

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **GROUND AND ENVIRONMENT** Committee held on 8 September 2016 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Kate Bailey  
Jane Baker  
Leslie Campbell  
Peter Gibbons  
Bill Hatton  
Darryl Sinclair  
Ian Weir

In attendance: Jo Whitcombe – Parish Clerk  
Tracy Bates – Acting Assistant Clerk (AAC)  
Georgia Cheshire  
Tony Copeland  
Phil Mead  
One member of the Public

### **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Carol Wise

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

**16/419 RESOLVED** unanimously to elect Cllr Jane Baker as Chairman of the Grounds and Environment Committee.

### **MINUTES**

**16/420 RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 30 June 2016.

There were no matters arising.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Geoff Moore spoke in relation to Play Provision in Hassocks for over 8's. Mr Moore referred to the report submitted by Mr Chris Hobbs, Mr Chris Lee and himself explaining that it was intended to be a positive contributory document for the Council to consider. Mr Moore expressed that he hoped that it would be possible to set up a meeting specifically to discuss provision for the over 8's in Hassocks as had been recommended. Mr Moore also informed the Committee that his email address as shown in the report was incorrect and that he would provide the correct address to the office.

### **OFFICER'S REPORT**

SGN Gas Works. Phil Mead asked whether there had been any response from SGN Gas Works regarding the letter sent on 21 July 2016 with reference to the gas works in Grand Avenue and potential damage to street trees. The AAC informed the Committee that no response had been received. It was proposed that this should be followed up by telephone. [Action: AAC]

Adastra Park. The Clerk informed the Committee that there had been positive feedback from residents regarding the new benches in Adastra Park. Cllr Ian Weir noted that it was disappointing to hear that so many benches in the park were damaged, and it was good to see that these were being dealt with so quickly.

### **PLAY FACILITIES IN ADASTRA PARK**

The Committee noted and welcomed the document and it was felt that this was a very good report. Cllr Peter Gibbons pointed out that Clayton Recreational Ground (managed by Mid Sussex District Council) had not been included, although it was recognised that the play equipment there is for under 8's. It was discussed as to whether the goal posts remain up throughout the summer at Clayton, however it was generally thought these were removed out of season. Cllr Ian Weir also noted that the survey carried out had not included specific reference to the Skatepark, and that this might have been useful. Mr Moore informed the Committee that Mr Hobbs was very open to comments about the document, however also referred the Committee to the fact that only 4 of the 160 respondents asked for improvements to the Skatepark.

There was general agreement that recreational facilities for older children was indeed an area that required reviewing. Georgia Cheshire pointed out that this gap had been noted in the Neighbourhood Plan documentation and also informed the Committee that some preliminary research work had been carried out previously on behalf of the Hassocks Amenity Association. Georgia Cheshire offered to forward this to the office for information.

Cllr Kate Bailey briefly updated the Committee on Streetmate and the Hassocks Hub. A survey had been carried out over the summer on what young people wanted to see in the village. It was agreed by the Committee that the Youth Work project and findings should be included and considered in conjunction with the provision of recreational facilities in Hassocks.

The four members of the Public left the meeting.

It was proposed and AGREED that a meeting should be arranged between interested parties in order to focus specifically on recreational provision for over eights in Hassocks. The meeting was arranged for Wednesday 2 November 2016 subject to this date being convenient for Mr Hobbs, Mr Moore and Mr Lee. [Action: Parish Clerk]

### **TREE PLANTING IN ORCHARD LANE/ADASTRA PARK**

The Committee discussed the proposals as presented by Phil Mead at the Grounds & Environment meeting on 30 June 2016 regarding the planting of young Oaks and Scotts Pines on the boundary of Adastra Park and Orchard Lane in preparation for the future loss of aging trees.

Following a site visit prior to the meeting, the Committee expressed in favour of the proposals to plant two young Oaks in the gaps as noted in the North Field Car Park in the hedging bordering Orchard Lane.

The Committee also expressed in favour of planting two young trees in gaps in the hedgerow bordering Orchard Lane north of the Car Park. However it was agreed that residents in Orchard Lane directly opposite the proposed planting site would be informed of the decision and their preference as to the planting of young Oaks or Scotts Pines would be sought.

Costs were discussed and the AAC informed the Committee that there were available funds in the Grounds Projects budget and the Environment Projects budget, which could be used for the planting of additional trees. Phil Mead supplied the AAC with two quotes for the supply of new trees.

It was noted that a tree in the far north-west corner of the North Field required staking and it was requested that this was included in the costing.

It was AGREED that quotes would be obtained for the supply, installation and staking of four new trees and the staking of the tree as specified in the north east corner of the North Field. [Action: AAC]

It was AGREED that the adjacent neighbours to the proposed planting site in Orchard Lane, would be contacted requesting their preference of tree between a Scotts Pine and an Oak. [Action: AAC]

### **ADASTRA BOWLING GREEN**

Members were asked to consider a request received from Adastra Bowls Club for the purchase of materials to maintain and treat the Bowling Green at as cost of £929.90 plus VAT. (Details as shown in the Officer's Report previously circulated).

**16/421** **RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure of £929.90 to cover the cost of materials required to maintain and treat the Adastra Bowling Green, to be taken from the Bowling Green budget.

### **HANGING BASKETS**

*At the full Parish Council meeting on 12 July 2016, it was resolved to ratify the recommendation of the Grounds & Environment Committee (28 April 2016. Minute Ref: 16/285) for the implementation and funding of a scheme for additional hanging baskets attached to businesses in Hassocks. It was also agreed at the same Parish Council meeting that Penny Wadsworth be co-opted onto the Grounds & Environment Committee to manage the initiative in conjunction with the Parish Clerk. (Minute Ref: 16/390).*

Penny Wadsworth reported that this scheme was underway and had received a positive response from businesses in Hassocks. Forms had been distributed to all local businesses for completion by those who wished to commit to the scheme, part of the agreement includes taking liability for the baskets outside their business. To date 29 completed forms had been returned. A small number of businesses are unfortunately restricted by their leases and had experienced some difficulty contacting Landlords to discuss this. Those businesses were unable to go ahead with agreeing to baskets being erected, despite expressing an interest.

The Parish Clerk informed the Committee that efforts are being made to contact a particular Landlord with regard to other matters and it maybe that the hanging baskets could be discussed with them at the same time.

The next stage is for Penny Wadsworth and the Parish Clerk to obtain three quotes for the supply and installation of the baskets. [Action: PW/Parish Clerk]

### **STREET TREES**

Phil Mead reported that he had been contacted by Jim Mellor, West Sussex County Council (WSSC) Arboriculturalist, regarding the Tree Planting for 2016/17. Jim Mellor has very kindly offered to cover the cost of 8 trees out of his budget for this year. This would amount to a saving of £1,200 from the Hassocks Parish Council Tree Budget.

Unfortunately, an invoice for £6,450 had already been submitted to Hassocks Parish Council by WSSC and had been paid in full, which causes some complications. Phil Mead informed the Committee that the AAC and Jim Mellor were looking into a way to resolve this if at all possible. It was noted that Jim Mellor has been of great assistance to the Parish Council with the Tree Planting Scheme.

### **PARKLANDS ROAD ALLOTMENTS**

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

Tony Copeland, Chairman of Hassocks Allotment Holders Association (HAHA) reported that the major projects of the allotment car park extension, the allotment path and the drainage had all been completed by the HAHA volunteers. He thanked Hassocks Parish Council for the financial support with this.

Tony Copeland and Cllr Jane Baker had carried out an allotment inspection in August and several plots were recorded as below an acceptable standard of cultivation. Letters had been sent to these tenants requesting an improvement. The AAC informed the Committee that there were six people on the current waiting list.

Cllr Baker expressed concern that the Tenancy Agreement focusses on cultivating fruit and vegetables, and suggested that consideration could be given to the cultivation of flowers too. A question was also raised as to the progress into research on allowing bees on the Allotments.

The AAC informed the Committee that the Parish Clerk and Administration Assistant had started to look at the Allotment Tenancy Agreement in conjunction with Tony Copeland, with a view to preparing a revised Tenancy Agreement for consideration by the Grounds & Environment Committee over the forthcoming year.

#### **Allotment Security**

Tony Copeland reported that there had been another break in at the Allotments, resulting in sheds being forced open and tools stolen. It was thought that entry was being gained by climbing up trees and over the fence at identified sites on the north and east borders of the Allotments.

It was proposed and AGREED to install defensive planting at agreed sites to discourage unauthorised entry to the Allotments over the fence.

### **ALLOTMENT RENT**

#### **Allotment Rent 2016/17**

At a meeting of the Grounds Committee on 11 March 2015, a formula as proposed by Hassocks Allotment Holders Association was agreed for calculating allotment rents which composes of three elements, plot rent, water installation, and water charges. (minute 7b). Using the agreed formulae, applying inflation to the rent for a half plot for 206/17 would make a total increase of 23p bringing the rent to £34.23. Therefore it was RECOMMENDED that the Allotment Rent for 2016/17 remained at £34.00 per half plot per year.

**16/422** **RESOLVED** that rent for Parklands Road Allotments would remain at £34.00 per half plot and £17.00 per quarter plot for the year commencing 1 October 2016.

#### **Allotment Rent 2017/18**

Following a review of the water charges the Committee were informed that there had been minimal change in the charges between 2013 and 2016. Therefore it was RECOMMENDED that the £5.00 charge included in the rent formulae remained unchanged when calculating rent for the year commencing 1 October 2017.

**16/423** **RESOLVED** that the water charge component of the rents for Parklands Road Allotments for the year commencing 1 October 2017 remain at £5.00 per half plot. It was AGREED that this would be reviewed in for October 2017 for rents from October 2018.

#### **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

##### **Footpath 27C**

Cllr Leslie Campbell reported that he would be joining Cllr Ian Weir for an inspection of the improvement works to Footpath 27C, and hoped it may be possible to speak to the owners of Lagwood and Pheasant Field at the same.

##### **Footpath 19K**

Cllr Campbell reported that the footbridge on Footpath 19K near to Mackie Avenue, Hassocks, had been significantly damaged. This has been reported to WSCC and Sue Phillipson, WSCC Access Ranger, is in contact with contractors as to the possibility of the bridge being repaired. Cllr Campbell expressed concerns that the footpath will need to be temporarily closed if the bridge is beyond repair.

#### **SKATEPARK UPDATE**

The Parish Clerk reported that the application for funding for the Skatepark from the Tesco Bags of Help Scheme had been unsuccessful. However, some information on further possible funding sources had been provided by Mid Sussex District Council, which the Parish Clerk will forward on. West Sussex County Councillor Andy Petch is also to explore possible funding through WSCC.

Georgia Cheshire raised the possibility of lottery funding and the Parish Clerk welcomed any offers of help to gain funding. Cllr Peter Gibbons informed the Committee that he was awaiting a reply from Ian Tovey as to whether Mr Tovey might be able to provide help with sourcing funding.

The Committee were informed that Cllr Sue Hatton had spoken to the Headteacher of Windmills School regarding problems experienced over the summer. Skateboarders have been entering the school premises after school and during the holidays to use goal posts

and other metal posts as skate equipment. Consequently, this equipment had to be removed. The youths involved had told the Headteacher that the facilities in Adastra Park Skatepark were not exciting enough.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday October 24 2016 at 7.30pm.

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

Signed .....Chairman

Date.....