



Westerham Town Partnership

1 Squerries Park Cottages

Goodley Stock Rd

WESTERHAM

KENT TN16 1RD

Westerham Town Partnership Meeting Thursday 13th November 2014 6.30pm

Present: Stuart Merrylees, Bill Curtis, Jane Hunter, Henry Warde, Nick Tonge, Wayne Thornton, Richard Banister, Kevin Maskell, Alison Burt, Neil Proudfoot, Toby Gravett, Peter Hills

Apologies: June Ingram, Geoff Tidy, Lynne Proudfoot, Viv Sheffield, Malcolm Basing, Jenny Smith, Lesley Moore, Eddie Boyle, Alan Wesley, Kim Jennings, Yvonne Russell, Clive Levene, Gordon Rodgers, Marril Gibson, Nina Cooper, Zoe Colbeck, Alison Tilbury, Kelly Innes, James Turner

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of 4th June were agreed.

SM explained that the committee has been reformed with SM as Chair and welcomed Bill Curtis as Secretary.

MB continues as Treasurer, but is looking to resign as soon as a replacement has been found.

SM invited those present to introduce themselves and explain a little of their interest.

Matters arising:

1.1 Defibrillator:

RB explained that he had attended the demonstration of the defibrillator in the phone box outside NatWest Bank and he'd come to the conclusion that the retailers should all be trained in its use and also that we should launch an appeal for more to be purchased. Cost approx. £1500.

The meeting agreed this was a good plan, and RB undertook to enquire about a Retailers' training session. JH agreed to support this with communication. KM agreed to look into further defibrillator and training funding.

ACTION: RB JH KM

1.2 Westerham Flooding

SM commented that routine drain clearance was still not being performed and said that it would be useful for residents to know how to complain to KCC about blocked road drains and undertook to write a paragraph for the website with a link to the complaints procedure.

ACTION: SM.

1.3 Aeroplanes – Gatwick Heathrow and Biggin Hill

JH explained that MB has identified that much of the recent low flying traffic comes from Heathrow takeoffs, which are denied permission to climb immediately. Westerham also has approaching Gatwick traffic and furthermore Biggin Hill is consulting on its expansion. Complaints have been sent to our MP, Michael Fallon, but he has not reported back. KM confirmed SDC is feeding into the Gatwick and Biggin Hill consultation. HW expressed the view that Biggin Hill expansion is beneficial for Westerham, leading to increased employment, albeit longer opening hours.

ACTION: MB, KM

2. Summer 1914 lessons

Best 2 day event in Westerham that most people can remember (see comments on website). Enormous effort by all the organisers and by a number of small teams – everyone made new friends and it raised community spirit.

BC, JH and SM were pleased that the event had ‘broadened the TP family. The main lessons were those of management: a clear structure of tasks and BC has since written a number of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which could be tested for the tasks of staging the Late Night Shopping event.

Overall Event cost £2500 of which major items were: advertising £450, orchestra £350, Punch and Judy £250 Income came from local sponsorship £1000, WTP guarantee £1000.

Income from event itself was £860 (of which the Coconut Shy £270 and Whip the Cloth £135)

But the committee would like to minute that such a big event should not to be repeated without a lot of careful thought.

3. Late Night Shopping, Thurs 27th Nov

General disappointment was expressed with the level of retailer participation in the organization of this event. There have been two separate meetings to plan this event, the first of which was well attended, less so the second. We would like to see much more involvement from the retailers with the infrastructure in future years. Most tasks are ongoing. See separate minutes. Publicity is now complete, although one T board has already been stolen.

Expenditure to date: ~£500 on flyers, 8x T boards, 4xbanners

Outdoor lighting, cables and matting ~£300, but these are bought for this and future events.

BC has written several SOPs, which have been distributed to relevant people and will be tested over this event.

Simon Humphries reported that he would be unable to deploy cones on east side of the Green: looks as though we ask Adam Seale.

JH reported that our event would be covered by FRANCE 3 TV channel.

ACTION: BC, SM, JH

4. Market

In GT's absence, SM reported that the fish stall from Salcombe is proving to be a success. The sausage man might be pulling out. There are 3 more markets between now and end Dec, with only one per month for the first quarter of 2015. SM reminded us that the income from the market is all we have and we all need to tell our friends to support the market.

5. Car Parking

Two sets of discussions this year with SDC masterminded by JH and JS. First were to deliver the WTP Parking Report and make proposals for changes to parking charges all over town. Second to work with HW, WTC and SDC to negotiate overflow area in the Darent car park. To avoid delays while the various parties sought full planning permission, it was agreed to invoke the option to allow private land to be used for parking for up to 28 days/year. HW signed 1 yr lease with SDC, WTC commissioned Mercer at cost of £3096. This was funded by SDC (£1000) WTC (£980) Rotary (£250) WTP (£866). In order to raise funds for the WTP contribution, we wrote an appeal letter and JH visited potential sponsors. Her efforts raised £1147.

WTP agreed a plan with WTC to pay someone to open the car park at selected days for £10/day . £180 paid to date, ie for 18 days. We have notionally ring-fenced the “car park fund” in our accounts and £1046 has therefore been spent to date.

Current discussions with SDC relate to their plan to raise parking charges again in Westerham next year, as their figures from the latest half year show a shortfall of income. JS has been discussing their figures and their accounting methods, and SDC has since voted to make no change for 2015.

ACTION: JH JS

6. Signage & Lighting plans –

Toby Gravett produced a preliminary report about signage & lighting requirements, commenting that there are plenty of signs but they need to be amended.

KM undertook to approach the Officers in SDC to see how we may move these issues forward, particularly re expertise and funding. JH expressed the hope that we can start in the Darenth Car park with a detailed plan of the town, and create a welcoming feeling with a new finger post design. June Ingram is still keen to talk about a Westerham Town Sign, and it is hoped this can be incorporated into the overall plan.

WT enquired whether there is a strategy and it was agreed this needs developing.

We all agreed that the Darent CP looks shabby and is not the best “welcome to Westerham”.

ACTION: KM to feed back to TG and JH.

7. Community Interest Company Incorporation.

WTP holds public liability insurance with Tennyson, that covers liability up to £5M pounds, for up to 5 events a year. We hope we never need to make a claim, but are conscious of the need to limit the potential liability of the officers. It is for this reason we are about to become a Community Interest Company.

“A CIC is defined as a limited company, with special additional features, created for the use of people who want to conduct a business or other activity for community benefit, and not purely for private advantage.”

We thank MB and his contacts at TSP for drawing up the document, which are now signed by SM, MB and BC.

Our constitution is on the website. Although “members” are defined, we have never levied a membership subscription and therefore no formal list of members exists. We propose that we create a class of “voting members” who will be eligible to vote for the officers. Maybe we should also have a class of “Business member”. We have for some time thought of creating a business directory on the website and we believe we could provide better promotion than Hang-Out

ACTION: JH, BC and SM to discuss with Malcolm Goodwin and others Nick Tonge?

KM promised to find other TP organisations in existence so we could compare best practice.

8. Pavilion development plans & access to Charmans Farm

In LM’s absence, JH reported the consultation is now complete, and has been published on VisitWesterham website. A summary of the most popular and practical suggestions has been agreed, and WTC has instructed a feasibility/grant source study.

ACTION: LM, JH

9. Community Play –

BC spoke on behalf of MG and confirmed the result of Arts Council grant should be known by end December. The Heart of Community grant produced no result. BC commented there was enthusiasm to press ahead with a modified plan even without the grant.

WTP has already made £1000 donation to the funds.

10. QR/mobile phone walks around Westerham

JH explained a facility for tourists to their phone to read a QR code on buildings, statues and the like, to listen to a spoken commentary. Everyone thought this sounded interesting and BC offered to write scripts. We should have no trouble finding speakers. SM will find out how about the technology. JH to find good examples we can visit.

ACTION: SM, BC, JH

11. Telephone Box on Verralls Corner

Bought by Westerham Society for £1 and repainted. Decorated by WTP (BC/SM) to date. A new mannequin will be bought for "Telephone Box Team" led by Julie Wortley and Vikki Buckley. Our thanks to them both.

12. Communications

Due to time shortage, this was not discussed.

13. Finance – Malcolm gives apologies. SM stated we had approx £4000 balance at bank. Other current expenditure for LNS close on £1000, so our current assets were approx £3000?

14. National Trust

WT invited members to the preview of the National Trust winter exhibition for the 50th anniversary of Churchill's death. Boris J was a celebrity guest. We were unable to attend at such short notice but will go along in due course.

15. Our 5th birthday

The Town Partnership was born 5 years ago next spring, when it started a website, a Farmers' Market, opened a bank account and wrote a constitution. We wondered if it might be an opportunity to tell the world who we are and maybe hold a fund raiser in the Hall

We could show some old Westerham film footage perhaps and BC's video of the Summer of 1914 event. Fish and chip supper? Invite the Town Crier. With other commitments, we should look for a volunteer committee and wait until after Christmas before making a decision.

ACTION: ALL

15 AOB

We welcomed Nick Tonge to our group. He is treasurer of the Bonneval Association and we all felt that there was room for stronger ties and we would look for ways of furthering links.

WTP laid a wreath at War memorial (Purchased from RBL at £30)

SDC had sent the latest Conservation Area Document. WTP had made comments to their draft in June. None of us had looked at the latest version.

ACTION: JH, SM

Date of next meeting – Thurs 26 Feb 2015 at Council Office at 6.30pm

Minutes by JH/BC/SM completed 18 Nov 2014