

## **Meeting of the Council**

**21 July 2016**

### **Written Questions from Councillors**

#### **Agenda Item No. 8**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12, Councillor Ient has submitted the following written question which he wishes to ask of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Smith:

“The effect of the dispute between GTR (Govia Thameslink Railway, who operate amongst other railways Southern Railways) and the RMT union is now affecting many thousands of the residents in our area. The latest development is that train services are to be cut meaning that for some areas there may be a rail replacement bus service which in itself will cause further inconvenience and congestion around stations like Lewes and on narrow country roads like the C7 between Lewes and Newhaven. I understand from some residents that families are having to arrange special pickups for those commuting to and from London as some stations have had their services cancelled or curtailed. Over and above this our long-suffering residents and commuters who are simply trying to get to and from their place of employment continue to have, on occasions, hours of delay making their working day much longer. What a mess GTR has made of our railway system. The Lewes District Council should not let this council meeting pass without making absolutely clear to the company that they should withdraw their proposed changes to the guards’ duties and to the closure of ticket offices so that life can go back to normal. Even then ‘normal’ is bad enough with the problems of delays on the rail network to and from London caused by congestion on an already overloaded rail infrastructure. Still that would be better than where we are now:

Would the Leader of the Council agree with me that GTR has caused enough hardship in our area and that this should be brought to an end by the franchise being removed from the company. Accordingly, would the Leader agreed to write to the Secretary of State for Transport and ask for the franchise to the company be to be terminated forthwith?”