

RURAL VOICES RURAL CHOICES

PARTNERSHIP MEETING NOTES

Thursday 16th September 2004

Present: Cllr Shirley James (Chair), Lewes DC
Dr Alex MacGillivray, Barcombe PC/LDALPC
Sally Harper, Lewes DC
Sgt George Meloy, Sussex Police
PC Kieran McDonald, Sussex Police
Nick Lear, Barcombe PC
John Cornwell, Barcombe PC
Jill Holmes, Ditchling PC
Pauline Lewis, Ringmer PC
Brenda Watson, Plumpton PC
Shirley Angel, Plumpton PC
Cllr Sarah Osborne, Lewes DC/East Chiltington/St John/Plumpton
Teresa Gittins, Action in Rural Sussex
Michael Bell, Hamsey PC
Stella Hill, Newick PC
Martin Cornwall, Newick PC
Tony Gedge, Streat PM
Tom Hawthorne, RDH Services
Rosemary Jeffery, Kingston PC
Willie Edmonds, Rodmell PC
James Mant, Lewes DC
Garry Clark, Lewes DC

All were welcomed to the meeting and introduced themselves. Declarations of Interest were received.

1. Apologies

Roger Moore, Lewes DC Housing; Ken Stevens, Fed of Small Businesses; Melanie Cutress, Falmer PC; Veronica Humphrey, Ringmer PC; Paul Rideout, South Downs CVS

2. Notes of the last meeting & matters arising

The notes of the last meeting were agreed.

3. Local Development Framework

James Mant from Lewes District Council's Planning Department gave a presentation on the Local Development Framework. He showed a DVD that the District Council has made to explain the new LDF planning system and answered questions from the floor. His responses:

- Parish Plans will be taken into account in the new system, as the community element will form a large part.
- It is completely open and up for consultation as to where new housing will be built, small villages will not be exempt. It's possible that development could happen all in one place.
- The Local Transport Plan will be a key document when considering the LDF.
- Public Examinations will remain and be more frequent.

Action: James Mant to establish if village/parish plans can become supplementary planning guidance

Action: All present to complete & return the form that James handed out if they want to kept up to date on the LDF

4. Licensing Policy

Garry Clark, Lewes District Council's Licensing Officer, gave a presentation on the new licensing policy (appended) and particularly how it affects premises that sell alcohol.

He invited all present to a special presentation on it on Monday 20th September at 7pm in Newick Village Hall.

Concern was expressed that premises will be able to stay open for as long as they like.

5. Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP)/Police Question time

Having attended the CDRP earlier that day, Alex MacGillivray reported his version of the meeting. He criticised the existence of another partnership, felt that there was too much paperwork circulated at the meeting and too many acronyms used. He reported on the recent District Crime Audit and was suspicious of its accuracy as the audit states that Westmeston and Ditchling, along with other areas of the District, are high crime areas. He felt uneasy that this Audit would form the basis of the next Community Safety Strategy.

Sally Harper responded by stating that the Community Safety Strategy would be a combination of the Crime Audit and the outcomes of the Perception of Crime Survey.

Alex had also raised the issue of rural policing with CI Bob Gough, who had been willing to listen. He then commented that parishes are still waiting for their Memorandum of Understanding with Sussex Police.

Action: CI Bob Gough to be invited to the next RVRC meeting

Sgt George Meloy referred to the notes of the last meeting relating to policing and provided a working progress on each:

- District Support Vehicle – this is being used as a surgery in some villages. Some parishes have not yet specified their preferred usage in their parish.

- Memorandums of Understanding – these have now been written and were given to those parishes present.
- Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) – these have been employed and are patrolling towns and villages already, some independent of mentors. Each PCSO has a geographical remit. More special constabulary are wanted to work alongside the PCSOs.
- Reporting crime – in order for the Police to respond to crime, it needs to be more widely reported.

A reference was made to CADDIE (Crime & Disorder Data Information Exchange) which holds all the crime detection and rates.

Action: Rob Wise, the CADDIE analyst to be invited to the next meeting

6. RVRC Transport/traffic issues & Lewes District Transport Group progress

Tom Hawthorne from RDH Services, gave a progress report on transport issues:

- Local Transport Plan – important that parishes are engaged in the consultation on what should be the priorities of the plan as the deadline to comment by is imminent.
- Chailey School – still trying to reschedule the 121 to call into Chailey School. The organisation of day trips during the holidays would not be feasible due to the lack of supervision available.
- ESCC bus tenders for the Lewes District area will be out soon which may lead to a change of operator or routes from January.
- The changes in parking arrangements in Lewes should result in a better bus service.
- Sustainable Communities Fair – this event takes place on 2nd October and alternative means of transport will be discussed there.
- Taxibus/Country Links service is still operating in the Barcombe, Ditchling & Plumpton area. There has been an increase in take up and the service will run at least until December 2005.

A progress report from the Lewes District Transport Group (sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership) is appended.

7. Area Partnership Workers

Sally Harper outlined the plan to apply for funding to the Local Strategic Partnership to employ Area Partnership Development Workers to support the five area partnerships (RVRC being one of them). Town Councils and area partnerships will be contributing both in cash and in kind towards the worker. It is recognised that parishes may not be able to or want to contribute so alternative sources of funding are being sought for the RVRC contribution.

8. Plumpton Parish Issues

Shirley Angel from Plumpton PC gave a presentation on the works that are currently being undertaken in the village to help rectify the problems with flooding and general water flow at specific hot spots in Plumpton.

9. Any Other Business

- Concern that the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath has had its night time Accident and Emergency function stopped.
- Environmental – Bevan Stream (landfill site), proposal to build an additional reservoir near Barcombe Mills and the reopening of the Uckfield to Lewes rail link has been dropped from the South East Transport Strategy.
- Responses are being received to a letter asking for parish interest in sharing SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices). Kingston, Rodmell and Hamsey are all keen to be involved.
- Falmer – the enquiry to the location of Brighton & Hove Albion's stadium has been reopened with alternative sites to Falmer also being considered. The parking controls in the village should be in place by the end of October

Next meeting Thursday 11th November, 7pm Yarrow Room, Town Hall, Lewes

Lewes District Transport Group Update

There is no explicit role for the LDTG in the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Individual members of the LSP together with Lewes District Council members and Town/Parish Councils have been consulted on the issues that should be of priority in the LTP. An early draft of the LTP will be shared with the LSP for comment early in the New Year. The developing LTP will determine the County resource spending allocation for the next 5 years and beyond, although this allocation is essentially calculated on the basis of a national formula. The LTP is in essence a management plan for the implementation of transport initiatives and guides ESCC investment in transport infrastructure and will undoubtedly inform and be informed by the regional plan and have a strong influence on the AIF as well.

The majority of the LDTG local priorities centre on green transport and road safety. A number of these local priorities could with support be worked up into suitable project bids. Action in rural Sussex has secured a £5,000 grant from the Countryside Agency towards rural transport for each of the next 2 years. It is hoped this can be used to contribute toward supporting a resource to develop such initiatives across the district, complimenting the proposal for Area Partnership Development Workers. Whilst the LTP covers the whole district significant focus is currently being placed on developing local strategies for the south coast towns. The priorities relating to Lewes were established through the Lewes 'Streets Ahead' consultation in 2002/03. It has been difficult to establish how the rural areas of the district fit in with this work. Many of the identified transport priorities emanate from Rural Voices Rural Choices where access to services and road safety is major concerns. These issues will be addressed as a part of the accessibility planning approach, which must be used to inform the LTP development.

Discussion with the Director of Transport & Environment at East Sussex County Council has led to the offer of support from a Senior Officer with policy/strategy experience. It is hoped that a revised meeting date of the LDTG can be arranged so that an initial discussion can develop on how the top down and bottom up priorities can be merged. The aim being to explore how both local priorities could be reflected in the LTP and whether the LDTG can assist with the delivery of County, Regional and National transport priorities.

Engagement from individual officers in certain specific transport disciplines of ESCC has been extremely positive but it is difficult to establish an overall appreciation of the county and regional picture and how local priorities either fit or conflict with this. Hopefully with the commitment being shown by ESCC will assist this process.

The East Sussex Economic Partnership under the provisions of developing the Area Investment Framework are seeking to establish a Transport Sub Group to bring together County wide priorities it is therefore essential that at a local level the effort is joined up as effectively as possible.