

HAILSHAM FORWARD

EXECUTIVE TEAM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 9.00AM ON 17TH OCTOBER 2014
AT
HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, MARKET STREET, HAILSHAM

Attendees:

Rob Slater: RS
Cllr Nick Collinson: NAC
Cllr Nigel Coltman: NSC
Cllr Bill Bentley: BB
Cllr David White: DW
Mickey Caira: MC
Reg Platt: RP, OVO Energy

Action:

8/14/1	Apologies:	
814/1.1	Anton Bree: AB Michelle Hagger: MH Cllr Paul Holbrook: PH	
8/14/2	<u>Presentation of Community Energy Scheme by OVO Energy:</u>	
8/14/2.1	Item deferred to later o the agenda as Reg was held up in traffic	
8/14/3	<u>Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting held on 5h September 2014</u>	
8/14/3.1	Agreed as a correct record.	
8/14/4	<u>Matters Arising:</u>	
8/14/4.1	NSC requested that the Team should review shop fronts and backs in Hailsham Town Centre on a regular basis.	
8/14/4.2	NSC also requested that there is a follow up with Hailsham Parish Church on their plans to "open-up" the churchyard.	
8/14/4.3	BB highlighted the issue with local businesses placing banners and posters the town centre, especially on East Sussex Highway railings and footways without permission. There is also an issue with the poor state and increasing amount of this promotional material. BB stated	

	that this needs to be controlled.	
8/14/5	<u>Hailsham Street & Specialist Markets:</u>	
8/14/5.1	MC updated the meeting with respect to obtaining a formal agreement with the owners of Vicarage Field to hold the market on this site, he confirmed that no agreement had been forthcoming and would chase this up. As a result of this a planning application has not been made to WDC as it was agreed with the owners agent that this would be done once the agreement was in place.	
8/14/5.2	DW highlighted the issue of facing a business rate charge if the market is established formally through an agreement with the owners and planning permission. It was agreed to review applying for planning application once the formal agreement was established.	
8/14/5.3	MC advised the Team that the shop currently used to store the market gazebos was under offer. Preliminary discussions with WDC to use an adjacent car park to place a container indicated that this may be possible, but the team considered there was too much of a negative impact on the town to do this.	
8/14/5.4	BB suggested as an alternative the purchase of one or more enclosed trailers that could be used to store the market equipment off site, the team agreed that this was a good option, subject to funding and RS offered to discuss this with Colin Slaughter who may have contacts that deal in trailers. MC also to obtain prices for suitable trailers.	RS to contact Colin Slaughter. MC to obtain prices for trailers.
8/14/5.5	The Team discussed market days for 2015, highlighting the main issue of the confusion for the public on holding the market on three Saturdays per month and one Thursday. It was agreed that holding the market every Saturday was the preferred option but need to take into account the effect on the Farmers' Market.	
8/14/5.6	BB suggested that cross promotion on the Saturday of the Farmers' Market would help both markets, and may increase the footfall for the Farmers' Market. BB also suggested that	

	the additional Saturday market on Vicarage Field could be a specialist market of some kind.	
8/14/5.7	NAC asked that evening markets should not be forgotten in the future planning of markets and events in Hailsham	
8/14/5.8	It was agreed that market traders would be canvassed over the next two weeks to see if they would support the Thursday market if retained and how they would support a market every Saturday. In the meantime MC would discuss this issue with Jenny Seale from the Farmers' Market. This would then feed into the next Stakeholders meeting on 6th November.	MC to organise canvassing of market traders and meeting with the Farmers' Market.
8/14/6	<u>Presentation of Community Energy Scheme by OVO Energy:</u>	
8/14/6.1	Reg Platt, Senior Partnerships Manager introduced the principals behind OVO Energy and the community energy scheme they are promoting. He explained that the normal options available to a local energy selling scheme were limited to a "white label" scheme where the local seller was paid a one-off referral for a new customer or the fully fledged supplier. OVO Energy are working on a community scheme and are looking to set up partnerships and share the operation of running the energy supply to the local community with a local partner. This is unique to the energy market. Plymouth is the first partner OVO have agreed a scheme which should start in February 2015. This scheme is somewhere in the middle of the white label scheme and a fully fledged supplier. Unlike other providers OVO would consider including local businesses in the scheme.	
8/14/6.2	RP confirmed that OVO had around 380,000 customers half of which have signed up since January 2014. He stated that there was huge interest in the community scheme with 200 organisations showing interest of which 100 are local councils. OVO have data that shows that 1/3 of energy customers nationally have never switched energy suppliers, 1/3 have switched once/twice and 1/3 have been more	

	<p>actively switching. Therefore 2/3 of the energy customers could make savings if they can be persuaded to switch. OVO are confident that as their administration costs are low they will always be able to beat the rates of the big six energy companies.</p>	
8/14/6.3	<p>DW raised concerns over the stability of the supply of energy especially electricity and would this make customers vulnerable. He also asked how volatile the price would be? RP stated that all energy suppliers faced any potential issues of supply and confirmed that OVO purchased energy a year in advance to ensure the stability of prices. He also stated that OVO were more efficient and customer focussed providing both lower costs and better customer relations.</p>	
8/14/6.4	<p>RS asked how many people would be required for this scheme to be viable? RP confirmed that they would want to have secured 10,000 customers over a five year period and have around 1,000 signed up to start a scheme. RP stated that OVO would want evidence that the 10,000 was achievable before a scheme could go ahead. He also stated that there are only four tariffs an energy supplier can provide and that OVO would have to give one tariff up for any local scheme but this could cover a larger geographically area than Hailsham.</p>	
8/14/6.5	<p>BB asked about the responsibility of debt management as this could present a risk. RP stated that OVO had a low incidence of bad debt and advised the Team that all energy bills contain an element to cover bad debts and the financial risk. In setting a local price this would be agreed by both partners. RP also stated that they have schemes in place to help the vulnerable and could provide details of bad debts to any partner on a regular basis.</p>	
8/14/6.6	<p>RS asked what would happen if the 10,000 was not reached in 5 years. RP stated that OVO would pay for all the set-up costs and therefore wanted some assurances about achieving this figure. He also stated that the scheme could be wound up early without penalty if the numbers of new customers was</p>	

	<p>not being achieved, but there would be no penalty or fines if this happened.</p>	
<p>8/14/6.7</p>	<p>The potential energy usage from local business should be higher than local domestic users and could help offset potential lower number of domestic use. NAC asked what resources OVO would put into selling the scheme locally. RP stated that OVO would be involved but would expect their partner to do A lot of the work. He also stated that this scheme was still new and not in place yet and therefore could not provide any real examples of how it would work out.</p>	
<p>8/14/6.8</p>	<p>RS asked about the pricing structure for potential Hailsham Forward Energy customers and how much they may save. RP confirmed that the price would be negotiated with Hailsham Forward. This could allow for some profit that would be reinvested by the partnership for the benefit of the town. RP also stated that of the 2/3 of the population that do not switch they generally save between £130 - £180 if the switch to OVO.</p>	
<p>8/14/6.9</p>	<p>NAC asked what OVO would expect from Hailsham Forward. RP stated that OVO would want confidence that the partnership would achieve the 10,000 customers in the five year period. He also stated that Hailsham Forward would have to do the marketing for the scheme. NAC commented that this would require some form of staffing to do this work.</p>	
<p>8/14/6.10</p>	<p>RP referred to the Community Energy South project that is working to generate and supply energy in East and West Sussex and this may be worth looking at for Hailsham. This may not deliver however the principals Hailsham Forward is looking at.</p>	
<p>8/14/6.11</p>	<p>BB stated that ESCC may be able to grant fund promotional work to help establish if this project would work in Hailsham. NAC stated that the scheme had great merit but too much was unknown and that the community focus and potential income to the Hailsham Forward project were good aspects. BB commented that if Hailsham Forward did not do this</p>	

8/14/6.12	<p>someone else may and Hailsham Forward would lose out on the potential income.</p> <p>NAC stated that we are at a stage where we need to ask the local community if they would consider taking up services such as these from Hailsham Forward. He suggested canvassing local people at future Street Markets to see if they would consider buying services such as energy from Hailsham Forward. The Team agreed that this should be done and that a simple questionnaire to include the postcode of the resident and potential services such as energy, Wi-Fi, heating oil, Street View internal images, etc. The survey to be placed on the website.</p>	MC to draft a simple questionnaire and review how this can be completed at future Street Markets
8/14/7	<u>Christmas Market:</u>	
8/14/7.1	<p>MC updated the Team on the organisation of the Christmas Event. He confirmed that there would not be a small skating rink as the company the Council had lined up were no longer in business and it was not possible at this late stage to find a suitable replacement. The event would feature 47 market stalls including some charity stalls, Father Christmas and his Sleigh giving away free presents. A reindeer rodeo, live music throughout the day, face painting and balloon modelling. With the exception of Father Christmas who would be located at the front of the Quintin's Shopping Centre all the activity would be on Vicarage Field, there will be a road closure between 4.30am and 9.00am and 4.00pm and 9.00pm to put all the infrastructure in place, the High Street will be open throughout the event.</p>	
8/14/8	<u>Public Wi-Fi access Hailsham Town Centre:</u>	
8/14/8.1	<p>NAC advised the Team that Eastbourne Borough Council had established public Wi-Fi in Eastbourne and wanted to see if this could be done in Hailsham. He stated that it would require local town centre businesses to hive off part of their broadband for local to use free. It would result in free broadband. The user would go onto a Hailsham promotional page and could also include broadcasts from Hailsham FM, and make the Town and Shopping Guide more readily available. NAC confirmed that it</p>	NAC to check if

	would require work to get local businesses to "sign-up" to give up part of their broadband, and he may have someone that would be prepared to do this.	there is someone willing to undertake this work.
8/14/9	<u>Reconnecting the Town:</u>	
8/14/9.1	NAC introduced this issue, highlighting some of the businesses expressing the view that they feel disconnected with parts of the business community. He wanted to try and get the town to "reconnect" and suggested that this could be done through some local activities, including a tug-of-war competition between the various areas of the town's business community. He also suggested that the town's summer events proposed for 2015 could be used to have these activities. The Team to progress this project.	
8/14/9.2	BB suggested that additional activities such a shop-buddies and business-to-business would help reconnect and help in the general well being of the town's businesses.	
8/14/10	<u>Any other business:</u>	
8/14/10.1	MC advised the Team that he had been asked to give a talk to the Hailsham Rotary in the work of Hailsham Forward in the new year. The Team were happy for MC to undertake this.	
8/14/10.2	NAC updated the Team on the Community Radio Station. The station will broadcast part-time from a room in the Old Court House from January over the internet. The Team confirmed that they support this project.	
8/14/10.3	NAC highlighted the fact that Google Earth had not updated their images of Hailsham since 2008 and a lot had changed in Hailsham town centre since this date. He has requested an update but this is scheduled to take place in 2017. In the meantime local businesses can put internal images of their businesses on Street View and Chandlers and Hailsham Leisure Centre have already done this. NAC advised the Team that local businesses can pay £250 plus VAT to have this done and it may be possible for Hailsham Forward to	

8/14/10.4	<p>negotiate the same rate and take a small margin. It was agreed to add this to the list of potential services Hailsham Forward could supply as part of the questionnaire.</p> <p>RS asked about the ATCM Seminar on parking. MC stated that if any one in the Team wished to attend an ATCM event then they should contact him to book a place.</p>	
8/14/11	<u>Date of Next Meeting:</u>	
8/14/11.1	The next meeting will be held at 9.00am on Friday 21st November at the town Council Offices.	