



Notes from Alton Community Coordination Group meeting

1st October 2020 @ 1800

Meeting opened by Richard Setford (Community First)

Richard opened the meeting in its new format by asking if anyone had anything COVID-19 related that they wanted to raise.

Andrew Joy mentioned concerns regarding the town fun-fair. An email from county public health has been released suggesting that the fun-fair would not be operating on a voluntary basis. However, certain criteria had not been met and that as things stand the fun-fair will be going ahead but things can change at any time.

Pam Jones raised the issue of flu jabs. There is a national shortage of vaccines and that people are getting worried about not being able to have a jab. Pam wanted to point out that this is a national issue and not a local one. She also pointed out the incredibly hard work that all the Drs and nurses are putting in plus the long hours they are doing.

Paula Langley agreed with Pams points and noted that in her experience there had been nothing but praise in the community. Paula then went on to add that the Mutual Aid phone line had closed temporarily until there is another lockdown. Long term users of the service have been paired up with volunteers for ongoing support. Hospital Transport have taken over transport services and pharmacies are now looking after prescription deliveries. Mutual Aid is in hibernation. The community bus couldn't run during COVID and a risk assessment suggests it can't currently run.

John Geoghegan added that the local LRC had seen a reduction in calls coming in. There is a skeletal staff in place but the phone lines are ready to respond to an increase in demand.

Pam Jones advised that there were concerns raised regarding pupils turning out of local schools were not showing signs of social distancing and that a member of the public had raised this point. There is also a lack of pupils not wearing masks. Ian Dane mentioned that each year had its own bubble and there were bubbles within those years. Masks were worn in corridors. Pam mentioned the issues regarding public perception. Ian also made the point that headteachers should not be burdened any more than they already are. Lisa Hillan backed up Ian's points.

Andrew Joy made one last point in that he felt we're in a wartime mentality and that this was an opportunity to instill a sense of social responsibility in our young people. Matthew Bayliss cited a news article he'd read regarding Luton coming out of special measures and that it was down to the community effort and everyone pulling together that enabled that to happen.

Louise Parker raised the point that the arrows painted on the ground in certain streets were wearing and that a re-education of the local people may be of benefit and the footprints could possibly benefit from re-painting. Pam Jones said she'd discuss this with the town clerk

Moving on to non-COVID related matters, Richard opened discussions regarding the future format of the ACCG. Given that things had improved and that the content of the meetings was moving towards both community related matters AND COVID-19. The suggestion was put forward that the formality of the group can lighten slightly with thirty minutes of the meeting being dedicated to COVID and thirty minutes being used to discuss community matters.

Richard also mentioned that the audience of the meeting could be widened and asked that if anyone knew of other groups or individuals that would benefit from attending the meetings then to please ask them to contact him so he can arrange an invite. Louise Parker suggested that updates be issued in advance. Matthew Bayliss recommended that any topics be submitted to Richard Setford in advance of the meeting and they Pam Jones suggested that each meeting should have a theme.

Graham Titterton suggested that the format of future meetings should be along the lines of updates and information first, followed by the theme of the meeting giving people the choice of what they attend the meeting for.

Lisa Hillan asked if all schools in the area were going to be invited and stressed that heads were snowed under and that representatives would attend instead. Matthew Bayliss asked Lisa if schools needed anything from the community. Lisa emphasized how demanding the job for teachers and heads was and that community perception might not reflect that. She asked for support and greater understanding of areas such as health and safety etc.

Paula Langley pointed out that the lack of testing was causing issues with normal seasonal coughs and colds resulting in increased stresses. Pam Jones mentioned that there is a testing station in Lady Place car park which seems to be under-utilized and will be writing to the CCG to enquire further.

The meeting then went on to community matters. Lisa Hillan informed the group that The Kings Arms are looking to start meeting in person using social distancing. They are assessing their current environment and capacity. They are looking to take new referrals and are anticipating sky-rocketing mental health issues. Lisa asked that referrals be made via schools etc and also asked the group to contact her directly if they need assistance with referring. Ian Dane if fund raising would help increase capacity which Lisa agreed would be of benefit. Olivier Carr said she'd send some links for funding from Radian.

Olivia Carr mentioned that at the last ACCG meeting the idea of making 2nd hand interview clothes available was floated and she could confirm that Radian had a supply of clothes at their Horndean office.

The date and time of the next meeting was agreed as being Tuesday 10th November 2020 at 18:00

Meeting closed at