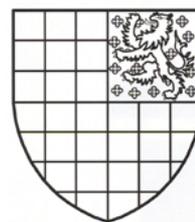


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**LEWES  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

of the meeting of the **Working Party** formed to address transport-related issues in Lewes held on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015**, in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lewes** at **7:00pm**.

**PRESENT** Cllrs S Catlin (Wischhusen); L F Li; M Milner (*Chairman*); S Murray; R O’Keeffe. **In attendance:** S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*)

**TIWP2014/01** **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Milner was elected as Chairman.

**TIWP2014/02** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** There were none. No message had been received from Cllr Dean.

**TIWP2014/03** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr O’Keeffe noted that she was member of the board administering ESCC Community Match funds.

**TIWP2014/04** **MINUTES:** The minutes of the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were signed as an accurate record.

**TIWP2014/05** **QUESTIONS:** There were none. Seven members of the public were present.

**TIWP2014/06** **BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:**

1 There was a brief discussion on general matters arising from the previous meeting and subsequent decisions by Council.

*Safety issues near South Malling School* - The Council had offered £1,000 to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to paint road markings as an experiment to assist with parking and traffic congestion issues during pickup and drop-off periods. There had been no response until Cllr Milner challenged the Highways Department officers to whom the issue had been passed, and initially he had received only an unsatisfactory formal reply explaining ESCC’s priority system for works. Further pressure had elicited a more thoughtful response, but it was explained that ultimately the matter could only be addressed as a formal project, with attendant changes to physical road infrastructure; signage *etc*, which must be preceded by consultation and amendment of prevailing traffic Orders. This was affected by current plans for the road and footpath network in the immediate area (Earwig Corner, and Lewes-Ringmer cycle path) The original idea of a low-cost experiment was not supported. The Town Council was referred to the Community Match scheme, which could allow works outside the structured and prioritized ESCC plan, if significant funding was provided by a parish council. The tenor of the communication from ESCC suggested that they saw little merit in any new scheme, but Members wished to at least establish the likely cost for the necessary project and the true potential for third-party contributions. It was agreed to pursue this question further.

*Footway repairs* – Cllr Catlin reported that standards of repair to Conservation Area footways appeared to be ‘slightly’ improved, although it was observed that some relatively recent repairs had been made using replica bricks/blocks made of self-coloured aggregate materials where the colouring was already fading, highlighting the second-rate standard. He volunteered to pursue this matter with ESCC, and Cllr O’Keeffe offered to assist in her capacity as a Member of ESCC

*Bus Shelters* – the short list of sites proposed for additional shelters had been discussed with ESCC and, as anticipated, only one could be agreed as there were technical restrictions at the others. It had been indicated that a licence to site a shelter on the North side of the Brighton Road outside Lewes Prison should be possible, although subject to planning permission and a careful choice of design, as

space was limited. It was agreed that this should be recommended to Council.

*Bench seats and litter bins at Lewes Bus-station* – it was reported that these were delivered and awaiting installation.

*Bicycle parking improvements* - ESCC had recently installed the new cycle parking frames, although it was not known if the programme was complete.

2 The meeting received a short presentation by Mr Ferrie VanEchtelt, who offered some ideas and past experiences from having worked for the UK's first pure electric car and van club social enterprise. (E-Car Club). Mr VanEchtelt aimed to show the potential of electric vehicles to help accelerate delivery of economic, community and environmental and transport agendas. He sought feedback and suggestions as to suitable partners with whom to continue the dialogue. Members thanked him for his informative presentation, and suggested that there could be value in informing the work of the Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

3 There followed a discussion on bus services in the town. Detail was offered of the Town Council's financial support to Community Transport in the Lewes Area (CTLA), and its application to routes. CTLA had noted that they remained open to further partnership projects. Compass Travel's Managing Director was unable to attend, but had sent a detailed message noting the company's position regarding ESCC funding cuts. He stated that reductions in services had been 'far less severe than originally anticipated' and that most rural areas had kept a similar level of service. He was apologetic that frequency of Town routes had been reduced, and suggested that without external funding these were not financially viable. He would be open to discussions as to options, should the Town Council be able to consider funding. Members agreed to ask Council for a mandate to discuss this matter with operators such as Compass.

Several members of the public present had a particular interest in this subject, and were invited to contribute. There was discussion of the detail of particular routes that circulate within the town, and services outward to other towns. Newhaven was cited as a nearby centre of employment and education, where public transport services were important. It was stated that reduced services effectively prevented Lewes people from deriving benefit from developments such as the new University Technical College to be built at Newhaven. Members were asked if they would liaise with other parishes to consider the matter jointly, and the principles of the Lewes District Association of Local Councils (LDALC) were discussed. Cllr Murray, as the Council's representative, undertook to introduce an item at the next LDALC meeting to establish the appetite of other parishes for cooperation. Members were exhorted to promote ideas to bus operators, rather than remain passive, and the legal framework for parishes in this field was discussed. Questions were raised about the County and District Councils' application of surpluses arising from parking charges, and the availability of statistics on existing usage levels of bus services.

TIWP2014/07

#### **CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:**

Council would be asked to pursue installation of a new bus shelter adjacent to Lewes Prison, subject to requisite permissions.

Council would be asked to agree a mandate for the Working Party to discuss bus service support with operators such as Compass Travel, and to establish relevant levels of cost. Cllr Murray would introduce an item at the next meeting of the Lewes District Association of Local Councils to discuss the respective positions of member parishes regarding bus services.

TIWP2014/08

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed.

*The meeting closed at 8:40pm*

Signed: .....

Date: .....