

Minutes of the Ratton & Rodmill Joint Neighbourhood Panel
held on 15th December 2009 at Ratton School

The Chairman welcomed those present and thanked them for their attendance.

Cllr. Mrs. Barbara Goodall agreed to take the Minutes

Present: Michael Tunwell, (Chairman & Dene Drive resident), C/Cllr. Colin Belsey, (ESCC, EBC & Kings Drive resident), Cllr. Barbara Goodall, (EBC), Cllr. Sandie Howlett, (EBC), Mrs. Sandy Boyce-Sharpe, (Friends of Hampden Park & Ratton resident); Sgt. Fiona Munro, (Sussex Police), Michael Marchant, (EBC Community Enforcement Officer), David Lee (Selmeston Road resident) Clyde Barrett & Darren Gunn (Park Lane residents), Mrs. Anne Wardle, (Acting Headteacher), Tyler Chambers (Student from Ratton School)

Apologies: Alf Pulfer, (Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator); John Crane, (Deputy Chairman & Park Lane Resident), Mr John Harmer, (Eastbourne Hospital Trust), Mr. Harry Stanley, (Rangemore Drive resident), PC Keith Rockingham, PCSO Austin Milson, (from Sussex Police.), Mr. David Linsell (Headteacher); Mrs. Tracy Comfort, (School Business Manager), Mr David Wilkins, Park Avenue resident. & Mrs Pat Fursdon, Ratton Drive resident.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was agreed that the Minutes were a correct record.

Matters arising not covered by the Agenda

Chairman reported on a meeting with Graham Kemp (Highways), C.Cllr. Belsey and Darren Gunn in order to note the problems faced by wheelchair users. They had walked along Park Lane and it was suggested that the Kings Drive end could be built out to form a nib, which would enable a safer dropped kerb access route to make it easier for wheelchair users to enter/exit. Mr. Kemp also suggested that ESCC should consider safer access ramps for wheelchairs at 19 Park Lane. Other highway maintenance requirements were noted for future action.

Neighbourhood Watch

The Chairman presented a report submitted by Mr. Alf Pulfer, who was unable to attend due to a bad cold. A number of new schemes have been secured in Ratton since our last meeting. Old Mansion Close – 20 homes & 1 co-ordinator; Eridge Road – 70 homes & 2 co-ordinators; Linkway – 7 homes & 1 co-ordinator; Kings Drive – 109 homes & 3 co-ordinators; St. Clements Court – 45 flats & 1 co-ordinator; Meadowlands Avenue – 93 homes & 1 co-ordinator (this was a small scheme increased from 12 to 105 homes).

Total new homes = 344 and 9 new co-ordinators. This increases the total number of homes covered by Neighbourhood Watch in Ratton to 1,738 and the number of schemes to 56. New recruitment has been put on hold now until 2010. The Panel recorded their thanks and congratulations to Alf Pulfer on his magnificent efforts.

Cold Calling

Mrs Fursden was not present to report on Old Ratton Residents Assoc., but Committee were informed they do not meet very often. Regarding Rodmill, C.Cllr. Belsey reported that he had spoken with Trading Standards about who sponsors the signs etc., only to be told that County do not pay for this any more. He would personally check with County and Sgt. Munro would also make enquiries.

Traffic Management

The new scheme at Willingdon Road junction with Victoria Drive and Park Avenue – reports that some drivers were misusing the cycle only area and then cutting in. C.Cllr. Belsey had e-mailed PC Rockingham asking if this could be monitored. Maybe some publicity in the Herald about this new style of road marking would help.

Further calls for the speed limit on Willingdon Road to be reduced from 40 mph to 30 mph, brought the suggestion that, following the two accidents involving Ratton pupils, the school could initiate their own petition, (Acting Head would organise this), but would need back-up from (Traffic) Police for this to be effective.

Police Reports & Crime Figures

For November the figures were: - 35 reported crimes (11 less than corresponding period), no burglaries, 3 vehicle thefts (top end of Willingdon Trees); 6 damage to vehicles (4 within Sussex Downs College), majority of violent offences happened at Hospital. Ratton figures are distorted by incidents at the College and Hospital.

Street Meetings Up-Date

PCSO Austin Milson was not present but Sgt. Munro said he had organised two meetings, - Twineham Road (1 resident attended where parking was the issue) and Eridge Road where there were no issues.

Further Meetings are planned for 5th January 2010 in Old Mansion Close at 2:00 p.m., and on 25th January 2010 in The Grove, Ratton at 2:00 p.m. On 11th February 2010 in Wrestwood Avenue at junction with Dene Drive at 2:00 p.m. and 2:45 p.m.

District Panel

The Chairman and Sgt. Fiona Munro gave a report of the District Panel Meeting held on Monday 30th November 2009 at Hammonds Drive Patrol Centre. It was reported that the members were introduced to the new Inspector, Rachel Barrow. The number of meetings has been reduced to 4 per year and scheduled for 1st February, 3rd May, 2nd August and 1st November 2010. Inspector Barrow was aware that there had been suggestions that there were too many Panels and promised to review this issue. An Action Sheet was presented detailing the measures taken by Police and PCSOs to deal with the problems raised by the local Panels. Neighbourhood Watch progress was also reported. In answer to a question as to why our Minutes were not on the Website, Sgt. Munro would investigate

Rodmill Issues Up-date;

David Lee had several concerns to report. The proposed residential development of 5 houses on land at the rear of Rangemore Drive (18/34) . There was a lack of suitable access and would lead to greater pressure on parking in Rangemore Drive. C/Cllr. Belsey said this was most probably going to Planning Committee in January 2010.

A hole in the road outside 134 Selmeston Road, had been reported by Michael Marchant. Highways had said it was not a priority, but it was getting worse. Michael Marchant would check up. The bus stop sign outside 88 Selmeston Road is still missing (not the responsibility of Stagecoach). There was an incident of a bus driver not being able to turn into Rangemore Drive due to parking obstructions and dropped his passengers by the hospital. Charity type bags are being delivered in the area (although not by a Registered Charity). Mr. Lee had reported this to Trading Standards and subsequently they were never collected. Michael Marchant reported that if bags are not collected on the date shown on the bag it would constitute littering of the public highway and he would issue warnings to any company responsible. Unlicensed vehicles on the highway are also a concern. Sgt. Munro/Michael Marchant should be notified of details.

Ratton Issues Up-date:

New trees have been planted in various locations through the Councillors Devolved Budget.

Answering comments about littering by Ratton pupils, Acting Headteacher, Mrs. Anne Wardle said the School do their best to ask students to be tidy when in the local area, and they do have regular patrols out, but cannot be everywhere. School does try to respond to any complaints, but off School premises children are the responsibility of their parents.

Any other business.

Mrs. Sandy Boyce-Sharpe invited any member of the Ratton Panel, as her guest, to attend the Hampden Park Panel on 26th January 2010 at 10:00 a.m., (held in the Railway Club, Station Approach) when a local Magistrate, Mrs Ann Thow JP, would be the Guest Speaker.

Sgt. Munro reported that a Street Meeting would be held at 3.00 p.m. on 17th December. at corner of Hazelwood Avenue/Poplar Walk, following the recent fire at 70 Hazelwood Avenue, The Fire & Rescue Service would attend.

Reported that 1 Selsfield Close, house/garden is in a dreadful state – Michael Marchant offered to have a look.

In answer to a question `is it illegal to park on cycle lanes`, the answer is `no if they are `Advisory white lined`. Michael Marchant is currently looking into some local By-Laws to see if they could be brought back into use to deal with motorists who park on pavements and grass verges.

Dates of next meetings

Agreed as: Tues. 23rd February 2010 at 4:00 pm and
 Tues. 20th April 2010 at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 5.20 pm.