

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Forum held on
Wednesday, 17th September 2014, The Grange, Bepton Road, Midhurst.

Attendance and Apologies (in italics):

Bepton Parish Council	<i>Apologies sent</i>
Cocking Parish Council	Attended: Cllr David Imlach
Easebourne Parish Council	Attended: Cllr Jose Galego
Elsted and Treyford Parish Council	Attended: Cllr Andrew Shaxson <i>Apologies – Cllr Andrew Leno, Chairman</i>
Fernhurst Parish Council	Attended: Cllr Heather Bicknell
Harting Parish Council	<i>Apologies sent</i>
Heyshott Parish Council	
Linch Parish Meeting	
Lodsworth Parish Council	Attended: Helen Cruikshank, Parish Clerk and Cllr Caroline Neville
Lynchmere Parish Council	<i>Apologies – Cllr Sylvia McCallum, Chairman and Cllr Sandie Moore</i>
Midhurst Town Council	Attended: Cllr Brendan Flynn
Milland Parish Council	Attended: Cllr Woodhams
Rogate Parish Council	
Stedham with Iping Parish Council	<i>Apologies sent</i>
Trotton with Chithurst Parish Council	
West Lavington Parish Council	Attended - Keith Elmy, Parish Clerk and Mike Thomas, Chairman
Woolbeding with Redford Parish Council	
Sussex Police	Attended - PCSO Craig Dunlop and PCSO Heidi Hay <i>Apologies - Police Sergeant Jon Chapman</i>
West Sussex County Council	
Chichester District Council	Attended: Cllr Heather Caird, Cllr Norma Graves, Steve Hansford, Sarah Peyman, Mike Boyce, Andrew Frost, Shona Turner <i>Apologies - Cllr Elizabeth Hamilton, Cllr John Cherry</i>

1. Introduction by the Chairman Andrew Shaxson opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
2. Tour of the Grange <i>Sarah Peyman and Mike Boyce, CDC</i> An extremely good guided tour of the Grange with all its new facilities, café, bar,

gym facilities and library followed with those attending the meeting that night being offered the opportunity of a temporary free pass to try out the facilities.

Sarah and Mike then gave a brief update on the building/project. Sarah explained that the project cost £8 million with funding coming from CDC and WSCC. The project had started on 4th September 2012, with the open day being held on 3rd March 2014. They are currently in the defects period and working with the builders and the Estates Team. There is also the potential development of the old site, which has not been agreed yet. Sussex Police will also be on site (with an extension to the north) and they will be submitting a planning application shortly. There will be many services under one roof.

Since the new Centre opened in March this year, it has been very successful, with gym membership increasing and the Centre itself being well received. The clientele is very diverse and represents every age group.

The Centre hosts a full programme – library, registrar, tourist information and CDC information which altogether adds up to a community hub. This room has hosted wedding receptions, (it has dividing walls). There are still a few issues with the car park which needs to be completed.

The Grange is well received and we are a community hub.
<http://www.chichester.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=21294>

3 Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Minutes of last meeting – 13th March 2014 – no minutes.

Matters arising –

Contact Fiona Baker, WSCC to find out what exactly it is they want Parishes to consider undertaking in partnership with them? It is still not clear. We have tried to co-ordinate, communicate with them. Perhaps bring up under future topics that we want a representative from WSCC and their community department to attend a future meeting? Steve Hansford to convey this to WSCC.

Lodsworth Parish Council were concerned that work undertaken by young offenders left some people vulnerable to crime. Parishioners were worried what type of offences the young offenders had committed. Would the Parish Council be responsible for so called, 'community' pay back? There are very strict rules as to who goes on this programme, all very carefully assessed. The young offenders did work in Tillington about 18 months ago with full supervision.

4. An Update from Sussex Police

PCSO Heidi Hay– Heidi.Hay@sussex.pnn.police.uk or
<http://www.sussex.police.uk/help-centre/your-local-district/Chichester/local-team/WC3NH21>

PCSO R Craig Dunlop - Robert.Dunlop@sussex.pnn.police.uk or
<http://www.sussex.police.uk/help-centre/your-local-district/chichester/local-team/WC3NH20>

Craig gave a general over-view. The area is still very safe, with low crime rates. Primarily, the problems they are dealing with are break-ins to cars at beauty stops

and outbuildings. Anti-social behaviour is non-existence, it is a very low crime area.

The main problem is the theft of expensive equipment that is kept in wooden sheds, so there is a need to tighten up security to prevent this. Report incidents to them on 101, (which often receives 2,500 calls a day in Sussex). If you think it is suspicious, don't hesitate, report it.

Heidi – Rogate/ Fernhurst

A problem in Fernhurst has been the congregating of youths in the centre of the village. Police now have regular patrols there. We have been covering this area for 10 -11years, so youth know us and we know them, no repetition of previous incidents and activity.

Opportunities and vulnerable vehicles. Vans are being broken into for tools which are left in them. Again, anything suspicious report it. If a crime is occurring, we need the call to go directly to the Police and urge people to call 999.

If there is a chance to note a number plate and if safe to do so, do so and call us. People think they are bothering us, they are not, we would rather a false alarm.

Telephone calls received are graded:

1. = 15 minutes response – crime to property, needs 999
2. = 1 hour response – a vehicle in the area is suspicious
3. = Couple of days response for a chat
4. = Information only, no further action

There is an intelligence log which is searchable and the information builds up, giving a clearer picture. Try to report information as soon as possible, we are around, if the call comes in and we are about, we can attend.

Questions?

Are we told what grade we are on when we call? Yes, reference number and grade.

Incidents of crime in urban areas, there is CCTV. It appears there is increase in crime in rural areas but rural crime needs cars. We build up information on reported cars which criminals know. Will the change of licensing to cars improve or make this worse? Too many people sell cars, the log is given to purchaser but car still in your name, the change in licensing should sort out this issue. If cars are reported, they become too hot to use, it's not perfect, too many untraceable cars out there.

Reports always go to Lewes Call centre – we are based on Chichester District – area and police station, 5 cars are out on any shift (this is a minimum requirement which is set by Government). If we are a bit short handed, we can ask Hampshire, Surrey or Horsham for assistance. The system is changing slightly to a no boundaries system, like the ambulance service.

Are you happy to come back to the meeting? Yes and happy to talk, please email but if it is important go through the call centre.

Sussex Police Website (<http://www.sussex.police.uk>)

5. Speeding Initiative – Cllr David Imlach - Cocking Parish Council

David gave a brief background to Cocking issues and pointed out that the settlement is either side of the A286, which suffers with speeding issues. The village which has many elderly people, is on one side of the main road with the shop, post office and church being on the other. There has also been a lot of recent

development, 20 new units – 40/50 more cars and a big development round by the church. The busy corner shop has no dedicated parking (well used by Easebourne) and many vehicles block lanes.

David then explained the issues they had encountered with regards to dealing with their speeding issues. These culminated in David contacting Ed Dickinson, WSCC about their problems, the outcome of which was that David attended the Making Sussex Safer seminar which was helpful.

In addition, at the All Parishes meeting held by CDC, there was a presentation on Operation Crackdown (<http://www.operationcrackdown.org/>) and David had the opportunity to discuss Cocking's speeding issues with the Chief Inspector, who again was very helpful.

With regards to 'yellow' signage - although the Parish Council have found suitable signage, they are unable to put this up and the Police are not allowed to do so. This is the responsibility of WSCC, Highways, it is their 'furniture' and they have to do that.

A question was asked whether Cocking had a pedestrian crossing? As it does not, was this something they had thought of? They had but there were not enough incidents recorded to justify this and there is the cost to be considered. Also in Highway's 'list' of incidents, Cocking are fairly well down it.

Craig also said that they had carried out a speed check in Cocking. Noting 100 cars, the average speed was 29mph. Recently in the Midhurst area, again, the average was 29. Another speed check was conducted in Cocking on 200 cars, with the speeds being between 26-32mph but they are happy to carry out further speed checks if required.

So things are being done and the message is become clearer.

David also wished to thank Diane Shepherd for being so helpful and Ed Dickinson and Fiona and other Officers from CDC.

6. Community Forums – the past, present and future - Steve Hansford, CDC

Steve began with a brief reminder of how and when the Community forums started (back in the 1990s, with the Rother Valley , Andrew Shaxson is an original member!). Steve then explained that the 'Community Forums' sit within his Team, the Communities Team.

The Community Forums have recently undergone a significant review, the outcome of which was to give the Parishes more opportunities and responsibility with action plans and funding. In June this year, a report went to Cabinet detailing how the Community Forums had worked over the past year within their new roles and it gave a mixed picture. Some Forums had taken hold of opportunities and some had felt it was too prescriptive.

The report also stated that the Community Forums were:

- A valued opportunity to discuss problems and identify problems.
- The element of the elected Member was also a real advantage (Andrew's role), as a voice to answer corporate issues and also Shona's role as co-ordinator and support.

- The frequency of meeting to be reduced – The All Parishes meeting has been increased to two a year. As this has now become the primary means of communicating information out to the Parishes, the Community Forum meetings could be interspersed between them, down to a minimum of 2 meetings a year and up to 4 with Officers present. If further meetings are required, this is something the Forum can decide itself.
- The 'hosting' parish is required to service meetings (ie venue and refreshments)

The Community Forums are important, they are a primary means of parishes to meet together, with CDC, WSCC and other agencies and Organisations, to identify common agendas. They are the forum to plan together common issues and take them forward, jointly or with support from this meeting. What do you want to make of this? It is your opportunity.

What are the current and topical issues affecting you and how can we help? We can bring solutions and expertise. It has been a rocky year for this Forum but with our commitment and support we can help shape and develop it.

7. Future topics

(Notes from the meeting held on 18th June 2013 – point 5)

1. Speed limits - problems of speeding (Bepton, Easebourne, Fernhurst Redford, Cocking, Stedham) improved safety measure on the A272
2. Infrastructure - including creating local employment, (Midhurst) supply of affordable housing, (Midhurst) improving youth facilities (Rogate), parking issues.
3. Maintenance – lack of re surfacing of roads, potholes, flooding, maintenance of verges and banks, grass cutting
4. Public transport – Advisory cycle route, public transport for young and old (Rogate, Fernhurst)

It was noted that four key areas of concern have previously been identified from your own parishes/areas.

Planning and speed limit issues have been covered, which leaves infrastructure, maintenance and public transport. Are they still areas you want to address or other things to add?

Where there are specific issues, dedicate a meeting to them. It is totally within your gift to do that. Invite the right person to the meeting, narrow the agenda topics, define the problem and we can look at finding a solution. New Homes Bonus (NHB) this year included a few projects regarding speed management. These types of projects would not be possible under the usual grant system but under the NHB system, if your community want to address it, then it could be possible.

Easebourne Parish Council had received an email regarding speeding on the A272. If the Parish Council paid a share towards this, WSCC would consider it. Highways have priorities for funding (by scoring) and are only able to do items on their priority list, using part funding. Is that fair? Why should the Parish Council be landed with cost? Should Highways be invited to a meeting?

Talking at the Community Forum is valuable, sharing experiences. NHB, we would have considered using it if we had known cost, etc., who can we go to for help?

We can jointly make a decision, parishes can precept for projects, CDC can help with bids/grants. This way parish owns democratic process and by working together, we can support it? Through CDC Officers we can unlock pathways. We must ensure we identify the questions and common issues? Parish Councils can write a business plan? Ask what are you spending money on? Neighbourhood Plans can be a mechanism to help to find out what the community wants to see?

We can invite Officers from WSCC and/or CDC, we need a clear agenda for the next Forum meeting. Identify what we want from them? Aim to establish a set of actions to come out of the meeting? Hopefully, that meeting will produce spin off topics. (A Parish commented that Operation Watershed was brilliantly organised)

8. Share Common Issues and Problems.

Re. future topics 4. Public transport – Fernhurst Parish Council identified their isolation and highlighted inabilities of returning home after 6pm by public transport. As this is a WSCC transport issue, it could be a discussion item for a future meeting?

9. Any other Business

- It was agreed that this Forum should meet twice yearly, alternating with the annual parish meetings.
- It was also felt, especially with the winter months approaching, that future meetings should be held 'centrally' and Midhurst was considered 'central' although a venue still needs to be found for the next meeting.
- The next meeting date was considered and it was decided that early November would be good, although this was subject to WSCC being able to attend.
- The meeting was invited to consider the post of chairman for the coming year. Andrew Shaxson was re-appointed as it was considered that continuity was important.

Date of Future Meeting – 2014

November – venue to be confirmed – Midhurst ? Date?