

HAILSHAM FORWARD CIC

STAKEHOLDER GROUP

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 10.00AM
ON 19TH OCTOBER 2018 AT
THE DIPLOCKS HALL, THE DIPLOCKS, HAILSHAM

Attendees:

Cllr Gavin Blake-Coggins: Hailsham Town Council
Dermot Clarke: Department for Work & Pensions
Richard Grocock: Environment Hailsham
John Harrison: Hailsham Town Council
Cllr Bob Bowdler: East Sussex County Council
Cllr Chris Jackets: Hellingly Parish Council
Ben Pratt: Hailsham Farmers' Market
Marina Briggins: Wealden District Council
Cllr Roy Galley: Wealden District Council
Ron Lloyd: Representing Town Farm Residents Association
Peter Bowles: Representing Town Farm Residents Association
Mickey Caira: Hailsham Town Council
Robert Boxer: Representing Willow Gardens Residents

Also present:

Terry Hall: Hailsham Town Council

1. Introductions and Apologies

The Chairman invited all the attendees to introduce themselves.

Apologies were received from:

Irit Meyer: representing St Marys Walk
Jeremy Shepherd: representing St Marys Walk
Cllr Chriss Triandafyllou: Hailsham Town Council
Ralph Olesen: The Link Hailsham
Christian Letschka: Hailsham Town Council
Jan Townsend: Community Representative
Steve Wennington: Hailsham Active
Jackie Akehurst: Department for Work and Pensions
Peter Willson: Hailsham & District Chamber of Commerce
Tracey Bond: Hellingly Parish Church
Nus Ghani: MP
Phil Matthews: Hailsham Community College
Clive Soper: Federation of Small Businesses

Cllr Nick Collinson: Wealden District Council
Cllr Nigel Coltman: Hailsham Town Council

2. Minutes of meeting held on 20 July 2018

The notes of the meeting held on 20 July 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

The Chairman highlighted the letter sent to ESCC, with respect to the potential use of the former Firstfields site in London Road, as a site for a new sixth form for the Community College. He asked if there had been a response to the letter sent by Hailsham Forward to ESCC. Mickey Caira confirmed that there has no been no response by ESCC to date.

4. Update Report on the work of the Executive Committee

The group noted the report given on the work of the Executive Committee.

Hailsham Farmers' Market

Mickey Caira asked Ben Pratt Chairman of the Farmers' Market to provide an update on the market. Ben highlighted that the increased footfall achieved in September with the attendance of Peter Bayliss did not result in any increase in the October market. Ben confirmed that he is working with Christian Letschka on the November market to see if there can be a link to the marking of 100years since the end of WW1. He also confirmed that Nus Ghani will be attending the December market at it was the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Famers' Market. Father Christmas will also be attending on his tractor.

The issue of the lack of footfall at the Famers' Market prompted a wider discussion on both the Farmers' Market and Street Market. Some of the members at the meeting conceded that they have never visited the Farmers' Market or confused it with the weekly Friday market held on the same site. The Chairman commented that there seemed to be a lot of traffic in Hailsham town centre on a Saturday, but the footfall in both markets was low.

Councillor Bowdler commented that the Altrincham Market in Cheshire was always busy and was a regular social event. The meeting acknowledged that markets in the north of England were supported well compared with markets in the south east.

The meeting discussed ways of promoting the markets, including using social media and it was agreed that everyone should help promote the markets through their local networks. The Chairman stated that the Town Council's Communities Committee is reviewing its promotion of events and Street Market, this includes the possibility of placing street light banners on several

the street lights in and around the town centre where the traffic slows. The banners would be used to promote both the events and regular activities including both markets.

Events

Mickey Caira reminded the meeting of the Christmas events that will be taking place in Hailsham. The first is the Christmas lights switch-on event, to be held on Vicarage Field on Friday 23rd November starting at 5.00pm. The second is the Christmas Market to be held on Vicarage Field on Saturday 15th December.

For 2019 the Town Council's Communities Committee are planning two summer events; one on 15th June, Hailsham/Sussex Day and one on 20th July, Summer Market, which will hopefully include a French Market. A road closure will be required for this event but will be restricted to the wider highway between the Quintin's and Vicarage Field. John Harrison highlighted the issues for the High Street businesses with a road closure and this will need to be done sympathetically. Peter Bowles commented on the negative impact of the town centre roadworks on these businesses. Councillor Galley commented that the improvements could not be made without disruption.

Hailsham Card

Mickey Caira confirmed that the new 2019 Hailsham Cards had now been delivered and are on sale for £10. The 2018 cards that will expire in December are now being given away as free tasters, to get more people to buy and use the new 2019 cards. Dermot Clarke suggested that the 2018 cards could be given to large employers to hand out to their staff. Marina Brigginsshaw agreed to put around a message to WDC staff that these are available from the Town Council offices. It was agreed that the members would look to find places where the 2018 can be handed out for the free taster.

Mickey Caira reminded the meeting that the Hailsham Card can be used in the other participating towns and businesses, including Eastbourne, Hastings, Battle, Bexhill, Rye and St Leonards.

Community Forum

Mickey Caira highlighted the continued success of the forum, that has created a strong network of community groups in Hailsham.

Hailsham Industrial Parks

Mickey Caira confirmed that the Hailsham Chamber of Commerce is looking to change its remit to include the industrial parks and area to include Polegate, who do not have a chamber.

Empty Shops

Mickey Caira highlighted the fall in the number of empty shops. The number will fall to just ten in the next few weeks with the opening of two new businesses by the end of October. He acknowledged the impact of WDC taking on the ownership of Vicarage Field as three of the empty shops on this site have recently been let.

New Projects

Mickey Caira stated that the Executive Team are looking at new projects, the one project currently being researched is the creation of a printed map and listing of town centre businesses.

5. Community Infrastructure Levy Projects

Mickey Caira introduced this agenda item, he explained that the group wanted an opportunity to put forward suggestions for infrastructure improvements in the town. He highlighted the fact that the CIL contributions from developers would not fund all the infrastructure improvements and there will always be competing items for these funds.

Councillor Jackets highlighted the issues with the lack of road improvements when new large housing developments have taken place in Hellingly and challenged the decisions of WDC Planners.

Marina Briggshaw highlighted the fact that CIL would not fund all the infrastructure but WDC are currently working with ESCC on a funding bid for road improvements on the A22. She stated that WDC receive the CIL payments and pass on 15% to parish councils. WDC have a restrictive criterion on how they can use the funding, it must be critical and strategic infrastructure improvements, whilst the parishes have less restrictive criteria on the use of the funding.

Councillor Galley confirmed the fact that the CIL funding received will not be enough to pay for the roads and schools that are planned. He stated that WDC meets with ESCC every quarter to discuss the strategic infrastructure projects. He also stated that developers should be building 35% affordable homes, if they are forced to pay more in CIL, then they may not be able to build so many affordable homes which would affect the people struggling to pay for housing in the future. If left to developers, they would build more larger homes that will give them better profits and negatively affecting more young people trying to get onto the property ladder.

6. Any Other Business

Councillor Galley stated that WDC have appointed a consultant to look at options for the development of the Vicarage Field site. It is anticipated that

there will be an update in April of 2019. Details of this will be brought back to this meeting in the future.

The Chairman asked for an update on the Post Office. John Harrison confirmed that the Town Council is making an application to take on the franchise for the Hailsham Post Office. The process is difficult for the Council as the post Office's "one size fits all" application process is not working for the Council. The current outstanding issue has yet to be resolved by the Post Office. At the same time the Council is in the process of securing 10 High Street as the location for the new Post Office. Ron Lloyd stated that the staff in the current Post Office do not know what is happening.

Councillor Bowdler questioned why there was bottled water available at the meeting. Mickey Cairra confirmed that it will not be used in the future, to eliminate the use of plastic bottles.

Peter Bowles asked if there are plans to install water fountains in the town to reduce the number of plastic bottles. WDC are working on this currently.

7. Future dates for meetings 2019:

25th January 26th April 19th July 18th October **2019**