

**Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2019 at 2.30pm  
on the Ground Floor,  
The Emmanuel Centre, Harrier Lane, Battle TN33 0FL**

**Present:** David Pankhurst (Peasmarsh) (**RALC Chairman**), Phil Allan (Iden) , Brian Banks (ESCC Team Manager- Road Safety), Gillian Branford (Salehurst & Robertsbridge) Lisa Cooper (Rother District Council), Gill Colquhoun (RALC Secretary), Cllr Gary Curtiss (Rother District Council), Isla Dacey (East Sussex Highways), Ros Day (Crowhurst), Judith Dean (Pett), Pam Dodds (Hooe/Wealden), Gary Durman (Hooe /Wealden), Michael Edwards (Westfield), Graham Furness (Guestling), Pauline Glew (Sedlescombe), Jim Gray (Dallington), Jacqui Harding (Northiam), Cllr Sally-Ann Hart (Udimore and RDC Councillor), Inspector Jonathan Hartley (Rother Police), Issy Horsley (Fairlight), Bob Kenward (Community Speedwatch), , Doug Lambert (Etchingham), Frances McKenna (PA to Huw Merriman MP), Wendy Miers (Dallington), Les Nottage (Brede), Steve O'Connell (Sussex Police), Hilary Pankhurst (Peasmarsh), Richard Parker-Harding (Rother District Council), Daniel Penfold (Pett), Judy Petty (Brightling), Cllr Sue Prochak (Rother District Council), Karen Ripley (Salehurst & Robertsbridge), Keith Robertson (Catsfield), Gillian Rothery (Udimore), David Scott (Catsfield), David Smedley (Icklesham), PC Roger Tomlinson (other Police), Udimore), Jonathan Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe and RDC Councillor), Mark Wey (Brede), Leonie Wheeler (Udimore), David Young (Ewhurst)

**1 Self Introductions were made.**

**2 Apologies for absence**

Cllr Bill Bentley (ESCC), Katy Bourne (Sussex Police Crime Commissioner), John Bradford (Camber), Cllr Claire Dowling (ESCC), Cllr Keith Glazier (ESCC), Ian Johnson (ESCC Traffic & Safety Manager) Malcolm Johnston (RDC), Huw Merriman MP, Frankie Nowne (Ticehurst)

**3 Appointment of representative to Rother Audit & Standards Committee**

Cllr David Smedley (Icklesham) elected, replacing Alan Stainsby. Wendy Miers already elected as second RALC representative to this committee.

**4 Accuracy of Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2019**, were **agreed** with one amendment. Item 12 'Catsfield' to be replaced by 'Ticehurst'. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

**5 Matters arising from meeting held on 10 July 2019**

Item 6. Timing and dates of meetings to be confirmed for April 2020 and July 2020 (5.30pm Tuesday meeting provisionally booked. See Item 9).

Item 6. RDC Hosting websites – Malcolm Johnston had confirmed that Rother would continue to host parish websites on their new web platform.

Item 14.Community Led Housing (CLH) Tom Warder had contacted the Clerk encouraging parishes to contact him regarding CLH initiatives, further to his presentation at the last meeting. [Tom.warder@ruralsussex.org.uk](mailto:Tom.warder@ruralsussex.org.uk)

Item 15.Broadband in rural areas – The Chairman reported that this matter had been raised at ESALC and is being investigated by Trevor Leggo.

**6 Reports to RALC:**

▪ **Sussex Police (verbal report)**

Inspector Jonathan Hartley gave his verbal report under Item 7.

- **Highways matters (ESCC written report)**

[isladacey1@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:isladacey1@eastsussex.gov.uk)

Isla Dacey, Head Steward, East Sussex Highways had circulated her written report. Cllr David Smedley raised the issue of jet washing in Winchelsea. Isla Dacey to investigate.

Cllr David Penfold (Pett) raised difficulties arranging a meeting with James Kelly regarding road safety. Isla Dacey to investigate.

Cllr David Pankhurst voiced concern at roadworks in Rye. Isla Dacey confirmed that utility companies are required to have permits to undertake such works; she will arrange for inspectors to check the works.

- **Rother District Council (verbal report)**

[cllr.susan.prochak@rother.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.susan.prochak@rother.gov.uk)

Cllr Sue Prochak reported:

- Rother Clerks had been sent letters explaining project funding for rural areas; £40K had been provided to Rother Voluntary Action over 3 years to help ageing through innovation in rural areas, tackling rural isolation. This project had not met the criteria for Community Development Grants.
- Rother Parish Conference will take place on the afternoon of 27 May 2020 at Sedlescombe Village Hall. Theme: Climate Change (to reflect Rother District Council's agreement to a Climate Emergency Motion with steering group working on action plan). She welcomed ideas from members.
- Congratulations to Crowhurst, Rye and Ticehurst on achieving their Neighbourhood Plans.
- The newly elected council is seeking to become more open and accountable. It will be easier for public to speak at planning meetings, and it has been proposed that Parish Councils will be able to have a seat if they wish to send someone to speak on particular applications

The Chairman requested that the Secretary is kept informed of progress on the Parish Conference. A question was raised on the length of time which might be given to Parish Councils to decide if they want to attend Planning Committee. Rother was asked to inform Parishes of timings when it takes effect.

## 7 Speeding in Rother:

### **Summary of Parish Speeding Issues by Cllr Keith Robertson, Catsfield Parish Council (Outputs and Key Messages from RALC Speeding workshop 26 September 2019)**

[keith.robertson@catsfieldpc.org.uk](mailto:keith.robertson@catsfieldpc.org.uk)

Cllr Keith Robertson thanked everyone who had attended the workshop and this meeting, including representatives from ESCC and Sussex Police). He explained that the focus of the meeting was to:

1. Consider the outputs and key messages from the Speeding workshop on 26<sup>th</sup> Sept.
2. Understand what ESCC and the Police response is and what their current activities and plans are.
3. Agree what the next steps will be and who will be engaged with any new initiatives to reduce the impacts of Speeding.

He provided a verbal report of the outputs and key messages from the RALC Speeding workshop held on 26 September. (See Appendix 1 for complete summary; pages 1-2 tabled at meeting, pages 3-5 provide further detail of the outputs). In summary 34 representatives from 24 Parish Councils had attended the workshop. The biggest message was that Parish Councils in Rother are open to work with other authorities to tackle speeding. RALC needs to find a forum where representatives can meet with the relevant stakeholders and report back to members. Key messages were primarily concerned with changes to policy and practice:

<b>Key Messages to Authorities – outputs from RALC Workshop</b>	
Review policy and practice - placement and funding of traffic & speed management infrastructure	Highways, Police
Review policy and practice - stats used for decision making and resource allocation.	Highways
Review policy and plans for speed awareness campaigns.	All
Review opportunities for funding changes.	All
Review changes to law to enable increased fines / powers to enforce locally.	Gov, Police
Review Policy on enforcement /Police presence.	Police

### **Presentation by Steve O’Connell, Sussex Police Community SpeedWatch**

[stephen.oconnell@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:stephen.oconnell@sussex.pnn.police.uk)

Steve O’Connell introduced the role of Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP: all relevant authorities working closely together, with access to Community Speedwatch data. [www.sussexsaferroads.co.uk](http://www.sussexsaferroads.co.uk)). He invited Parishes to contact him with queries.

- Community Speedwatch comes under SSRP through Operation Crackdown, and is managed by Steve O’Connell, working with 106 Parish Councils across Sussex. Speedwatch originated in Battle in 2011 and was managed by a private organisation with the co-operation of the Police. Speedwatch is expanding its reach over several Counties with the management of operations and enforcement now under the control of the Police. The software used to manage speedwatch teams and data is still supplied by contract from the initial private company.
- Speedwatch volunteers record vehicle speeds and details which are processed by the Police who then send warning letters to drivers.
- There are now 278 speedwatch groups and 1500 active speedwatch operators in Sussex.
- 90% of drivers sent a warning letter do not receive a second letter.
- Resources to set up new Speedwatch teams, liaise with SSRP and Police enforcement have been very limited which has led to delays in responding to requests and enforcement actions resulting from Speedwatch team’s recordings. New staff are now being allocated to the Police Speedwatch team which is expected to improve responses.
- Data from Speedwatch is used to direct Police resources (e.g. camera Vans) to some sites. Data is available to Parish Clerks.
- Sussex Safer Roads Partnership is the organisation set up “Create a safer environment for all road users, significantly reduce life-changing injuries and eliminate fatalities.” The web site also has data section where info from Speedwatch, Operation Crackdown and other data can be found. See <https://www.sussexsaferroads.gov.uk/>
- Only 1 of the 24 Councils attending the meeting knew about SSRP.

### **Update/Response from Rother Police by Inspector Jonathan Hartley.**

Inspector Hartley introduced PC Roger Tomlinson as Prevention PC in Rother, a contact point for Parish Council and Community SpeedWatch groups. He is tasked to coordinate Rother Police response to speeding. Prevention teams will help and support Parishes where possible. Councils to advise him how Rother Police can best help. Sussex Safety Roads Safety Partnership welcomes bids from Rother Parish Councils for SID equipment purchase. Rother Police have no policy in terms of enforcement, due to limited resourcing (not all Police Officers are trained to do enforcement).

## **Response from Brian Banks, East Sussex Council Council Team Manager - Road Safety**

- Yes, they are aware of the issues raised these are “nothing new”
- There is a statutory duty to prevent road death and serious risk, and that is all that the current budget and resources can support.
- The only statistics that are or can be used to define risk are those provided and pertinent to the above duty. Statistics sourced from Speedwatch records or other sources will not be considered.
- Speed signs / Speed limits do not significantly change driver behaviour or reduce speeds. Other measures are needed to do that.
- The costs of changes to road infrastructure (changing/ moving signs, speed limits, road layouts etc) are very expensive. A survey of proposed changes may typically cost £20,000 with implementation over £100,000
- The processes needed to ensure any changes do not make the situation less safe are extensive and complicated.
- Parish Councils asking for change must be very clear what the impact of the proposed change is before embarking on a project and be willing to at least part fund projects.

## **Questions and answers on speeding led by Keith Robertson**

*Cllr Wendy Miers* recorded her thanks to Keith Robertson for leading on this RALC initiative.

*A member of a CSW group* highlighted that a lot of blockers had been identified. It is a struggle to recruit CSW volunteers because no consequence. Could a driving education course be designed to have an effect on speeders caught by Speedwatch? Inspector Hartley stated that could be dealt with under a public order offence in future.

*Cllr Robertson* stated that CSW team in Catsfield can only identify a fraction of offenders. Couldn't Police extrapolate the data for Police to identify where offences will happen? Steve O'Connell confirmed that the Police do that but do not currently have resources to follow up. A trial will be rolled out across the County; data is available publicly.

*Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall* stated that Sedlescombe were unable to get the equipment they wanted, Highways would not approve as not seen as an existing problem. Also told that drivers will only slow down under different conditions – we should change the conditions to change their behaviour for key spots in villages. Is there some rationale for trying out at outskirts of village, given safety record? Behaviour has been changed in Ringer. Steve O'Connell agreed that sustained random CSW works (Storrington is an example).

*Cllr Sally Ann Hart* (Udimore and Rother District Councillor) informed the meeting that discussion has taken place on how speeding can be reduced through the public realm. We need to think of innovative ways through partnership working; not put up barriers CSW does not always work. Campaigns such as drink driving are successful, but need to make speeding equally socially unacceptable. Brian Banks agreed there are lots of things which can be done. Permanent vehicle activated signs are covered by legislation. DOT vehicle activate signs for casualty reduction situation and where other things have not worked. SIDs can be put up if temporary (if they are fixed they need to comply with Traffic Signs Regulations), and temporary signs can be moved around if can demonstrate a speeding issue. Damage waivers must be signed if signs are put on Highways furniture. Keith Robertson suggested a toolbox is needed to show what can help.

*A Councillor* asked if there is any way of injecting teeth into CSW – have Police attended some of the Speedwatch groups and prosecuted? Steve O'Connell stressed that CSW is about road safety education. However Sussex Police are looking at using special constables who would be able to prosecute.

*Cllr Gillian Branford* (Salehurst) stressed the value of the public realm and making behavioral change. Are there things Parishes can do such as campaigns to go alongside speeding? A group of parishes could identify smaller solutions, looking at common examples,

*A Councillor* asked if it is as difficult to remove signs as install them. Brian Banks stated that if you wish to remove a regulatory red circle sign it is very difficult. Others are easier but limited. Highways are struggling to do crash sites only, and educate drivers

*A Councillor* stated that CSW is education, but what if you have a constant offender? Speed camera much quicker. Steve O'Connell reiterated that speed camera is not education.

*A Councillor* highlighted that it is a national issue – need to thinking about rest of country. Couldn't we use Satnavs in cars?

*A Councillor* raised local issue with 30mph limit directly before 60 mph limit. The Parish is looking into reducing 60 limit to avoid potential accident but as there have been no casualties this is very difficult. Surely emphasis should be on prevention? Brian Banks stated it is prioritisation, and if it was easy to solve it would already be done. Driver education is key, introducing appropriate speed only reduces a small amount of problem. Drivers need to see reason to slow through physical engineering. One Councillor pointed out that one factor which will influence the driver is a speed limit. We want to achieve minimal injury and death.

### **The Way Forward**

Keith Robertson summarised: that a mixture of solutions is needed. The policies in place do not support what RALC members need and changes will be necessary. The meeting demonstrated that there was a difference between the view of Parishes and the view taken by ESCC and to some extent by the Police on the value attached to the degradation of the quality of life in villages caused by speeding. If we are to increase the resources allocated to tackling speeding Parishes will need to both part fund any projects and persuade other authorities to change policy.

It was agreed to form a RALC working party to consider how RALC can address the challenges concerning speeding by working with other authorities to reduce the impact of speeding on the towns and villages in Rother. The following representatives volunteered to be members of this group, to meet quarterly, terms of reference to be agreed at the first meeting: Cllr Keith Robertson (Catsfield) and RALC Executive Committee); Cllr Gillian Branford (Salehurst & Robertsbridge); Cllr Judith Dean (Pett); Cllr Mark Way (Brede); Cllr Jim Gray (Dallington); Cllr Sally-Ann Hart (Udimore and Rother District Councillor).

Steve O'Connell asked RALC to involve the SSR Partnership.

Cllr Prochak reminded members of a former Rother campaign that individuals signed up to. Keith Robertson was thanked by the Chairman for his work on this issue.

- 8 Any Other Business** – the Chairman reported that the Executive had agreed to review the Secretary's honorarium backdated to January 2019, to £900 per annum (based on approximately 80 hours per annum). The meeting agreed to this change.
- 9 Future meetings (dates and timing)** – Wednesday 8 January 2020 2.30pm; Tuesday 7 April 2020 5.30pm; Tuesday 7 July 2020 5.30pm (April and July meetings to be confirmed on 8 January).

*The meeting ended at 4.26pm.*

**Gill Colquhoun, RALC Secretary** 10 Willowbank, Robertsbridge, TN32 5NH  
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