



EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 August 2025

Committee Members: Cllr S Ody (Chair)
Cllr A Peacock (Vice Chair)
Cllr J Belsey (Town Mayor)*
Cllr L Gibbs
Cllr J Mockford
Cllr C Pond*
Cllr S Reeves (Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr T Scott*
Cllr F Visser*

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3 members of the public were in attendance.

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Pond, Scott, Visser which were accepted.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

14 TO APPROVE FOR ACCURACY THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF 20 MAY 2025

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on the 20 May 2025 having been previously circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chair noted that Sustrans are running a project to look at revitalising the Avenue Verte, which was raised by Chris Boardman following him riding the route and finding it in poor condition. The Town Council have been involved as stakeholders, along with MSDC and WSCC, including the Active Travel Officers and have attended several meetings.

16 WALKING/CYCLING LEAFLET

The draft of the walking and cycling leaflet was circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee were pleased with the design and content, and thanks was given to officers for working alongside Sustrans to produce the leaflet. It was felt the leaflet would be a welcome edition for both residents and tourists visiting the town.

It was noted that the map should be reviewed prior to further print runs, as some routes might need to be changed/amended. Lowdells Lane was mentioned, and the Deputy Town Clerk was asked to check in with WSCC as to the progress of this project. It was commented that the East Grinstead Worth Way walk/cycle route would be impacted by proposed development in the future.

RESOLVED: The Committee approved the draft East Grinstead Walking & Cycling Guide to go to print with 1000 copies.

17 SHARED SURFACES WORKING GROUP

DWG have been instructed to commence the Town Improvement Plan feasibility study, and it was noted that a community engagement event will be held in September at East Court. The timeline for the completion of the work is the end of September/early October. MSDC are paying the consultants fees which are in the region of £20,000 from allocated funding.

18 BIKE HIRE SCHEME

A full report was circulated to the Committee, which included the data from the survey, which received 133 responses, with a summary below.

The survey results indicated that most respondents are East Grinstead residents aged 35 and over who visit the town regularly. Interest in the scheme was mixed, with 42% expressing interest and 57% responding "no" or "maybe." The most common intended use was for leisure, recreation, or exercise on a weekly or occasional basis. E-bikes were preferred over pedal bikes by a ratio of 60 to 40, although the option of E-bikes has not been considered, this would obviously incur additional capital expenditure. The most popular hire durations were between 1–2 hours and up to half a day. Preferred hire locations were the Station, Town Centre, and leisure routes 1 such as Forest Way and Worth Way. The comments were categorised as 51% negative, 27% positive, and 22% neutral. Key negative comments: East Grinstead roads are very congested, unsafe and hilly, could increase cyclists riding on pavements, waste of public money which could be spent on other benefits for the community, only works in cities, concerns about bikes being abandoned, many existing schemes have been abandoned, and could increase antisocial behaviour. Key positive comments: good for fitness/health, good way to utilise the leisure cycling routes ie, Forest Way/Worth Way.

In respect of sites, these were still proving difficult to secure and MSDC/WSCC do not seem to be able to give over any land for sites, which was disappointing. If the right sites are not available, this will impact the success of the scheme. The station site ownership was currently in question and WSCC Highways were looking into this.

The suggested scheme is fully managed and covers supply and management of bikes, including insurance and is a docking style scheme whereby bikes should not be abandoned.

RESOLVED – Based on the information in the report and the survey results, if a site was not forthcoming within the Town Centre it was agreed that the scheme should not proceed any further at this stage.

19 CYCLE PARKING AT EAST COURT

Following the quotes received to level an area in the car park and install cycle racks near to the toilets, officers have reviewed the areas available, and a report was circulated recommending the use of the vacant space in the staff car parking area for cycle racks, which could have additional CCTV fitted to make the area more secure.

The Committee reviewed the options put forward and raised concerns that the suggested area did not feel safe or convenient for cyclists to use and the Council should be encouraging sustainable transport by offering suitably located cycle racks. It was noted that safety should be considered as this is a car park area, so suitable placed bollards will be a requirement for protection in the original area.

It was noted that Gatwick Diamond funding could be approached for this initiative, although funding was available via the Committee budget.

RESOLVED: To install Sheffield bike racks in the original location in East Court car park, near to the toilets where lighting and CCTV is available without levelling the surface. A budget of £2,000 was agreed using the outdoor services team to carry out the work, if possible, with the appropriate safety features being installed, such as bollards. It was noted that planning permission maybe required.

20 RENEWABLE ENERGY

The installation of solar panels is currently being reviewed by the Town Clerk and Estates Manager, which will look at costings and advice from MSDC in respect of planning and as to where the panels might be located. S106 funding could be used to purchase the panels. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

21 ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTS/COMPETITION FOR THE COMMUNITY

A proposal was put forward in respect of ways that the Council could continue to celebrate the success of the Bee Friendly Award this year, to celebrate World Bee Day again and to encourage residents and community groups to get involved with environmental projects and encourage pollinators.

This could be in the form of an annual grant, for example the East Grinstead Community Environmental Grant or an annual or one-off competition, named to tie in with the Bee Friendly award, such as the Bee the Change Challenge or Bee the Future Competition with the winners being announced on World Bee Day to promote this in the town.

The Committee were keen to put this in place, however, noted the importance of working together with community groups such as East Grinstead Bloom. Therefore, it would be important to engage with Cllr. Mockford in respect of this moving forwards. It was suggested that East Grinstead Beekeepers' Association were contacted.

To continue the World Bee Day work and looking at communities and encourage residents and community groups annual grant, or competition to tie in with the Bee Friendly Award.

RESOLVED: To arrange a meeting with the Chairman, Cllr. Mockford and the Deputy Clerk to put some ideas and a plan in place to present at the November meeting. A criteria for the grant/competition would also need to be put forward for approval by the Committee, together with a budget.

22 TO NOTE ACTION LIST

Action list was noted.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 21.00 hrs.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 25 November 2025 at 7.30pm.