

MEADS NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd June 2010

PRESENT: Kevin Mannall (KM) University of Brighton, Fred Lewis (FL), Barry Ayres (BA), John Regan (JR), Valerie Blaxland (VB), Roger Stiggers (RS), Michael Blackmur (MB), PC Lisa Cousins (LC) Sussex Police, PCSO Dave Smith (DS) Sussex Police, Marie Lindwood (ML), Andrew Keeffe (AK) University of Brighton, Fiona Towse (FT), Diana Oosterveld (DO), Bob Jameson (BJ), David Heath (DH), Jane Elkin-Wood (JEW), EBC Cllr Barry Taylor (BT), Simon Evers (SE), Roy Peacock (RP) Chairman, Lionel Lacey-Johnson (LLJ) Secretary

In attendance: Judy Hendriks (JH), Susan Foster (SF), Jackie Carter (JC), Don Foster

APOLOGIES; Sgt Gareth Evans, PC Donna Bagguley, Sue Enfield, Tricia Sneath, Andrew Dakyns, Ian McKirgan, EBC Cllrs David Elkin and Nigel Goodyear, Derek Scott, Mark Weston, Nick Bevington

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.05 pm by welcoming all present and recording the apologies. He then invited all present to introduce themselves.

1. **Minutes of the meeting on the 7th April 2010.** These had been circulated beforehand; there were no comments and they were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2. **Action on the MAIN ISSUES**

2.1 University of Brighton. LC reported that the Police had again been very active in trying to minimize the problems of antisocial behaviour amongst students. And that notices warning of the existence of plain clothes officers patrolling the area had been posted in the Naomi Close and Carlisle Road areas.

RP asked if anyone had any further issues about bad behavior by students. JEW recounted an incident in Carlisle Road when 20 or so students had spilled out onto the road from the Welkin site and were making a lot of noise; on complaining one of the students stepped forward to apologise on behalf of his companions and took it upon himself to persuade them to be quieter and to return to their hall. JEW took this incident as an indication that perhaps the messages on bad behavior had at last been noted and that a more responsible attitude was developing amongst, at least, the present intake. Another minor incident involving students getting off the bus near the entrance to the Ascham estate had lead to talk amongst the Residents Association of having gates installed at that location.

RP reminded the meeting that the International students will be arriving shortly. AK has arranged for a meeting to take place on the 2nd July between reps from the University, the Police and leaders of the various International groups in order to, hopefully, avert a repetition of the problems experienced last summer. KM confirmed that the agenda for this meeting will be announced nearer the date of the meeting.

SF complained of rubbish, particularly food packaging, left behind by students in the Denton Road and The Dentons area. RP said that this subject had been discussed at a previous meeting and KM confirmed that there were litter bins available at the Sports Hall and Hillbrow sites; he added that the installation of extra bins by the Council was not something in which the University could become involved. RP mentioned a similar problem at the Darley Road site, KM said that he thought this was not necessarily associated with the students because they had a very good restaurant there and as such there was no need for them to buy in food. However, RS said that this situation did not apply to the weekends. KM added that he had a very good working relationship with the Community Enforcement team. BT explained that as far as the Council; was concerned there were two separate contracts

involved, one for street cleaning the other for rubbish collection. The discussion ended with RP asking BT if he could look into the possibility of the Council providing more litter bins at both Hillbrow and the Darley Road sites. **ACTION BT**

Having asked, and not receiving any more comments relating to the University, RP thanked the two representatives KM and AK and they then left the meeting.

2.2 Traffic. Speeding and Parking.

Speeding. RP started by saying that this problem had again been raised at the last Town Panel Meeting; it appeared to be a general complaint throughout Eastbourne. SF spoke of speeding down the Beachy Head road and asked if signs could be erected. RP mentioned that 30mph signs exist but had been moved a little way eastwards. It had proved impossible to have the signs placed where an earlier Panel meeting proposed they need to be, because of the requirement for such signs to be a certain distance from the nearest street lighting. He added that speed checks had been carried out on several occasions but with the re-siting of the signs, he had been told that the curve of the road now made the task most difficult. The possibility of installing speed humps was briefly discussed but discounted but DH asked if flashing 30mph signs, as seen on some roads throughout the County, might be used. This idea was widely acclaimed as a possible answer. After further discussion on ways of reducing incidents of speeding RP said that at a recent Neighbourhood Watch Federation Meeting the Police had reminded people that, in order to achieve a conviction, it was always necessary to have firm evidence and accurate reports containing dates/times, location and descriptions of the vehicle involved including registration, or even partial registration details. RP further reminded this meeting of the provisions of **Operation Crackdown**, the number to call being on the list of important telephone numbers recently issued by this Panel. LLJ handed out a few extra copies of the list and read out the number for all to note. In reply to a question about the expansion of the "Speedwatch" scheme operating in Ringmer, RP said that the Police would like to extend that scheme to other areas and to install more flashing signs but shortage of funds was preventing this. The use of speed cameras was raised again and several members asked why these were nearly always accompanied by warning notices. RP said that there was a legal requirement for this. The discussion ended with RP agreeing to further discuss possible solutions outside this meeting with BT and at the next District Panel Meeting. **ACTION RP and BT**

Parking. BJ opened this subject by telling the Panel that a meeting had taken place at St Bedes School to discuss the movement of traffic in that area and it had been proposed that Cliff Road should become a one way road, with entrance only from the junction with Meads Street. The necessity and advantages of such a scheme being that it would prevent cars coming at speed from the wider King Edwards Parade into Cliff Road which normally has cars parked on both sides leaving a very narrow centre lane, thus causing a potential accident involving cars exiting Dolphin Court garages and pedestrians crossing by the junction with Meads Street. LC said she was already in contact with Mr Weston the chief Highways engineer over the proposal. **ACTION LC**

BJ continued by saying that parents picking up or dropping off their children at St Bedes were often parking on the double yellow lines in the area in the mistaken impression that it legal to do so when attending to their children, LC said that providing they were still in their cars and did not exceed a 10 minute period of grace the Police and traffic wardens did in fact show some leniency in this respect.

MB changed the subject by reporting that an old green Jaguar car had been parked for some time close to the junction of Carlisle and Salisbury roads and asked about the legal

distance that cars were required to be parked from a junction. RP said that if any vehicle was parked in a manner likely to cause a danger, for example obstructing another driver's or pedestrian's view of the road, it normally resulted in the Police contacting the owner who would be asked to move to a safer location.

LLJ drew attention to the notice in the local paper giving the times and dates of the surgeries being run by the Council on the proposed changes to Parking in Eastbourne. The Meads surgery is to be held on the 19th June in St John's Hall between 10am and 4pm.

RP ended the discussion on parking by reminding all once again of the value of Operation Crackdown and of calling the NCP who now have a mobile unit capable of responding very quickly and dealing with bad parking on yellow lines and/or causing problems.

2.3. Helen Gardens. LC indicated that things had been relatively quieter in the gardens. BJ reported that he thought that the problem of light pollution from the security lighting on St Bedes School might soon be resolved as he had been in contact with a rather more responsive representative from the school who had shown surprise at the number of lights in use and the times that they were left on. RP had spoken to PC Scott Franklin-Lester recently who had also confirmed that there had been few problems with the gardens of late. BJ, while also confirming a better situation in the gardens, drew attention to the fact that two young men on motor cycles were still a cause for concern one consistently rode in an irresponsible manner, on the pavement and without a helmet. BJ also thought that there could be a link to the break-in to the garages at Dolphin Court. **ACTION LC**

3. Update on other issues

3.1 Overgrown trees/shrubs. One incident had been dealt with by DS and there had been no further complaints.

3.2 Cycling on pavements. RP said that this issue had been discussed again at the recent Town Panel meeting at which it became clear that this was still of serious concern to residents. The Police had asked that incidents should be reported as accurately as possible giving details of location, timings and descriptions.

3.3. Horses on footpaths. JH was at the meeting in order to explain and defend the riding on pavements by herself and her co-rider SF. She gave as the main reasons for taking to the pavement as follows -1. Oncoming vehicles in the middle of the road. 2. Parked cars preventing quick access to the side of the road, 3. Abuse from some drivers for being on the highway, 4. Noisy vehicles passing too close and "spooking" the horse.

During the course of some fairly heated exchanges between JH and SF and several members of the Panel, the riders were frequently asked why they felt it necessary to ride about the town when they had easy access to the Downs. SF replied in answer that the downs were full of rabbit holes into which the horse might tread and possibly break a leg. After acknowledging the fact that they knew the Highway Code said that horses should not be ridden on the pavement the riders said that they found the roads very dangerous. This prompted LLJ to say that he thought they had made a poor risk assessment as regards roads vis a vis holes on the Downs and that as a keen walker he had observed many places on the Downs, particularly in the area of Black Robin and Bullock Down Farms, where there are very good horse rides and that rabbit burrows, as opposed to rabbit scrapes which are not harmful, are generally confined to the edges of the scrub.

During the debate SF and JH said that; neither had ever caused a pedestrian to vacate a pavement in favour of the horse and no danger or accident involving a pedestrian has been

cited, the surface of roads is infinitely preferable for a horse than the often slippery and uneven surface of pavements and that many local residents regularly express their joy at seeing a horse and rider in the village and other quieter areas of Upper and Lower Meads. No answer was given to the point about riding around the town rather than the downs.

Ending the discussion, RP reminded the riders of the value of Operation Crackdown in reporting anti social driving.

3.4 Camper Vans. RP said he had received no further complaints and DS confirmed that those vans that he had checked were properly taxed and were not causing any obstruction.

3.5 No 1 Meads Street. There has been no change as yet but RP confirmed that tenders were still under consideration for the necessary repair work to the forecourt. There is also a possibility that the proposal to install bollards here might be extended to include other parts in the area in after the repair work has been completed. RP gained the backing of the Panel to formally propose this idea. **ACTION RP**

3.6. Google. The problem of not being able to delete some images, mentioned by BJ at the last meeting, has been resolved.

3.7 Dog Fouling. RP began the discussion by saying that this is still a major issue across Eastbourne. JR while mentioning the success of the recent campaign in Hampden Park asked why more action was not being taken in other parts of the town to impose fines on the offending owners. LC spoke in support of Sue Criddle, the Dog Warden, who has to cover the whole of Eastbourne. LC praised the efforts of the Dog Warden who had reacted vigorously to the priority concerns of the Seaside Panel but in spite of issuing many tickets to the offending owners, had been up against a very poor social attitude in that area and many of the warnings had been ignored. RP once again stressed the importance of accurate information in reporting any unsocial incident and reminded the meeting that the telephone number of the Dog Warden was included in the recently issued list of numbers.

3.8. Pavements. JR spoke of problems in Carlisle, Meads and Silverdale roads where lorries, involved in construction work, had almost destroyed the pavements and verges; he asked why no action was ever taken against the developers who did not pay for the repairs to pavements. RP reminded the meeting that he had had a meeting with Mr Stevens of the Highways Department at which Mr Stevens had said that he would welcome any reports from members of the public about pavements and roads in a poor state of repair. RS said that the real issue is that some planning permissions are being given without the inclusion of a clause requiring the contractors to reinstate pavement damaged in the course of the work, further, in cases where the reinstatement clause had been included, the Council are failing to carry out an inspection to make sure that the necessary action has been taken. ML and others agreed with this view and RP said that he would raise this matter next week at the special Town Panel meeting arrange with Mr Stevens. **ACTION RP**

3.9 All Saints. There has been no change in the situation whereby the developers will not open the open space to the public until 75 units have been sold.

4. Identification of other issues.

4.1 Passageway off Dalton Road. RP and LLJ said that the problem of rubbish in the passageway running around the back of the Westminster Bank had re-emerged. RP had called the cleansing department and LLJ had called the Enforcement Office; there had been a quick response and the rubbish was soon cleared. Environment and Cleansing Departments were trying to identify the perpetrators. Any information as to who is responsible should be given to the Enforcement Office

4.2 Lighting in Coltstocks Road. RP reported that this has now been installed thanks to ESCC Highways Lighting, the Police/CRP, the Meads Ward Councillors and EDF.

4.3 Bus Stop in Silverdale Road. As a result of concern by residents using the Bus Stop near to Collington Close the road has now been suitably marked out making it safer to enter or exit a bus.

4.4 Seagulls. MB reported he had received several complaints about someone feeding seagulls very early in the morning, thus creating more noise than usual at an unsocial hour. He asked what the law is. LC said that any excessive noise could be reported to the Office of Environmental Health. LLJ asked if there was an Eastbourne Bye-Law preventing the feeding of the gulls; DS said that he thought there was but that this only applied to parts of the seafront.

4.5 Garage Break-ins. RP spoke of several incidents whereby blocks of garages in the Meads area had been targeted by thieves, the places most affected were Rowsley Road, Kepplestone, Milchester Court and Dolphin Court... BJ thought the incident at Dolphin Court might be connected with the young men on motor cycles of whom he had spoken earlier but LC said that the descriptions given in both incidents did not match. Articles stolen recently included fishing gear and in an earlier case only one bottle of water from a pack of six.

4.6 Dangerous dogs. JR said that dogs involved in the incident in Saffrons Park last December have been seen in the area again but that there had been no repetition of attacks on residents.

4.7 Seating Bench. BT said that a bench had recently been installed at the top of Granville Hill after requests from residents.

5. Agreement on the three priority issues. It was agreed that the priorities should be:-

The University of Brighton, Traffic for the Police and now Litter.

6. Meads Website. RP called attention to the fact that the minutes of our meetings are now being posted on the Meads Website.

7. District Panel Meetings. RP said that the next District Panel was due to meet on the 14th June 2010. Unfortunately he would not be able to attend and called for a volunteer to act on behalf of this Panel. Failing anyone coming forward he would be handing in the main points that have emerged from this meeting. **(Sec's Note: LL-J to attend)**

8. Panel Membership,

BJ said that Mr Charles Palmer, Chairman of Dolphin Court Residents Assn, had shown a willingness to attend, otherwise membership will remain the same.

9. Meeting frequency and date of the next meeting. It was agreed that a two monthly interval is satisfactory and the **date of the next meeting was set for the 4th August 2010. Hopefully the venue will remain the same but this will be confirmed at a later date.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55 pm.