

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **GROUND AND ENVIRONMENT** Committee held on 27 February 2020 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Cllrs Jane Baker, Kristian Berggreen, Leslie Campbell, Frances Gaudencio, Peter Gibbons, David Hammond, Bill Hatton, Frank Rylance and Alex Simmons.

In attendance: Tracy Forte – Deputy Clerk

GE19/93 APOLOGIES. Cllrs Georgia Cheshire and Kate Bailey, and co-opted member Tony Copeland.

GE19/94 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. There were no declarations of interest.

GE19/95 MINUTES.

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 21 January 2020.

GE19/96 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. There were no members of the Public present.

GE19/97 PARKLANDS ROAD ALLOTMENTS. There was nothing to report.

GE19/98 ADASTRA PARK MEMORIAL TREE REQUEST. Members were invited to approve a request from the family of Pearl Dixie to plant a tree in her memory in Adastra Park. Pearl Dixie, lived in Hassocks and sadly died, aged 10, from cancer, in 2017. Members were fully supportive of the request, and understood the family's wish to ideally locate the tree near to the Play Area in the North Field. Members were happy with this suggestion, however it was noted that the forthcoming play area improvements would mean that the planting would have to be postponed until after the work had been completed. Therefore Members agreed that they wished to offer the family the choice of an alternative location should they wish to plant a tree in the immediate future. The Garden of Remembrance was agreed as the best alternative location and it was suggested that a Winter Flowering Cherry could be a suitable tree.

Cllr Baker expressed concerns about the possible risk of damage to any tree planted and informed Members about a protective fencing used by other authorities to reduce this risk. It was suggested that whilst the family would fund the tree as proposed, the Parish Council should look into funding the fencing. This was supported by all Members.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase and planting of a tree, with a plaque, in Adastra Park by the family of Pearl Dixie in her memory. The two agreed locations were in the vicinity of the North Park Play Area or the Garden of Remembrance, and it was agreed that the final location would be chosen by the family, with the exact siting to be decided in conjunction with Cllr Baker and the Clerk.

It was **AGREED** that a Winter Flowering Cherry was the preferred species for the Garden of Remembrance. However should the agreed location for the tree be in the North Field, a suitable species would be suggested by Cllr Baker in consultation with the family based on the final location.

- GE19/99** **ADASTRA PAVILION FURNITURE.** Members had previously resolved that a budget of up to £1600 be used for the purchase of suitable replacement furniture for the Community Pavilion as deemed appropriate by the Clerk. . (Min Ref: **16/288**). Due to unforeseen circumstances, this was not progressed and the resolution has now lapsed. Over time the furniture has deteriorated further and requires replacing at the earliest opportunity. Therefore Members were invited to approve the expenditure of a budget of up to £1750 to be used for the purchase of suitable replacement furniture for the Community Pavilion as deemed appropriate by the Clerk.
- GE19/100** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure of a budget of up to £1750 to be used for the purchase of suitable replacement furniture for the Community Pavilion as deemed appropriate by the Clerk. Expenditure to be taken from the Pavilion Budget.
- GE19/101** **BURIAL GROUND FEES.** Members were invited to consider proposed increases to the Burial Ground fees for 2020 based on a 1.78% increase in CPI between September 2018 and September 2019. It was proposed that all fees were increased with the exception of Search Fees and fees relating to Deed of Grant amendments and it was recommended that these fees remain at the same level.
- One Member queried the charges for the burial of children under 16, and informed the Committee that other local authorities did not charge for burial plots for children. It was discussed as to whether this should also be applied to the charges for Hassocks Parish Council.
- Members were supportive of exploring this proposal and therefore it was **AGREED** that the Deputy Clerk would provide a report at the next meeting allowing Members to make a decision on whether to remove charges for the burial of children under 16.
- It was therefore **AGREED** to postpone the approval of any changes to the Burial Ground Fees until this matter had been considered.
- GE19/102** **ADASTRA PARK MASTERPLAN.** Cllr Frances Gaudencio updated Members on the recent Play Area Consultation and the current situation with the project. The Consultation had been a successful event and was attended by approximately 80 parents and children, the majority being primary aged. The responses to the proposals were very positive and there was a great sense of excitement and appreciation. The Parish Council staff and Cllr Gaudencio had attended the event, along with the Play Consultant managing the project. Cllr Gaudencio expressed her thanks to the staff for their support at the event.
- The Park Working Group had since met to discuss the next steps, and the Clerk has now been asked to raise a Purchase Order to confirm the contract with HAGS. Following the consultation, it was agreed that no changes would be made to the proposed designs. Due to the recent weather conditions, unfortunately the start date for the project may have to be delayed until May/June, although the aim is still to complete before the summer holidays.

Cllr Gaudencio informed the Committee that the Clerk had reported that on completion of the work, the ground surrounding the two play areas would most likely be very muddy and require significant remedial works such as seeding. This would have to be reviewed nearer the time.

It had been agreed that once a schedule of works had been received from HAGS, Cllr Gaudencio and the Clerk would agree the process of publicity and communication of the project to the Public.

The drainage in the park continues to be a concern, and it has been agreed that the Clerk would contact specialists to endeavour to reach a clear understanding of the best course of action to address the drainage problem. This would be reported back to Council. Cllr David Hammond is to explore methods for the natural recycling of water.

GE19/103 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS / LIGHT UP HASSOCKS 2020.

GE19/103.1 Festive Lighting Contract. Members were informed that the existing Festive Lighting contract had come to an end and that four companies had been contacted with regard to providing Festive Lighting in Hassocks for 2020 onwards, all of whom had confirmed an interest in providing a quote for the contract. Members were invited to consider whether to continue with the existing specification for the Festive Lighting Contract or if any amendments were required. Members were informed that £3,750 has been allocated for Christmas Lights for 2020.

As background, Members had been reminded that in March 2016, at the request of the Light Up Hassocks Committee, Hassocks Parish Council agreed to take over the responsibility for the funding and organisation of the festive Lights in Hassocks. Previously this had been the responsibility of the Light Up Hassocks (LUH) committee. Around the same time, the LUH Committee disbanded and the Sussex Vale Rotary Club took over the organisation of the LUH evening event and have indicated that they will continue this role for 2020.

There was a mixed feeling amongst the Committee about the previous festive light displays in Hassocks, some Members felt it was well balanced for the size of the village, and others felt that Hassocks could benefit from a more substantial display. It was recognised that in order to increase the display, further funding would be required and there was some discussion as to whether this should come from the Parish Council reserves or whether residents/traders might be willing to contribute. Historically endeavours by previous LUH Committees to encourage contributions from traders/residents had proved unsuccessful which was why Hassocks PC had been asked to take over the funding of the lights in 2016.

After some discussion it was AGREED that the four contractors should be asked to provide quotes based on the existing specifications and also any alternative displays that could be provided within the agreed budget. The Deputy Clerk to report back at a future meeting.

GE19/103.2 Tree Lights. Members were informed that the sections of the 3 sets of Tree Lights on trees (London Planes) along Keymer Road were damaged in 2018, and that these along with the Tree Lights on a tree outside of the URC Church had all been disconnected in 2019 due to the street lighting contractor, SSE, changing the enforcement of regulations of attachments to lighting columns. The lights are currently

still in situ and would cost in the region of £625 plus VAT to remove, these could however be stored for possible future use.

GE19/103.4 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the expenditure of £625 to remove the tree lights currently in situ. £470 to be taken from remaining 2019 Christmas Lights budget and £155 from the reactive work budget.

GE19/103.5 Lighting Repairs. Members were informed that the Merry Christmas Hassocks Frame has started to fail in sections, which is to be expected over a period of time. It had been recommended that the light is either fully refurbished or a new light is purchased as replacing sections as they fail is not a reliable option to ensure a fully functioning light each year. Members were presented with 3 options:

Refurbishment. The refurbishment would constitute the removal of all the rope light from the frame and the re-roping in new LED rope light (new colours can be chosen). This would also include replacement cabling etc. The negative of this is the cost of labour and materials. Guide price approx. £1200.00 plus VAT.

New Bespoke Motif. This would be to the exact requirements including specific text, logos and colours. Guide price approx. £1850.00 plus VAT.

Catalogue Merry Christmas. A design could be selected from a catalogue, finding a generic motif suitable for the display area and colours could still be chosen. Guide price approx. £1200 - £1500 plus VAT.

Members were invited to consider the various options and agreed that keeping the original frame was the preferred option, and therefore it was **AGREED** that a complete refurbishment would be the preferred route if a guarantee was provided with the work. The Deputy Clerk would explore this option further and report back.

GE19/103.6 Light Up Hassocks Road Closure Request. Members were invited to consider a draft road closure application for the Annual Light Up Hassocks event to be held on 4 December 2020. (Appendix 6). Members are also requested to note that following requests from Traders and Residents, the date for Light Up Hassocks 2020 has been moved a week closer to Christmas and will take place on 4 December 2020.

Members fully supported the road closure application.

GE19/104 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW). There was nothing to report.

GE19/105 URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda. There were no urgent matters.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

GE19/106 It was **RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted Councillors will be referred to the Confidential Agenda. If any members of the public or press are in attendance they will be requested to withdraw from the meeting in the public interest.

GE 19/107 MINUTES. RESOLVED to accept the confidential minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 21 January 2020.

GE 19/108 DATE OF NEXT MEETING Wednesday 25 March 2020 at 7.30pm

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

SignedChair Date.....