

Minutes of a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT** Committee held at the Town Hall,
The Broadway, Crowborough on Tuesday 26th January 2016 at 7.30 pm

Present	Councillors	Margaret Brain Quentin Burch Peter Ellefsen Martyn Garrett David Larkin * Alan Penney Ronald Reed Heather Rogers Greg Rose Wendy Scrace Matthew Street * Sandra Timms	Vice Chairman Chairman
Also present		John Coleman Cllr Richard Stogdon Cllr Sylvia Tidy Philippa Hewes David Foot Susan Barnard Three members of the public	Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Comm. East Sussex County Council East Sussex County Council Town Clerk Operations Manager Operations Administrator

* *Denotes non attendance*

APOLOGIES

Cllr David Larkin – personal reason.
Cllr Matthew Street – business commitment.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Graham Johnson, a member of the public from East Beeches Road, addressed the committee to summarise the concerns of local residents of the Beeches estate with regard to the speed and rapid acceleration of traffic in those roads. Residents are seeking the creation of a 20mph zone or traffic calming measures. ESCC has not assessed these measures as being a priority for implementation. Residents are planning to submit a petition to ESCC at the next Full Council meeting in March.

MINUTES**Minutes – 24th November 2015**

7638 **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2015 as confirmed be signed by the Chairman.

Matters Outstanding (including reports on updates)

An update was requested on the future of the PCSOs. No firm developments have been announced by the Police. It is likely that there will be fewer PCSOs as from April, with a different role and a less territorial deployment. Local Neighbourhood Police Panel groups and local residents' associations have been urged to send representatives to LAT (Local Action Team) meetings, at which local Police priorities are decided.

The option for Town/Parish Council funded PCSOs will not be available from April and parishes are being asked to consider providing community wardens.

RAILWAY REPORT

The refurbishment of the additional carriages is proving challenging and the refurbished units will not come into service before late July 2016. Platform lengthening work is proceeding apace, with work at Edenbridge Town, Cowden and Buxted well advanced. Services have continued to be poor but with a satisfactory replacement bus service. There is no official news as yet on the progress of the South Coast Rail Study.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**Strengthening Local Relationships – update from meeting 21st October**

The ESCC maintenance team is investigating the cemetery entrance kerbing which was not replaced when Herne Road was resurfaced in 2015, causing the cemetery to flood. The blocked drain outside Robin Hill in Aviemore Road has been added to the jetting list. The road surface in Alice Bright Lane has not been found to be in need of repair but will be regularly inspected. Gully jetting in Crowborough will take place between the end of February and the beginning of April.

Community Match Funding

To review list of parking restrictions/yellow lines sites

7.58pm – two members of the public left the meeting.

Councillors considered a prioritised list supplied by ESCC of locations in Crowborough where double yellow lines have been requested by residents. None of these schemes will be taken forward at the present time without match funding from the Town Council.

7639 **RESOLVED** that the Town Council applies for match funding, at an estimated cost of £2,500, in order to implement the three schemes assessed as highest priority for double yellow lines at the junctions: Osborne Road/Crowborough Hill, Sybron Way/B2100 Rotherfield Road and Medway/Crowborough Hill.

8.12pm – a member of the public returned to the meeting.

Request for traffic calming measures in North Beeches Road and East Beeches Road

There was a discussion on the problems with traffic speed and acceleration at North Beeches Road and East Beeches Road, and it was agreed to ask the Town Council sponsored PCSO to spend time at the location checking speed and driver behaviour.

It was agreed to write to ESCC in support of the residents' petition, along with a request for the scheme to be reviewed in light of the location of the school and the prevalence of young people in the area. A letter will be sent to Beacon Academy requesting that the school considers placing suitable signs near its exit encouraging safe driving in the adjacent residential roads, and to make users of the site aware of the current traffic problems experienced by residents.

8.45pm – Cllr Sylvia Tidy and a member of the public left the meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Clean for the Queen – March 4th to 6th

Clean for the Queen is a campaign to clean up Britain in the year of The Queen's 90th birthday. It was agreed that, due to the timescale, and the 'I Care for Crowborough' campaign held last September, that the Town Council would not organise a town-wide event. Awareness of the initiative will be raised through an article in the newsletter and via the website, with Cllrs supporting local groups taking part.

8.57pm – Cllr Richard Stogdon left the meeting.

CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

To review Ranger's report of tasks completed against Management Plans and other work

In his written report, the Ranger highlighted the environmental impact of future development of a small piece of woodland which had recently been sold adjacent to Beacon Academy. The connectivity value of this piece of land in relation to the Ghyll was explained. The Committee was asked to consider the future of a small piece of disused sports land adjacent to Fermor School and Beacon Academy and developing it as a small nature park.

9.03pm – John Coleman and a member of the public left the meeting.

FINANCE

Management Account Reports to 30th November and 31st December 2015

7640 **RESOLVED** to adopt the Management Account Reports to 30th November and 31st December 2015.

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

None

The meeting closed at 9.07pm.

RAIL REPORT for the ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

26th JANUARY 2016

MEETINGS ATTENDED

Uckfield and East Grinstead Lines Community Rail Partnership Stakeholders Meeting 12th January 2016

The work of 2015 was discussed and reviewed and the proposed Action Plan for 2016 was agreed.

Particular actions working with partners include:-

The promotion of accessing the countryside for walking/cycling (by train).

The promotion of travel to young people to encourage sustainable transport by station visits.

The provision of additional localised/personalised posters, onward travel maps and time-tables, &c., for notice boards.

The latest edition of the CRP's Line Guide is in the final stages of preparation and will be published in the spring.

More information on the current CRP's work can be found at their web-site and on Facebook.

Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee 13th January 2016

At the invitation Southern this meeting was held at Southern's Selhurst Depot. It followed a tour of that part of the works where the additional Turbostar diesel trains are being made ready for use on the Uckfield line. The Committee members found the visit interesting and worthwhile and were very grateful for the opportunity to see the work being carried out and for the information provided by the very knowledgeable Southern guides.

At the meeting Southern apologised for some poor service days again!

Currently the services remain variable but always overcrowded in the peak hours. The replacement bus services connecting Crowborough to Buxted and Uckfield during the present line closure were reportedly satisfactory.

East Sussex County Council replied to the Parishes Committee's request for action to overcome the parking problems along the roads around Eridge station and stated that it was not going to take any further action regarding the matter. It was agreed that the Committee would write to ESCC requesting bus shelters be provided near the station on the A26.

Uckfield station car park was reported as now being quite well used and seemed to have increased the number of free spaces in the nearby town car park.

Platform lengthening has now started at most of the line's stations. Edenbridge Town, Cowden and Buxted are all quite well advanced. The programme has been slightly delayed by cancellations of some engineering possessions due to poor weather conditions. The time lost should be made up by the end of the current line closure.

The overhaul and restoration of the additional trains is proceeding more or less on programme. The programme is difficult and complex, some of the work required cannot be carried out at Selhurst Depot and so the vehicles are moved out to other works for some tasks. The major overhauls of two of the units are nearing completion and are in progress on the others. When this work is finished they will then be moved again for body repairs. When finally completed the units will be commissioned and put into traffic after testing on the Uckfield line. The Committee was told that the units would be in service by 24th July 2016. Having seen the extent of the work required and learned of some of the problems that have arisen with this work it appears to have been and continue to be a real challenge for Southern, but one that the team are confident will be successful.

OTHER

The latest update of the progress of the GTR/Network Rail Joint Performance Plan makes unhappy and unsatisfactory reading. The latest period reported (ending 12th December 2015) shows performance even worse than the previous 4 weeks, and is well below that at the start of the plan, which commenced last February when things were very poor largely explained by problems at London Bridge. Whilst many of the causes of delays and cancellations are due to Network Rail infrastructure problems, GTR is however, directly responsible for the provision of adequate staffing being available to run the services and for train failures. It is of little consolation that the Uckfield Line services generally appear to have been less affected than others of Southern and Thameslink. Presumably the DfT will be discussing the future performance improvement requirements with the senior managements of Network Rail and GTR.

There has been no official news regarding the status of the South Coast Rail Study being produced for the DfT at the behest of the Chancellor. It has been heard that something might be released towards the end of February.

J N Coleman 18th January 2016