

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 24th March 2015 at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:-

Town Clerk
18th March 2015

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Questions from members of the public (15 minutes maximum)

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES

3.1. Minutes – 27th January 2015

3.2. Matters Outstanding (including reports on updates)

3.2.1 Lighting improvements at Jarvis Brook pedestrian crossing (7073)

The improvement scheme is to be scheduled for implementation

3.2.2 Trees at Clokes Corner (7235, 7236)

Replacement trees have been planted.

3.2.3 Widening of footpath by new pedestrian crossing at Beacon Academy

Following the removal of the equipment cabinet, East Sussex County Council is to adjust the width of the footpath.

3.2.4 Crowborough Cross Traffic Signals Improvement Scheme

The junction is to be reviewed by the Road Safety Team, East Sussex County Council.

3.2.5 Fingerpost replacement/repairs

Work is continuing on the refurbishment of the fingerposts

4. RAILWAY REPORT

Report from John Coleman.

5 STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS MEETING 2ND MARCH

6. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

6.1 Update on speed limit and enforcement on A26 Beacon Road

6.2 Petition for pedestrian crossing on A26 near Sheep Plain

6.2.1 To note East Sussex County Council's response to the petition

6.2.2 Request to install a bus shelter

6.3 Request for a bus shelter to be installed near the Bricklayers Arms, Whitehill Road

6.4 Minutes of a meeting of Wealdlink Forum and North Wealden Transport Partnership Limited 11th February 2015

6.5 Request for speed controlled signage at Hurtis Hill

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

7.1 Request to install a dog waste bin at Willowmead/Hurtis Hill

7.2 Request to install a planter at the junction of Ghyll Road and London Road

7.3 Clean Up Crowborough Day

8. CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

8.1 To review report of tasks completed against Management Plans and other work

8.2 Crowborough Ghyll Management Plan 2015-2019

8.3 To renew the Management Agreement for the Bluebell Wood to 31.03.16

9. FINANCE

9.1 Management Account Reports to 31st January and 28th February 2015

9.2 Transfer of funds to Reserves

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 MARCH 2015

MEETINGS ATTENDED

Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee 11th March 2015

Southern were not represented.

The Committee was advised that the train service continued to be poor and that Southern and Network Rail were struggling to run a reliable service. It was felt that this was partly due to a still over optimistic timetable being run subsequent to the latest changes at and near to London Bridge.

There also appear to be problems with new signalling arrangements which can affect the Victoria trains; this has a knock on effect on all services which use the Brighton Main Line. Unfortunately, this appears to be contrary to what we told when we queried the risk assessment of the size and robustness of the Three Bridges Signalling Control Centre. In addition to these problems there have been train failures, fatalities, and fallen trees, all adding to the recent woes, as staff have struggled to keep passengers updated with the latest information.

There may have been signs of some slight improvement in the last week or so but some services are still late and trains are quite often turned at Crowborough.

The Committee does not believe that the latter problem can be resolved unless the single line sections are re-doubled thus enabling easier recovery of lost time.

Southern, Thameslink and Network Rail have put an Improvement Plan in place and expect to see a big improvement in performance in the course of the next 3 months. The first report of their progress is awaited with interest.

The meeting was attended by the Conservative and Labour parties PPC's who were briefed on the Committee's views and aspirations. Both were supportive.

Reports were received that the awaited Network Rail Electrification Study might be published later this month, ahead of the General Election, which some members thought surprising.

At Uckfield, Network Rail has found local objections to its preferred access route to enable the platform there to be extended.

Also at Uckfield, the work for the provision of the new station car park is apparently not proceeding very quickly, and it is suggested will not be completed by the end of April as planned.

The additional train sets are still due to be transferred to Southern at the end of this month and be operational at the end of July.

Sussex Community Rail Partnership - Uckfield and East Grinstead Lines Steering Group Meeting 17th March 2015

The Chairman updated the meeting with the news of proposals that the remit of Community Rail Partnerships should be changed/extended were being brought forward and that details of a new business plan would be provided as soon as possible. It was also advised that future local funding was of some concern although that from the Train Operating Companies was secure.

The Development Officer's Action Plan was discussed and agreed.

It was reported that the future use of the empty accommodation at Crowborough (and Edenbridge Town) was still unresolved, and that this was apparently due to staff changes at Network Rail.

The Oakleaf group that tends the plant containers at Crowborough has restarted and hopes to produce a good show this year.

One important CRP activity this year will be Rail in the City which will be taking place on 20th May at Blackfriars station. This is an event that will include CRP's from all over the country.

The Sussex CRP, assisted by the South Downs National Park, and by volunteers will be there to encourage the use of public transport to visit the our towns and countryside. (The new Blackfriars station, which stands across the river and has great views, is worth a visit at any time [off-peak].)

OTHER

It has been noted that Network Rail has commenced a clearance of the line-side at the Crowborough Engineers Yard and southwards towards Buxted. It also appears to have started assessing possible revision to some signal locations at Crowborough.

J N Coleman 18th March 2015

Report for Environment Committee meeting 24th March 2015

5. STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS MEETING 2ND MARCH

Draft Minutes of the meeting to be circulated.

6. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

6.1 Update on speed limit and enforcement on A26 Beacon Road

A report has been received regarding mobile speed camera enforcement on Beacon Road, within the 40 mph section. None of the road collisions in the 3 year data indicate excess speed as a contributing factor. Camera enforcement is focused on casualty reduction and the site on Beacon Road will not be taken further for a mobile speed camera unit at the present time.

The request for a pedestrian crossing on the A26 Beacon Road near Church Road has not been included in the County Council's capital funding programme for 2015/16.

6.2 Petition for pedestrian crossing on A26 near Sheep Plain

Residents from Nevill Court, Nevill Close and The Rowans, have signed a petition for a signalised pedestrian crossing and improved bus waiting facilities on the A26.

6.2.1 To note East Sussex County Council's response to the petition

East Sussex County Council has acknowledged that a pedestrian crossing would be of benefit to the residents of Nevill Court, Nevill Close and The Rowans. Many requests are received for improvements, and the County Council uses an evidence based process to prioritise schemes which will be of the most benefit to local communities. The proposal for a crossing does not score highly enough to be taken forward at the present time.

There is already a centre island on the A26 outside Nevill Court to help pedestrians cross the road.

6.2.2 Request to install a bus shelter

The petition also includes a request for a bus shelter. This has already been considered by the Environment Committee and extracts from the relevant Minutes are as follows:

27.11.12

To consider the installation of a bus shelter on A26 near junction with Sheep Plain

Following the change of route for the no.29 bus service, Highways has asked the Town Council to consider installing a bus shelter at the above location. A quotation has been received for £4,128 + VAT.

It was AGREED to attempt to ascertain the usage of this bus stop and to reconsider the matter at the next meeting.

29.01.13

Update on bus shelter provision

It has proven difficult to determine usage of the bus stop near the junction of A26 and Sheep Plain as passenger data is confidential. It has been suggested that other stops in Crowborough would benefit from the provision of a shelter due to a high usage. It was AGREED to continue to monitor the situation.

In January 2014, it was agreed to install a bus shelter at Croft Road. The budget for bus shelters for 2015/16 is £500 to cover minor repairs.

6.3 Request for a bus shelter to be installed near the Bricklayers Arms, Whitehill Road

A request for a bus shelter near the Bricklayers Arms was put forward at the last Environment Committee meeting. The site has been examined but there is insufficient room to install a shelter at this location and it would hinder visibility for traffic using the adjacent access road.

6.4 Minutes of a meeting of Wealdlink Forum and North Wealden Transport Partnership Limited 11th February 2015

Please see attached Minutes

6.5 Request for speed controlled signage at Hurtis Hill

A request has come forward from the West Ward Neighbourhood Panel for solar activated speed signs to be installed at Hurtis Hill. East Sussex County Council has advised that to install two vehicle-activated solar powered signs, warning of the bend, would be approximately £15,000. The scheme is not a priority for the County Council. An application could be submitted for consideration under the community match funding programme.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

7.1 Request to install a dog waste bin at Willowmead/Hurtis Hill

A request has been received to install a dog waste bin at Willowmead/Hurtis Hill. It has been reported that someone is leaving a black bag on the ground which is being used for dog waste disposal.

In May 2013, the Environment Committee considered a request to install a dog waste bin near Southridge Rise/Willowmead – this was not taken forward. In January 2014, Wealden District Council introduced a Dog Control Order, making it an offense for someone not to clear up after their dog.

The Town Council now has to pay for the installation of new dog bins, the charge is currently £500 inclusive of VAT per bin, in addition to the weekly emptying fee of £5.05.

7.2 Request to install a planter at the junction of Ghyll Road and London Road

Cllr Elizabeth Fermor has requested that a planter is installed at the junction of Ghyll Road and London Road. There is a concrete base at this location from a bench that was recently destroyed in a traffic accident.

The Council's floral displays are currently sited at key locations in the town to provide maximum impact:

- The High Street and Fernbank
- Croft Road
- Clokes Corner
- Chapel Green and Canada Green
- 'Welcome to Crowborough' signs

- Hanging baskets
- Beacon Road/Mill Lane junction

7.3 Clean Up Crowborough Day

This suggestion was put forward at the last Environment Committee meeting following a meeting of the Local Action Team. The Partner Coordination Manager at Waitrose has advised that they may be interested in being involved in a clean-up day, following the success of the previous work in the Keep Britain Tidy campaign.

8. CROWBOROUGH'S NATURAL HABITATS

8.1 To review report of tasks completed against Management Plans and other work

Country Park

Litter picking

Waste bin installed in car park

Tree survey completed

Ghyll

Litter picking

Tree survey completed

Bluebell Wood

Litter picking

8.2 Crowborough Ghyll Management Plan 2015-2019

The management plan for the next five years has been received. The Ranger will be reviewing the plan and drawing up a schedule of tasks for the area.

8.3 To renew the Management Agreement for the Bluebell Wood to 31.03.16

Wealden District Council has agreed to the renewal of the Management Agreement for the Bluebell Wood for a further year.

9. FINANCE

9.2 Transfer of funds to Reserves

Recommendation

To transfer the sum of £2500 from Environmental Improvements, cost centre 4654/801, to earmarked reserves for future environmental projects.