

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
EAST GRINSTEAD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
Held in the Rehearsal Room, Chequer Mead
On Tuesday 16th January 2007 at 7.30 pm**

Present:

EGCP Members:

Bobby Hamilton	(BH)	Chairman
Alan Lord	(AL)	Vice-Chairman
Christine Hardisty	(CH)	Secretary
Roger Martell	(RM)	Chamber of Commerce
Edward Belsey	(EB)	Co-Opted
Christa Wilson	(CW)	Moatfield Surgery
Carole Weighill	(CaroleW)	East Grinstead Traders
Jo Hodginson	(JH)	CPSO
Elizabeth Carter	(EC)	MSDC
Andrew Brock	(AB)	Co-Opted
Don Cooper	(DC)	East Grinstead Credit Union

1 Apologies for Absence

Joan Roberts	(JR)	EG Library
Pat Strong	(PS)	WSCC (Education)
Ginnie Waddingham	(GW)	Co-Opted
Jim Joyce-Nelson	(JJN)	East Grinstead Town Council

2 Minutes of EGCP Steering Group Meeting of 21st November 2006

AL proposed, RM seconded, and it was agreed unanimously to accept the Minutes of the Meeting of 21st November 2006.

3 Matters Arising from the Minutes of Meeting of 21st Nov. 2006

BH reported that he and AL had had a meeting with Christopher Snowling (MSDC).

The following points were raised:

It seems unlikely that WSCC will get support from Surrey and East Sussex County Councils with regard to easing congestion in East Grinstead where proposed new routes cross these counties.

At the moment, there does not seem to be any prospect of EGCP gaining representation on the LSP. EC said that MSDC was looking at the structure of the LSP, that EGCP and Burgess Hill Community Partnership had made a good case for inclusion in the LSP and that this was still under consideration.

4 East Grinstead Town Action Plan Objective E4: Improve Community Safety issues – Hooliganism and anti-social behaviour, Safety at night in East Grinstead, Vandalism, Drug Abuse

CW said that all these issues were discussed at the Social and Community Working Group. The Working Group felt that more data was needed which would give information on whether East Grinstead has more pubs than other towns, whether problems with anti-social behaviour caused by alcohol was worse than anywhere else.

The Working Group denounced the practice of "Happy Hours" where people were encouraged to drink more alcohol. Members of the Steering Group also felt that this

was not good practice. AL said that he was on the Licensing Committee and that this Committee tried to prevent "Happy Hours" He believed that other towns had more problems related to alcohol than East Grinstead. The Working Group had also discussed the work of Pubwatch and was pleased that this was active in East Grinstead. The Steering Group were concerned that service stations sold alcohol, believing that this gives the wrong message to motorists.

Some Steering Group members felt that there were more problems with over 18 year olds than with teenagers and children, but RM said that there were problems in Queens Walk with very young people. EB said that school holidays were problems as far as hooliganism was concerned. CH to ask a member of the Community Safety Team to talk to EGCP.

BH asked these issues to be taken forward by the Social and Community Working Group.

BH pointed out that one of EGCP's objectives is to improve the range of facilities and services to young people. Facilities at the Wallis Centre are pivotal to this discussion. Members were concerned to hear that staff cover for holidays and sickness at the Wallis Centre was a problem. The Working Group was requested to prepare a paper on this problem for consideration at the next meeting of the Steering Group

It was noted that Bob Broadway is intending to reopen Ashurstwood Youth Club. CH said that the extent of the problem was not really known, and CW asked that EG schools be involved in this discussion.

5 Objective B3 of East Grinstead Action Plan; Remedy local skill shortages and improve post 16 training opportunities

EB had researched this issue and produced a report for EGCP members (copies were given to members at the meeting). He said that it could be argued that there are no skill shortages as these shortages can be filled from outside EG.

At present in EG there are slightly more employers looking for staff than people looking for work. He said that there is £450million economy in EG.

Problems include the "gentrification" of the industrial estates (development of factory sites for non-industrial use), the price of car parking in EG, the cost of housing in EG and also the fact that some offices have been turned into housing.

The main areas of skill shortage seem to be in Hospitality and Entertainment, Information Technology, and jobs in the Transportation Industries.

Remedies include the recent reintroduction of apprenticeships.

EGCP members discussed EB's report. RM said that the cost of housing meant that young people who trained in EG left the town because they could not afford to live here.

Members were concerned that skill shortages would be made worse over the next few years by the need for labour for the Thames Gateway and the Olympics. EB will talk to CADIA and WS Education Department.

6 Objective B1 of East Grinstead Action Plan: Revitalisation of the town centre in terms of shops and services as well as appearance

One meeting of the Working Group considering this issue had taken place. So far they have nothing to report.

7 The Work of EGCP

BH asked members to consider the operation of the Burgess Hill Community Partnership, the progress of EGCP in pursuit of its objectives, and whether EGCP

Steering Group meetings to evaluate progress towards objectives are sufficiently frequent.

AB said that the Burgess Hill Partnership appeared to have more success than EGCP, that they seemed to concentrate on identifying smaller issues which they flagged up and which were then taken forward by others.

CW said that EGCP was in fact achieving similar success to Burgess Hill Partnership and had identified some of the same issues. EB said that EGCP has influenced others to take forward important issues. CH said that EGCP should make a list of the activities on which it has had influence; because EGCP is concentrating on more major issues it does not publicise the smaller successes it achieves while working on bigger projects.

It was agreed that it was not necessary to hold more frequent meetings of the Steering Group; that projects were being progressed satisfactorily by the Working Groups.

8 Reports from Working Groups

a) Local Environment and Transport (report circulated)

Simon Kerr will have a draft of the new tourist leaflet available soon.

Metrobus will put out a list of bus routes to hospitals.

RM pointed out that progress on Objectives D ("A place of sensitive change and development, and a place to care about") and E ("A place where it is safe and easy to get around") of the EG Action Plan depend on the decisions about the EG housing allocation and the proposed relief road.

b) Social and Community (report circulated)

Most of the Working Group's activities are reported above. The Parent's Help card is nearing completion; funding has been sought from the CLC for £2,500 towards the cost. It is hoped to complete and distribute the card to 10,000 households in EG in March.

GW had attended an MSDC health panel and had pointed out that EG been excluded from consultation on recent health changes.

DC reported that the Credit Union was about to hold its first AGM and that it had approx 70 members with net assets of approx £20,000.

c) Local Economy (no report available)

10 Any Other Business

CH reported that East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Service had appointed Loral Bennett to set up a volunteering service within the CVS. She would offer a matching service to local organisations and volunteers. The CVS hoped to get more funding to expand this service.

CW reported that CW, CH and DC had attended a meeting of the Pilot Project for and Integrated Primary Care Team for EG. This project is seeking to improve the primary care service within EG by integrating the work of local health professionals and others involved in the provision of local health care.

11 a) Meeting Schedule of Working Groups

The next Environment and Transport Working Group. 9.30am Tuesday 27th February 2007 at The East Grinstead Library.

The next Social and Community Working Group is .Monday 19th February at 2pm in EG Library

b) Date of Next Partnership Meeting

The next Partnership meeting will be held on Tuesday 13th March at 7.30pm in Chequer Mead.