

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 7 SEPTEMBER 2006

Present: Councillor L Marmara (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs V Waddingham (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Mrs Collins DL, Mrs Heasman and Mrs Wilson
Councillors Johnson and Lord

Also present: Councillors Baldwin and Barnett.

130 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

District Councillor Mrs Glynn said how much she had welcomed the Town Council's campaign, through Civic News earlier in the year, urging the public to save water and indicating the steps that it had taken to do so itself. She said that notwithstanding recent rain there is still a distinct shortfall of water in the underground aquifers and she hoped that there could be continuing publicity emphasising the importance of water conservation. The Chairman answered in the affirmative.

Public Question Time concluded at 7.49 pm.

131 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Dixon, Heasman, Joyce-Nelson and Matthews.

132 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2006, having been previously circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

133 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF PREJUDICIAL AND PERSONAL INTEREST

- * Councillor Mrs Heasman disclosed personal interests in the Public Rights of Way Routine Maintenance (Min 138) and Adult Services in West Sussex (Min 139) both as an employee of West Sussex County Council.
- * Councillor Mrs Collins disclosed personal interests in Speed Watch (Min 134) and Policing Issues in East Grinstead (Min 135) as a member of Sussex Police Authority and in Public Rights of Way Routine Maintenance (Min 138) and Adult Services in West Sussex (Min 139) as an elected member of West Sussex County Council.
- * Councillors Mrs Waddingham and Lord disclosed personal interests in respect of Concessionary Rail Pass Issues (Min. 142) as they respectively receive a disabled and senior citizens pass.

134 SPEEDWATCH (Min 52 8.6.06)

Members noted Speed Watch figures for May and June 2006. They also noted that East Grinstead Police now only send 20 warning letters per month to the worst and/or repeat offenders in the parish. Members appreciated the reasons for this but did urge that the statistics that Sussex Police continue to compile for this should include the number of offenders recorded in addition to the number of letters sent. The Town Clerk agreed to ask Inspector Scott if that could be arranged.

With regard to Councillor Dixon's comment about high traffic speeds in Hurst Farm Road, Dunnings Road and Herontye Drive, it was agreed that this would be best progressed through the Local Action Team and Councillor Marmara said he would do this. In this regard it was also felt appropriate to ask Sussex Traffic Police to target and prosecute those speeding in East Grinstead, particularly on estate roads, and request that high level publicity be given to this. It was agreed that this could be taken up with the Divisional Chief Inspector and local Inspector.

Councillor Mrs Wilson commended the electronic warning signs that advise drivers they are exceeding the speed limit. Whilst noting these are expensive Councillor Mrs Collins did confirm that such a sign is to be included as part of the speed reduction programme that West Sussex County Council is progressing on the A22 Lewes Road between the Beeching Way roundabout and Ashurst Wood.

135 POLICING ISSUES IN EAST GRINSTEAD (Min 52 8.6.06)

There was considerable discussion, initiated by the Leader of the Council, regarding the meeting that all Local Action Teams had had with Mr Neil Smith of West Sussex County Council Highways on 6th September. Whilst such a meeting was felt to be helpful, particularly now there is no East Grinstead Transport Forum, there was disappointment expressed that there had not been a more positive reaction to some of the proposals made. It was appreciated that LATs do have a shopping list of enhancements they would wish to see initiated, the junction of Portland Road with Ship Street being the one that was specifically mentioned, and it was hoped that early action would be possible in supporting the work and representations of the LATs. It was hoped that there would be further meetings as it was known that these are valued by those, including the general public, who attend.

In response to a question the Town Clerk said he would check which LAT minutes he had received since the last Public Services Committee meeting and send copies to Members in the next mailing.

Councillor Mrs Collins advised that the next County Liaison Committee meeting will be on 25th September at 7p.m. in Glen Vue and the next public meeting to discuss Policing in Mid Sussex District will be held on Wednesday, 20th September at 6.30 p.m. at Clair Hall, Haywards Heath.

Finally on this item the Town Clerk reminded Members that the local police Inspector, Paul Scott, would be attending the next Council meeting on 2nd October 2006, possibly together with Chief Inspector Chris Ball, and he urged Members to give consideration prior to the meeting of those questions they would like to ask, and where such questions require a detailed response, to let him know so that advance notification can be given.

136 FORBUOYS SUB POST OFFICE (Council Min 85 3.4.06)

All Members expressed great pleasure at the speed in which the new sub post office had opened following the closure of that at Forbuoys. They asked that their thanks and commendation be recorded to the new sub postmaster, Mr Miles Wescott, and they hoped that the new facility at 101 London Road would be well used by the East Grinstead community.

137 JOURNEY PLANNING TO CENTRAL SUSSEX NHS FACILITIES (Min 234 10.11.05)

The Town Clerk's report was noted. Councillor Mrs Heasman advised that the Help Point does have a leaflet containing details of bus routes to hospital facilities in the south. Councillor Lord advised that the real issue is that many East Grinstead residents need to visit hospitals in other areas, Redhill for example, and this has not been addressed in the "Planning Your Journey To and From NHS Facilities in Central Sussex" leaflet.

Councillor Lord advised that he would be attending the next meeting of the Health Improvement Group of Mid Sussex PCT at Clair Hall on 22nd September at 2.30 p.m., when transport provision in Mid Sussex would be specifically discussed. He agreed to raise Members' concerns at that time.

138 EAST GRINSTEAD PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY ROUTINE MAINTENANCE (Min 235 10.11.05)

The Town Clerk's report, providing details of the works by West Sussex County Council's Public Rights of Way Maintenance Team in East Grinstead in May 2006, was noted.

139 ADULT SERVICES IN WEST SUSSEX

The Town Clerk's report giving details of the new Adult Services Directorate in West Sussex comprising Adults' Social Care Services with effect from 1st April 2006, was noted.

140 ALCOHOL ABUSE SERVICES IN MID SUSSEX

Members noted details of a letter recently received by the Leader of the Council from Dr Vevers of Moatfield Surgery regarding severe cutbacks on substance misuse services relating to alcohol abuse in East Grinstead. They shared the concerns of Dr Vevers at the recent decision of the Mental Health Trust to axe a dedicated nurse, previously employed for this purpose, at the Princess Royal Hospital.

Members felt that alcohol abuse is a major problem in society and the decision to axe this service was clearly flawed. The Chairman said that this was particularly so at a time when licensing laws have been relaxed by central government.

It was reported by Councillor Johnson that local young people assigned to courses by the Courts to overcome drink problems now have to go to Worthing and are given a rail voucher for the purpose. He felt this was nonsense. He also commented that local people visiting detoxification centres have to travel well outside the area.

Councillor Lord reported that he would raise this issue also at the meeting of the Health Improvement Group meeting in Clair Hall on 22nd September.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be requested to write urgently to the Mental Health Trust urging them to reinstate the dedicated nurse specifically employed to deliver substance misuse services relating to alcohol at the Princess Royal Hospital, thereby supporting the representations of local general practitioners. It was also agreed that copies of such letters should be sent to the PCT, the Strategic Health Authority and the Town's MP, Mr Soames.

141 STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENTS

Members noted the Town Clerk's report advising of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that Mid Sussex District Council is undertaking that will help inform the core strategy, part of the District Council's Local Development Framework, and enable representations to be made by that authority to Southern Water and the Environment Agency. Members were reminded that prior to the meeting they had been asked to come up with detailed information for their Wards in respect of those areas that had experienced flooding problems so that these could be reported to the District Council. The following representations were made by Members:-

Dorset Avenue; Station Road (by the bus lay-by); the Maypole Road/London Road junction; Holtye Road east of Sandhawes Hill, Holtye Road in the vicinity of Queen Victoria Hospital; Lewes Road just north of Oakley Close, and Lewes Road close to the junction with Herontye Drive.

RESOLVED: That a copy of the Town Council's identified flood risk areas in East Grinstead be forwarded to Mid Sussex District Council to assist in their Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work.

142 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – CONCESSIONARY RAIL PASSES (Min 60 8.6.06)

Members noted details of concessionary rail pass issues for May, June and July 2006.

143 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM MEMBERS OF MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL AND WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL.

Members noted the report from County Councillor Mrs Collins and thanked her for this. The report contained information from the County Council meeting on 21st July, specifically relating to concerns about health services in West Sussex and information regarding the North Mid Sussex County Local Committee. In this regard she again advised Members that the next meeting, on 25th September at Glen Vue Centre, will commence at 7p.m. and not, as she had indicated in her report, at 7.30 p.m.

144 CLOTHING COLLECTIONS

Councillor Mrs Waddingham drew attention to recent clothing collections from households in East Grinstead. She said that whilst these referred to the provision of jobs in Third World countries and employment in UK factories, the recent collections by Orellana was by a commercial company. That company had been dissolved on 27th June 2006. Councillor Mrs Waddingham said that Trading Standards have concerns about these collections and the best advice for anyone wishing to give unwanted clothes to good causes is to give them to local charity shops. Members thanked Councillor Mrs Waddingham for bringing this matter up.

145 BURGESS HILL HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING SITE - TEMPORARY CLOSURE

Councillor Mrs Heasman advised that the above site is temporarily closed from 4th September 2006 to Spring 2007. Whilst this would not ordinarily impact upon East Grinstead this does bring one specific local benefit. During this period of closure Mid Sussex District Council is reducing the cost of its collection service for bulky household waste items across the District. Therefore, for fridges/freezers,

TV/computer monitors and microwaves the closure period charge will be £11, as opposed to the normal charge of £23. West Sussex County Council will be meeting the subsidy of £12. For other bulky household waste (per 15 minutes loading) the closure period charge will be £17, as opposed to the normal charge of £35, with the West Sussex County Council subsidy being £18.

Members thanked Councillor Mrs Heasman for bringing this information to public attention.

The meeting closed at 8.27 p.m.

SIGNED:

CHAIRMAN.