

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
EAST GRINSTEAD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
Held in the Maud Barclay Room, Queen Victoria Hospital
Tuesday 13 November 2007 at 7.30pm**

Present:

EGCP Members:

Bobby Hamilton	(BH)	Chairman
Andrew Brock	(AB)	Co-opted
Ramesh Champaneria	(RC)	EG Chamber of Commerce
Don Cooper	(DC)	EG Credit Union
Jon Ford	(JF)	Imberhorne School
Mary Goode	(MG)	Queen Victoria Hospital
Roger Martell	(RM)	Chamber of Commerce

Attending:

Ken Averill	(KA)	EG Town Twinning Association
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1. Apologies for Absence

Edward Belsey	(EB)	
Phillip Coote	(PC)	
Christine Hardisty	(CH)	EG CVS (Secretary)
Joanne Hodgkinson	(JH)	
Alan Lord	(AL)	Vice Chairman
Chris Parker	(CP)	EG Business Parks
Paul Scott	(PS)	
Sue Seward	(SS)	Mid Sussex District Council
Carole Weighill	(CaW)	East Grinstead Traders
Christa Wilson	(CW)	Moat – Sussex Police

BH welcomed everyone to the meeting and said it was unfortunate that the Town Council, Mid Sussex District Council, the Police and the Business Parks Association were not represented.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 September 2007

RM proposed, RC seconded and it was agreed unanimously to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2007 as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 11 September 2007

BH showed the meeting the Parents' Advice leaflet which was impressive. RC asked about the colour scheme because of possible difficulty in legibility, but BH informed the meeting that it had already been printed.

There were no other matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. **AGM Matters**

4.1 **Matters arising from minutes of AGM of 13th September**

BH remarked that he was delighted by the attendance but disappointed that there were no new approaches or new ideas proposed.

4.2 **Secretary's honorarium**

This was not discussed.

5. **Working Group Reports**

Social and Community Working Group

BH reported that the Town Council had agreed the use of the Parish Hall by Age Concern. They were now in a position to go ahead but there were two main issues:

- 1) Legal and contractual arrangements
- 2) Financial/fundraising

There would need to be a fundraising campaign as £300,000 was required to fit out the kitchen, floors, computers and therapy equipment. Further work was needed to identify community equipment other than that needed for therapy.

BH confirmed that he, as Chairman of the EGCP, had been co-opted onto Age Concern.

Environmental and Transport Working Group

RM reported that notes on the meeting held last week would be circulated. They had discussed the area action plan and came to the conclusion that they needed the houses for the infrastructure that comes with it.

The relief road was discussed. The District Council was not yet ready; it was working to ensure all the local authorities were on board.

Regarding the Bluebell Railway and public transport interchange, the group were not happy to wait until April, but if the Bluebell Railway would agree, a meeting will be held in the new year with all parties.

There was a move to combine the town trail leaflet with others produced for the town which would save costs.

Regarding cycle route, RM confirmed there was no money and nothing would happen before 2011.

RM said that town centre signage would be looked at particularly obscured road signs which needs to be fixed.

Strategic Area Action Plan

BH reported that he had sought a meeting with Ms Judith Hewitt to discuss the East Grinstead within the Strategic Area Action Plan. There had been a delay in submission until Spring 2008. AL and BH are taking this up with GOSE (Government Office for the South East) and would keep an eye on it.

There had been statements by Mid Sussex District Council which indicated to the public about the problems e.g. traffic through Forest Row and also the classification of the A22. Poor roads were driving business and commerce away from the town. The Partnership needed to ensure there was an acceptable transport system which should rise above housing need.

AB said that the planning report from the draft South East Plan which had gone to public enquiry, was available on the GOSE website. It does recommend the A22/A264 as a strategically significant route and this would be the recommendation to the Secretary of State. There was a need to ensure that SERA and GOSE endorsed this. The South East Plan was one year away from adoption.

EG Credit Union

DC reported that the Credit Union was 15 months young. They were seeking new members and to raise funds for its administration.

Local Skills

BH read out an update from Edward Belsey regarding his controversial paper on local skills shortages. Considerable discussion followed and it was clear that the meeting disagreed with the conclusions of EG's update. DC proposed and it was agreed that EB would be asked to withdraw his paper and to resubmit.

The following points were made:

- The catchment area of both Imberhorne and Sackville schools will be redrawn when the new houses are built.
- The number of students in EG not in education, a job or training is very small
- JF said that they had sent a questionnaire to parents asking what is it that they need. Parents do want to help their children.
- It was important that both schools were considered equally for additional support when new houses are built.

Town Centre Revitalisation

BH reported that together with Chris Parker, they met people in Winchester to get a view of another authority's working relationship with Thornfields. It appeared the relationship with the council was remarkably good and seemed to be acceptable on both sides. Thornfields operated entirely by CPO (Compulsory

Purchase Orders) which gave a time delay of about 6-8 months. There was a distinct possibility that alternative proposals would be submitted.

Clarification was needed if CPOs had to honour covenants but this was a legal issue.

Discussion also took place as to the relationship between an authority and Thornfields. Thornfields do all the planning arrangements and act as the developer. It was thought that they were currently out of pocket by about £1.5M which could rise to £2M.

6. **Age Concern Accommodation**

Included within the Social and Community Working Group report.

7. **Fit for the Future**

BH reported that Chris Rolley had written a very good letter to West Sussex PCT setting out the views of the town. Thanks to Ginnie Waddingham and Christine Hardisty who had insisted that East Grinstead be part of the Fit for the Future loop. The letter emphasised that the interests of East Grinstead be represented in Kent, Surrey and East Sussex. Margaret Collins had undertaken to do this.

School Health Survey

BH read some summary findings from a school health survey carried out jointly by West Sussex PCT and the County Council which would be passed to GW for discussion at the sub group.

8. **Voluntary Sector Issues**

This was not discussed.

9. **Presentation by EGCP to EG Town Council**

BH said that the presentation started at 6.00pm on Monday 19 November.

BH and CP would present an update on the presentation given to the AGM on what the Partnership will do in the future.

10. **Town Twinning**

BH welcomed KA to the meeting who gave a presentation on the Town Twinning Association.

KA explained that the organisation was formed in 1962 and was very successful. The aims were to promote: friendship, education, culture, commerce and sport. Whilst many students wished to come to the UK, there was lower numbers of EG students wishing to exchange. Next year they would be encouraging young disabled students. There was a difficulty in finding groups able to deal with disabled young people. JF and KA then discussed opportunities of joint working. The Twinning Association's website address is www.egtwinning.org

BH thanked KA for a most illuminating presentation and asked if there was any way the Partnership could help find hosts for the 12-18 year olds.