

**Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2020 at 2.30pm
on the Ground Floor,
The Emmanuel Centre, Harrier Lane, Battle TN33 0FL**

Present: David Pankhurst (Peasmarsh) (**RALC Chairman**), Peter Turner (Icklesham) (**RALC Vice Chairman**), John Barnes (Etchingham), Gillian Branford (Salehurst & Robertsbridge), John Bradford (Camber), Gill Colquhoun (RALC Secretary), Isla Dacey (East Sussex Highways), Ros Day (Crowhurst), Judith Dean (Pett), Bob Franklin (Burwash), Graham Furness (Guestling), Jacqui Harding (Northiam), Issy Horsley (Fairlight), Malcolm Johnston (Rother District Council), Doug Lambert (Etchingham), Peter Lamont (Peasmarsh), Clive Meekham (Guestling), Wendy Miers (Dallington), Les Nottage (Brede), Hilary Pankhurst (Peasmarsh), John Parsons (Rye Foreign), David Penfold (Pett), Graham Peters (Bodiam), Judy Petty (Brightling), Cllr Sue Prochak (Rother District Council), Gary Quinney (Udimore), Karen Ripley (Salehurst & Robertsbridge), Keith Robertson (Catsfield), David Smedley (Icklesham), Jonathan Vine-Hall (Sedlescombe and RDC Councillor), Mark Wey (Brede/Broad Oak),

1 Self Introductions were made.

2 Apologies for absence

Rupert Cawte (Camber), Lisa Cooper (Rother District Council), Edward Erith (Beckley), Inspector Jonathan Hartley (Sussex Police), Carol Hodgson (Catsfield), Pauline Glew (Sedlescombe), Jean Scott (Whatlington), David Stone (Playden), David Young (Staplecross)

3 Matters Arising from previous meeting

Timing of April and July meetings to be discussed under Item 17.

4 Accuracy of Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2019, were **agreed** with one amendment to those present – ‘Daniel Penfold’ changed to ‘David Penfold’.

5 Finance

To receive update as at 30 November 2019

An update had been circulated by the Secretary to members. There were no comments

To agree subscriptions for 2020-2021

The Chairman proposed there was no change to the subscriptions, on the basis that the bank balance remained healthy. **Approved** by the meeting.

To discuss renewal of Online Mapping

The meeting discussed whether to consider a proposal by Geosphere that members take up insurance with their preferred partner insurer, obtaining free subscription to Online Mapping in return. The current subscription (£45 per member) was felt to be good value. The meeting **agreed** that it was impractical to consider the proposal by Geosphere and the Secretary should inform Geosphere that RALC wished to renew on the same basis as the current year on renewal in August. Councillor Doug Lambert (Etchingham) expressed an interest in subscribing. He would discuss with his Parish Clerk.

6 To receive a report from Sussex Police

No report had been circulated in Inspector Hartley's absence.

7 Highways matters (ESCC) (verbal report)

isla.dacey1@eastsussexhighways.com

Isla Dacey, Head Steward, East Sussex Highways apologised that she had not circulated a report. She will circulate her written report via the Secretary [report received since the meeting and circulated with the minutes]. She reported that there had been a significant rise in emergency potholes due to recent rainfall, resulting in a backlog. Upcoming works are posted on the Highways website. Darren Bass has been appointed as steward in Area 3; he was previously a member of the Highways contact centre team. He will attend SLR meetings in that area. Two updates were available from items raised at the last meeting. The issue of surfacing work and debris within the gullies clearance at Winchelsea had been passed on to the works supervisor; the section which was not treated had been left for a reason – due to the conservation areas and concerns for the buildings. The issue with road works in Rye had been dealt with.

Questions were raised by members, as follows:

Cllr Jacqui Harding, (Northiam) highlighted that ESCC have reassured the Parish that pothole materials are better, however on the A28 at Horns Cross a pothole repaired just before Christmas had collapsed. Isla Dacey confirmed that the A28 is inspected monthly; she will ask the Area Steward to survey. She explained that it could be a temporary repair. If the weather is poor when works are undertaken this will have an impact; potholes can appear in the same location and the road can break down around a repair. A steward can identify larger works which happen after patching

Cllr John Bradford (Etchingham) stated that there was some evidence in Etchingham Parish that patches are washing out within weeks of repair. Also potholes are emerging at the edge of roads adjacent to verges. Isla Dacey will feedback the issue to the Steward Team. She stated that the stewards are working towards a risk based approach. Verges are not subject to same repairs as carriageways. Should repairs be required to the carriage way it is likely that Type 1 material will be used in the verges to support repairs to road surface, but Highways have to wait until damage comes into the carriageway.

A Councillor raised issues relating to utilities digging up roads in Fairlight. Cllr Peter Turner (Icklesham) queried if Highways have any way of enforcing utilities to reinstate roads. Isla Dacey confirmed that utility works are guaranteed. Permit inspectors check active and past utility sites. If works are proven to not be up to standard Highways can ask for reinstatement.

Cllr David Smedley (Icklesham) queried why a whole street in Winchelsea has been missed in recent work. Isla Dacey will check. It was further queried when such works are undertaken are they checked. Isla Dacey confirmed that sub contracted works have work supervisors and are subcontractors are asked to return.

Cllr Franklin (Burwash) queried newly installed bollards restricting the width of the pavement, with reference to opposite the Wheel Inn. Cllr John Bradford stated that this is being addressed by Highways.

A Councillor reported that road closure signs had been left twice in last 6 months after works had been completed. Isla Dacey informed the meeting that all supervisors are responsible for removing these signs, but any staff in Highways can remove them. (utility companies are responsible for their own communication). It was queried as to who determines what road diversions are. Isla Dacey stated that an A road has to be diverted to an A road.

Cllr David Pankhurst (Peasmarsh) highlighted that pavements are not being cleared so weeds are encroaching. Are there any works planned? Isla Dacey stated that there is one sidings gang which covers the whole County. Debris can be reported to the District Council. Road inspectors can ask the sidings gang to clear paths.

8 Rother District Council (verbal report)

cllr.susan.prochak@rother.gov.uk

Cllr Prochak highlighted the Rother Parish Conference to which all Parishes are invited on 27 May, 2pm at Sedlescombe Village Hall, with a theme of Climate Emergency. David Pankhurst to Chair. RDC has published its draft Environment Strategy. Everyone in Rother is asked to give their views and ideas on the strategy during the consultation commencing 24 February 2020. The Conference programme includes talks on Rother Environment Strategy (Cllr Kathryn Field); Community Infrastructure Levy (Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall); Recycling waste hierarchy (Viridor); what Parishes can do with their land (AONB), and a closing panel will answer queries on topics raised by Rother Parish Councillors. Parish Clerks were reminded to return their precept letter by the end of January. Training may be relevant on emergency planning. How many Parishes have emergency plans? (she suggested this could be a topic for a future RALC meeting). Ticehurst Parish were congratulated on taking up the opportunity to speak at Rother District Planning Committee.

A Councillor suggested that Andy Arnold of ESCC was asked to speak at the Parish Conference. Cllr Penfold (Pett) asked if Parishes could find out earlier the agenda of District Planning meetings. Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall stated that a week's notice is given; if Parishes wish to find out if a specific application is to be discussed they should speak to the Planning Officers. Parish Councils do need to register to speak at such meetings.

9 RALC Constitution

The Chairman informed the meeting that the RALC constitution, which had been circulated to members by the Secretary, had last been updated in 2010. The Executive are in the process of reviewing it with a view to presenting an updated version for agreement at the April meeting. The Secretary was asked to circulate the update by mid February to give members sufficient time to consult their Parish Councils. The Chairman also noted that from the April meeting voting should revert to one vote per Parish rather than one vote for each member attending the meeting.

10 Update from speeding working group

Keith Robertson updated the meeting. The RALC speeding working group established at the last meeting, made up of 9 individuals from RALC parishes, had met. The group agreed to address two of the key issues identified in the workshop: 1. There was a lack of Police enforcement, and 2. There is a need for Parishes to engage with East Sussex to get things done (signs, road changes etc). Also 3. To request that Community Speedwatch considers a graduated response in sending letters to motorist with higher speeds resulting in more direct and urgent actions.

Keith Robertson had attended the Police & Crime Commissioner Focus Meeting and raised the question of what enforcement is taking place. This confirmed that little enforcement was happening in rural areas and there was no answer as to what would trigger enforcement. The question remains as to whether the Police would use data if they had it to support their decisions around enforcement.

RALC has two questions. 1. For the Police: What is your current approach to enforcement and if we provided you with speed and volume data (not data that would identify a vehicle) would you use it to support your decisions around enforcement? 2. To ESCC what information do you need to build a case for East Sussex to change road infrastructure? And would you use data we collect to support cases for change?

A discussion followed. Questions/Comments were made:

1. Will they (ESCC) only place speed warning signs where they already have data? Temporary or permanent? They will place either type where Police already have data indicating a record of crashes or injury.
2. SpeedWatch have data, parishes need to encourage SpeedWatch teams to do surveys.

3. Do we know if Police will respond to increased data? We do not.
4. Winchelsea has the data the Police need, but the data missing is what the Police want: fatalities.
5. It is possible to find national data on 2020s website.
6. The cost of East Sussex installing a camera for a week is £800. (It is about £500 for 1 site) Several thousand for permanent camera. We need to push for cheaper cameras for Parish Councils.
7. Do current signs record the number of instances when the speed limit is broken? It depends. You can pay extra for software but only worthwhile if you know what the Police response would be.
8. What would you like to happen? A response to significant speeding.
9. Going together as a collective adds argument where recorded correct data is already there. The overall objective is getting parishes safer.
10. Is there not Rother wide education signage for speeding? This is one of the objectives, but not following up on this yet.
11. We need to get politicians involved. Sally Hart-Davies is supportive. Huw Merriman wants to be involved.
12. Safer Rother Partnership shows Police do have money, they occasionally support SpeedWatch groups. A Rother Cabinet member is Co-Chair of Partnership.
13. Is the Police and Crime Commissioner involved? Yes, Keith Robertson has met with her; she has said the correct procedure is to ask questions through Inspector Hartley.
14. How is PCSO recruitment going? We now have names of our local PCSOs.
15. If we collect the data how many Police do you think should be allocated to speeding?
16. Measuring data is double edged; we need to share data with our communities.
17. We need to ask what will you take seriously and what will you do.
18. Is there any evidence of the impact of speed humps?
19. Data collected by Highways Agency show that speed limits are not being enforced by the Police. It is necessary to scare future drivers.
20. What is the policy on naming and shaming speeding drivers?
21. Can the Police not use existing data, and start to book speeding drivers? A big part must be to change people's attitude by using speed cameras in villages.
22. Can we club together to purchase speed cameras to move around Rother? A number of Parishes showed interest in buying visual speed displays.
23. How do we establish if data can be recorded on speed signs? Isla Dacey confirmed that it is possible to check East Sussex signs. These can be calibrated and are regularly maintained. Any issues can be reported to East Sussex Highways.
24. If a PCSO attended SpeedWatch would that be enough to trigger prosecution? Not sure.
25. The same letter is issued to speeders, whatever their speed. Could there be a scaled response?

The meeting **agreed** that RALC should write as a body to Sussex Police stating that RALC Parishes are prepared to collect speeding data, and asking if RALC do so what action Sussex Police are prepared to do in terms of enforcement with the data collected. (We have been instructed by Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner to write to Inspector Hartley). Cllr Prochak offered to pass on the strength of feeling on the topic to Huw Merriman MP.

11 Data Sharing Council Wish List for parish Online

The Secretary explained that the list of data sets held by Rother District and East Sussex County Councils, which had been circulated to members, had been formulated at the Geosphere training in November. It was proposed to request that the Councils share these datasets with Geosphere. The meeting **agreed** that the Secretary submit this list to Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council asking them to share this data with Geosphere for inclusion on the Online Mapping website. The list would be kept under review. In the longer term RALC would lobby that a longer dataset is included, using data sets provided to Geosphere by Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Councils as a model. Malcolm Johnston confirmed that he had no objection in principle.

12 Rother Parish Conference 27 March 2020

This item had already been discussed under Item 8.

13 Parish websites hosted on Rother site

Malcolm Johnston confirmed that Rother is still very happy to host Parish websites. Crowhurst, Peasmarsch and Camber currently take advantage of this.

14 Reports from RALC representatives

There were no reports. Cllr Jonathan Vine-Hall confirmed that WARR Partnership had formally finished. Members should watch for changes in European funding.

15 Any other Business

The Secretary had been asked to promote the TCV 'I Dig Trees' programme offering free trees for planting in local communities. This scheme had now ended for 2019/20 however it is expected to be available again in Autumn 2020. The Secretary has written to ask for the dates for 2020. [Since the meeting she had received a reply to say that the scheme is expected to reopen in October 2020, she would be informed when this takes place]. A similar scheme is available through the Woodland Trust.

16 Date of next meeting

Members present rejected the idea of changing the next meeting to a Tuesday evening, on the basis that a number of Parish meetings were held on Tuesday evenings. A vote was taken and it was **decided** to revert to an afternoon meeting for April. The date was confirmed as Wednesday 8th April at 2.30pm. The date and time of the July meeting to be confirmed, if an alternative evening could be found an evening meeting would be considered. The meeting is currently booked for Wednesday 8th July at 2.30pm.

The meeting ended at 4.05pm.

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