

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

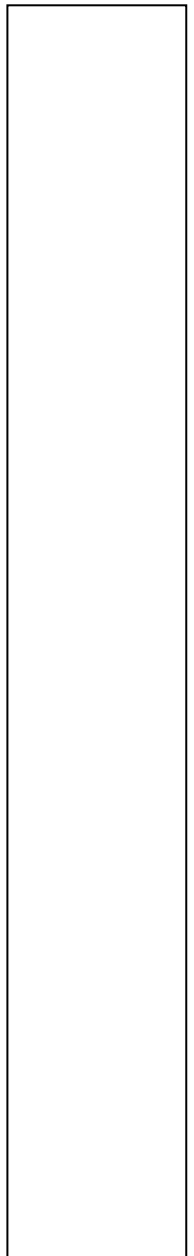
### Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 18 November 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Present:     Ian Weir (Chairman)                     Phil Mead  
              Alan Berry                                 Darryl Sinclair  
              Sue Hatton

Clerk; Linda Baker

Also present were Elliott Bance from Asprey Homes, and Graham Glenn, Valuation and Estates Manager, WSCC, for item 4.

- 1. Apologies for Absence.** An apology for absence was received from Leslie Campbell.
- 2. Declarations of Interest.** None.
- 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 September 2013.** The minutes were taken as read, agreed by the meeting, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- 4. Beacon Centre.** Ian Weir reported that the parish council had run a community engagement exercise on the future of the Beacon Centre, following a suggestion from Aspreys regarding community consultation. A questionnaire had been circulated, and an open day had been held at the Beacon Centre. The response had been encouraging, and over 100 questionnaires had been returned. 11 people had volunteered to join a management committee, 25 had volunteered to help run the centre, 19 had offered to contribute financially, and a number of groups had expressed an interest in using the building. Following the consultation exercise, a meeting had been held with those interested in setting up a management committee. The group included people with experience in running organisations. This group was now looking at projected running costs, potential users and whether the centre could be self-financing. They were also looking at the most appropriate form and constitution for a body set up to run the centre, whether it could be a charity, company limited by guarantee etc. The group were concerned about the condition of the building, and the amount of refurbishment work that might be needed now to make the building useable, and possible structural issues which might arise in the future. It was understood that a survey had been carried out in 2009 which had highlighted a number of items which needed attention.  
In discussion it was questioned whether there was a need for the Beacon Centre when youth provision could take place elsewhere,



and the response to the consultation had been quite small compared to the population of the village, so it was suggested that the outcome did not necessarily reflect the views of a majority of residents. There was also concern about the parish council having a financial involvement in the centre when the condition of the building was unknown, and there could be significant costs involved in repairing and maintaining the structure in future. It was pointed out that the previous Beacon Centre Management Committee had encountered maintenance problems, which had proved a stumbling block in endeavours to keep the centre open.

Elliott Bance confirmed that Aspreys were prepared to consider any suggestions for the future of the centre, depending on what the community wanted, and would not expect the parish council to take on an unlimited liability in regard to the centre. Graham Glenn said that if the lease was transferred to another organisation, WSCC would need to be assured that any organisation taking on the lease had a robust governance structure, and WSCC might consider transferring the lease for a limited period rather than the full term of the lease. WSCC might be prepared to offer some financial assistance for an initial year or so to help a management group get the centre up and running, but WSCC would not contribute to ongoing maintenance or any reconfiguration of the building, having regard to the considerable cost savings WSCC would have to make in the coming years. The building had been maintained by WSCC on a Health and Safety basis over recent years, but he was not aware of any major work that was required. The building might for example need re-roofing in 10-15 years. WSCC could moth ball the building or assign a sub-lease to an organisation which was capable of running it sustainably.

Graham Glenn pointed out that this was fundamentally a landlord/tenant issue, which WSCC and Aspreys would have to resolve, and any organisation taking over a lease or sub-lease would need to be a reliable tenant.

It was agreed that the outcome of the community engagement exercise had been positive, and that the formation of a group interested in taking on the management of the centre was a significant step forward.

It was agreed that the council had fulfilled its remit to undertake a community engagement exercise, and should now leave the management committee to take discussions forward with WSCC and Aspreys.

Ian Weir would send contact details for the management committee to Graham Glenn and Elliott Bance so that they could arrange to meet representatives as soon as possible.

IW  
GG/EB

Any future financial support for the centre would be considered at a later date if the management committee were successful in securing a sustainable future for the Beacon Centre.

The committee:

- a) NOTED the outcome of the community engagement exercise and the formation of a management committee of local volunteers, who would take the project forward
- b) NOTED the position of WSCC and Aspreys outlined at the meeting, and expressed their thanks to Elliott Bance and Graham Glenn for attending, and
- c) RESOLVED that the Parish Council would be asked to note the above.

5. **Tree Planting; Update.** Phil Mead reported that twenty five trees would be planted this year, in Farm Close, Clayton Avenue and Mackie Avenue. Further planting would be carried out in Mackie Avenue in 2014/15 as the project had been over-subscribed. One tree had died in Bonywood Road, and this would be replaced at no cost. An article would be published in the December 2013 thanking residents for their contributions to the street tree planting.
6. **Hanging Baskets.** RESOLVED that the quotation from Annies Baskets for 28 lamp post baskets for 2014 should be accepted, the colour scheme to be blue, yellow and red.
7. **Parking Working Group: Update.** Network Rail, WSCC and MSDC had been sent a copy of the report. WSCC were progressing the recommendations, and a meeting was being arranged with MSDC. Network Rail had suggested a double deck car park at the station, which was not a viable option, and Ian Weir would contact Network Rail to see if any other options were available.
8. **Finger Post Ockley Lane.** The oak post was still being seasoned, but it was hoped that the new post would be installed before the end of the year.
9. **Footpaths.**
  - a) **Footpath 12k.** A meeting had been held with the WSCC County Councillor and Rights of Way Manager, and it had been agreed that remedial works were required. The landowner had consented to access, the work was out to tender, and should be undertaken in May 2014. The question of diverting the path was not being pursued.
  - b) **Cyclical Inspection.** The nine month's cyclical inspection was underway, and Leslie Campbell was liaising with the new WSCC Access Ranger.
  - c) **Rights of Way.** Future reports would be entitled Rights of Way rather than Footpaths.

PM

C

IW

LC

C

**10. WSCC Consultation on Highways and Transport draft Works Programme.**

The letter dated 9 October 2013 from WSCC was considered. The committee had no comments on the proposals.

**11. TRO Lodge Lane.** The committee had no comments.

**12. Meeting Dates 2014.** The following meeting dates were agreed:

Monday 3 February

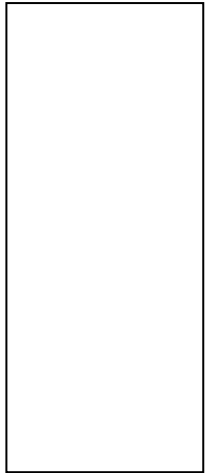
Monday 28 April

Monday 30 June

Monday 1 September

Monday 3 November.

**13. Date of Next Meeting.** 3 February 2014 at 7.30 pm.



There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....