

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENT Committee held on 24 October 2019 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Cllrs Jane Baker, Leslie Campbell, Frances Gaudencio, David Hammond, Kate Bailey, Georgia Cheshire, Peter Gibbons and Frank Rylance.

In attendance: Ian Cumberworth – Clerk

GE19/58 APOLOGIES. Cllr Bill Hatton and co-opted Member Tony Copeland

GE19/59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. There were no declarations of interest.

GE19/60 MINUTES.

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 26 September 2019.

GE19/61 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. There were no members of the Public present.

GE19/62 OFFICER'S REPORT.

Members noted the Officer's report as in the agenda.

Festive Lighting - Members noted that the company had attained the required accreditation and that the licence had been approved to install the display this year.

Adastra Play area - Members noted the recent repairs undertaken by the Monday Group on the fencing and wooden play equipment in the small children's play area.

GE19/63 PARKLANDS ROAD ALLOTMENTS - Nothing to report

GE19/64 MSDC ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY CONSULTATION. Members duly noted the current consultation.

GE19/65 GROUNDS & ENVIRONMENT BUDGET INITIATIVES 2020/21

The Clerk introduced the report setting out the current balances held for earmarked reserves and sought members views as to whether any further initiatives should be identified/considered for the forthcoming year's (2020/21) budget setting process.

Members were informed that a similar report was considered recently by the Policy Resources & Communications Committee, who felt that although they did not identify any additional initiatives some of the descriptors used to identify the funds could be expanded. Members were also informed that there may be an opportunity to allocate additional funds to existing initiatives and new initiatives, if any, as part of the forthcoming budget setting process.

Members discussed various reserve funds and sought clarification on their purpose, the consensus was that no new initiatives should be suggested at this stage but further allocation of funds to existing initiatives be considered as part of the budget setting process.

ADASTRA PARK MASTERPLAN - Members were invited to consider the recommended proposals from the Park Working Group to progress the next phases of the masterplan in relation to the current children's play area and the proposed older children's play area at the top of the South field near the Garden of Remembrance. The Working Group is made up primarily of members from the Grounds and Environment Committee and one co-opted member

The Working group had identified two key areas they wished to progress in the next financial year. The first area related to the existing play facility to improve the play value and widen the range of equipment to be suitable from the current 0 - 8 yrs. to 0 - 12 yrs. The group proposed that this scheme would be funded from a combination of ring-fenced s106 monies held by Mid Sussex District Council specifically allocated for Adastral Park play space and the Parish Councils reserves. Members were requested to consider a proposed a budget of up to £100,000 (net) in total for this element of the scheme.

The second area Members were requested to consider related to the installation of some older children's play equipment in the vicinity of the skate park possibly in the area previously occupied by the recently felled oak tree (swing/climbing type equipment). In addition the group were recommending a proposal to install a basketball hoop near the existing safety surface area near the skate park. The Working Group Proposed that a budget of £50,000 be allocated for this location.

Members were advised that if these two proposals were approved this would reduce the current held reserves for the Master plan down to around £46,000.

The above proposal excluded fees and further provision for paths to connect the older children's play area and skate park.

Members were requested to consider each option in turn.

Members debated the Working Group's recommendations and expressed support for both proposals and sought clarification on whether additional seating and bins could be incorporated into the scheme designs. The Clerk indicated that this may be feasible to incorporate these within the overall installation contracts, alternatively the Council may wish to seek to create a separate budget to fund these.

The Chair of the Committee sought clarification on the status of future s106 funding from the Clerk. Members were advised that a number of current s106 funds are not site specific as to where the funds can be utilised, however this is likely to change.

The Clerk informed Members that future funds are more likely to be attributed to be expended specifically in and around the developments they relate to, therefore it is likely fewer funds will be available for Adastral Park. The Clerk informed Members that some funds will be realised from the old post sorting office development for the benefit of the park at some future point. Members thanked the Clerk for the clarification.

Members were then invited to consider each proposal in turn. All Members voted in favour therefore.

GE19/66.1 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the budget of £100,000 for the existing children's play area to be funded from ring-fenced s106 funds held by MSDC and the balance funded from Parish Councils Earmarked Reserves.

GE19/66.2 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the budget of £50,000 to provide a range of older children's play equipment in the vicinity of the skate park to be funded from Parish Councils Earmarked Reserves.

Members were also requested to note that a further sum of up to £20,000 from Earmarked Reserves may be sought to fund a path to connect the older children's play area and the skate park. Members duly noted this point.

GE19/67 **MAY DAY/DOWNFEST EVENTS.** Members were invited to consider a request from Michelle Binks to host the following events in Aadastra Park 2020.

(i) Friday 8th May 2020 75th VE Day Celebrations. – Members were informed that the Monday Mayday bank holiday has been cancelled for next year and replaced with the Friday as a bank holiday to coincide with VE Day celebrations. Therefore permission was being sought to hold the event in the park on the Friday.

GE19/67.1 Members **RESOLVED** to grant permission for the event subject to further consultation with other park users to ensure any fixture clashes are avoided.

(ii) DownsFest on Saturday 5th September 2020 12 – 10. Members were requested to consider granting permission to hold the above event, if Members were minded to agree to this proposal it was also suggested that the Council would take a similar approach to this year's event and allow set up on Friday 4th and Sunday 6th (am only) to enable break down of the site. Further consultation will be undertaken with other park users to ensure that this does not impact on any fixture commitments.

GE19/67.2 Members welcomed this request and **RESOLVED** to grant permission for the DownsFest event to be held on the 5th September 2020 and the park being made available for set up on the 4th and break down on the 6th (am)

GE19/68 **CRICKET NETS** – Members were invited to consider a proposal received from Keymer & Hassocks Cricket Club to locate a permanent cricket practice net within the park. The letter received (Appendix 5) from the Clubs Chairman set out the benefits of the proposal, the Clerk also informed Members that he had been provided with a letter of support from Sussex Cricket which is the body that represents all levels of cricket within Sussex.

The suggested scheme put forward by the Cricket Club is proposed to be funded via funding raised by the club.

Outline drawings were provided for Members to consider which detailed the dimensions of the practice net area. At this point no final decision was being sought from Members but an agreement in principle as to whether they would be open to the idea of an installation of a facility of this type within the park. To assist Members in their deliberations the Cricket Club had also provided drawings of the nets, options for two potential sites together with photos of other similar installations.

Members discussed the merits or otherwise of the proposals and some concern was expressed over the size and locations currently suggested however overall they felt there would be potential benefits to the installation.

Most Members indicated they were in favour in principal but with a number of caveats: one member felt that the club should be encouraged to be more proactive in promoting girls cricket; some reservations were also expressed over the suggested siting and the impact on trees and the need to consult with the wider users of the park before a final decision is made. Members also raised whether the nets could be located anywhere else in the park other than the two suggested sites.

GE68.1 Members **RESOLVED** to agree the idea in principal for the installation of cricket practice nets subject to further detailed discussions by the Clerk and the club prior to coming forward with any final proposal for decision.

GE19/69 **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW).** Cllr Lesley Campbell raised an issue regarding the proposed diversion of the PROW at Friars Oak fields and whether the Council was proposing to make any representations. The Clerk informed Members that at the time of this meeting he was not aware the Council had received any notification of the proposal. Members indicated that if and when any proposal is received by the Council the matter will be considered by the Planning Committee.

Members were also requested to note that the PROW inspections were scheduled to be carried out by County next month therefore Members were invited to inform the Clerk of any maintenance issues they wished to raise. It is understood that the Deputy Clerk had provided advance notice to Members of this Committee to consider raising matters they wished the Clerk to take forward with county's PROW team.

GE19/70 **URGENT MATTERS** at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda. Members were advised that it had been necessary to close the Tennis Courts due to moss and remedial options are currently being considered.

GE19/71 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** The date of the next meeting is Thursday 28 November 2019.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.35pm

SignedChair Date.....