

Rother Association of Local Councils (RALC)
Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2017, 2.30pm
on the Ground Floor,
The Emmanuel Centre, Harrier Lane, Battle TN33 0FL

Present: Lesley Bannister (Brede), Ann Cook (Ticehurst), Graham Furness (Guestling), Carol Harris (RALC Secretary), Pauline Glew (Sedlescombe), Margaret Howell (Battle), **Richard Jessop** (Battle) (**RALC Chairman**), Les Nottage (Brede), John Overall (Catsfield), David Pankhurst (Peasmarsh), Hilary Pankhurst (Peasmarsh), David Perrett (Guestling), Graham Peters (Bodiam), Mike Rowe (Beckley), Dan Russell (Sussex Police), Jean Scott (Whatlington), Alan Stainsby (Crowhurst), Jonathan Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe), Andrew Wedmore (Brightling), Nigel Wooldridge (Camber).

1 Self-introductions

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

2 Apologies

John Bradford (Camber), Annette Childs ((Etchingham), John Collins (RDC), Richard Farhall (Ewhurst), Tony Ganly (RDC), Derek Greenup (Fairlight), Jacqui Harding (Northiam), Martin Holgate (Catsfield), Malcolm Johnston (RDC), Carole Kynvin (Brede), David Stone (Playden), Peter Turner (Icklesham).

3 Accuracy of Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2016

The minutes were approved.

4 Matters arising from meeting held on 12 October 2016

Andrew Wedmore (AW) that Broadband Working Group had held their first meeting. He confirmed that he had been invited to speak at the Parish Conference in November on the poor broadband available in many of the Rother areas and had been disappointed at the subsequent misleading article in the Observer of numbers affected by this issue. AW advised that ESCC appear to have no plans in place beyond the end of contract 2 and he encouraged more coordinated pressure to rectify this. Any member that would like to assist AW are welcome to contact him via the RALC Secretary. Members agreed that Rupert Simmons, ESCC Lead Member for Economy should be invited to the next meeting.

5 Finance

The update as at 31 December 2016 was noted. The Secretary reported that a replacement mandate is being completed as the previous one did not arrive at Barclays Bank.

6 Sussex Police

Insp Dan Russell(DR) reminded members that he had reported on the changes to local policing at the previous meeting. He highlighted the issues of illegal parking in Rother and emphasised that Rother and Wealden are the only districts within the south east that do not have decriminalised parking. DR confirmed that RDC are considering this option and that the Chief Constable is also in favour of decriminalisation. Whilst Sussex Police acknowledge responsibility for illegal parking; the resources are not available and the costs and time involved in prosecution is prohibitive. DR reported that any genuine risk of harm through illegal parking; fraudulent disabled parking and obstruction issues would be dealt with although there are no routine patrols. He highlighted the poor lines/signs in some areas and suggested that this be raised with ESCC. Richard Jessop(RJ) reported on a recent Battle Town Council(BTC) meeting at which Leader of RDC was invited to discuss decriminalisation with residents, schools and business of Battle. Cllr Maynard had declined due to a conflict of interest. Cllr Kenward (Deputy Leader) stated at the meeting that he would not support decriminalisation in view of the negative impact on businesses in Bexhill! It was generally felt that this was a disappointing response when he is

the Portfolio/spokesperson for Business and Voluntary Sector Liaison for Rother; not only Bexhill. RJ confirmed that money raised from civil enforcement fines would be spent on traffic/roads. Nigel Woolridge suggested that all towns/parishes have different issues and may not all favour decriminalisation.

On other matters DR reported that there has been a reduction in home burglaries but an increase in shed/garage thefts. He confirmed that patterns of behaviour will continue to be monitored and acted upon accordingly.

The Chairman thanked Insp Russell for his report.

7 Highways matters (ESCC)

No representative in attendance.

8 East Sussex Highway Schemes

Postponed until the next meeting.

9 Rother matters

No representative in attendance.

10. Bus Services Bill

An abridged version of a Bill currently going through Parliament had been circulated and is attached to these minutes. David Pankhurst(DP) reminded members that the County had reduced bus services in April 2015 and he hoped that this Bill may help improve the County's provision. He highlighted the Bill's aim: to encourage franchising and partnerships between areas to provide better services. Members agreed that the current level of service results in more car traffic. RDC's view on this Bill would be welcome.

11 Reports from RALC representatives

The Chairman reported attendance at a meeting:

- of the South East Region Counties Association Forum at Lewes to discuss membership options of the National Council of the Association of Local Counties;
- with the Chief Constable of Sussex at Lewes where an update was given on the targeted policing strategy, report that: Officers can now give evidence at courts via a video link; a recruitment drive to find another 100 officers is underway; and IT systems are being updated so that Sussex, Surrey, Thames Valley and Hampshire all share the same;
- of ESALC – the minutes will be circulated.

12. Any Other Business/Future Agenda Items

The Chairman invited members to contact the Secretary with suggested Speakers for future meetings.

- **East Sussex Highway Schemes – Karl Taylor**
- **Electoral Services - Richard Adams**

13. Next meeting – Wednesday 12 April 2017

The meeting ended at 3.50pm

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