

Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC)
Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2018 at 2.30pm
on the Ground Floor,
The Emmanuel Centre, Harrier Lane, Battle TN33 0FL

Present: David Pankhurst (Peasmarsh)(RALC Vice Chairman), Lesley Bannister (Brede), Annette Childs (Etchingham), Ann Cook (Ticehurst), Lisa Cooper (RDC), Judith Dean (Pett), Michael Edwards (Westfield), Lesley Elmslie (Burwash), Graham Furness (Guestling), Pauline Glew (Sedlescombe) Carol Harris (RALC Secretary), Michael Horley (Westfield), Margaret Howell (Battle), Malcolm Johnston(RDC), Nicholas Jones (Fairlight), Wendy Miers (Dallington), Les Nottage (Brede), John Overall (Catsfield), David Perrett (Guestling), Mike Rowe (Beckley), Jean Scott (Whatlington), Dave Townsend (Sussex Police), Peter Turner (Icklesham), Andrew Wedmore (Brightling).

1 Self Introductions were made

2 Apologies for absence

David Furness (Battle), Richard Farhall (Rye), Tony Ganley (RDC), Hilary Pankhurst (Peasmarsh), Dan Russell (Sussex Police), David Smedley (Icklesham), Alan Stainsby (Crowhurst), Jonathan Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe), Nigel Wooldridge (Camber).

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2017 were approved subject to the addition of Annette Childs (Etchingham), Judith Dean (Pett) and Lesley Elmslie (Burwash) to the list of those present. The Secretary asked that all members sign the attendance list as this is used for minute purposes.

4 Matters arising from previous meeting

It was noted that many Councils have undertaken various GDPR training and/or had agreed the services of an external Data Protection Officer. Members were asked to provide the Secretary with details of chosen DPOs for circulation.

5 Finance

The update as at 31 March 2018 was noted.

The Secretary recommended that, in light of the existing balance, the subscriptions for 2018-19 should remain at the same level. This was agreed.

6 Sussex Police

Sgt Dave Townsend(DT) explained that his role is Neighbourhood Policing. He reported that, in light of Rother District Council's proposal to ask that East Sussex County Council implement Civil Parking Enforcement in the Rother area, Sussex Police will actively enforce the illegal parking; particularly in Rye, Battle and Bexhill. He highlighted that the changes to PCSO and policy has changed and priorities have to be made. DT highlighted the increase in scams and supplied copies of the latest booklet. (Please let the Secretary know if you would like a copy).

Insp Dan Russell had asked that particular areas suffering illegal and dangerous parking be reported to him.

7 Report from East Sussex Highways

543 potholes had been repaired throughout the county in the last week; During the snow conditions in Rother: all main routes were kept clear; all grit bins reported as empty were promptly filled; nine out of ten sites requesting hippo bags of salt went out the next day; and 79 trips this year compared to 42 last;

Planned maintenance subject to change (parishes will be notified): 8-17 May Starvecrow Lane/Horseshoe Lane, Peasmarsch – carriageway resurfacing; 23 May Peter James Lane, Fairlight – carriageway works; 12 April Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak – drainage works; 9-13 April Crowhurst Road, Crowhurst – drainage works;

Utility works: 23 April – 4 May Battery Hill, Fairlight – installation of electricity cables; 16 April – 22 June Fourteen Acre Lane, Guestling – installation of new sewer; 20 June – 18 July Eight Acre Lane, Guestling – installation of new sewer;

Upcoming events: 29 April St George's Day procession: Market Road/High Street/Upper Lane, Battle; 27 May Fundraising race Tanhouse Lane, Peasmarsch; 8 July Catsfield boat race.

Members noted the extremely poor condition of roads in general, with potholes that are filled but not lasting. The Secretary was asked to invite ES Highways (possibly Jon Copp) to the next meeting.

8 Rother matters

Malcolm Johnston(MJ) introduced Lisa Cooper as the new Monitoring Officer. He reported on the recommendation from Cabinet for Full Council to ask EESC to adopt CPE in the Rother area. He confirmed that Wealden had declined to join this scheme. The existing parking restrictions would be taken forward with a review after a period of time. MJ confirmed that Public Spaces Protection Orders will be replacing Byelaws: this enables instant fixed penalty notices to be issued rather than costly court action. Additional PCSOs can be agreed by Full Council including temporary amendments for specific areas; aggressive begging will be added. He confirmed that funds from fines will be retained by RDC.

Sgt DT reported that there is a hybrid scheme in place with aggressive beggars initially being given a warning letter with map of areas to avoid.

MJ confirmed that the Sedlescombe Neighbourhood Plan has been considered and will be put to Full Council for implementation. The Robertsbridge referendum will be undertaken shortly. He advised that in response to the decision by ESCC to reduce the grass cutting regime to 2 cuts per year,, RDC had agreed to pay for all Rother areas to continue from the existing 6 cuts for one year. MJ reported that the Member Development Charter has been retained for a further 3 years..

9 On-line Mapping

Members were reminded that RALC paid for an initial year's subscription for this service. There was a mixed report of activity but most felt that it is a useful tool. The Secretary was asked to enquiry on the cost per Council for a further year.

10 Reports from RALC representatives

The Chairman reported on a meeting of the Rother Grants Panel at which all but one application had been approved.

Andrew Wedmore reported on broadband activity:

- broadband Contract 3 had been signed;
- planned completion is March 2020;
- predicted that 99% of the premises in the county will then have access to superfast broadband
- contract cost is £4.3m:
 - not new money- clawed back from BT's excessive profits on previous contracts;
 - significantly less than the budget of £6m;
- Contract 3 was structured in two "lots":
 - Lot 1 - single-supplier;
 - Lot 2 could be multi-supplier (with possible multiple winners for bits of Lot 2).
- Clearly structured so that Lot 1 was a "sweetheart" deal for BT
- BT were awarded Lot 1
- Lot 2 has not been awarded – no report on why

- Contract 3 starts with a comprehensive survey to identify the premises to be covered/not covered and is expected to be complete by December 2018
- BT will then not be able to who will be included
- It is hoped that ESCC will publish this detail, although there is no commitment to do so
- ESCC had promised to release information on BT identified initial areas but had not yet done so
- Contract 3 is expected to cover 7220 properties: calculates at just under £600 per property
- It has been suggested that communication should be held on a county-wide basis: AW and Andrew Hoad of Ashburnham will therefore address the SSALC board on 10 July for support
- As a key driver of economic development ESCC should be looking at ultra-fast broadband now.

The Secretary was asked to invite ESCC to attend the next meeting to discuss broadband issues in Rother.

11 Any Other Business/Future Agenda Items

The Clerk reported that the Police & Crime Commissioner is meeting with SSALC and any questions should be submitted by 13 April.

12 Next meeting – Annual General Meeting Wednesday 11 July 2018

The meeting ended at 3.55pm.

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