

HAILSHAM FORWARD

Stakeholder Group Meeting

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 10.00AM ON 27TH JANUARY 2017 AT
THE DIPLOCKS HALL, THE DIPLOCKS, HAILSHAM

Attendees:

Suzanne Collins: Hellingly Parish Council
Michelle Hagger: Hailsham Town Council
Mickey Caira: Hailsham Town Council
Ben Pratt: Hailsham Farmers' Market
Dermot Clarke: DWP
Jackie Akehurst: DWP
Michelle Gray: Wealden District Council
Ralph Olesen: The Link Hailsham
Terry Hall: Hailsham Town Council
Jan Townsend: Community Representative
Cllr Chriss Triandafyllou: Hailsham Town Council
Cllr Nigel Coltman: Hailsham Town Councillor
Steve Wennington: Hailsham Active
Cllr Nick Collinson: Wealden District Councillor
Cllr Amanda O'Rawe: Hailsham Town Councillor
Trina Mayson: The Now! Charity Group Ltd
Rev David Farey: Vicar of Hellingly and Upper Dicker
Cllr Gavin Blake-Coggins: Hailsham Town Council
Pete Heasman: Costains

Two Hailsham Street Market Trades: Brenda Taylor and Brenda Billings

1. Introductions and Apologies:

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and invited all those present to introduce themselves to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

Nus Ghani MP
Derek Carter: CH2M
Cllr Roy Galley: Wealden District Councillor
Richard Grocock: Environment Hailsham
John Harrison: Hailsham Town Council
Nigel Hannam: Wealden District Council
Alice Matthews: Sussex Community Development Association
Cllr Barby Dashwood-Morris: Hellingly Parish Councillor
Nus Ghani: Member of Parliament
Phil Matthews: Hailsham Community College

Irit Meyer: representing St Marys Walk
Jeremy Shepherd: representing St Marys Walk

2. Notes of meeting held on 28th October 2016:

The notes of the meeting held on 28th October 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising:

None

4. Formation of a Community Interest Company:

Mickey Caira provided some background to this agenda item. He explained that there are some financial advantages for Hailsham Forward to move to a more formal basis. Both he and Michelle Hagger had spent some time with 3VA who have suggested the most appropriate way forward was the establishment of a Community Interest Company (CIC). The document, sent out previously to the Stakeholders provided a draft of the CIC Memorandum. MC confirmed that Hailsham Forward will need to engage with a suitably qualified person/organisation to help with finalising the document to ensure that it is fit for purpose. There will be a cost for this service.

The Chairman asked for feedback on the proposal to move the partnership to a more formal basis. There was overall support for this and it was agreed to take this forward. The issues raised by the meeting included:

- Should councils be members, as they may have a conflict of interest, especially if funding bids are made by Hailsham Forward to a council?
- Should individuals be members, and if so how are they dealt with if they no longer support the principles of the partnership?
- Should other groups, not currently part of the Stakeholder Group be invited to become members, such as residents' associations?
- Are there tax implications?

It was agreed that other community groups in the town should be invited to join in and this will be promoted via the normal channels. Rev David Farey highlighted the issue that if a lot more organisations join in it may make the partnership too big to operate successfully.

5. Hailsham Street Market:

Mickey Caira highlighted the main issues of the fall in trader numbers at the Street Market. He confirmed that Hailsham Town Council had agreed to fund a suitably qualified/experienced person to firstly, carry out some research as to why traders have moved away from the market and why the market is not attracting many new traders and secondly recruit new traders following any

changes made as a result of the initial research. At present the Council was in the process of trying to obtain quotes for this work.

The Chairman asked the two market traders present at the meeting to provide some input to the issue. Brenda Taylor stated that there was not enough advertising of the market and that the cost recently quoted by Mickey Caira for advertising in the Friday Ad @£1,000 was not correct as a small weekly ad would cost £442. She asked why the market did not advertise in the Hailsham what's-On Magazine. She also asked why the pitch fee of £25 could not be reduced to £20 as it was difficult for some traders to pay this especially at this quiet time of year. Mickey Caira highlighted the challenge to reduce the price of the pitch fee as there are fixed costs that need to be funded from the pitch fee including business rates at over £2,000. He also highlighted that around £1,800 had been spent on the last year on advertising. Brenda suggested that the market organisers should plan to have more themed markets and look to find traders that supply items that you cannot currently buy in Hailsham town centre.

Councillor Collinson suggested that as part of the research on the market stall prices from other local markets should be sought, to see if Hailsham is competitive.

The Chairman confirmed that a new incentive has been agreed by the Executive Team to give two free markets to new traders.

Rev David Farey asked for a financial statement for the market, Michelle Hagger confirmed that this will be provided in the near future.

6. Update on the Work of the Executive Team:

Shop Fronts

The Chairman highlighted the inspections that have been carried out by him and Mickey Caira. This has helped to encourage local businesses to keep their premises in good order. The renovations to both the Quintin's and Vicarage Field were noted.

Community Forum

Michelle Hagger updated the meeting on the work of the Forum, highlighting the summer community event that is being planned by a number of the members of the Forum. She explained that the Forum is now starting to organise themselves more, with less support from the partnership. Councillor Collinson highlighted the success of the Forum with their planned community day in July. Steve Wennington also commented on the success of the Forum stating it was a great place to find out what is happening in the town.

Hailsham Card

Councillor Collinson stated that the card was being used in Chapter 12 but proposed that more should be done to promote the card to both local businesses and residents. This will be picked up by the Executive Team in the coming weeks.

Pop-Up Shop

Trina Mayson stated that the Chamber is in the process of commissioning works to the flooring and heating in the premises before it will be available to let. Lets will be available for one to two weeks at £100 per week. Michelle Hagger commented that a number of the Street Market traders were interested in using the shop.

7. Update on the MASHH Project:

Pete Heasman from Costains provided an update on the progress of the works in the town centre. He confirmed that the bones found whilst excavating the High Street were animal bones and therefore the works to this area could be re-started. He stated that the works are behind the revised schedule but they are working to get the contract completed by the end of April. This will involve a change to the programme, with works in Vicarage Lane being undertaken at the same time. Since the start of January block paving has been installed down part of George Street and carriageway reconstruction has started at the southern end of the High Street. He confirmed that they will maintain access to all businesses during the remainder of the works.

Councillor Collinson commented that the works have affect businesses differently and proposed that following a meeting held in September with local businesses another one should be organised and offered to assist with another meeting. It was agreed that this will be organised.

Councillor Ms O'Rawe asked about the positioning of one of the new street lights positioned outside of the Rajdutt in the High Street. Pete Heasman highlighted the difficulty in positioning the light, which involved avoiding building overhand and existing underground utility services. He did confirm that whilst the position was not ideal it provide enough space for a mobility scooter or double buggy to pass. He also confirmed that the position of this light was being investigated to see if there is another solution.

The Chairman highlighted the drainage issues on the completed north end of the High Street. Pete Heasman confirmed that this is being investigated and any remedial works will be undertaken as part of the snagging list of the contract.

Ralph Olesen highlighted the problems with vehicles parking on the new footways whilst the road was open in the run-up to Christmas. This will result in damage to the footways over time if it continues. The Chairman stated that the Town Council and Environment Hailsham are looking to install suitable planters on some of the wider footways to both improve the appearance of the town centre and prevent parking on the new footways. He also stated that the Town Council is working with the police to setup a process of challenging illegal parking. The police have confirmed that they will not routinely enforce parking regulations in the town centre, but have suggested a way forward.

Ralph Olesen asked what diversions will be in place when the carriageway is reconstructed in George Street. Pete Heasman confirmed that there will need to be two diversion routes one for small vehicles and one for larger vehicles as the larger vehicles will be too large to negotiate the shorter diversion route. It is anticipated that the George Street works will start in March and the road will be closed for five weeks.

8. Future Dates for Meetings.

The future dates of the meeting will be as follows: 28th April 2017 (AGM), 14th July 2017, 13th October 2017.

9. Any Other Business:

Steve Wennington highlighted the community activity day that is being planned on Western Road Recreation Ground for 23rd July. He is working with a number of local groups to put on the event, which may also involve Hailsham Community College. Councillor Collinson proposed that Hailsham Forward support this event and could possibly supply some market stalls, this will be discussed at the next Executive meeting in February.

Steve also mentioned that Rural Sussex is planning an event for the Maurice Thornton Playing Fields in April.

Ralph Olesen asked if Diplocks Way was adopted. This could not be confirmed but it is likely that East Sussex County Council have adopted the highway as they carried out resurfacing a number of years ago. Ralph highlighted the poor state of the footways and verges and the difficulty in parking and access through the estate. Mickey Caira mentioned the project the Executive Team were putting together to look at potential improvements to Hailsham's industrial estates that included looking at issues around access and parking in Diplocks Way.

The Chairman mentioned Wealden's Local Plan and the work that needs to be done to find transport solutions to both existing and potential issues, with the proposed building of over 9,000 homes in the Hailsham area up to 2037. Steve Wennington highlighted the need to keep people active and this needs to be planned for in the development of the local area.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and their input to the meeting.