

North Mid Sussex County Local Committee

21 March 2018 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 7.00pm at East Grinstead Library, 32-40 West Street, East Grinstead, RH19 4SR

Present: Mr W Acraman (Worth Forest), Mrs Bennett (East Grinstead Meridian), Mrs H Brunsdon (Imberdown) and Mr A Lea (Lindfield and High Weald).

In attendance: Deborah Myers (Director of Education & Skills), Rachel North (Director of Communities), David Penrose (Democratic Services Officer), Richard Speller (Highway Area Manager) and Dean Wadey (Principal Community Officer).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J Russell (East Grinstead South & Ashurst Wood).

Welcome and Introductions

37. The Chairman welcomed everyone in attendance to the meeting and invited members of the Committee and officers to introduce themselves.
38. With the agreement of the Committee, the Chairman re-arranged the order of the Agenda.

Declarations of Interest

39. Mrs H Brunsdon declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 Application 163/NMS, as her husband was a member of Weir Wood Sailing Club.

Minutes

40. Resolved – that the minutes of the North Mid Sussex CLC meeting held on 7 November 2017 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Urgent Matters

41. There were no urgent matters.

Progress Statement

42. The Highways Area Manager introduced the progress statement. He highlighted the following areas that:

- The developer had agreed to footpath works on Imberhorne Lane and that they had passed the Road Safety Audit.
- The capital programme for 2018/19 had been published and was available on the Council's website.
- The first phase of the gas main replacement in London Road had not exceeded its permit date. There was a further stage to be undertaken, but no permit had yet been issued. Objections to the works could be made when the notice was issued, but it was not in the interest of the company to extend the works unnecessarily.

- The Chairman asked that enforcement of parking controls on grass verges be included in future Progress Reports.
- There were issues associated with the Sandy Lane Community Highway Scheme in Crawley Down.
- A meeting had been arranged with the Queen Victoria Hospital in order to develop a transport plan to help with their car parking issues.

43. Resolved - that the Committee note the written and verbal updates.

School Transport

44. The Committee noted a briefing paper on School Transport. The Director of Education & Skills presented the briefing note and highlighted a number of areas in the paper including the statutory role that the Council had regarding school transport and the price of transport for Post-Sixteen year olds, which was not a statutory obligation. She highlighted the 16-19 Bursary Fund which was administered by schools and the fact that schools were finding it hard to distribute this. In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- That there had been a detrimental effect on students from Ashurst Wood travelling to Sackville, as the withdrawal of the 3 in 1 card meant that students were being charged £100 a month for the journey. Ashurst Wood in the Metrobus area, but students were not able to take advantage of the 25% discount that had been negotiated with Metrobus by the Council. Students could walk to school, but would have to go along the busy and dangerous A22 in order to do so.
- Though a large authority with extensive rural areas, the Council was still obliged to follow the statutory guidelines regarding school transport. The Director of Education and Skills undertook to give consideration to the issues around Crawley Down and Ashurst Wood.
- That there had been a meeting between local Members and Metrobus at County Hall to discuss the issues in the rural areas. A follow up meeting had also been held in County Hall to discuss the issues of Crawley Down and Ashurst Wood. The Chairman said that she hoped that an innovative solution to the matter would be found.
- That the Council had undertaken a piece of work on transport and transport budgets.
- Concern was expressed about the impact of charges on those parents on marginal incomes who were not eligible for support for school transport and whilst there were statutory limits, whether the Council could choose to reduce these. The Director replied that home to school transport was taken out of the council tax, rather than from central Government funding and that the safety was of paramount importance, and there was an appeals process in place which allowed parents to address concerns about the transport issues.
- Members stated that the change in charge for the Post-Sixteen transport should have been implemented over a longer period of time. The Director agreed, and said that now that she had been appointed as a permanent Director, issues such

as this would be addressed as they arose. She went on to say that it was not possible to base the decision to raise the charge to £600 on anything apart from what the cost of the transport was to the Council at the moment. It was not possible to factor in whether or not parents would stop their children using the bus as a result of this change. A great deal of public consultation had been undertaken before the decision had been made.

'Talk with Us' Open Forum & Community Updates

45. The Chairman invited questions from the audience.

46. Mr Collins from the Ship Street Residents association voiced concerns about the increased danger that was represented to residents from on street parking in the area. Large vans had been obstructing residents from being able to get out of their drives, and children were in danger from traffic as they went down the road. The Chairman replied that she was confident that the local Member was aware of the issue, and asked that it be included on future Progress Statements. The Area Highways Manager undertook to work with the Resident's Association and the local Member in order to find a solution to the problem.

47. Margaret Collins from the East Grinstead Society asked who was responsible for the handrail near the War Memorial in East Grinstead. It was noted that the County's legal Department had investigated the matter, but it had been unclear as to who owned the land. The Area Highways Manager undertook to discuss the matter with her further.

48. Ros Furley from the East Grinstead Cycle Forum asked that cycle provision be included in any discussions with the Queen Victoria Hospital regarding their parking issues. The Area Highways Manager said that this would be part of the solution that would be discussed with the hospital.

49. Frank Berry asked whether or not West Sussex County Council had objected to the Hill Place Farm development application by Linden Homes in East Grinstead and if no objection had been submitted, were there plans to do so. Also, had consideration been given to the junctions with the A22 and the A264. The Chairman asked that the Area Highways Manager discuss the matter with the Planning and Transport Policy Manager and provide a report to the next meeting.

50. It was noted that substantial changes were being proposed for Three Bridges Station, and that the right hand turn out of the station would be removed. Dr Gibson from Worth Parish Council stated that he did not feel that this was a sustainable use of Section 106 monies and that it would result in an increased journey for many residents from the Mid Sussex Area.

Transforming Grants: Crowdfunding

51. The Director of Communities provided a presentation on the proposal to change the Council's funding model from a paper based system to an online Crowdfunding system. She said that the intention was to bring the system on line over the next financial year.

- That whilst concerns had been raised at the Call In of the decision at the Select Committee regarding the possible marginalisation of smaller community groups, Library staff and community officers would be trained to help residents access the site. In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- That whilst the CLC would have a funding limit of £5k on each application, the overall total bid on the crowdfunding site for a project would not have a limit, and could be as high as the project required.
- That there was a 5% charge for a project utilising the Crowdfunding site, but that this was standard across all such platforms.
- That the Select Committee had requested that a report on the progress of the crowdfunding platform be provided after the system had been in operation for a year.

Community Initiative Funding

(Mrs H Brunsdon declared a non-pecuniary interest)

52. The Committee considered a report on Community Initiative Funding by the Director of Law, Assurance and Strategy (copy appended to the signed minutes)
53. The Committee debated the respective merits of all the current applications and applicants were asked to outline their proposals.
54. It was agreed that application 83/NMS from St John the Evangelist should be deferred as the fund raising target was £130k, and it was unlikely that the CIF funds would be spent within the requisite year. It was agreed that the project would be more appropriate as a crowdfunded application.
55. Application 132/NMS from Sussex Clubs for Young People, was approved, and the Committee asked that the group be invited back to provide feedback on the success of the project.
56. The Committee noted that application 142/NMS from the Crawley Down Memorial Association was for a number of blue plaques to mark the houses where villagers had lived who had lost their lives in the First World War. Four further houses had been identified, and the initiative had been mentioned in the Commons by the local MP. Work was being undertaken with the local school to help children relate to history. The application was approved.
57. The Committee noted that this year was the centenary of the foundation of the RAF, and the East Grinstead Armed Forces Day had been expanded as a result. Application 149/NMS towards RAF 100 was approved.
58. The Committee noted that the club was trying to encourage diversity and involvement from young people in West Sussex. Taster days were being arranged during which the club would provide all kit as well as the boats and instruction. Those interested in taking up the sport would have ongoing teaching and support for a year as well as subsidised membership. The application was approved.
59. Two members of Ashurst Wood Village Council spoke about application 166/NMS. They said that the Ashtock Festival had evolved from a summer fair and had reached the size where additional funding was required to pay for a PA system, professional security and First Aid cover. The applicant confirmed that the event attracted commercial businesses that made money at the event. Members expressed concern regarding the application, and the following points were made:

- That as this was a recurring event, it was not appropriate to provide CiF funding.
- That the application would not be made every year so in this instance, the application should be approved.

60. **Resolved:** that the following application be approved:

132/NMS - Sussex Clubs for Young People, £830.00, towards setting up the Duke of Cornwall Award.

142/NMS - Crawley Down Memorial Association, £3,000.00 War Dead Remembrance.

149/NMS - East Grinstead Armed Forces Day, £1,000.00 towards RAF 100.

163/NMS - Weir Wood Sailing Club, £2,500.00 towards Open the Gates.

166/NMS - Ashurst Wood Village Council, £1000.00 towards Ashstock Festival

167/NMS - Imberlink, £4766.00 towards Cricket in the Community

173/NMS - Pericles Theatre Company, £2,500.00 towards the Promise of Everlasting Youth.

181/NMS - East Grinstead Athletics Club, £3,500.00 towards a Hammer Cage.

61. The following application was deferred and the applicant was advised to re-apply when the new crowdfunding arrangements were in place:

83/NMS - St John the Evangelist, £5,000.00 towards building the link community building.

Nominations and Appointments to School and Academy Governing Bodies

62. The Committee noted a report by Executive Director of Children, Adults', Families, Health & Education (copy attached to the signed minutes). There were no current nominations for approval.

Date of Next Meeting

63. The Chairman confirmed that the next meeting of the North Mid Sussex County Local Committee would be held on Wednesday 13 June 2018 at The Imberhorne School, Windmill Lane, East Grinstead.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Chairman