

HAS SOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENT** Committee held on 30 June 2016 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

PRESENT: Cllrs Peter Gibbons
Leslie Campbell
Ian Weir
Darryl Sinclair

In attendance: Tracy Bates – Acting Assistant Clerk
Tony Copeland
Phil Mead
One member of the Public

APOLOGIES

Cllrs Kate Bailey, Jane Baker, Bill Hatton and Carol Wise.
Georgia Cheshire and Penny Wadsworth.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –There were no declarations of interest.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

16/378 **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Peter Gibbons as Chairman of the Grounds and Environment Committee.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was AGREED to defer the election of a Vice Chair until the next meeting.

MINUTES

16/379 **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 28 April 2016.

Cllr Ian Weir noted that the minutes for the Grounds & Environment meeting had not yet been agreed at Full Council and that minute 16/285 recommending the implementation of a scheme for additional hanging baskets in Hassocks therefore had not been considered. The Committee was advised that this would be taken to the Full Council meeting in July 2016.

It was requested that the Hanging Baskets remain a regular agenda item until further notice.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Sian Phillips spoke about agenda item 7.1. Proposed work to trees in Adastra Park bordering 13 Parkside, Hassocks. Sian was concerned about when the work would take place if it was agreed as she has noticed an increase in work taking place on trees during the growing season. Sian suggested that it would be less damaging to the trees if any

work which involved a severe level of pruning were to be carried out during the dormant season, and asked if the Committee would consider this when approving tree work.

ADASTRA COMMUNITY PAVILION

Cleaning Contract (report previously circulated to all Committee members)

Further to the resolution (minute 16/287) to appoint Bee Clean Cleaning Contractors to clean the Pavilion on a weekly basis initially, subject to review after 3 months, the Committee was invited to consider approving the continuation of this contract. The Acting Assistant Clerk informed the Committee that the contract was working well and all clubs had responded positively to this. The condition of the Pavilion is monitored by the Clerk as part of an ongoing programme and this will continue.

- 16/380** **RESOLVED** to approve the continuation of Bee Clean Cleaning Contractors to clean the Pavilion on a weekly basis as an ongoing contract. Subject to regular monitoring by the Parish Clerk. [Action: Parish Clerk]

ADASTRA PARK

TREES

13 Parkside. The Committee were advised that correspondence has been received from the residents of 13 Parkside asking the Parish Council to consider a request for the reduction in the density of the Sycamore and Maple trees in Adastra Park which border their garden. A proposal and quote for a level of work acceptable to the Parish Council and the Residents was provided, and discussed by the Committee, alongside the request from Sian Phillips regarding the timing of any work. The Committee were advised that the Residents had agreed to contribute to half of the total cost.

- 16/381** **RESOLVED** to approve the lifting of the canopy of the Sycamore by 8-10ft and thinning by 15% to re-establish a gap between the Maple and the Sycamore trees bordering 13 Parkside. To approve the lifting of one or two branches from the Maple if deemed necessary. To approve the work to be carried out by James Wilson Tree Care, the total cost to be met in equal parts by the Residents of 13 Parkside, Hassocks and by the Parish Council. It was AGREED that the work would take place in late Autumn.

Bowling Green.

The Committee were advised that an email has been received from the Adastra Bowls Club asking for permission to take down the remaining Hawthorn Tree and remove the adjacent tree stump situated on the south east corner of the Green in the hedgerow.

Following a discussion, the Committee agreed that the tree could be removed by the Bowls Club, in addition a suggestion was made that the Bowls Club might like to make a contribution towards the Village Tree Fund which provides trees elsewhere in the village.

- 16/382** **RESOLVED** to approve the removal of the Hawthorn Tree and adjacent tree stump in the south-eastern corner of the Bowling Green, to be carried out by the Bowling Club. To ask the Bowling Club if they would consider making a contribution to the Village Tree Fund.

BENCHES

Committee members were asked to consider agreeing a policy for the donation of Memorial Benches in Adastra Park. It was proposed that to provide some consistency and to improve the visual amenity of Adastra Park, future replacement benches and seats are of the same style dependent on location and that families who wish to provide a seat in memory of a loved one are asked to make a donation of a set amount which would cover the purchase of the cost of the seat and the installation. The proposed amount would be £650 for a wooden seat.

This was discussed and it was noted that there are a variety of seats and benches within the park. The three main styles to be continued going forward would be seats made of recyclable materials, as in the play area, wooden Memorial Seats in an agreed style and benches as made by the Monday Group. It was acknowledged by the Committee that families would prefer to see a strong traditional seat in memory of loved ones. The style of seat would be dependent on location and suitability as considered by the Clerk.

A suggested style of Memorial Seat was discussed and it was AGREED that the Alexander Rose 5ft Rose Seat from the Roble Collection (details previously distributed) was a suitable style to use.

- 16/383** **RESOLVED** to approve a policy for the replacement of Memorial Seats and Benches using the same style, as agreed, according to location. To request a donation of £650 towards Memorial Seats from families wishing to have a seat installed.

OAK TREE IN TALBOT FIELD

Members were asked to consider the felling of a dead Oak tree on Talbot Field. If felling is approved the Committee were asked to consider quotations for the work.

It was AGREED that the Oak Tree should be felled in the interests of public safety. Consideration was given as to whether the felled logs should be stacked to create a wildlife haven, however concerns were expressed about the risk to other trees if infected logs were left in situ and also about the risk of the stacks being seen as a climbing area for children to play on.

- 16/384** **RESOLVED** to agree the complete felling of an Oak tree in Talbot Field at a cost of £420.00 and the removal of all wood.

JACK MILL

The Committee were advised that the Parish Council has received correspondence from the owner of Jack Windmill. The restoration works to the Cap are well underway and will be completed during August 2016. The ideal would be if the Sweeps and necessary Brake wheel could also be fitted this year as it is the 150th Anniversary of Jack Mill.

The owner of the Mill has committed to the restoration of Jack from personal funds. The cost of installing the Sweeps and Brake wheel alone is likely to be in the region of £56,000 and the Parish Council was asked if it would consider making a financial contribution to this work.

The owner has offered access for any celebration of Jack's 150th anniversary for any event if the Parish Council wishes to host.

The Committee discussed this request and it was agreed that both Jack and Jill Mills are a significant feature of the Parish and it was noted that the Mills are used in the Parish Council logo. The Committee agreed strongly that the Mills are an integral part of

Hassocks, and visually benefit all residents as well as being a tourist attraction. Therefore serious consideration was given to this request. The Committee recognised the significant cost of restoring Jack Mill and therefore acknowledged that any donation would need to be relative to this. In which case it was noted that any donation the Parish Council made, should be ideally acknowledged publically in some way for the future.

Questions were raised as to whether this type of request has been made of the Parish Council before and to how the Parish Council have been involved with the restoration of Oldlands Mill and Jill Mill. The Committee enquired as to whether any other organisations have been asked to make a contribution i.e. South Downs National Park. This information was not available at the meeting.

It was AGREED that the Parish Clerk would be asked to research the request further and to use this to prepare a paper which could be presented to full Council for consideration. It was AGREED that given the significance of the Windmills in the Parish, the Committee in principle would support a donation of £5,000 towards the installation of the Sweeps to Jack Mill.

16/385 **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that consideration is given to a donation of £5,000 towards the installation of the Sweeps and Brakewheel to Jack Mill, subject to further research by the Parish Clerk. [Action: Parish Clerk/Acting Assistant Clerk]

STREET TREES

Street Trees

Phil Mead reported that a total of 43 trees would be planted as part of the 2016/17 Village Tree Scheme. 7 in Oldlands Avenue, 9 in Queens Drive, 9 in Kings Drive and 10 in Chancellors Park plus 8 additional trees in various locations around the village. This would use a substantial amount of the £10,000 budget allocated for the next three years by Hassocks Parish Council but it was noted that additional money is received in donations and there is still some money left in the budget from the previous year. It was also noted that the Hassocks Amenity Association (HAA) and Hassocks Community Partnership (HCP) have made donations in previous years, and that the HAA have continued to do so every year. It was hoped that the HAA would consider making a donation again for 16/17.

Orchard Lane

Phil Mead had completed a survey of trees along Orchard Lane with regard to planting young Oaks to ensure the presence of trees in the future, as discussed at the Grounds and Environment meeting on 28 April 2016. Phil distributed a sheet with suggested possible sites for two new Oaks and also three Scotts Pines along the Adastra Park boundary with Orchard Lane. (Appendix 1) Phil informed the Committee that Scotts Pines are indigenous to the Hassocks Area. The approximate cost of these replacement trees would be:

150cm Oak - £26.00
175cm Scotts Pine – £180.00

The proposals were discussed and it was noted that it would be preferable for Members to make a site visit to look at suggested locations first hand. If the proposals were to go ahead, a consultation with neighbouring residents should be undertaken to consider any possible impact.

It was also noted that an area of the hedge is also collapsing and requires reinforcing.

It was AGREED that the Tree Warden would be asked to survey the area and to make a report of his views on this area. It was AGREED that the next Grounds & Environment meeting would begin with a site visit at 7pm. [Action: Acting Assistant Clerk]

Grand Avenue

Phil Mead reported that SGN Gas Works have been working along Grand Avenue and the work has necessitated the digging of deep trenches in the grass verges. Phil was concerned that this may have disturbed the tree roots, and some of the trees have been planted recently. Phil asked whether the Parish Council would consider writing a letter to SGN Gas Works bringing this to their attention and asking whether they would make a donation to the Village Tree Fund in lieu of any damage which may have been caused to the trees.

It was AGREED that Phil Mead would draft a letter and this would be finalised and sent out by the Parish Clerk on behalf of Hassocks Parish Council. [Action: Phil Mead/Assistant Parish Clerk]

PARKLANDS ALLOTMENTS

Report from Hassocks Allotment Holders Association.

Tony Copeland gave an update on the drainage and footpath improvements which have been taking place at the Parklands Allotments. The drainage work is 95% complete with one more channel to be put in and the path extension is entering the final phase in the forthcoming weeks. This work has all been carried out by volunteers and Tony extended thanks to Hassocks Parish Council for funding the project. Cllr Ian Weir commented that he had visited the site and was very impressed by the considerable amount of work that had been carried out by the volunteers.

Allotment Security

Tony Copeland reported that there had been two incidents of damage and theft within the allotments since the last meeting. The first incident occurred at the end of April 2016 and involved the theft of 3 strimmers and petrol cans from sheds, the second incident was in the last week and seven sheds had been damaged although nothing had been stolen. Both incidents had been reported to the Police. It appears that entry is gained by climbing up the lower limbs of an Oak tree which is situated adjacent to the perimeter fence, and the Committee were asked if the lower limbs could be removed to prevent this method of access. A survey of the perimeter is to be carried out by Hassocks Allotment Holders Association to establish whether there are any other areas of possible access.

It was AGREED that the Tree Warden would be asked to make a site visit to inspect the tree in question. The Acting Assistant Clerk would contact the Mid Sussex District Council Tree Officer regarding any Tree Protection Orders.

16/386 RESOLVED that the necessary branches should be removed subject to any the appropriate planning requirements being met.

Additional security measures were also discussed and approved.

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Bridleway 3K

Cllr Leslie Campbell updated the Committee following correspondence from the West Sussex County Council Access Ranger regarding Bridleway 3K. There are concerns over the condition of Public Bridleway 3K and Cllr Campbell informed the Committee that this Bridleway is well used by walkers and riders alike. A request had been received from the Access Ranger for the Parish Council to consider making a financial contribution towards the improvement of this Bridleway. This would ideally be in partnership with the landowner, the British Horse Society and WSCC. The Committee discussed this and questions were raised as to the amount required and how such a partnership would work.

It was AGREED to support the request in principle. The Parish Clerk would be asked to gather further information for consideration at the next Grounds & Environment Committee meeting.

Footpath 27C

Cllr Campbell requested that the Parish Office followed up the proposed improvements to Footpath 27C by WSCC as they do not appear to have taken place to date. (Action: Acting Assistant Clerk)

Footpath 5K

A request was made for an update on the re-opening of Footpath 5K. The Acting Assistant Clerk will follow this up with WSCC. (Acting Assistant Clerk)

SKATEPARK UPDATE

It was noted that external funding opportunities are still being explored by the Parish Clerk and a further meeting would be arranged once this exercise has been completed.

Cllr Peter Gibbons requested that the Skatepark remains a regular agenda item until further notice.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 8 September 2016 at 7.30pm. To be preceded with a site visit to Orchard Lane/Adastra Park at 7pm.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.14 pm.

SignedChairman

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