

Ashford Rural West Forum (Weald area)

Monday 28 March 2011
Sandy Acres Sports Hall Hall 6:30pm

Present: Richard King (KCC), Rita Howes, Gerry Clarkson, Jessamy Blanford, Shirley Whittington, Larry Krause, Christine Drury, Ian McClintock and David Geoghegan (notes).

Introductions

Richard King opened the meeting by saying that this was an informal meeting and asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves and say where they were from.

Terms of Reference

The meeting agreed to proceed without TOR on an informal basis for the time being.
Community Grants

Richard spoke about the three grant funding streams he has for community projects. His £10K MCG was allocated as follows:-

Youth Shelter	Westwell Playing Fields	£500
New doors	Hothfield Village Hall	£500
Bounce Mat	Westwell Playing Fields	£500
Junior section games	Kennington Cricket Club	£500
Bus shelter	Brabourne PC	£500
Mini Bus	Wealden Wheels	£1,000
Village Hall	Pluckley PC	£500
Display case	Hothfield History Soc	£500
After school Club	Egerton	£500
Bethersden Youth	ABC	£500
Horse carriage	RDA	£500
Wealden Wheels	Hothfield PC	£350
Library	Egerton CofE School	£500
Car park	Bethersden	£500
Hothfield Coaching	Charlton Athletic FC	£500
Hearing Loop	St Margret's	£1,000
After school club	Hothfield	£650
Music Festival	Egerton	£500

For the Local Scheme Grant of £3,400 the agreed spend for 2010/11 was:-

Egerton Playing Fields Committee	Sports Pavilion	£1,400
High Halden	Little Acorns nursery roof	£2,000

Finally for the Small Community Capital Grant budget of £5,000 the spend was:-

Egerton Millennium Hall	New Acoustic Equipment	£3,000
Challock PC	Play Park	£2,500

These three funding streams will be available for the new financial year.

Projects must be discussed with Richard King before an application form can be issued.

KCC Budget

Council tax for both KCC and ABC councils will be frozen.

Consultation will take place about withdrawal of some bus subsidies. Wealden Wheels should perhaps be expanded to all Parishes.

Highways Issues

Richard said he had £25k of highways funding to allocate each year and any unspent could be rolled forward but that funding had now been allocated for the current financial year.

Amongst other issues, the Forum discussed:

- The need for a crossing in Trinity road (if the Highways Authority say it should be a condition with the new school build it will fund this)
- A crossing is also needed in Singleton Hill.
- The weight limit sign down Wye Road in Boughton Lees needs moving.
- Sure Start at Bluebell would like a speed indicator display to help reduce dangerous speeding.
- The Nash Court corner into Westwell needs re-engineering
- Parking of HGVs and their litter along the A20 remains a problem
- HGV parking at Potters corner also remains an issue but here ABC seem good at collecting the litter left behind.
- The parked Winnebago on the A20 is a problem.

Richard King agreed to follow up the above issues. It was recognised a lorry park was need ASAP (and not just for operation stack) however this was a national problem and perhaps European funding could be obtained.

The attached paper on reporting a fault on highways was distributed.

Other Issues

- Noise on the M20 near Westwell is a problem that the Highways agency is aware of but with the current budget deficit it is unlikely that much will be done. Is more screening possible?
- ABC will adopt as the norm a 30mph speed limit through all villages. New signage will be needed.
- Whilst the KCC Community Warden is brilliant the PCSO is not seen in Hothfield. Major issues around Beech Drive need a multi agency approach.
- The Hothfield toilet remains an issue and these could be turned into a café and an office for Kent Wild Life Trust.

Any Other Business

The allotments at Great Chart are going ahead but there are some legal issues and costs. Richard agreed to enquire whether KCC can do these internally and maybe he could help with any more funding that might be needed (The playing fields also need funding).

Details of KCC Cabinet and Committee changes were issued.

Details of applying for village hall grants will be distributed with these notes.

No details are yet available about the KCC £5m Big Society fund. These will be emailed out ASAP.

The Forum ended and agreed to meet again in June.