

Minutes of the Ashdown Forest Villages Road Safety Partnership

10.00, 12 June 2007, Ashdown Forest Centre

Present John Gramolt (elected Chairman; Withyham PC), Robert Watson (representing Forest Row PC), Keith Sinden (ESCC Road Safety Officer), Arabella Sackville (Withyham PC), Ray Galley (Maresfield PC), Matt Elder (East Sussex FRS), Hew Prendergast (Conservators). Minutes taken by Tracy Buxton.

1. **Apologies received:** Graeme Beattie (ESCC), Danehill PC.

2. **Minutes of last meeting**

No comments were made and the minutes were adopted.

3. **Matters arising**

Danehill's non-payment for the use of the SIDs was discussed and Keith Sinden reported that he had expressed disappointment to the Parish Clerk. However, he reported that Danehill support SIDs in principle. It was agreed that the Committee should note the reaction to the request for a contribution and that the Committee hopes Danehill will be able to make an appointment to it soon.

There was a short discussion regarding and agreeing that the minutes being automatically forwarded to Parish Clerks so that they are fully aware of what is taking place.

There was a short discussion regarding the Dutch situation (presented at the December 2006 meeting), what could be learned and EU funding opportunities. Keith Sinden commented that letters were written but, due to various staff changes, the outcomes are not known; however, there were budgetary constraints. Keith reported that there had been a meeting with the County engineers but they were under pressure to deal with speed limits which is their priority. John Gramolt asked if there was a possibility of making direct contact with the Dutch? Keith Sinden replied that there were time constraints and very little that was actually new. John Gramolt commented that this project was 'one for the future' and that some of the Dutch ideas on junction design were interesting. It was agreed that the Committee would confirm its interest in this project and would be pleased to become involved when the opportunity arises.

The speed awareness course planned for September was discussed. Keith Sinden confirmed that it was still going ahead and was 'on track'. He reported that the Police now have a new IT system for the issuing of speeding tickets and are looking at developing an online booking system for people who want speed awareness courses (rather than having five points or a fine). Keith went on to describe how central Government are keen to have education, to change attitudes and patterns of behaviour as well as enforcement. It was hoped that this system would be in place by September 2007. John Gramolt commented that the Committee's aspirations were limited by its resources and that enthusiasm was constrained by resources. Robert Watson commented that the Committee should confirm its willingness to assist and commented that the next 'Safety Week' was week commencing 17th September.

There was a short discussion regarding the Speed Management Conference in Uckfield on 4th April. Ray Galley commented that the main emphasis was on bigger roads and working with local councils. Keith Sinden described how the county councils have been tasked by central Government to bring 30mph speed limits to all town and villages and this assessment of speed limits which is a challenging project. There was a discussion regarding the background to this and on 20mph limits.

4. **Results of the SIDs Week in April and What Next?**

SIDs were manned in Forest Row, Withyham but not Maresfield. The results, organised site by site and time-related, were tabled. It was agreed that three good strategic sites had been chosen and although the samples were small it would be fair to extrapolate out information. It was agreed that speed reduction figures at Woodeaves on the Forest were good and that the mean speed had been reduced. There was a discussion regarding producing a more detailed analysis of the data and the use of the raw data gathered by previous SIDs at Wood Reeves car park. It was agreed that these were quantifiable and measurable data that show how well the Partnership is doing. There was a discussion regarding releasing the information gathered to the press; regardless of whether the results are good or bad there is a story to tell. Ray Galley commented that there was an opportunity to release information via the County Council Press Office. There followed a discussion regarding the appropriateness of releasing the data now or waiting until September. It was agreed that any older raw data should be gathered and presented in the same format, likewise new data gathered in September. It was agreed that this supporting paperwork was invaluable and there was a discussion regarding the appropriateness of attaching this to the minutes in its original or an amended format.

Matt Elder commented that SIDs were found to be more effective when used randomly and followed by Police enforcement. Keith Sinden commented that when used in the same locations there was driver desensitisation. There was a discussion regarding flashing illuminated speed signs and it was agreed that those in Nutley and Forest Row were effective but there could be a reduction in impact over time.

John Gramolt commented that the message was not getting through to the members of the Parish Councils and the Committee should be leading by example and be finding a way to encourage the less active Parishes to get involved. Robert Watson commented that communication was very important and that all Parish Councillors need to be aware of what is going on, however, the SIDs results documents contained too much information. Hew Prendergast commented that the value of the data was important in itself. John Gramolt suggested that a one page summary should be produced with some of the headlines highlighted and have the source of the headlines attached for information. He went on to say that this could be sent directly to the Parish Councillors. Hew Prendergast queried if the Parish Clerks were reluctant to pass on information? John Gramolt replied that it was not known if information was passed on or not but that the Committee should be more pro-active in sending out data directly to the Parish Councillors and that the addresses are in the public domain. Hew Prendergast suggested that a press release could go the Parish Clerks and that the Committee should be talking to individual Parish Councillors. Keith Sinden suggested that the local press as well as the County Council Press Office should be sent the one page summary and the key points. He also suggested that the same sites have SIDs in September in order to gather more data to see if there is any improvement and that it would be useful to have a Community Enforcement Officer to be occasionally present further down the road to improve the effectiveness and credibility.

It was agreed that there would be a one page summary and the data, in their entirety, attached. It was agreed this summary should be sent to the County Council Press Office, and the local press. It was agreed that a detailed analysis of the Wood Reeves data be produced containing two years' worth of data; that sites to be done again in the September SID week be selected (to include Woodseaves as a priority) and Police support sought.

Keith Sinden tabled a document on the recent Schools Week (16th to 20th May). One of the classes involved carried on doing a road safety project. PC Helen Donovan was excellent and

later on she and a colleague caught six speeding drivers on Hartfield Road and two others who were not wearing seat belts and did not have tax discs. Robert Watson stated that visibility had a good effect overall and people seemed to take notice. John Gramolt asked if this had been discussed with Withyham School and Keith Sinden explained it had recently been done at Nutley and Uckfield and with 150 to 180 schools in the area he went on to report on the pressures affecting the scheme. He described how training was targeted at child pedestrians, child cyclists, young driver training and driver improvement. It was agreed that the excellent photograph be attached to the data documents sent to the press along with a quote from the Headmaster and a report on the success of the Forest Row activities. Keith Sinden confirmed that Maresfield and Nutley would be involved in September. Hew Prendergast asked if it would be possible to get hold of Police data and Keith Sinden replied that it would be possible.

Matt Elder asked for a confirmed list of SID sites for September and there was a short discussion on risk assessment of sites and how they were chosen based on statistics and fatalities. He went on to explain the role East Sussex Fire and Rescue plays in the Partnership with crews taking part in signing people up to make a commitment not to speed and that they would like to be available to visit the sites during the use of SIDs. He also explained about East Sussex FRS involvement with Sussex Police in roadside education (mobile phone use and seat belts) which recently took place at Beddingham (fine or points versus ten minutes education with East Sussex FRS officers). He explained that this was a very valuable exercise and it is being used in Crowborough and Uckfield with SIDs and traffic officers – this is an example of the Partnership working. Matt Elder showed the Committee the tool kit used during these education sessions. Keith Sinden commented on the lack of experience East Sussex Fire and Rescue officers had in signing people up. Matt Elder commented that crews were trying to engage people in conversation and were indeed getting a few people to sign up. Hew Prendergast reported that he was able to sign people up at larger gatherings.

There was a short discussion regarding practicalities of equipment being used.

It was agreed that the follow-up data be gathered and analysed by John Gramolt; that the September sessions should go ahead; that Matt Elder should be informed of the dates and locations to enable East Sussex FRS to participate more fully; that documentation should be in a recognised format to ensure consistency in recording; that two shots at publicity now and in September be utilised; that more Parish Councils be involved and that Police data and analysis be sought.

Robert Watson queried who communicated with the Parishes about these meetings and the e-mail list was scrutinised. Hew Prendergast reported that the e-mail group was as up to date as it could be given there had just been elections. All Parishes were represented and Parish Clerks included apart from Hartfield who had not yet chosen a representative. The Courier was also represented.

It was agreed that the next SID dates would not be in September but Monday 1st October to Friday 5th October.

9) Date of next meeting

Monday 17th September 2007 at 10.00

The meeting finished at approx 1245.