

RATTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL MEETING
RATTON SCHOOL, PARK AVENUE, EASTBOURNE

3.45 PM 24 FEBRUARY 2009

MINUTES

PRESENT:

David Tomlinson – Chairman
C.Councillor Michael Tunwell
Councillor Colin Belsey
Councillor Barbara Goodall
Councillor Carolyn Heaps – Old Town
David Linsell – Head Teacher Ratton School
PCSO Austin Milson
PC Keith Rockingham
Alf Pulfer – Neighbourhood Watch
John Crane – Park Lane Residents
David Lee – Rodmill Residents
Harry Stanley – Rodmill Residents
Darren Gunn – Park Lane Residents
Clyde Barnett – Park Lane Residents
Bez Kassebi – Park Lane Residents
Chris Da Silva – Ratton School
Chloe Deadman – Ratton School
Jill Tomlinson – Minutes

APOLOGIES

Councillor Sandie Howlett
Michael Marchant
John Harmer
Jan Newens
Sandy Boyce-Sharpe
Sgt. Fiona Munro
Charlotte Schram
Norman Russell
George Williams

CHAIRMAN – WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed John Crane and Bez Kassebi on behalf of Park Lane residents, Chris Da Silva and Chloe Deadman on behalf of Ratton School and Cllr. Carolyn Heaps as observer and Chair of Old Town Neighbourhood Panel.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes circulated and accepted.

MATTERS ARISING

Alf Pulfer confirmed that Neighbourhood Watch continues to grow in strength and he had been successful in identifying a Park Avenue resident to assist in delivery of Neighbourhood Watch material for Park Avenue and hopefully work to develop an active Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for the area.

Cllr. Goodall advised that she was still awaiting confirmation that a litter bin would be installed in Selmeston Road at the junction with Chalvington Road. No progress to date on repairing the damaged road sign at this junction.

Harry Stanley asked that it be recorded an excellent response had been forthcoming from Michael Marchant on behalf of EBC Enforcement to address fly tipping in Rangemore Drive after he raised the issue at the last meeting. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the Eastbourne Borough Council on behalf of the Panel expressing appreciation for the swift response.

VILLAGE GREEN STATUS

Cllr Belsey advised that there had been no progress on the proposal seeking Village Green status for Westlords but he would continue to press for a resolution at the earliest opportunity.

RODMILL – ALL DAY PARKING – PROGRESS REPORT.

Cllr Belsey was invited to outline to members the latest position on proposals for Control Orders to restrict all day parking in certain areas of Rodmill. He confirmed that the work was well advanced and it was anticipated that the consultation process would be under way before the date of the next Panel meeting when he anticipated being able to report in more detail. Cllr Belsey went on to outline action he had taken to ensure contractors responsible for road works in the area made good all damaged road surfaces and footpaths.

PARK LANE PETITION FOR FOOTPATH

The Chairman outlined the history associated with the proposal that had resulted in a petition calling on East Sussex County Council to provide a footpath in Park Lane. David Linsell reinforced the point that he had been asking the County Council to consider providing a footpath in Park Lane to reduce the danger for students and other pedestrians using Park Lane. He

went on to invite views from the two student representatives, Chris Da Silva and Chloe Deadman, who confirmed that they considered Park Lane to be dangerous as the result of a lack of a footpath. They gave examples of having been 'brushed' by motor vehicles on occasions when using the Lane. The Chairman then invited John Crane as a new member of the Panel and Park Lane resident to outline his views when he confirmed that he and a number of his fellow residents were against the proposal to provide a footpath since it would alter the character of the lane. He also pointed out that the lane was not wide enough to accommodate a footpath at its upper end and, at the lower end, the introduction of a footpath would require the children using it to cross the road twice. He also reinforced the point that a survey of the area should be undertaken before any decision was made.

Cllr. Tunwell reinforced views of certain residents that he had reported at previous meetings, saying why they considered Park Lane should remain in its present form. It was acknowledged by Panel members that there are issues requiring further consideration and it was hoped that a traffic survey for both Park Avenue and Park Lane would be undertaken by East Sussex County Council in due course to address this and many other traffic concerns for the area.

Cllr Tunwell advised on the protocol for presenting a petition to the Chairman of East Sussex County Council and confirmed that he would be delighted to present the petition on behalf of Ratton residents if that was what they wished. The Chairman confirmed that he would place the necessary arrangements in hand.

Results of the petition calling for a footpath in Park Lane are as follows:-

IN FAVOUR - 218
AGAINST - 9

It is important to emphasise that only residents of Park Lane and those residing in roads leading directly from Park Lane, together with those who regularly use the school entrance in Park Lane were invited to sign the petition.

COLD CALLING ZONE

As a result of other commitments, the representative from East Sussex County Council Trading Standards was unable to be present. Item deferred to next meeting for update and agreement. Harry Stanley advised that his review of Burton Road had confirmed that residents in that road are in favour of the establishment of a Cold Calling Zone. Cllr Belsey suggested that it might be appropriate to consider larger areas as cold calling zones than those suggested at the last meeting. For discussion at the next meeting.

RATTON CRIME UPDATE REPORT

Sussex Police provided reassuring evidence that criminal activity within the Ratton Ward remains as one of the lowest levels within the Borough of Eastbourne. Austin Milson outlined concerns that had been expressed over theft of milk from doorsteps although to date those responsible had not been traced.

RODMILL RETAIL CRIME INITIATIVE

Sussex Police confirmed that there had been a take up on proposed retail crime initiatives although much of the effort until now had focused on Hampden Park and Old Town where greater problems had been identified. It was confirmed that the Police, working with retailers, had achieved some early successes and the initiative would continue. Rodmill retailers will continue to be involved in any new initiatives put forward.

NEIGHBOURHOOD DISTRICT PANEL REPORT

The Chairman presented details of items discussed at the recent Neighbourhood District Panel meeting. He advised that funding was available for a range of community initiatives that Panel members might wish to consider. However, in the event of any failure to take up funding, the amount of funding available was likely to be reduced. Panel members were invited to consider suitable initiatives for consideration at a future Panel meeting.

The Chairman outlined details of the 'Community Pay Back scheme' and suggested there might be an opportunity for Panel members to consider suitable initiatives that could include small building work, painting, DIY, litter collection, general cleanup and community issues. Bids by the Panel should normally be made through the Chairman to the Sussex Police representative responsible for co-ordinating the scheme. David Linsell confirmed that the scheme had already been used successfully for work on school premises.

Panel members were advised that good progress is being made on the establishment of a total of 21 Neighbourhood Panels covering the whole area of the Borough of Eastbourne.

The Chairman advised Panel members that he had received a general message to all Panels from the local Police Commander Chief Inspector Dick Coates seeking to clarify the role of Neighbourhood Panels. In his message

Chief Inspector Coates reinforced his view that Neighbourhood Panels should be Chaired by local members of the community and be a true reflection of the issues local people want addressed. They must not be used at any time as a political tool or be influenced by local statutory bodies.

It was agreed that the Ratton Neighbourhood Panel continues to function as a lobby group seeking to put forward as appropriate, the views and concerns of residents primarily to local Councillors and the Police. The Chairman confirmed that at no time had there ever been any hint or suggestion that the Ratton Panel has been subjected to political influence and he believed the issue had arisen as a result of an incident in another part of the town.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

John Crane sought clarification on the legal position for motor vehicles parking on grass verges adjoining roads. The current position was outlined by Cllr Tunwell and Police representatives.

Cllr Belsey advised that he was currently engaged in discussion over concerns about the unsatisfactory condition of the road surface in Babylon Way at the junction with Parkway. It was thought the problem may be the result of a damaged sewer and he would continue to seek a resolution on the problem.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21 April 2009, Ratton School at 3.45 pm.