



MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 22ND APRIL, 2008 AT 7.30 PM, IN THE SMALL HALL, VILLAGE HALL, PLUMPTON GREEN

PRESENT: Mr. R. Taylor Chairman
Mr. K Speirs Vice Chairman
Mrs. S. Angel
Mrs. B. Watson
Mrs. S. Akers
Mrs C Nicholson
Mr. T Thomsett
Mrs. C Eastwood
Mrs K Wride

County Councillor Mrs M. Stroude
District Councillor Mr T Hawthorne
Sergeant K Macdonald
Mr P Nicholson

40Members of the Public

- 1. APOLOGIES:** Mrs S Akers
- 2. MINUTES:** The Minutes of the Meeting on 3rd April, 2007 were signed as a true record.
- 3. MATTERS ARISING:** None.
- 4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:** Mr Taylor thanked the Vice Chairman, Clerk Councillors, Mrs Stroude and Mr Hawthorne for all their hard work.
He then asked Sergeant Macdonald to speak

Sergeant K Macdonald: Total reduction in crime 2007-2008 by 9.5%. East Sussex has the highest reduction of burglary dwellings in the force, vehicle crime is down by 7.3% and criminal damage down by 8.1%; violent crime has also continued to reduce by a further 15.1%. For Plumpton there has been four more crimes in the year 07/08 compared to 06/07. Criminal damage: 5 offences during 06/07 and 4 in 07/08; Burglary OTD (elsewhere than a dwelling) 4 incidents, an increase of 2 offences; Burglary dwelling: one less than last year; Violent crime: rise from 7 to 15; Vehicle crime: same amount in this year as last; Public Place violent crime: rise – 5 more than last year; Drug offences: one reported this year.

A total of 244.62 hours were spent on foot patrol and mobile patrol by PCSO's, approximately 20 hours per month.

Speeding: priority in most parishes. PC Vitler has visited the village with the speed gun. PCSO Whittaker-Jones has recently circulated a notice round the village and the station highlighting parking issues. Cold Calling: this needs to be reported to the Police at the time of the incident.

Sgt Macdonald asked for questions:

Q The figures in percentage terms seem low.

A This is a low crime area.

Q There are problems at the north end of the village, car owners in Chapel Road, an increase in irresponsible parking, making it difficult to turn left from Chapel road into Station Road There is also a problem at the junction at the Plough onto South Road.

A These matters are usually dealt with ESCC Highways. A mirror was suggested. The PC will write about this.

Q Could a 40mph hour limit be put before the 30 mph?

A Highways deal with this – Clerk will write.

Q There are concerns about cyclists without lights – newspaper deliveries.
A School liaison officer taken up this issue in the district and has visited schools about this.
Cyclists make up a large percentage of those who die on the roads.
Clerk to put in magazine article to ask cyclists to make sure they have lights.

Mr Taylor thanked Sergeant Macdonald, Mr and Mrs Young Neighbourhood Watch, and PCSO Whittaker Jones.

Mr Taylor reported that the Post Office had been saved for now.

The future of the PRH is awaiting a PCT decision, maternity is the most threatened service.

Half Moon Junction: Two meetings held with ESCC; they will erect road sign well before the junction to alert drivers coming from Lewes. Slow signs will be painted on both approaches. The best solution would be the removal of the earth bank in the garden of a property but this would be at a large cost.

Riddens Lane; the repair of the road here had been the best so far.

There had been problems with the level of the BT boxes in an area of Station Road which had caused problems for disabled access. BT had quoted £83,817, but ESCC Highways had done the work free of charge.

Car parking near the station - PC had asked the railway company to help create more parking but they had refused. Police asked to warn illegally parked cars once and then book them. The problem is not helped by the chicane of cars down the village.

No real solutions to this problem; double yellow lines would be hard to Police, residents permits? – this could move the parking problems elsewhere in the village.

Footpath 13A - There had been a problem here with aggressive dogs. ROW Officer, Police and Dog Warden informed. Any further incidents should be reported to the Police. Rights of Way Improvement Plan – ESC Highways have published this plan for 2007-2017. There is an intention to a) prioritise work required b) improve footpaths c) work more closely with PCs. Anyone who experience footpath problems should report them to the Clerk so that PC can work on their behalf. If contacting Highways direct, please let PC know.

Habitat Survey Group – Two years ago under the guidance of Sussex Wildlife trust, informal group of residents carried out initial survey of habitat in the village. In December 2007, Mrs Nicholson presented a paper to PC setting out individual trees, groups of trees, shaws and woodlands which were felt by the group to be special and required protection. Mr Wynn LDC tree officer visited the parish and inspected the trees in question with Mrs Nicholson, Mr Hutson and Mrs Hall.

Footpaths – Two members on the PC actively look after the condition of the footpaths, Mrs Nicholson and Mrs Eastwood. Some areas have been put right by ROW, particularly in the south of the parish.

East Sussex Village of 2008 Competiton – PC have entered this.

Mr Taylor asked Mr Nicholson to present the Sandpit report.

Mr Nicholson said the term would be for ten years to 2016, and it appeared the village would have to live with this. He thanked the liaison committee. He said they would keep in touch with what was happening there and would report anything they felt was important.

Mr Nicholson said that he was grateful to the PC for their support.

There are concerns about what happens when it gets going. There were several lorries that had been observed, but they were not all going to the sandpit. He asked everyone to be vigilant and report anything that caused concern to the relevant people.

Mr Nicholson had sent in a submission in response to the Waste and Minerals Plan; the Sandpit in Plumpton was the only soft sand one in the area. Mrs Stroude was helping with Sandpit issues.

Mr Taylor asked for questions.

Q Would a mirror help at the Half Moon junction?

A There used to be one there, it was mentioned at the site meeting but not taken up.

Q What about a flashing warning sign from the Lewes end.

A PC would ask Highways about this and a mirror.

Q There is an article in the county magazine about speeding traffic with £.6m to be spent between 37 villages. Is Plumpton one of them?

A There is an intention to have a 30mph through all villages.

Q I am concerned about the closure of the school swimming pool and the process of informing everyone. There was no prior consultation with the PTA, wider community and parents. A meeting had taken place but the information was very misleading; there has been no attempt to look at alternative funding. PTA offered funding to keep the pool. Health and Safety is an issue and School Governors no longer want to take responsibility for the pool; pools are part of the school agenda.

A Mrs Stroude said that she had every sympathy, Plumpton was not the only school affected. She said she had spoken to the Chairman of the Governors. The decision to close the pool is made by the Head Teacher and Governors; they had said that the pool was in urgent need of repair at significant cost. Consultation should have taken place, but they do have the right to close it; it appeared that Health and Safety, Staffing and Finance were the issues. Mrs Stroude said she was on the case.

Q If the decision to close cannot be changed, the only possibility was to see if the school could lease or sell the ground to residents to form a Plumpton Green swimming pool.

A Even if it was leased it would be the schools and CC responsibility and the Head Teacher and the Governors have a duty of care to the school site. A meeting should be set up with the Head teacher. Mrs Stroude said she would speak to the Capital Resources Team; she said she was very supportive of the cause.

Q Why are we having to pay full price on the buses even though we have a bus pass, I would be willing to pay half as I have to go to work before the 9.30 start time?

A Scheme comes into force after 9.30m – this is a national scheme, but it is a problem in rural areas.

Q I thought they were trying to encourage people to use the buses.

A The problem is where to draw the line; we will try to see what we can do.

Q Can we not pay half price?

A System does not allow for this, they have an electronic system of paying on the bus.

Q I have written a long letter about the buses. People in Brighton can go for free at 9am.

A Brighton and Hove pay for time between 9-9.30, but LDC cannot afford it.

Q I would be prepared to pay half price

A The biggest problem for LDC is the shortfall in funding of £700,000.

5. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Mrs Stroude said that the revenue support grant had been increased by 3%; ESCC was judged to be a good authority by the Audit Commission. There are 16,073 employees and the largest employer in the county.

Business and development Resources: There is to be regeneration at Newhaven and the port, Eastbourne and Hailsham triangle, and Hastings.

Children's Services: Services rated good with excellent capacity to improve. There are several children's centres for the 0-5 years; there is increased provision for sports and opportunities; continuing work with special needs children, and foster carers came out in an inspection as 'excellent' provision. There is an enthusiastic Youth Development Service, a funky teens for disabled young people and a youth cabinet.

Community Services: ICT services, manage 150 different projects across the county.

New location for archives, at Sussex University (Falmer) paid for by Lottery Heritage bid.

Transport and Environment: Environment top of the agenda; increase in maintenance for roads and footpaths; plan to have 30 mph through all villages and a bus review.

Adult Social Care: three year review of care to reorganise and increase use of direct payments. Aim to support vulnerable people to participate in their local communities.

Aim to make smooth transition from Children's Services to Adult Social care for those with a disability or mental health problem.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT:

Mr Hawthorne introduced himself as the elected LDC Councillor. He said how much time many people put into the community. Mrs Stroude was thanked for keeping a lively interest in the Plumpton area, and also the PC for supporting him in his first year as District Councillor. Mr Hawthorne said he was involved in the following committees: Employment, Scrutiny Panel, Chair of Transport Working Group, Air Quality Partnership,

the South Downs Joint Committee, Local Strategic Partnership, Action in Rural Sussex. He said he particularly enjoys RVRC, to consider big issues of rural housing, youth matters, transport, re-cycling and speeding. RVRC had purchased the SID machine. They had organised an event at Chailey School giving the young people an opportunity express their concerns and learn about alcohol and drug abuse, transport problems, bullying and where they can seek advice. A Road Safety Awareness event was being held at Plumpton College in the autumn.

The concessionary travel for those over 60 has caused issues, as there is not enough money to fund this, and LDC have a £700,000 shortfall, resulting in having to make additional savings throughout the budget.

Good progress is being made in areas such as recycling, and there is a pilot project to recycle cardboard from flats in the south of the district. LDC is amongst the top 20 in the country for reducing and reusing waste before it goes to landfill.

LDC has a very experienced management team and the Audit Commission and have said that once again, the District is excellent value for money and is rated joint 14th in the whole of the country.

Mr Hawthorne said he had dealt with several individual issues such as homelessness, planning and transport.

He was pleased to get LDC to re-surface Riddens Lane.

He has spent a lot of time fighting the proposed cut backs for local health services, to try and keep the A and E and maternity services at the PRH.

The Post Office is secure for the moment, but it is a case of use it, or lose it.

Mr Hawthorne then made a presentation of the Action Plan. He elaborated on the following headings.

82% had responded: The Process - The need for an Action Plan. The Committee. Distribution. Analysis The Parish Council. Community Involvement.

What Happens Next - Information available now (on display) Implementation Plans. Publication. Final Launch. Community Involvement. Review in One year.

The Sections – Personal. Transport, Parking and Speeding. Environment. Community: Communications. Policing, Housing, Facilities, Shop and Businesses.

All these headings had revealed key findings, which were revealed in detail in the display (in the committee room before, during and after the meeting).

What Next - Establishing Priorities. Agreeing Sensible Timescales – statistical weighting; the need or not to engage with outside agencies; practicalities and funding; whether sufficient leaders in the village emerge. Liaison with Parish Council and Communicating Plans to the Village.

Another event would be held on Saturday 31st May, 2008 with the display on show.

Mr Hawthorne asked for questions.

Q There isn't a doctor here anymore.

A There are doctor's in Newick, South Chailey and Ditchling..

Mr Hawthorne said that more volunteers were needed to help with the plan.

7. CHAIRMAN OF THE VILLAGE HALL REPORT:

Mr Taylor thanked Mrs Burgon, the Manager and Mrs Donovan the cleaner. He also thanked Mr Akers SOCS and Licence Manager, Martin Gilbert, Alan Upton, Bob Taylor Nick Satchell the Finance Manager and all the village hall committee members for their hard work.

There are several new projects: The kitchen, new lighting in the small hall and corridors, stage lighting, sound system. Fund raising starts with the Village Fair on 5th July 08.

Donations had been received from the Pantomime Society and Plumpton Players.

Two jumble sales had raised £2150.

There had been damage to the ladies toilets, door bolts and window vents; this area will be redecorated this year. The ivy on the west wall has been cut down. Path around the pond to Station Road – hopefully a slope will be put in here to help disabled people access this area. Car park light switch to be moved from the bar to the cloakroom counter in the corridor.

8. CHAIRMAN OF PLAYING FIELD REPORT:

Mr Speirs reported that the surface in the play area had deteriorated and costings for replacement or repair are currently being sought. Some minor repair work also has to be done.

The Pavilion functions very well for sports clubs and playgroup and some internal decoration will take place shortly. The Skateboard area has fallen victim to vandalism and graffiti. Repairs and removal have taken place and a new type of fencing will be erected soon. Mr Speirs thanked Mrs Eastwood and Mrs Wride for their work in cleaning off the graffiti. Continual repair in this area is not possible within the budget, so the situation needs to be monitored.

Car parking situation is far from ideal with an increasing number of commuters using the facility. A solution needs to be found to improve this.

Mr Speirs thanked everyone who helps with the running of the playing field and the co-operation between all of the user clubs.

9. CHAIRMAN OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT REPORT:

Mr Speirs reported that the new bus pass scheme allowing free travel anywhere in the country within prescribed times. Due to the limited bus service in the area, the PC have asked LDC if the usual time limit could be extended.

Unfortunately due to low usage the CC plan to withdraw three weekday and three Saturday services. The Village Rider services are being reviewed and various options being considered. This is likely to lead to further cuts in this service.

The railway service has seen a significant increase in usage in the last year. This should help with further negotiations for additional services. The downside is the parking problems this creates. The Station Manager had reported that vandalism is virtually non-existent.

Mr Speirs asked for questions.

Q Services are to be cut on the buses, will a timetable will be published in the parish magazine.

A Bus timetable is published once a year, trains twice a year. It could be put in the shop window or the station.

Q The station is looking nice now, but why has the signal box not been done?

A It is to be done this year.

Q Can anything be done to reduce the lighting out of hours at the station?

A Station Master said no because of Health and Safety and work being one on the line.

Q Light pollution is a greater problem.

A Clerk will write to Network rail to see what can be done.

10. CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT:

Clerk reported that the precept for 08/09m is £26,312 Band D equivalent properties 656.42

Grants had been awarded to: Ecobags, FWAG, SOCS, PRH campaign, CAB Lewes, Victim Support, Happy Circle, British Legion.

Village Hall and Playing Field accounts are audited by the Charity Commission.

Balanced accounts were available, but the summary will be published after the Audit according to local government requirements. Clerk thanked Mr Greening for his hard work as Internal Auditor.

Over £1000 had been spent on graffiti and vandalism over the last year.

11. TRAVERS TRUST REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT:

Mrs Watson explained the origins of the Trust. The interest payment was £40 this year, and the balance now stood at £198.55. The Trust is not often asked for money, it is sometimes used in a dire emergency, such as fire.

Mr Taylor was asked to sign the accounts for the year.

Q I am concerned about the trees on the racecourse, as leylandii have been put up which obscures the view. Could the PC ask if the height could be reduced.

A Waiting to see Mark Cornford to talk more about this.

Chairman

THESE MINUTES ARE IN DRAFT FORM AND WILL BE RATIFIED AT THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING IN 2009 (Date to be decided)