

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **GROUND AND ENVIRONMENT** Committee held on 28 November 2016 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Jane Baker  
Peter Gibbons  
Bill Hatton  
Darryl Sinclair  
Ian Weir

In attendance: Colin Hunt – Locum Parish Clerk  
Tracy Bates – Acting Assistant Clerk (AAC)  
Phil Mead  
Penny Wadsworth  
1 member of the Public

### **16/526 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Leslie Campbell and Kate Bailey. Apologies were also received from Tony Copeland. Also absent was Georgia Cheshire.

### **16/527 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **MINUTES**

**16/528 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 8 September 2016.

There were no matters arising.

### **16/529 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**16/530 OFFICER'S REPORT.** Noted.

**16/531 HASSOCKS HUB.** Members were asked to consider the continued use of the Adastra Community Pavilion by Hassocks Hub as a Youth Club.

The Committee welcomed the news that the Youth Club has been well attended and also that the provision of the Pavilion by Hassocks Parish Council (HPC) has enabled this project to get off the ground. It was also noted that two Councillors have worked extremely hard as volunteers of the Hassocks Hub to help to set up and run the Youth Club.

It was felt that long term continued use of the Pavilion free of charge did suggest an unfair advantage to the Youth Club over other youth groups in the village, and some discussion took place regarding this concern. It was noted that HPC has actively supported the need for a Youth Club and Youth provision in the village, and the creation of the club has been a notably positive achievement which has been partly due to the involvement of HPC.

Therefore any future decisions made about the Youth Club must bear this in mind. It was also noted that Cllr Kate Bailey was absent from the meeting, and as she is directly involved in the Hassocks Hub and Youth Club, any discussions around future decisions would be better informed with Cllr Bailey's input.

The Acting Assistant Clerk (AAC) was asked about current charges and advised that commercial hirers and an existing pre-school community group were charged at £8.80 per hour. Charges for sports clubs varied but charges were in line with those applied by Mid Sussex District Council.

It was unanimously AGREED that the use of the Pavilion by the Youth Club until July 2017 should continue as per the current arrangements and free of charge. The situation post July 2017 would be reviewed at a future G&E meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the Hassocks Hub should continue to use the Pavilion under the current arrangements and without charge until July 2017.

**16/532** The Chairman informed the Committee that new information had been received directing that Item 12 on the Agenda would now need to be considered in confidence at the end of the meeting.

**16/533** **ADASTRA COMMUNITY PAVILION.** Members were asked to consider three options for the replacement of the flooring in the main communal area of the Pavilion.

The Committee were advised that new information had been obtained suggesting that the flooring previously selected (28 April 2016 Minute ref: 16/286), was not considered robust enough to withstand the heavy duty use from sports footwear. The AAC informed Members that sports clubs are asked to remove footwear and generally this is adhered to, however cannot always be guaranteed. Therefore two further options of more suitable flooring were considered by the Committee.

Atlas 40 Altro Safety Flooring. Spike Resistant	£4451.17 plus VAT
Contract Carpet Tiles	£1638.33 plus VAT (price supplied in April 2016)

Members discussed the two options. Cllr Jane Baker queried the possibility of underfloor heating which had previously been raised as a possibility given the high costs of the current climate control system in the Pavilion. It was noted that a PIR sensor has now been fitted to the existing system which means that the system is only activated when the building is in use. The Climate Control system has also had recently been fully serviced and the filter had been replaced, this should make it more efficient, although it would be a year before this was confirmed.

The AAC was asked about current users of the Pavilion and any impact on suitability of flooring. It is believed that any hirers who carry out activities on the floor supply their own matting given the poor current condition of the existing flooring, although this could not be confirmed.

Consideration was given as to whether it would be more economical to install carpet tiles with a view to replacing them every four years. The hygiene aspect of carpet tiles was a concern, alongside the fact that the existing carpet tiles had proved not to be fit for purpose.

It was agreed that the Altro Safety Flooring would be easier to keep clean. It was noted that information as to the warranty provided with both types of flooring would be useful, however the AAC did not have this to hand.

After some discussion it was AGREED that the Altro Safety Flooring was specifically designed for the purpose and that Carpet Tiles had already been proven not to be suitable in terms of hygiene and appearance over time.

**RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders in this instance to remove the need to provide three quotations for each flooring. Three contractors were asked to quote initially in April and these quotations were considered. Disco Carpets was approved for the initial work and has been asked to provide additional quotes following the review. It would be deemed as unprofessional and unfair to all contractors to start the quotation process again in terms of the time already taken in providing the original quotations.

**RESOLVED** to approve the installation of Atlas 40 Altro Safety Flooring by Disco Carpets at a cost of £4451.17 plus VAT.

**RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of four barrier mats at a total cost of £588 plus VAT.

#### **16/534     ADASTRA PARK TREES**

534.1     Members were asked to consider a request for the thinning and reshaping of two Maple Trees in Adastra Park overhanging 15 Parkside, Hassocks. The request was for the removal of four branches from 1 Maple and 3 major branches from a second Maple which heavily overhang 15 Parkside. A quote for this work had been received from James Wilson Tree Care, as a continuation to recently approved work to the same group of trees bordering 13 Parkside.

The Committee discussed the above request and it was considered in the light that work had recently been approved on one of the Maple Trees at the request of a neighbouring resident to 15 Parkside. It was AGREED therefore that it would be appropriate to approve this current request on the agreement of the resident to pay half of the cost.

**RESOLVED** to approve the work to two Maple trees in Adastra Park bordering 15 Parkside as follows:

- removal of four branches up to 30 feet high to main union points on Maple 1
- removal of three branches up to 30 feet high back to a union, and the reshaping of the canopy on Maple 2.

The above work to be undertaken by James Wilson Tree Care at a total cost of £550. £275 to be met by Hassocks Parish Council and £275 to be paid by the resident.

534.2     It was proposed by Cllr Ian Weir that the Clerk could have some delegated powers to make decisions on similar requests for Tree Work in Adastra Park in consultation with the Tree Warden. Cllr Bill Hatton felt that the trees in Adastra Park were a unique feature of the park and that any decisions made regarding these trees should be a Committee decision. After some discussion it was AGREED that all requests from residents for work to Adastra Park trees would be decided by Committee.

#### **16/535     FLORAL DISPLAYS / HANGING BASKETS**

Quotations had been received by three contractors for the supply, installation and maintenance of hanging baskets to be displayed outside various businesses in Hassocks

from 2017 – 2019. One contractor was only able to quote for supply and therefore this was not comparable.

The same contractors had also been asked to provide quotations for the supply and maintenance of lamp post floral baskets for Hassocks in 2017 - 2019.

Members were asked to consider the two comparable quotes and to approve a contractor for the supply and maintenance of both hanging baskets and lamp post baskets.

It was agreed that fortnightly maintenance would be required for the Hanging Baskets and the comparative quotes were as follows:

**31 Hanging Baskets** (Supply, install and maintain)

- Greenscape Landscapes £ 1466.79 for 2017
- Annies Baskets/ Blue Star maintenance £ 2782.25 for 2017

**20 Lampost Baskets** (Plant, install and maintain)

- Greenscape Landscapes £ 1169.00 for 2017
- Annie's Baskets/Blue Star maintenance £ 6482.60 for 2017

The above quotations were considered and compared in detail.

**RESOLVED** to approve the appointment of Greenscape Landscapes for the supply, installation and maintenance of both hanging baskets and lamp post baskets for three years starting from Summer 2017 at a cost of £1466.79 for 2017 for Hanging Baskets and £1169.00 for 2017 for the Lamp post baskets. Increasing by 2% per year. It was AGREED that a formal contract would be drawn up and would include a clause to withdraw or change the contract at the end of 2017 subject to the conditions of a Service Level Agreement.

**16/536** **HASSOCKS BURIAL GROUND.** The Committee was asked to consider a quotation for additional ground maintenance and improvement work to be carried out in the Memorial Garden in Hassocks Burial Ground. It was noted that a considerable amount of time had passed since the original planting in this area and it was now in need of some intensive improvement and maintenance work.

The existing Contractor appointed to maintain the Burial Ground was asked to provide a quote for additional planting and tidying up of the Memorial Garden alongside the application of mulch to the borders. The total cost for all work £2584.00.

**RESOLVED** to approve the additional maintenance and improvement work to the borders in the Memorial Gardens in Hassocks Burial Ground. The work to be carried out by Rooted Garden Services at a total cost of £2584.00

**16/537** **STREET TREES.**

537.1 Phil Mead reported that the Street Trees have been well received in the village again this year, and that an email had been received from a resident thanking HPC and the Village Tree group for the tree outside their property. A refund of £1200 has been received from West Sussex County Council in lieu of trees which had been planted as replacements rather than new trees. The arboriculturalist from WSCC, Jim Mellor, had covered the cost of these trees within his budget which Phil Mead noted was much appreciated by HPC and the Tree Group.

In addition to this Phil Mead reported that a member of The Field Society had passed away and had very generously left a bequest to the Village Tree Group of £1500 for trees to be planted in Manor Avenue

- 537.2 Cllr Peter Gibbons informed the Committee that Hassocks Amenity Association (HAA) was winding up and any outstanding funds or commitments were to be transferred to the Hassocks Community Partnership (HCP). He noted that this was something to bear in mind as the Hassocks Amenity Association have always supported the Village Tree project by means of an annual donation. It was hoped that this would continue under the umbrella of HCP.

Penny Wadsworth excused herself from the meeting – Cllr Ian Weir thanked Penny for her hard work and involvement with the Hanging Basket Project. PW left the room.

### **16/538 PARKLANDS ROAD ALLOTMENTS**

- 538.1 The AAC informed the Committee that a letter had been received from a long standing allotment holder noting that the allotments were looking really good and thanking the G&E Committee for its support. This was well received by members.

#### **Report from Hassocks Allotment Holders Association**

- 538.2 Tony Copeland, Chair of Hassocks Allotment Holders Association (HAHA), was unable to attend the meeting but had provided a written report to be shared with Members. The main points reported were as follows:

- Half of the Blackthorn plants have been planted.
- November 5<sup>th</sup> clear-up day was held as a joint bonfire party with around 50 people enjoying refreshments and sparklers as well as clearing the site of all combustible material.
- New Hoppers for mushroom compost, wood-chip and horse manure completed.
- The new drainage system seems to handle the wet weather very effectively.

- 538.3 Tony Copeland also reported on Allotment Security:

Allotment Security continues to be an issue. Making it as difficult as possible to gain access seems to be the best option.

There has been another break in with six shed doors broken, as far as we know nothing stolen. Intruders exited into the farmer's field and then probably into the area managed by MSDC as the fence is broken down and used regularly as a way out across the fields towards Clayton.

HAHA think there would be some benefit in repairing the fence on the South side of the MSDC land area (where the playground is located). The thought is that this gap is used to get in and out of the farmer's field to the South of the allotments. In the last break-in, to get out, a table had been put up against the Southern allotment fence so that the perpetrators were able to hop on to the table and then over the fence and then through the broken fence on the South side of the MSDC land. All that can be done to make it less easy to gain illegal access will help. Blackthorn is perfect although we will have to wait several years to see the benefit. We are considering buying a camera trap.

The Committee discussed the ongoing problem with allotment security and agreed that in the first instance it was necessary to find out who had responsibility for the fence in question. It was thought that the fence might belong to MSDC. (Action: AAC)

It was also agreed that once this was established, it might be useful to make contact with the landowner of the field south of the allotments and Parklands Play area to ascertain whether any joint strategies could be implemented to deter trespassers.

**16/539**     **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

**Bridleway 3K.** The Committee had received a request from the WSCC Rights of Way Officer asking if Hassocks Parish Council would consider making a contribution towards surfacing improvements on Public Bridleway 3K.

The cost of this work has been estimated at £32,000 and it is hoped by WSCC that the landowner and the British Horse Society would be agreeable to also making a contribution.

Members agreed that this Bridleway is a well-used Right of Way in Hassocks and were positive towards the idea of partnership funding. HPC has a budget for Rights of Way which has not been used this year, and therefore funding was available for this project. The funding would only be provided if improvements to this particular Bridleway went ahead.

**RESOLVED** to approve the provision of £3,500 towards the cost of surface improvements to Bridleway 3K by WSCC.

**16/540**     **MONDAY GROUP DONATION.** Members were asked to consider the payment of an annual grant of £750 to The Monday Group in recognition of the work carried out on behalf of Hassocks Parish Council. All Members unanimously agreed that the work carried out by The Monday Group on behalf of Hassocks Parish Council was very much appreciated and that an annual grant of £750 would be gladly approved.

**RESOLVED** to approve the payment of an annual grant of £750 to The Monday Group in recognition of the ongoing assistance the group provides in maintaining Council assets.

**16/ 541**     **SKATEPARK UPDATE AND PLAY PROVISION.** The Committee were asked to note that a Play Provision/Skate Park review has been delayed for the time being due to a funding review. This has been listed as a high priority matter for the Council.

This was noted by the Committee. Cllr Ian Weir raised the point that Hassocks Parish Council has significant funds in its General Reserves which are available for projects such as the Skate Park and Play Provision review. Therefore Cllr Weir proposed that the G&E Committee made a recommendation to the Policy, Resources & Communications (PR&C) Committee that significant additional funding is ear-marked for this particular project when agreeing the budget for 2017/18. This was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to the PR&C Committee that significant additional funding is ear-marked for the review and provision of a new Skate Park and additional play facilities for older children in Adastra Park.

**16/542**     **URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN.** None

**16/543**     **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** Meeting dates for 2017 are in the process of being finalised. It was thought that the next G&E Meeting would be held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017, although this would be confirmed.

The one member of the Public left the room.

**16/544**     **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS:** In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted Councillors would be referred to the Confidential Agenda. Any members of the public or press are in attendance were requested to withdraw from the meeting in the public interest.

**RESOLVED** the Meeting is closed to the public and press to enable confidential matters to be considered.

**16/545**     **WSCC HIGHWAYS CONTRACT.** Discussed under Confidential

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Signed .....Chairman

Date.....