

Minutes of a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee held at the Town Hall,
The Broadway, Crowborough on Tuesday 28th January 2014 at 7.30 pm

Present	Councillors	Quentin Burch Michael Cooke Peter Cowie Elizabeth Fermor Philip Fermor Ronald Reed Wendy Scrace David Shaw Andrew Steen * Matthew Street Sandra Timms	Vice Chairman Chairman
Also present		John Coleman Barry Kemp Monty Larkin Philippa Hewes David Foot Susan Barnard 2 members of the public 1 member of the press	Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Comm. Crowborough Conservation Sussex Pony Grazing & Conservation Town Clerk Operations Manager Operations Administrator Trust

* *Denotes non attendance*

APOLOGIES

Cllr Andrew Steen – personal reason.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Philip Fermor declared a personal interest in the land at Palesgate Lane having been involved with managing this land.

Cllr Elizabeth Fermor declared a personal interest in the land at Palesgate Lane as her husband has been involved with managing this land.

Cllr Quentin Burch declared a personal interest in the land at Palesgate Lane as a member of Crowborough Conservation.

Cllr David Shaw declared a personal interest in the land at Palesgate Lane as a member of Crowborough Conservation.

MINUTES

Minutes – 26th November 2013

7070

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2013 as confirmed be signed by the Chairman.

Matters Outstanding (including reports on updates)**Pedestrian crossing at Beacon Community College**

Work is progressing on this scheme. NOTED.

Planting at Clokes Corner (7023)

Flowering shrubs to be planted in the spring. Work is progressing on the hanging basket trees. NOTED.

PRESENTATION FROM SUSSEX PONY GRAZING & CONSERVATION TRUST

Barry Kemp addressed the Committee and explained that the two fields immediately adjacent to the Ghyll have a very high nature conservation value and are classified as unimproved lowland grassland. This type of land is increasingly scarce and appropriate management is important. Grazing the land will provide a sustainable way to prevent long-term decline of the quality of the habitat.

Monty Larkin, grazing co-ordinator for the Sussex Pony Grazing & Conservation Trust, provided some background information to the Trust's work. It is proposed that two or three Exmoor ponies are provided to graze the fields for two or three months each year. The fields will require fencing and an application for funding can be submitted to the High Weald AONB. A water supply will be needed for the ponies.

It was agreed that the following Agenda item be brought forward:

To consider grazing the meadow at Palesgate Lane and submitting a grant application for fencing.

7071 **RESOLVED** to graze the meadow at Palesgate Lane and to submit a grant application to the High Weald AONB Unit for fencing.

Barry Kemp expressed Crowborough Conservation's wish to help in any way with the above initiative.

8.05pm – Barry Kemp, Monty Larkin and one member of the public left the meeting.

RAILWAY REPORT

A report on the recent Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee Meeting had previously been circulated. John Coleman reported an amendment from Southern, announcing that the overhaul of the diesel train fleet will now not be complete until the end of March, rather than January. A pilot trial of some new driver equipment will take place which is aimed at helping trains keep to time and reducing carbon emissions. The newly opened Signalling Centre at Three Bridges marks a further step in the plan to close all signal boxes apart from fourteen in the country. The box at Oxted is currently still operational. Listed signal boxes are being offered to heritage railways.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**To note highway improvements at Crowborough Cross junction**

A traffic light review at Crowborough Cross has identified that timing alterations and new road demarcation markings would increase safety and improve traffic flows. East Sussex County Council has advised that funds have been identified for the scheme for installation early next financial year.

To agree installation of a bus shelter at Croft Road

Permission to proceed has been received from the housing association and approval granted by East Sussex County Council. The cost of £7,000 for installing a shelter at this location is largely due to the difficulties of the site. The bus stop is particularly heavily used by schoolchildren at the beginning and end of the day.

- 7072** **RESOLVED** to proceed with the installation of a bus shelter in Croft Road and to approve expenditure of up to £7,000 + VAT.

Update on request for double yellow lines to be installed at Beacon Gardens

Highways has advised that there is little prospect of this request progressing further.

To consider a response to East Sussex County Council Highways Community Self-Serve Initiative

It was **AGREED** that an expression of interest would be made with regard to the Community Fund Match and Local Delivery Company options.

It was also **AGREED** that should the Town Council be able to provide services that are fully funded by ESCC, but less expensive than those provided by County, then the options should be discussed.

To consider improvements to the lighting at Jarvis Brook pedestrian crossing as a match funding request

An improved lighting scheme has been costed at £5,700 but has not achieved a high enough score to be taken forward. It may be suitable for consideration under the Community Self-Serve Initiative.

- 7073** **RESOLVED** to submit the scheme for lighting improvements at the crossing in Jarvis Brook as a Community Fund Match proposal.

- 7074** **RESOLVED** to transfer the sum of £5,000 from Environmental Improvements, cost centre 4654/801, to an earmarked reserve for future environmental projects.

Signs to indicate the boundaries of Jarvis Brook

A proposal to install signs indicating the boundaries of Jarvis Brook did not receive sufficient support.

To note the recommendations on the future provision of bus services in East Sussex

Following a consultation on bus services, the County Council's Cabinet approved a number of recommendations aimed at reducing the transport budget by £2.23 million over the next three years.

8.45pm – the member of the press left the meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

To note the introduction of a Dog Control Order in Wealden

The Dog Control Order came into force on 1st January 2014.

The Town Council will report to Wealden District Council a dog bin at Montargis which has fallen over and another in Herne Road which has become almost inaccessible due to the installation of mobile phone mast cabinets.

To consider a request for planting the anniversary bed at Chapel Green to commemorate the Canadian 70th anniversary

- 7075** **RESOLVED** to plant the anniversary flower bed with the Canadian national flag to commemorate the 70th anniversary of 5th July 1944.

CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

To review report of tasks completed against Management Plans

A list of tasks completed in December 2013 and January 2014 as part of the Management Plans for the Country Park, The Ghyll and The Bluebell Wood was reviewed and noted.

LIGHTING

To note report on lighting matters

Two lighting columns require replacing at a cost of £1245 each.

8.50pm – John Coleman and one member of the public left the meeting.

FINANCE

Management Accounts to 30th November and 31st December 2013

- 7076** **RESOLVED** to adopt the Management Accounts for the two periods ending 30th November and 31st December 2013.

URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING AND/OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

The Operations Manager will examine three issues which were raised:

- A Town Council bench behind Bysouths which has missing slats.
- A notice board for another parish erected on London Road.
- Water getting into Town Council notice boards.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

RAIL REPORT for the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING 28th JANUARY 2014

MEETINGS ATTENDED

Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee Meeting 8th January 2014

Southern did not attend the meeting.

The weather over the Christmas and New Year had been exceedingly wet and windy. Services were badly affected by landslides and fallen trees. The Uckfield line had fared better than most of the network but problems elsewhere did cause problems for passengers.

On occasion, short train formations continue to occur resulting from the overhaul and refurbishment programme which leaves even less than the usual number of spare units being available. The overhaul of the diesel train fleet is still expected to have been completed by the end of this month.

Fortunately, the major engineering works that took place over the holiday period seem to have gone well and were completed on time. The works which took place at Gatwick Airport, Coulsdon and Victoria involved track and signalling renewals and enhancements..

It is hoped that these improvement together with the newly opened Signalling Centre at Three Bridges will enable better reliability and time-keeping on the whole network.

All five bidders have submitted tenders for the new Thameslink, Great Northern and Southern franchise and the winner is expected to be announced in May 2014.

OTHER

The Minister of Transport received Network Rail's London and South Coast Route Study last month. He has stated that the final version will appear within two months. This Study includes an assessment of the possible future role of the Uckfield Line and the reinstatement of the Lewes – Uckfield link.

J N Coleman
20th January 2014