

Minutes of the Ashdown Forest Villages Road Safety Partnership

10.00, 3 December 2007, Ashdown Forest Centre

Present John Gramolt (elected Chairman; Withyham PC), Graeme Beattie (ESCC SID Co-ordinator), Ray Galley (Maresfield PC), Hew Prendergast (Conservators), Arabella Sackville (observer), Chris Simmons (Hartfield PC), Keith Sinden (ESCC Road Safety Officer), Robert Watson (representing Forest Row PC), Minutes taken by Tracy Buxton.

Action:

1. **Apologies received:** Matt Elder (East Sussex FRS)

2. **Minutes of last meeting.**
The minutes were adopted.

3. **Matters arising.**

There was a short discussion regarding the positive but limited media reaction to SID week (a small feature appearing in the East Grinstead edition of the Courier). Hew Prendergast confirmed the press office at County Hall had been contacted about SID week, however, it would seem the contact person has changed. Future articles should be sent to Mike Taggart.

It was noted that progress had been made on most of the action points from the last meeting, however, there was no update from Matt Elder who was making enquiries regarding finances. This would be carried over to the next meeting. **ME**

4.

Results SID week 1 to 5 October 2007.

Graeme Beattie reported that the SID week ran from the 1st to 5th October 2007 and that turn out was good, in fact, it had been the best to date. Coverage had focused on Wednesday 3rd October on the B2026 and the B2188, when three SIDs were used - facing south in the morning from 07.30 to 09.30 and facing north in the afternoon from 16.30 to 18.30. The other sites selected were Wood Eaves /Chuck Hatch / Junction of B2026 at Fairwarp.

The police, who had been fully informed about the SID week, were present only at Hartfield and made a courtesy visit to Wood Eaves. Keith Sinden was asked to provide information on the number of drivers the Police dealt with.

John Gramolt reported that there had been some technical difficulties with the SID machines (reading kph rather than mph) and there were some concerns voiced regarding the site of the SID in Chuck Hatch. Graeme Beattie reported that he would do another risk assessment and re-assess the sites available.

There was a short discussion regarding the pro-forma used by volunteers on SID days and John Gramolt stated he would e-mail form to John Chalke (Hartfield PC).

There was short discussion about encouraging Danehill PC to participate in future SID events. It was noted that speeding was an issue on the A275 at Chelwood Gate.

It was agreed that the Keith Sinden contact the Police to ascertain the number of drivers dealt with by the Police. **KS**

John Gramolt agreed to ensure the simple pro-forma was made available for volunteers to use in future. It would also be attached to these minutes. JG

There was a discussion regarding the data obtained from the SID week. There was currently no information available from Hartfield or Forest Row. Data was available from the Withyham and Maresfield SIDs.

At Withyham there were ten sessions and fifteen operators. Surprisingly, the highest speed recorded was 65mph but many were recorded at 60mph. The worst day of the week, for speeding, was recorded as Sunday with 80% of those recorded being in excess of the speed limit.

At Maresfield 80% of those passing the SID were conforming to the speed limit and had speeds recorded at 35 to 38mph. It was agreed that speeding was becoming less of an issue at Maresfield and that the SID would move from a reduction to a maintenance role.

It was reported that at Forest Fold, on the London Road between Crowborough and Lye Green in the 40mph zone (a known accident spot), there were recorded speeds of 60mph. There was a short discussion regarding proposed changes to the T junction and speed limits.

There was a discussion regarding the comparison of previous and current data at Wood Eaves, the site that had the most data available. It was noted that data were difficult to compare as they were compiled with too many variables and like-with-like comparisons were required. It was suggested that the SID data collection computer programmes be used more fully to build up credible statistics.

Graeme Beattie reported that all parishes had the data discs, however, the barrier to using them was the level of IT skills required. He went on to say County did not support the software and that, nationwide, it had not proved very successful to operate and in fact no one had got this part of SID to work. It was noted that during the winter SID machines were not in much demand, so it was a good time to experiment with the IT.

Keith Sinden confirmed that good IT skills were needed to actually download the data on to the lap top but considered it to be worthwhile attempting to make it work. John Gramolt suggested that Withyham be asked to do a road test in isolation to assess the practicalities and write up a simple user guide.

There followed a lengthy discussion regarding the data that had already been gathered and it was generally agreed that there was too much acquired by a 'scattergun' method. What was required was the collating of the currently available data into a more meaningful summary and, in future, a more targeted approach. It was agreed that, to move the process forward, SIDs be utilised on a specific day, time and period. It was suggested that a SID could remain on a single site for a full day with only a change of operators.

It was generally agreed that a SID co-ordinator was required to collate all the results; that a simple one page statement goes to all the SID volunteers stating what we are asking them to do; that data comparisons are pulled together and that summaries are fed-back to the volunteers to maintain their interest and motivation.

There was a discussion on the usefulness of the data to the Police and their presence during SID week and there was some disappointment at the lack of a Police presence. Keith Sinden commented that local police officers had been trained to use speed equipment in order to support local initiatives such as SID week.

Keith Sinden reported that, as a result of retiring, he would no longer be attending meetings after April and that he would be very happy to see the group continue. He also reported that it was not known if Graeme Beattie would be attending meetings after April and it was suggested that the Group write to County to explain how vital Graeme's input was to the success of local initiatives such as SID.

There was a short discussion regarding the availability of reflective jackets and any requests should be passed to Keith Sinden.

PS (Added after the meeting.) Matt Elder reported by email that there will be no funding at this stage from the Safer Wealden Partnership Road Safety Group. He pointed out that it would be helpful to be able to demonstrate the reduction of speed and, more importantly, all causes of accident in hot spots such as the A22 and A264. He recommended two more high profile road safety weeks be held next year and stated that the involvement of Sussex Police was critical.

It was agreed that Cllr Tony Reid and Cllr Matthew Lock be contacted in writing to explain the importance of Graeme Beattie's role. JG

It was agreed Forest Row and Hartfield be contacted to submit their data for analysis as soon as possible. RG

It was agreed that all parish data needed to be pulled together and that it be centrally co-ordinated. JG

It was agreed that Withyham PC test the data collection capabilities of the SID and that the way forward be discussed outside of the meeting. JG

It was agreed at the next SID session would be focused on one full day and targeted at one single location. GB

It was agreed that the next SID day would tie in with a local school road safety week at either Groombridge or Withyham. GB

It was agreed the next SID day would be all day on Wednesday April 23rd. GB

It was agreed that there would be further press releases on the success of SID with commitment and casualty figures presented in percentage terms. HP/JG

9) Date of next meeting

Monday 25th February 2008 at 10.00

The meeting finished at approx 12.00.