

RINGMER PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Held on Thursday 4 June 2009 at Ringmer Village Hall

PRESENT: Cllrs. Mrs J Fordham; J E Kay; A R Peters; K White; and Mrs J Woollons.

There were no members of the public present.

1. APOLOGIES **ACTION**

1.1 There were apologies from Cllrs Longhurst and Mrs Pitts

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

2.1 Cllr Peters took the chair for this Meeting. There was one nomination for the Chair of this Committee, for Cllr Longhurst, proposed by Cllr Kay and seconded by Cllr White. He had indicated in advance that he was prepared to stand and was therefore duly elected.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

3.1 There were no declarations.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

4.1 There were no members of the public present and consequently no public questions.

5. ACTION POINT LIST – Appendix 1

09/01/01 Fatal Traffic Accident on The Broyle: As a letter had been sent to ESCC, copies to Sussex Police and MP, following receipt of the petition and letters from residents and businesses fronting the road, and the matter was being discussed further under item 9, it was agreed to discharge this action point.

09/01/02 Allotments : The Clerk advised that remedial work had been completed and extra allotments created, which have all been taken up, and one of the gates had also been repaired. It was therefore agreed to discharge the action point.

09/01/03 Damage to Bus Shelter : As this had been repaired by additional unobtrusive bracing and so far appeared to have prevented further damage by natural or other means, it was agreed to discharge this

action point.

09/01/04 Rustic Benches : Following instructions from the Clerk in line with the survey report and Members' request, Mr Giles has provided appropriate repairs and replacements and will keep a watchful eye on those benches mentioned that did not appear to warrant action . It was therefore agreed to discharge the action point.

09/01/05 Drainage Issues : The Clerk reported that some useful information had so far been provided by Cllr Wilson and Environment Agency but that little had been forthcoming from ESCC and Southern Water. This was an ongoing matter which would be pursued further as time permitted.

09/01/06 Additional Dog Bin : As the resident had been advised that a bin would not be provided, it was agreed to discharge this action point.

6. ALLOTMENTS

6.1 At the annual inspection of the allotments which preceded the Meeting, it was noted that most plots had been well maintained and that the new and reinstated smaller plots were already organised and generally bearing produce. It would be necessary however to write to 4 plot holders to request that they weed part or all of their plots (nos 2B, 9,11A and 14A/B) in the interests of neighbours and with a request that they alternatively forego the land or a proportion of it, since there is a waiting list. Also to write to 2 people about trees growing on their plots.

**Clerk
09/06/07**

6.2 As also discussed on site, it was agreed that the Committee accede to a request from the holder of plot 5 to place a bee hive there although there was some concern that the bees might be affected in some way by humming from the electricity substation. This was on the basis that he conform to the guidance produced by the Bee Keeper Association for hives on allotments and receive mentoring from an experienced beekeeper.

6.3 The Clerk advised that following discussion with a person on the allotments waiting list, he had approached Age Concern and others about the possibility of facilitating a Landshare arrangement, similar to that publicised on the Home Cottage television programme (see landshare.channel4.com). This would enable those with surplus land or with gardens that they find hard to maintain, to make them available to those interested in growing their own produce, usually in return for a share in what is grown. Members considered this a worthwhile approach to take and it was mentioned that there are a number of vacant parcels of land in the village that could usefully be put forward in this way, in many instances pending decisions over future use.

7. FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS, FOOTWAYS AND TWITTENS

7.1 Proposal for a new footpath to the Downs

The Clerk advised that the appropriate legal document had still not been finalised to enable the path to open, the sticking point having been an expectation by the Estate’s lawyers that ESCC take full responsibility for public liability insurance. At this stage, it was considered that there would be a further month’s delay – Cllr Kay suggested that RPC could perhaps cover this under its own insurance if the matter were not resolved within this time.

7.2 Kissing gates

The Clerk stated that limited progress had so far been made regarding the planned installation of kissing gates on footpath 22 between Bishops Lane and Norlington Lane, and further liaison with ESCC footpaths officer was required. From discussion in the Meeting however it was apparent that the design and implementation of these proposals may not be straightforward, given the overgrown state of hedges blocking the formal footpath route, alternatives currently being used and the need for further measures to overcome boggy patches and so forth.

In the meantime, the stile closest to Bishops Lane required a temporary repair to make the path usable – in the form of an additional step and the landowner is to be approached in the first instance, but with the work to be done by Council if this proves necessary.

**Clerk
09/06/08**

8. TRAFFIC, PARKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

8.1 Cllr Mrs Fordham raised local concerns at the revised parking arrangements at the southern end of Broyle Lane, as there was still poor visibility and unsatisfactory narrowing of the road. It was considered that the problem was compounded by cars parking on both sides of the road and it was suggested that the Broyle Community Association be asked if restrictions to ensure parking on just one side would be seen as an acceptable solution; a site meeting could be helpful. This would then be put to ESCC at the next Liaison Meeting.

**Clerk
09/06/09**

9. THE BROYLE – HIGHWAY SAFETY AND REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS – Appendix 2

9.1 Members noted that the letters and petitions had now been sent to ESCC, which have been acknowledged and a response promised. (The Clerk has since heard from Norman Baker, who has written to ESCC to support RPC and the residents. He advises that the County

Council is compiling a list of areas to be considered as 'priority sites' for traffic calming measures and would hope that The Broyle will be included on this list.)

10. RADAR/BRAKE TRAFFIC SURVEY

- 10.1 Cllr Mrs Fordham advised that through the traffic survey and other data collected by RADAR, there was an average of 11,395 vehicles passing through the village in a 24 hour period. In the last 2 years, following over 100 speedwatch sessions each year, some 1700 letters were sent to those found speeding, of whom only a small proportion were local residents. The recent speed loop found that more than half of the speeding occurred outside peak hours, between 6pm and 6am and that this included 17 instances of travelling in excess of 70mph.
- 10.2 She advised that it would cost some £250,000 to both purchase and install average speed cameras for the village. It has been found on A roads that a county council could recoup these costs in 2 years, but Members agreed that despite this possibility, an expenditure of this scale was beyond the resources of RPC.

11. SPEED SURVEY RESULTS AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSING – Appendix 3

- 11.1 Following the introduction of the speed indicators last year, it was decided to commission a further speed survey in Lewes Road near the Old Forge in the hope that this would demonstrate the reduced speeds necessary to enable ESCC to support the introduction of a pedestrian crossing to serve the College and Primary School. Conducted in term time at the end of April, this demonstrated average '85th percentile' speed over 24 hr periods as 35.4mph eastbound and 34.5mph westbound.
- 11.2 Informal discussions with Lewes DC planners and the Community College have been commenced regarding the possibility of gaining funding and other support for a pedestrian crossing, but it was agreed that the speed survey results should be referred to ESCC with a request for its support also and for confirmation that a crossing is needed and now technically feasible given reduced traffic speeds.

**Clerk
09/06/10**

12. CORRESPONDENCE

- 12.1 The Committee considered a further letter from Mrs Craig of Gote Lane seeking the provision of a dog bin en route to the village centre and a request from Ms Jauncey for a bin and other action against dog fouling in Norlington Lane. It concluded that Council did not have the resources to purchase, install and cover the emptying of further dog bins and that principally this cost had only been met for the more intensively used centre of the village where amenity and child

safety are overriding considerations, and the residents should be advised accordingly. Regarding dog fouling, the Clerk advised that he would be pursuing deterrents against this problem and showed Members a number of types of signs and small posters that could be used, samples of which had been supplied by LDC's Dog Warden.

**Clerk
09/06/11**

- 12.2 Coincidentally, Lewes District Council had conducted a survey of bins recently and considers that the 6 that the Parish Council is apparently responsible for, are in need of replacement. This would cost RPC in the order of £360 each, for which there is no provision in the current budget. The Clerk had inspected some of them and believes that while there is corrosion in the bottom sections, they are still structurally sound and not seriously unattractive. It was agreed that LDC be advised that the Parish Council does not consider that the bins need replacement at present.

13. ANY REPORTS (by leave)

- 13.1 Oral reports were received from several Councillors. Arising from these, Cllr Mrs Fordham referred to problems in Vicarage Way due to its frequent use by large wide vehicles and suggested that the hard surface should be widened by use of a concrete 'plinth' or a lay-by inside the kerb line which would enable cars to park largely off the carriageway. It was agreed that, before contacting ESCC with a request for action, all Councillors be given the opportunity to visit the road and that the matter be discussed further at Council on 11 June.

- 13.2 Cllr Mrs Woollons stated that the 2 hr parking restriction at the shops had been well received and had greatly aided the availability of parking spaces for shoppers. Cllr White referred to the fact that several verges in the area only get mown infrequently and had now become badly overgrown. It was agreed that the responsibility for these areas should be investigated and that it should then be requested that such areas be mowed more often.

**Clerk
09/06/12**

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.1 The Chairman reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on Thursday 1 October 2009 at 7.30 pm in the St. Mary's Room, Ringmer Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.52 pm.