

MEADS NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held 2nd February 2011

PRESENT : Roy Peacock Chairman (RP), Jane Ekin-Wood Secretary (JE-W), PC Lisa Cousins Sussex Police (LC), PCSO Dave Smith Sussex Police (DS), Andrew Keefe University of Brighton (AK), Terry Preston Students Union, University of Brighton (TP) Cllr Barry Taylor EBC (BT), Cllr Nigel Goodyear EBC, Michael Marchant EBC Enforcement (MM) Lionel Lacey-Johnson, (LL-J) Stephen Ekin-Wood (SE-W), John Regan (JR), Bob Jameson (BJ), David Heath (DH), Valerie Blaxland (VB), Marie Linwood (ML), Ewen Summers (ES), Barry Ayres (BA), Ian McKirgan (IM), T Darrell (TD).

The meeting opened at 7pm with the Chairman welcoming all and announcing the following Apologies:

APOLOGIES : Roger Stiggers, Andrew Dakins, Freddie Lewis, Diana Oosterveld, Michael Blackmur

Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th December 2010

These had been circulated previously and were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

2. Action on Main Issues

2.1 Brighton University

A copy of the conditions of study and residence issued by the University to students on arrival had been provided by AK after the December meeting. These documents are based on a 1996 Government document, personalised by Brighton University. A part deals with anti-social behaviour and being a good neighbour. The documents were reviewed by RP and IM and they feel that there is room for improvement in the document. The Chairman invited IM to report on their assessment of the documents. IM said that they felt there was a need for the University to review this document, as it does not say how students who behave anti-socially in say, Eastbourne town, will be dealt with. As the University accredits the students as Adults it therefore limits to the course of action that can be applied. AK replied that all new students sign a Code of Conduct, part of which includes a clause about not bringing the University into disrepute, but he agreed that this particular issue should be highlighted.

RP referred to a recent court case in Brighton involving five university students living in a semi-detached house causing noise problems to their next door neighbour. They were served with an anti-social behaviour order, which was ignored, and they were taken back before the court and each fined £850.00. RP stated that he would like to see what action the University now takes against these students as they would have signed the Code of Conduct when they first entered the University. AK pointed out that the allegations made by the neighbour on television recently that the anti-social behaviour had not stopped, had yet to be proved. RP stated that this anti-social noise problem had spread across Eastbourne and also applied to houses with multiple student occupation. AK summarised that the meeting would like in addition to the Code of Conduct document being updated, the outcome of Brighton University's disciplinary action towards the Brighton students. **ACTION : AK**

AK brought the meeting up to date regarding a designated smoking area outside the University buildings, as had been requested by ES. AK and ES had met with Nicola Witnall, Estates Manager for the University to discuss this problem in the morning. They viewed the possible site for the smoking area and Nicola confirmed that this would not be possible because of economic and Health and Safety matters. It was however, mentioned to ES and AK that posters could be placed around the entrance

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requesting people not to smoke there. ES voiced his frustration at the frequency with which Health and Safety is raised as an excuse for something not being done. AK mentioned that these issues, (not his!) involved students having to walk across the grass and they might slip. TP enquired as to where the smoking sites would be, and AK replied, various sites. TP informed the meeting that students were not allowed to smoke on the campus and so the students go outside the boundary to smoke. He did not think that they would use any special facilities. Answering BT, AK confirmed that smoking is not permitted on campus but thought that it was permitted in the grounds. AK added that the Estates Facilities Management had said that there was no budget for any more anti-smoking publicity.

AK also raised the subject of smoking pouches which were introduced to the previous meeting by MM. Following on from the litter issue AK passed the information about pouches on to Sam, the President of the student body. TP had not heard anything about these, and MM explained to him how these work. MM also pointed out that the students could be fined £75.00 for dropping cigarette stubs. TP did not think that the students were aware of this. MM offered to supply the University with the relevant posters and literature, warning of the health risks. MM asked whether AK had thought of inviting the Department of Health into the University to give students advice, as they would do this free of charge. AK thought that it was the sort of issue that the University would be interested in addressing.

ACTION : MM, TP and AK

MM said that SITA report back to EBC on the amount of litter left in a particular area and the cost of cleaning it up is assessed. BT queried as to whether there is CCTV present at the Denton Road entrance, LC replied that a sign would have to be present if it were. ES challenged AK's claim that there are designated smoking areas as he says that nobody knows where they are. He has looked at an area identified but has found that the signs to it read "staff only". AK conceded that the signs are badly worded. BT suggested that the pouches could have a minimum charge of 10p each, which would help to offset the costs. MM told the meeting that his department is trying to get clubs and pubs to sell the pouches, in order to stop the public littering streets with discarded cigarette ends but they are not finding it easy. TP re-iterated that the risk of a fine for dropping litter would have the most effect on the students.

2.2 Traffic, Speeding and Parking

AK mentioned concerns were raised at the last meeting about students' car parking. Posters have gone up around the refectory and certain areas reminding students and visitors to the University about considerate parking,

LL-J told the meeting that he had asked the Highways Department to put a single yellow line down one side of the road in Gaudick Close in 2009 and again in 2010. Cars are being parked here and sometimes partly on the pavement causing difficulties to wheelchair users and pedestrians forcing them on to the road. On [many occasions](#) the Police had to be called. This problem was particularly dangerous during the recent snowy conditions, and the same situation also applies to Beachy Head Road. LL-J chased Highways on this again recently and received another letter from Victoria Mackell stating that this would be looked at. He also said that as it stands it is impossible to get their [wheelchairs](#) along the pavement and a fire engine would not be able to get down the the Close. NG stated that this issue was part of a much wider consideration regarding parking matters across Eastbourne and unlikely to be dealt with until after May. BT reminded the meeting that the "Residents Only" parking signs were removed as they were illegal, and that he thought that the residents of Gaudick Road would welcome such parking. LL-J feels that it requires a single yellow line with a time restriction during Monday to Friday. JE-W pointed out that St Vincents Place had such single yellow lines and they appeared to be no problems. RP pointed out that there are various parking issues across Meads, but the reasons for this discussion is because it is Brighton University students that are

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causing the problems in Gaudick Close and Beachy Head Road. DS confirmed that he had issued parking tickets to some offenders.

ES informed the meeting that he had a conversation with a Police Officer who said that parking on the pavement had largely been ignored by the Home office but that if you crossed a double yellow line to park on a pavement then it would be the same as parking on double yellow lines. He asked LC and DS what evidence is required to bring about a prosecution. DS replied that if it is a dangerous obstruction it can be removed but if it is an obstruction on a grass verge he cannot issue a ticket. ES asked if he took a photograph could the Police issue a ticket. DS replied that the Police have to see the offending vehicle themselves. RP said that this is a nationwide problem but did not know what could be done about it in Eastbourne. LC replied that this is a perfect example of use of **Operation Crackdown** whereby if residents supply them with dates and times, persistent offenders can be targeted. DS stated that he had ticketed various offenders in the Meads area. LC gave assurance to the meeting that if the Police were presented with the evidence action will be taken. NG reminded the meeting that the yellow line system within the Borough is now decriminalised and the responsibility falls to the Parking wardens. RP had been contacted by a resident of Dalton Road where a car had been left for a long time and caused a problem with tree cutting. Again, this Road and Matlock Road would often present a problem for fire engine access due to parked vehicles.

Answering RP, LC said there had been only one report of noise from the students. As a result LC had looked at the Welkin Halls security tapes and one student with eight visitors from London, was spoken to and reprimanded. Otherwise there were no other reports of trouble. LC thanked TP for posting notices on Facebook or similar; this was endorsed by the meeting.

TD thanked LC and DS for the action taken over a drug dealing problem in Naomi Close. As a result a metal fence has been erected behind the garages which will stop the problem from occurring again. LC instigated a round of applause from the meeting for TD who was instrumental in interrupting a drugs operation, called the Police and this resulted in a prosecution by the Police.

LC then gave the meeting an update on **Operation Irontrack**. The Police swab all communal areas to see what, if any, drugs are being used and it enables the Police to keep an eye on the situation.

Before concluding the discussion on items affecting Brighton University, TP explained to the meeting that the Student Union would be conducting various events around the town to raise money for charities. Last year they raised £9,000 distributed between The Childrens Cancer Fund in Polegate, Alzheimers Society, and the Crossroads Carer Society. This year the recipients will be Age Concern Eastbourne, Demelza Childrens Hospice, Cancer UK and The Dispraxia Foundation.

LL-J thanked AK for help with posters, and AK replied that he understood residents concerns about various issues, but that by having these meetings it has helped to improve the situation. AK and TP then left the meeting.

RP reported on an E-mail from a resident in Cranborne Avenue about tradesmens' vehicles causing damage to verges and added that this was also a problem around St Andrews school in Darley Road. DS had followed up on RP's report about a particular vehicle and this was no longer causing a problem. RP then stated that this approach to parking is a problem all over the town and is causing widespread damage. MM said that this must be reported to the EBC so that action can be taken. IMcK suggested that the company to which the vehicle belonged should be informed. BT commented that a vehicle working at Breeze, Grand Hotel Buildings, had been seen driving down the pavement and parking. RP reported a vehicle overtaking him when he was doing just under 30 MPH down Beachy Head Road and IMcK asked, if reported to the Police, would they be spoken to? LC responded that

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they would be. RP reported that he and a PC had witnessed a speeding car outside the Town Hall one evening; the PC managed to get the number and he followed up with the driver the next day.

BT told the meeting about an incident where a child was nearly knocked down outside the Ship Inn in Meads Village. There is an exceptionally low pavement outside the pub and he asked that it be recorded by the meeting that he had raised this issue with the Highways Dept. BT suggested that as bollards cannot be placed there it may be possible to raise the pavement. RP reported that Darley Road had been tidied up with bollards, but that most of the bollards outside St Andrews school have now been damaged.

LC asked that residents be aware of a recent spate of thefts from cars in the Meads area, particularly SatNavs; it is occurring at all times of the day, mobile 'phones etc are all being targeted. JE-W told the meeting that she uses a SatNav mat on the dashboard which can be put in the car boot when the car is left and does not leave a tell tale ring on the windscreen. LC reminded car owners of the importance of not leaving things on display whilst their cars are parked.

2.3 Cycling on pavements including the promenade

RP asked NG and BT whether there had been an update on cycling on the pavements.

BT replied that the latest information was that EBC is asking that approval be given by the County Council for a cycle track to be put from the Kiosk near St Bedes School down to the Wish Tower, on the pavement; the Seafront Cycle Scheme. This is riding on the back of another scheme, the Horsey Cycle Route in another area of the town. There has been a public consultation at the Town Hall and a school near St Phillips Avenue. Approx 80% of the people attending the meeting were in favour of this scheme. The cycle track would be on the pavement outside the entrance to St Bedes School. The entire hedge at Helen Gardens would be removed and re-planted and the path widened by three metres. BT said that the hedge would take up to 20 years to re-grow to the existing height. Matthew Lock, CEO of the County Council queried as to why it was being brought before the County Council when it should be brought before the EBC. He approved the proposed Horsey Cycle Route but at BT's request left the Meads Seafront Cycle Scheme until after another public consultation.

BT also said that the St. Bedes' Headmaster approves of the scheme, but when BT approached several parents at the school, they did not know anything about it; neither did other members of the public in the area. He also mentioned that it will cost in the region of £100,000 to set up. BT also asked the county officers whether Dukes Drive and King Edwards Parade are particularly dangerous for cyclists, and they do not think so. He invited Matthew Lock to visit the area, and having done so, he did not think it was a good idea. IMcK asked who would be responsible if there was an accident and it was generally thought the council would be. BT replied that it must be dual use, but BJ agreed with Barry that it was a bad idea, and suggested a 20MPH limit for that stretch of road. NG also said that having seen the congestion on the pavement at certain times of the day, the scheme would be untenable. Lastly, BT said that the consultation has now been taken away from EBC and the decision will be taken by County Hall. BT feels that is unfortunate, and that the local residents will now have no input into the decision.

A general discussion ensued about cyclists speeding along the lower promenade, and the problems with enforcing the ban already existing.

3. Update on other issues already raised;

3.1 Overgrown shrubs, hedges and trees

RP reported he was approached by residents in The Dentons about overgrowth and as a consequence poor lighting and a harbour for litter. Although cut back of some overgrown shrubbery

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had been done, since the students had returned after their Christmas break more litter had been evident. MM apologised for having forgotten to action the installation of a litter bin and this will now be done. IMcK mentioned that he thought it was a National problem and that citizens should be educated not to drop litter in the first place. MM commented that there are not many bins at Beachy Head as this encourages the public to take their litter home with them.

RP mentioned that there had been some concern by the residents that the alleyway was dark and a danger to females, especially the many students that use it. By cutting back some of the shrubbery this had been improved, however, he and the Councillors have secured funding to put a new lamp at the Beachy Head Road end. RP thanked the Councillors for their help in enabling this work to be done quickly. RP also reported that dog fouling in Denton Road and the alleyway in The Dentons has improved. MM advised that new signs would be erected about plain clothes officers patrolling the area.

3.2 Helen Gardens and St Bedes Lighting

BJ reported that male activity in Helen Gardens has decreased significantly and that removing the hedge may be advantageous! The floodlighting at St Bedes School goes off at approx 1815., bar one . No response yet from the school about the remaining lights on the main building which he feels have not been shrouded properly. BJ will follow up on this problem. RP offered his support if needed.

3.3 Litter

RP mentioned that a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is moving rubbish bins left out by the students living over Meads Interiors. RP asked if LC might be able to intervene and he arranged to speak to her after the meeting. ES mentioned Denton Road remains a rubbish tip of a general kind, particularly from the start of the road up to The Dentons. LL-J asked that this be brought up under the Brighton University business as the rubbish is caused by the students, often dumping rubbish out of their cars before driving off. RP said there had been an increase in the litter since the Students returned.

3.4. Dog Fouling

RP reported that a resident in Buxton Road and Bolsover Road has reported a dog fouling the pavement in the early morning and the evening, but they have not identified the owner. Sue Criddle, the local Dog Warden would visit the owner if they can be identified. MM reported that dog fouling had increased this year.

3.5 State of pavements and roads

BT commented that these were being investigated by the County Council and NG added that there was a program of repairs which would start once the weather had improved. BA added that when he first moved to Eastbourne there was more care taken where pavements were repaired. He mentioned that recently the contractors had repaired an area in Grove Road with black tarmac. Both NG and BT replied that this would be rectified soon.

RP reports pot-holes to www.fixmystreet.com and this seems effective. He also reported that in some roads cracks there seems to be water. DH reported a water problem in Darley Road which has gone on for three days. Work appears to be in hand. NG said that there will be a lot of work done in March, and BT confirmed that there is a rolling programme starting soon. ML felt that sometimes the work is not prioritised correctly, and not of a good standard.

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4. Identification of other issues.

ML mentioned that four houses at the end of Silverdale Road where work is unfinished, and nothing seems to be happening. RP reported that the developer had gone bust, but furniture had been seen going into one of the buildings. RP reported that the landlord of one of the adjoining properties had removed rubbish from the front of the buildings himself. ML also reported the continuing presence of a white van in Silverdale Road and car parts are stored in it. This van never moves but it is taxed and therefore no action can be taken. Work undertaken in the road however may warrant action.

VB enquired as to whether there was any progress on the scaffolding in Holbrook Close. BT replied that the work would be done soon, but that there had been delays for various reasons. It would not have been economic for the scaffolding to have been taken down in the meantime. RP has spoken to the NW Co-ordinator about the matter and is satisfied it will soon be resolved.

LC had an e-mail from Catherine Marlow requesting that members at tonight's meeting should be informed of Community Messaging. This offers information on local crimes, court results, crime prevention. LC said that members would not be inundated with information. RP said that he would forward this under the BCC (blind copy) e-mail for members to sign up to it; names, e-mail details and addresses, mobile numbers are needed for this service provided by Sussex Police.

RP mentioned that there had been problems for NW Co-ordinators receiving communications from Police HQ at Lewes, particularly those with BT internet connections. Shortly to be resolved.

MM told the meeting that he had received a letter from RP about the horse stabled in Meads Brow. He has spoken to Mike Smith, Downs Manager, to get more clarification on local by-laws. If the horse is being grazed on Downland on aside Beachy Head Road or being ridden in this area an offence is being committed. He advised that if there is a problem then the Legal Department would get involved. A Meads Brow resident reported the horse bolting from the Brow across Beachy Head Road riderless.

5. Agreement of the three priority issues

It was agreed that the three main issues would remain the same.

6. Meads Ward NP Website

This was being regularly updated with inputs, including Minutes and dates of meetings by the Police.

7. District Panel Meeting – 14 December 2010

The Police confirmed ongoing support for the priority issues, encouraged by the success with the Univ.

8. Panel Membership

No change to the current practice.

Date of Next Meeting.

This has already been set for Wednesday the 6th April 2011, venue to be confirmed

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm