

CROWBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

To all Members of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee (with copies to all other Members for information).

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee to be held at the Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough on Tuesday 26th July 2011 at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:-

Town Clerk
18th July 2011

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

AGENDA ITEMS

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES

3.1. Minutes – 24th May 2011

3.2. Matters Outstanding (including reports on updates)

3.2.1 Fingerpost repairs (6110)

Repairs are scheduled to be completed by the end of July.

3.2.2 Installation of bollards outside the Post Office (6111)

The bollards outside the Post Office have proved to be effective in controlling parking on the pavement. ESCC has agreed to install new bollards, purchased by the Town Council, when Croft Road is being resurfaced at the beginning September. A site meeting was held with Glasdon and conservation style bollards have been ordered.

3.2.3 Maintenance of Conan Doyle statue

There were some issues with the wax and the statute has been cleaned again. The sculptor has requested that the statue is cleaned/treated professionally and a quotation of £450 + VAT has been received for this work with subsequent annual cleaning/waxing £300 + VAT.

To approve the cleaning/treatment of Conan Doyle statue

3.2.4 Letter to Charles Hendry MP re train issues (6162)

A letter was written to Mr Hendry to raise awareness of overcrowding on the Uckfield Line and to ask for his support with the Lewes/Uckfield line reinstatement and the Brighton Main Line2 project. Mr Hendry has taken this forward and a reply from Southern has been received.

3.2.5 Pedestrian gate at Canada Green (6163)

Gate has been removed.

3.2.6 Tidy up of RoW footpath between Fermor School & Beacon Community College

There has been a site meeting with a representative from Beacon School. An update will be provided at the meeting.

3.2.7 Distribution of leaflet advertising the extended bus timetable

9300 leaflets were delivered to households in Crowborough. The cost of £2000 was funded from the County Council Passenger Transport budget.

3.2.8 Part-night lighting (6167)

Heathfield & Waldron Parish Council has confirmed that the conversion to part-night lighting has been positive. Only a few comments have been received to the consultation in the newsletter and the article in The Courier. A meeting has been arranged for 19th July with ESCC to discuss the scheme in detail.

3.2.9 Late night bus service

East Sussex County Council is to take over the running of the late night bus service from Tunbridge Wells on Friday and Saturdays nights. The evening service will not continue as the route is already supported by the no. 29 bus.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Uckfield-Lewes Railway

Report attached from John Coleman.

5. CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

5.1 Matters Outstanding on Natural Habitats (including reports on updates)

5.1.1 Audit on the condition of trees on Crowborough Town Council land (5938)

An initial audit has been undertaken on land owned/managed by the Council and the results recorded – this does not include the Country Park, The Ghyll and the Bluebell Wood which are subject to an existing inspection programme. Specialist advice is required for some trees and it is expected that there will be urgent tree work required. Other work has been prioritised and will be undertaken in-house – the work will need to be supervised by the Ranger.

5.1.2 Picnic benches at Silver Jubilee (6114)

Benches have been installed.

5.1.3 Waymarkers – Silver Jubilee (6115)

In view of the outside work commitment during the summer months, no further action will be taken on the waymarkers at Silver Jubilee until November.

5.1.4 Leaflet – The Ghyll (6116)

In view of the outside work commitment during the summer months, no further action will be taken on the proposed leaflet for The Ghyll until November.

5.1.5 Dedication of The Ghyll under The Crow Act 2000 (6117)

Dedication complete.

5.1.6 Country Park – dig ditch to address erosion of cliff by pond (6164)

Digger has been booked and work is scheduled for 21st July.

5.1.7 Country Park – install wire to fence by top bridge (6165)

Work completed 7th June.

5.1.8 Sign for Silver Jubilee entrance to The Ghyll (6166)

Sign has been received and is scheduled for installation before the end of the month.

5.2 Ranger's Report (see attached report)

5.2.1 Treatment of Japanese Knotweed

5.2.2 Country Park - To consider work to improve drainage in car park

Advice was sought from Ashdown Forest Ranger and Environment Agency in order to resolve flooding problems. Advice concurred with spending £2,125 on Coppards quote to grade and lay 30 tonnes of road planings and make up with 20 tonnes Fittleworth fines, rolled to fall towards ditch. There is no requirement for a separator.

5.2.3 Crowborough Conservation - to consider support and liaison

6. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

6.1 Report on the Litter Review

6.2 To review the location and condition of notice/poster boards and consider the purchase of new boards

6.3 Planting in flower beds

A suggestion has been received from the Communications & Events Committee for the Summer planting in flower beds for 2012 to follow a red, white and blue scheme to support of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee event.

Theme planting in the anniversary bed costs £2100 and it may be that local sports groups wish to contribute to planting to support the Olympics.

7. TRANSPORT and HIGHWAYS

7.1 To consider request for a bus shelter to be installed at Warren Camp

A report will be given at the meeting.

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8. LIGHTING

8.1 To consider proposal for part-night street lighting

A report will be circulated following the meeting with East Sussex County Council 19.07.

9. FINANCE

9.1 Management Accounts to 31st May 2011 (sent to Councillors 8th June 2011).

9.2 Management Accounts to 30th June 2011 (sent to Councillors 11th July 2011)

10. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING and/or INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

RAIL REPORT for the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 24th May 2011

MEETING ATTENDED

Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee 11th May 2011

Southern attended this meeting.

The operator advised that the Summer Timetable for the Uckfield Line would be unchanged from the present one.

All peak morning trains are heavily loaded and there would be no changes to the formations of these trains as there would be no advantage to be obtained by swapping stock from one service to another.

Security and ticket sales arrangements were being improved at the three small stations on the line (Hever, Cowden and Ashurst). Real time Help Points, improved CCTV and ticket machines were being introduced.

Southern were taking criticism of their performance last winter very seriously and were now pressing ahead with their ON TIME RAILWAY target plan which involves making it everybody's objective to be on time trains at all points and not within 5 minutes of right time at the terminating stations.

Laura, who is Crowborough station's efficient and well liked staff member, is being promoted and transferred to Polegate. A replacement is being recruited

The Spa Valley Railway opened to Eridge at the end of March and the extension is proving popular. Visitors are using the interchange at Eridge and the through ticket facility from all Southern stations to Tunbridge Wells West on the heritage line.

Revenue protection (and a better environment for passengers) has been aided by the introduction of ticket gates to the platforms at Oxted.

Members went on to suggest that revenue protection was still not as good as it should be as the conductors did not always read the tickets. Southern said that training was continuing. The only news on car parking provision was that the negotiations for 40 spaces at Uckfield were continuing.

The AGM of the Community Rail Partnership Stakeholders will take place at Tandridge District Council Offices in the early evening on the 2nd August 2011. More details will be circulated later.

Members of the Committee agreed that the overcrowding was not acceptable and that it was forecast to become worse by Network Rail's RUS. There appeared to be no strategy in place to provide for this future growth other than to increase fares to lower demand. It was agreed that the Town and Parish Councils should be requested to write to their MP alerting them to the facts and asking for their assistance in improving the future prospects for services. Some draft suggestions will be circulated.

The Committee agreed that the Councils they represented be asked to confirm their continued support for BML2 and the Lewes – Uckfield re-instatement, which has recently received more support from politicians and the media. It was also proposed that they should be asked also to write to their MP on this matter. Some salient points will be circulated shortly.

I recommend that Crowborough Town Council adopts these two latter suggestions as they appear to be the best next steps to obtaining some progress on both matters.

John Coleman
14th May 2011

RANGER'S REPORT, July 2011

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Country Park car park

Advice was sought from Ashdown Forest Ranger and Environment Agency in order to resolve flooding problems. Advice concurred with spending £2,125 on Coppards quote to grade and lay 30 tonnes of road planings and make up with 20 tonnes Fittleworth fines, rolled to fall towards ditch. There is no requirement for a separator.

2. *Crowborough Conservation*

Our Volunteer's group have supported CTC by voluntary work and by fundraising: Is there an opportunity to thank them for this now?

ITEMS FOR NOTING

Country Park

Budget = £10,000, £1,802.75 spent, £8,197.25 remaining

- Practical tasks from the site management plan are on target
- Resolution 6112 – Completed. The fence has been moved.
- Resolution 6164 – Completed. A ditch has been dug.
- Resolution 6165 – Completed. Wire has been attached to fence.
- New entrance signs have been installed with logo discs inlaid.
- 6 waymarker posts were vandalised and are being replaced.
- Dog fouling issue – Improvements seen since initiative where dog-bags are provided from a dispenser for emergency use.
- Byelaws – The Secretary of State has again been chased for their approval.
- Cllr Howell who is the Portfolio Holder for Community and Volunteering on WDC's Cabinet visited the Country Park to do voluntary work resulting in a press release in the local media.
- Jarvis Brook School classes visited the site for the first time.

The Ghyll

Budget = £20,000, £1,301.62 spent, £18,698.38 remaining

- Practical tasks from the site management plan are on target.
- Land has been acquired to the east of the Heatherview development adjoining The Ghyll. The buffer land and woodland will be managed by The Ranger whilst the other areas will be managed by Ground Staff.
- Several incidents of off-road motor biking have been reported to us and the police. The offenders have been spoken to and have moved on.
- Resolution 6114 - Three wooden benches have been installed at Silver Jubilee Playground and the old benches recycled.
- Resolution 6116 - The Ghyll is now dedicated under The Crow Act 2000 and the Ranger liaised with PC Richard Waters and Sgt Mark Nevill on powers.
- Resolution 6166 – An entrance sign has been installed at Silver Jubilee.

Bluebell Wood

Budget = £4,500, £420 spent, £4,080 remaining

- Practical tasks from the site management plan are on target
- CTC are now taking over management of Japanese Knotweed from WDC.
- The boundary fence owned by adjacent property Old Mill Court is in poor condition and The Management Company have been contacted.

Summersales

- An Ecologist's report was commissioned and has been passed to David Foot.
- A Dormouse survey has been initiated by Crowborough Conservation.

General

1. Invasive Species – Japanese Knotweed is now being managed on seven CTC sites. The results of management over the last 18 months are very positive but ongoing control is required. Liaison with neighbouring properties is underway.
2. The first survey of trees on CTC land has been conducted and resultant works will be facilitated both in-house and with tree surgeons. The Ranger will conduct this survey annually and it is recommended policy that a more qualified Tree Consultant be instructed to conduct the survey in 2012 and thereafter on a 5 yearly basis.
3. Chemical Storage at Wolfe Depot – Significant progress has been made to make this safer and to conform with legal requirements and work is ongoing.
3. *Crowborough Conservation – Our Volunteer's Group*
 - A £10,000 lottery grant applied for by the Ranger has been received from the National Lottery towards a Threatened Species project. It will train members of the Public and facilitate surveys for dormice and amphibians and reptiles that are recommended in the site management plans at the Ghyll and Country Park and Summersales saving CTC over £8,000.
 - A program of volunteering events supporting the Site Management plans for various sites have been completed successfully and included led walks at The Ghyll and Country Park, pond management, scrub clearance, tree felling, laurel cutting, ivy cutting, Himalayan balsam management, litter picking and removal of defunct fences. A new website www.crowboroughconservation.org has been set up by volunteers and is used to advertise events on CTC sites.
4. Green Infrastructure – David Foot and Ranger met with Kelly Sharp at Wealden who is compiling information on Green Infrastructure. Consultation on development sites in Crowborough from the Core Strategy will begin autumn 2011.
5. Section 106 money available – Philippa Hewes, David Foot and Emma Newman met with Chris Bending at Wealden to discuss potential use of Section 106 money in Crowborough. ~ £50,000 will be available from the Heatherview development, ~£ 50,000 from the Old Fairground and ~£34,000 from Coppice View. We were advised that Section 106 will be replaced by CIL which will pool development money and de-localise it making it necessary for Crowborough to be proactive and compete for their share.
6. Encroachments – The Ghyll and The Country Park appear to have several cases of encroachment from neighbouring properties. Advice is being sought on this matter.
7. Canada Green – 24 wooden memorial plaques have been made by the Ranger to replace those that were worn.
8. Following Crowborough's lead, Uckfield Town Council have recruited a Full Time Ranger to manage their Green Spaces.
9. The Ranger has successfully completed a course at Plumpton College and exited with a Countryside Management qualification.
10. A new Natural Environment white paper has been published by the Government. See attached for advice for Local Councils around formation of Local Nature Partnerships.