

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENT Committee held virtually on 3 December 2020 at 7.30pm.

Attendees: Cllrs Kate Bailey, Jane Baker, Kristian Berggreen, Leslie Campbell, Frances Gaudencio, Bill Hatton, Frank Rylance and Alex Simmons.

In attendance: Tracy Forte – Deputy Clerk
Ian Cumberworth – Parish Clerk
Cllr Claire Tester

GE20/42 APOLOGIES. Cllr Peter Gibbons, and co-opted member Tony Copeland.

GE20/43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. There were no declarations of interest.

GE20/44 MINUTES.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Grounds & Environment meeting held on Thursday 22 October 2020, be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

GE20/45 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. There were no members of the Public present.

GE20/46 OFFICER'S REPORT. Member's noted the Officer's report (Appendix 1 of the Agenda). The Deputy Clerk informed Members that the office were communicating with Downlands School over the concerns and that the local PCSO had visited the Parish Office to discuss the issues. It was stressed that anyone who witnesses any anti-social behaviour should report this to the Police via 101 as soon as possible. Any behaviour which poses a risk of harm or serious damage should be reported on 999.

GE20/47 MEMORIAL BENCH PROTOCOL REVIEW. Members were invited to review the current protocol for the provision of Memorial Benches in Adastra Park and to consider whether to increase the current donation from £650 to £700 to cover an increase in the cost of the bench and installation. Members were also invited to consider requests for alternative benches on an individual basis.

GE20/47.1 Members AGREED to APPROVE maintaining the current donation at £650 and for the Council to cover the additional costs for installation of benches.

GE20/47.2 Members AGREED to APPROVE the consideration of requests for alternative benches subject to the approval of the Clerk in the first instance, and the final approval of the Committee. Such benches would not fall within the donation policy and all costs would be covered directly by the individual requesting the bench.

GE 20/48 ADASTRA PARK MASTERPLAN.

GE20/48.1 Adastra Park Drainage. As Members are already aware, Adastra Park is subject to adverse ground conditions in the winter months which results in water logging across various parts of the park and areas of the path network. The Clerk reported that as part of the Park Masterplan the Park Working Group are keen to explore whether there are any viable cost effective drainage solutions the council could make to the park.

Therefore the Clerk invited Members to consider the option of appointing a suitably qualified person to provide advice on developing a viable drainage scheme. Members

were asked to note that the Council does not currently hold a specific budget for this type of work however there is a budget for general professional fees in the sum of £4,000 which based on known activity is likely to remain under committed this year. Therefore it was proposed by the Park Working Group that some of these funds could be utilised to appoint a suitable consultant to advise on the viability/feasibility of developing a cost effective drainage solution to improve the existing ground conditions.

Members discussed the matter in detail. There was some recollection from a Member that a full report had been carried out in the past prior to the existing drainage work being carried out, and it was thought that the outcome had suggested there was no viable affordable solution to the drainage problems. Therefore some concerns were expressed over the use of further funds if it had already been confirmed that it would not be possible to solve the issues. Other Members and the Clerk were not aware of such a report, however it was agreed that the Deputy Clerk would have a further look to support this. The Clerk informed Members that drainage was a key concern which was raised during the Masterplan public consultation and continues to be a concern of park users.

GE 20/48.2 Subject to establishing whether a detailed report had previously been considered discounting the viability of a drainage solution, Members **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** to Full Council that funds from the General Professional Fees Budget are utilised for the appointment of a suitable consultant (expert) to advise on the viability/feasibility of developing a cost effective drainage solution to improve the existing ground conditions in Adastra Park.

GE 20/49 **FLOOD WORKING GROUP.** Members were invited to consider approving the formation of a working group to review the issue of flooding within the village and explore potential solutions. The proposal had been put forward by Cllrs Frances Gaudencio and Claire Tester.

A draft proposed Terms of Reference for the group had been shared with the Committee as a background paper for information (Appendix 1). The Chair opened the discussion by suggesting that the Committee should support the formation of such a group. She noted that the work carried out by the Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Group provided a useful starting point for such a Working Group, referring to Policy 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan – Managing Surface Water. The Chair proposed that the group would be self-managing and would report to the G&E Committee at each meeting. The Chair also observed that the composition of the group would be important for its success and that the WSCC representative should ideally be a senior officer alongside our WSCC Kirsty Lord.

Cllr Alex Simmons raised the possibility of a First Response Group which could be set up in association with Mid Sussex District Council. The group would consist of a set of trained volunteers who could be called upon to assist in flood situations.

There were various discussions around flooding, however it was noted that the purpose of this item was to agree the formation of a Flood Working Group to consider the various issues raised. Members considered the formation of a group. The Terms of Reference were noted as a draft proposal for consideration by the Working Group once formed.

GE 20/49.1 Members AGREED to APPROVE the formation of a Flood Working Group to review the issue of flooding within the village and explore potential solutions.

GE 20/50 **FINGERPOST.** Members were invited to consider the renewal of the finger sign post at A273/B2116 Stonepound Crossroads Hassocks. Two quotes had been received for the replacement finger post, one from Harry Stebbing Workshop at 1437.27 plus VAT (Company A) and the other from JAKK Country Furniture at £1390.20 plus VAT (Company B). The replacement fingerpost would be funded from the Fingerpost Maintenance Budget which is currently £1500. Members considered both quotations, and it was noted that installation was included in the quotation from JAKK Country Furniture which was preferable.

GE 20/50.1 Members RESOLVED to approve the expenditure of £1390.20 plus VAT for the supply and installation of replica fingerpost at A273/B2116 Stonepound Crossroads Hassocks by JAKK Country Furniture. To be funded from the Fingerpost Maintenance Fund.

GE 20/51 **URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda.** Cllr Frank Rylance raised a concern over graffiti around the village and wanted to know what action could be taken. The Deputy Clerk informed the Committee that Mid Sussex District Council will remove graffiti if reported either directly to them or alternatively to the Parish Office who will pass the report on. Graffiti can be reported online on the MSDC website - <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/environment/graffiti-flyposting/>

GE 20/52 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** Thursday 28 January 2021 at 7.30pm

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.15pm

SignedChair Date.....

Grounds & Environment Committee Meeting 3.12.20

Proposed Terms of Reference for Grounds and Environment Working Group on Flooding

Purpose of Group

To review the evidence of flood incidence and risk in the parish and the potential solutions and make recommendations for future action.

Membership of Group

Up to 7 Council members and co-opted members from organisations with an interest in flooding including West Sussex County Council, HKD Transition and the Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust.

Tasks

Including, but not limited to:

- Receiving updates from WSCC on the implementation of the 'Hassocks Surface Water Management Plan' 2016;
- Receiving updates from HKD Transition / Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust on the implementation of the study 'Reducing Flood Risk in Hassocks - Upstream Flow Mitigation Herring Stream and Lagg Stream' 2016;
- Reviewing options for future natural flood management measures on publicly owned land, including Parklands Copse;
- Reviewing options for other measures to control surface water runoff;
- Reviewing options for protection measures for businesses and residents most at risk of flooding, and options for funding these.

Reporting and Timescales

The group will report its findings back to the Grounds and Environment Committee within 12 months unless otherwise agreed by that Committee.

Cllrs Frances Gaudencio & Claire Tester