruby Brittle had confirmed the cleaning schedule.
- Item 12 Rother hosting parish websites – Outstanding. Malcolm Johnston to confirm via the Secretary whether Rother District Council are still able to host parish websites.

7 Finance

- **Approval of end of year audited accounts to 31 March 2019** - the financial statement, receipts and payments and bank reconciliation statement, audited by Alison Stevens, were approved by the meeting. The Secretary clarified that note 1 on the financial statement should read 31/3/18. The Chair recorded his thanks to the Secretary for her commitment to update the Bank Mandate.
- **Budget for 2019-20** – The meeting agreed the budget as previously circulated. This included confirmed figures for SALC donation and Online Mapping RALC subscription. Membership fees to remain frozen, as agreed at the last meeting. A suggestion was made that the training reserve could be used for GDPR training.
- **Appointment of auditor** - Alison Stevens to be asked to audit the accounts for 2019/20. If she was not available another auditor recommended by RALC to be approached by the Secretary.
- **Parish Online online mapping renewal, including fee for individual parishes. (for year beginning 17 August 2019)** - the meeting approved renewal of Parish Online for a further year at a cost of £1197.60. 24 parishes had committed so far, this meant the cost would be approximately £50 per parish. Members to be billed by the Secretary with RALC subscriptions in the next month. Geosphere to be asked to provide a half day training course at £475 + VAT, to be paid out of training reserves. (This was deemed appropriate as the system had recently been updated and included new options). The meeting was informed that Geosphere had recently contacted the Secretary to offer future online mapping free if all parishes took up insurance with their partner insurer for a 3 year fixed deal at 10% discount and recorded assets and insured items on the software. The meeting discussed the practicalities of taking up this offer and decided to decline at this point.

8 Speeding – to discuss proposal that speeding initiatives should be focus of October meeting / additional meeting if required

Keith Robertson spoke in his capacity as Catsfield Councillor Community SpeedWatch coordinator for Catsfield, and Clerk for Crowhurst. He explained that the Rother Clerks meeting held in June had discussed the issue of speeding and established that it was a common and important issue across Rother. Community SpeedWatch is in place in some parishes but general awareness by the public about speeding is missing, with hardly any enforcement. The idea of parishes coming together to create joint messages had been discussed: what parishes think the issue is, what parishes could do themselves, and what parishes could reasonably ask other authorities to do to help. It had been agreed that clerks would speak to their councils to see if they wanted to do this, and to reconvene in September and bring ideas to RALC in October. The meeting agreed that it would be useful to take stock of what is happening across Rother

and to make speeding the focus of the October RALC meeting. The Secretary was tasked to invite the appropriate people to this meeting, including members of local traffic groups.

9 Sussex Police

Inspector Jonathan Hartley confirmed that, due to lack of resourcing, Sussex Police do not enforce speeding, although the matter is often raised. He welcomed the proposal for organisations to work together to tackle speeding across Rother.

Inspector Hartley reported on current Police work:

- In Coastal locations : an operation to deal with parking issues at Camber; introducing messaging around white ribbon (police response re domestic violence); use of technology around drones; Operation Safety (knife crime) in Bexhill and other areas affected.
- In Rural areas the Police are combating external and internal threats. External threats are represented by cross border criminality (Sussex Police are working with Kent, and starting to share information); recognition cameras are being introduced in North Rother including Battle; looking at using technology to strengthen the road network). Internal threats include a reduction in PCSOs (lack of visibility reduces trust and confidence and increases fear of crime); PCSOs are being reintroduced where a threat is raised (drug use, anti social behaviour etc). The Police & Crime Commissioner has pledged funding for neighbourhood policing, an increase in staff, and improvement for the 101 system. Knife crime is increasing; the key is educating children. Residential burglaries are falling. Domestic abuse is significant and continues to rise. There is a significant rise in stalking which is hidden; intelligence is needed from communities which can be via charities.

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Karen Ripley (Salehurst & Robertsbridge Clerk) raised the issue of a current spate of distraction burglaries at local retail businesses in Robertsbridge, asking what could be done. Inspector Hartley was unaware of the problem; he will address crime prevention advice and the fact that police appear disinterested when issues are reported.

A councillor asked whether areas where traffic gets diverted through, away from Camber, should get any police help.

Cllr Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe) highlighted use of technology (CCTV in Sedlescombe in response to Community SpeedWatch reports and a spate of burglaries). Susan Price (Hurst Green) informed the meeting that Hurst Green Parish want technology on the A21.

Alan Stainsby (Crowhurst) congratulated Inspector Hartley on efforts to reintroduce PCSOs, he was concerned at current low level of confidence in Police. There are still issues with 101 reporting system.

10 Highways matters (ESCC)

isla.dacey1@eastsussexhighways.com

Isla Dacey, the newly appointed Head Steward for East Sussex had provided a report which had been circulated to members, together with a parish guide to East Sussex Highways (dated November 2018). This guide to be circulated to Parish Councillors by Rother Clerks.

11 Community Infrastructure Levy Funds – to discuss impact of delayed notification to Parishes of bid process by RDC (email to Rother Clerks June 2019)

Rother Clerks had requested that RALC discuss this matter, voicing their concern that Parish and Town councils had only been notified about the bidding process for infrastructure projects of at least £100,000 in June (several months after other bodies were informed).

Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall cllr.jonathan.vine-hall@rother.gov.uk spoke in his capacity as the recently elected Chair of Rother Planning Committee. He explained that some CIL funds had been pre allocated under 123 list, primarily projects in and around Bexhill. At the end of 2018 enough money had been collected to start a bid process and in error the offer to bid went out to all organisations except town and parish councils in

February 2019. Two successful internal bids had been received. Rother recognise that it will take more than 2 months for parish and town councils to develop a bid for projects of at least £100,000 and will need to bid next year. The bid process is being reviewed; Councils are advised to start to get ready, obtaining quotes ready for the new bid window early in 2020.

Keith Robertson (Crowhurst) queried if a group of villages could develop a joint bid. Cllr Vine-Hall confirmed that this was possible.

Karen Ripley (Salehurst & Robertsbridge) asked to what extent projects should feed into 123 list / local development plan, and where to start if considering major projects. Cllr Vine-Hall advised parishes to speak to Brian Banks at Highways if any project concerned a major highway and consider match funding scheme process). A minimum of 8 months needs to be allocated to the process.

Cllr John Barnes (Etchingam) stressed the importance of Rother considering what projects are appropriate, and the need to think through the relationship between all 3 levels of government as to what the best use of CIL money is.

Cllr Vine-Hall noted that Local Neighbourhood Plans need to identify big schemes.

12 Rother matters

malcolm.johnston@rother.gov.uk

Malcolm Johnston reported that:

- Rother's Housing Allocations Policy is going out to consultation. Parishes were asked to look at the allocations. A few changes are being proposed which will have quite major impact. Homeless are a statutory duty, however Rother is trying to redress the balance for non homeless seeking housing.
- Catsfield, Rye and Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plans had recently passed through local referendums. Turnout was around 40% for Catsfield and Crowhurst, and 20% in Rye
- Local elections on 4 May 2019 had resulted in a large number of District Councillors changes.

Cllr Prochak cllr.susan.prochak@rother.gov.uk introduced herself as the new Cabinet lead for Rural Affairs, Parish and Town Council Liaison. She welcomed ideas via email on what she can do to champion the rural areas and is interested in reintroducing the local parish conference. She is available to discuss issues with individual councils and is happy to attend parish meetings.

Cllr Doug Oliver, new Leader of RDC introduced himself. cllr.doug.oliver@rother.gov.uk He hoped to attend future RALC meetings.

13 Reports from RALC representatives

No reports had been circulated. Cllr Stainsby reported that RALC representatives continue to be observers at Rother Audit & Standards Committee.

14 Community Led Housing A presentation by Tom Warder, Community Led Housing Manager, Action in Rural Sussex, and Peter Turner, Chairman Icklesham Parish Council

Tom.Warder@ruralsussex.org.uk

Cllr-P-Turner@ickleshamparishcouncil.org.uk

Tom Warder provided an overview of Community Led Housing (CLH). Four main models of Community Led Housing were explained and examples across Sussex, including Icklesham were identified. There are currently 22 groups working on Community Led Housing across Sussex (East and West Sussex). Cllr Peter Turner provided an explanation of the work of Icklesham Parish Community Land Trust Ltd. See attached presentation. This project has developed since a housing needs survey was undertaken in 2015, with planning consent for 15 affordable houses obtained in 2019. It is hoped that building will start in February 2020. This could be the first community led housing development in Rother. Approximately £80,000 has been spent on preparing the planning application with architect fees around £25,000. The remaining funds have been spent on carrying out pre-application surveys. These can cause delays. The greater crested newt survey can only be carried out in March/April.

Alan Stainsby (Crowhurst) suggested that such developments should happen in non rural rather than rural communities as CLH in rural areas could be argued to be non sustainable. Tom Warder argued that CLH is to provide housing for local people with housing need. John Barnes (Etchingam) argued that changes in business practice allow working from home.

Tom Warder and Peter Turner both welcomed further contact from individual councils. Amy Fearn Amy.Fearn@rother.gov.uk also introduced herself as the Rother Officer for Affordable Housing; she is also available to discuss specific council queries.

15 Any Other Business – a report written by Andrew Wegmore (Brightling) on the issues with rural broadband in Brightling Parish had been circulated by the Secretary. Judy Petty (Brightling) requested that pressure continued to be put on East Sussex Broadband Team / BT in this matter. Graham Peters reported that the East Sussex Broadband team had done some further survey work. David Pankhurst would be raising the issue at ESALC in July.

16 Date of next meeting – next meetings: Wednesday 23 October at 2.30pm, 8 January 2.30pm, dates and times of April 2020 and July 2020 meetings to be confirmed (provisional dates on agenda 8 April 2020 and 8 July 2020).

The meeting ended at 4.44pm.

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