



HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of a Meeting of Recreation and Open Spaces Committee held on Tuesday 8th December 2020 at 2:30 pm via Zoom conferencing.

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs G Perry (Chairman), R Kendall, M Eastwood, N Farrell, D Jemmett, M Morgan, A Rickard, A Sharp, N Stevens.

In Attendance: Mr K Wright (Clerk), Mrs R Grantham (Operations Manager), Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator), Mr J Willis (Tree Warden), Mr J Rodriguez (Henfield Football Club - HFC), Mr D Muirden (Henfield Tennis Club - HTC).

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Cllr Jemmett declared an interest in item 13 as he is a committee member of Henfield Cricket Club. He will attend the Parish Office to sign the Register of Members Interests.

2. APOLOGIES

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13th OCTOBER 2020

These were approved, to be signed by the Chairman in the Parish Office at a later date.

4. MATTERS ARISING

1. Coronation Oak identified in Interim Tree Survey
The Chairman confirmed that permission from HDC is still waiting.
2. Ash Die back
The Chairman confirmed that there is a link on website and to the HDC website concerning Ash Die Back.
3. Event Application and Guidance
The Chairman confirmed that the HPC website had been updated.
4. Kings Field
The Chairman confirmed that the switch housing had now been fitted.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting

OPEN FORUM

Mr Rodriguez asked whether he could organise Nick Blake to roll the Memorial Field as its surface was very uneven. The Clerk confirmed that the contract with Grasstex included cutting only. It was agreed that Mr Rodriguez would meet with Mr Blake and try the roller over a section to see if it solved the problem.

Mr Rodriguez said that storage of large football equipment was a problem and that the idea of a large container next to the Pavilion had been decided against as the neighbours would object to it being placed there. He asked whether a temporary covered storage such as a tarpaulin could be used at the rear of the pavilion. Cllr Morgan confirmed that as long as it was a temporary feature it could be trialled. It was confirmed that HFC would remove it if they received any complaints from neighbours.

Mr Rodriguez confirmed that he had seen plenty of children using the play area at the Rothery on match days. He also asked that an electrician be sought to look at the flood lights there. The Clerk confirmed that the Works Officer had tried to contact an electrician and would continue to do so.

Action Point – Works Officer to organise an electrician to quote for repairs to the flood lights at the Rothery Field.

Mr Rodriguez stated that the mowing at the Kings Field had damaged the playing field and that had there been a match the pitch would have been unplayable at that time. The Clerk confirmed that he had spoken to Richard Conway of Grasstex to make sure that it does not happen again. The pitch does seem to have recovered well.

Mr Rodriguez said that HFC would like to clear behind the Eric Holder Pavilion on the Kings Field to create a storage area with some fencing around it, the Clerk confirmed that he would ask the Works Officer to check the area and would get back to Mr Rodriguez.

Action Point – The Clerk to liaise with Works Officer and Mr Rodriguez.

Mr Muirden thanked the committee and Cllr Morgan for their time. He confirmed that the resurfacing of Courts 1 and 2 and junior court was complete. He also said that HTC were still awaiting permission from HDC for work to start on changing the floodlights. It would probably be next year before the courts could be painted and lined.

Mr Muirden reiterated that HPC had agreed in principal to a new 21-year lease as it would help with getting grants. After speaking with Cllr Morgan, Mr Muirden said that HTC would like to go ahead with the matter at their cost and he realised that HPC would need a Surveyor and a Solicitor which he expected to be about £5,000. HTC wouldn't require a solicitor on their side to save money. Mr Muirden asked if HPC would get estimate of fees for Surveyor and Solicitors. Mr Muirden said that HTC would like to consider the adding mini court into the lease, so two quotes would be needed. Mr Muirden also said the HTC would like slight changes to the lease that would allow for the playing of music in the pavilion and allowing alcohol to be brought in and consumed on the premises but not a full licence. He had already spoken with HDC who also stated an application for this is not necessary.

Cllr Morgan confirmed that HPC had used Griffith Smith in Brighton in the past for legal matters, but he was unsure of Surveyors but would check with Eric Holder. Cllr Morgan confirmed HPC's obligation to use professional services for these sorts of matters and that it would need to be registered at the Land Registry. It was agreed by all. Cllr Morgan said that when he was in the Parish Office he would get a copy of the original Surveyor's report and send to Mr Muirden.

Action Point Cllr Morgan would investigate a surveyor and that he would draft something to give instructions to a Surveyor and Solicitor. He would also send a copy of the original Surveyor's report to Mr Muirden.

Mr Muirden left the meeting at 3pm

The Chairman reconvened the meeting

The Chairman confirmed that the Committee would move to item 13 concerning the Cricket Club. Cllr Jemmett confirmed that HCC hoped to increase the area of the pitch as shown in the plan that had been circulated to the committee. Cllr Morgan said he felt that HCC would not want unnecessary costs and that HPC maybe able to go for a variation of the lease. Cllr Jemmett said that the boundary on that side was a little small. The Operations Manager confirmed that the area was 675 sq. metres. A number of councillors felt that they needed more information and Cllr Morgan said that he would mark out a clearer plan and that it would be helpful if HCC could put stakes out to show where they wanted the new boundary so that Committee members could see the area concerned. Cllr Morgan said that the cheapest way would be to grant a variation of the lease on it so there was not a cost. The Chairman asked how urgent this was and Cllr Jemmett said that it would wait until the Spring. This item would be carried forward to the next meeting.

Action Point – Cllr Morgan would draw up a clearer plan and Cllr Jemmett would ask Nick Blake at HCC to identify the area with stakes

Cllr Morgan asked whether there was any progress on the Sandpit Field Project or Wildflower planting scheme. The Chairman reassured him that it was being considered and would be dealt with later in the meeting.

Cllr Morgan left the meeting at 3.15pm

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Rise in water levels causing two bridges to float away
The Chairman confirmed that the recent rain had caused flooding at the Bull and by Chates which had led to two bridges being swept away. The one at the Bull was now back in situ thanks to WSCC and they would do the same with the other bridge as soon as they were able to.
2. The Chairman said that Museum website now had a section on trees called Arborea and would welcome people to nominate their favourite tree and why they like it.

6. TRAILS

1. Three Parishes Trail
Cllr Eastwood said that the first of the two trails had been launched and that an order had been placed for Trail discs and QR codes to mark the Trails. He further confirmed that Mike Ainscough, Rob Gordon and he were working on a new Three Parishes Trail which would actually be two trails: the first from the Bull to the Royal Oak and the second from Henfield to the Bull and continuing. Cllr Eastwood said he hoped that a trail including Sussex Prairies would be launched next Summer.
2. Benches and seats along footpaths
The Chairman said that a number of benches on these trails were broken or in need of repair or renovation. Cllr Eastwood said that he would inspect trails twice a year to look at the state of fixtures like styles and benches and identify problems and get repairs done or replacement. A number of these benches had been placed by families in memory of a loved one, the Chairman confirmed that the committee would liaise with those families where there were problems.

7. TREE WORK

The Tree Sub-Group had met and made recommendations which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

1. Trees on Unadopted Land – Notes from Will Jones at HDC and Cllr Morgan
The Chairman said she had also found details from Cllr Potts saying that HDC are now being asked for more TPOs. She said that she felt that trees should be kept at the forefront of everyone's minds. Cllr Sharp felt that Tree Wardens could be used to try and preserve trees that did not belong to anyone. Mr Willis said that he agreed with this and that the trees in question on the twitten near the Scout had all been under TPOs and that had saved them but they had been cut. Cllr Eastwood wondered whether the Tree Warden could do a Tree Audit and if individual trees were considered valuable then a TPO could be applied for. The Clerk confirmed that when an Ash Tree had been cut down near the Leisure Centre two new replacement trees had been planted. Mr Willis confirmed that a birch and a wild cherry had been planted but that they had not been well cared for after planting and had only just survived. He confirmed that he would keep an eye on them.
2. Tree Charter/Trees in the Parish
The Tree Sub-Group had said that HPC did support trees, looked after them and had made a statement on climate and environment action plan, therefore there was no need to sign up to the tree charter.

3. Tree Warden Role

Mr Willis confirmed that he was passionate about trees and was happy to have his role expanded, happy to go on training courses with WSCC and increase his knowledge. He is happy to help with trees in any way as they are vital for the environment. The Tree Sub Group had recommended that more Tree Wardens should be recruited and hoped social media might be used to attract interested volunteers.

Action Point – Operations Manager to liaise with Cllr Perry about getting a message on social media requesting volunteers to become Tree Wardens.

8. PLAYING FIELDS

1. Memorial Field

The Chairman confirmed that a box cut including leaf collection had been carried out last week and that the Memorial Field was much improved. She also said that Gary Pettifer had requested that the problem of rabbits was looked at. The Clerk confirmed that the Works Officer could look at this but would need to clear some vegetation. Cllr Sharp said that he was happy to meet the Works Officer to discuss which vegetation could be removed prior to a rabbit cull. It was agreed by a majority of seven in favour and one against to carry this out.

Action Point – Works Officer to meet Cllr Sharp to discuss the vegetation clearance and then Works Officer to organise the culling of the rabbits.

2. Rothery Field

a) The request for a container

This matter was dealt with in the Open Forum

b) Bench for the late Mr Greenfield.

The Parish Administrator confirmed that the bench would be the same style as was arranged for the late Wyn Saunders and would go along the fence in Neptown Road in the corner nearest the village. The Works Officer would prepare a concrete base at the family's expense and they would organise the purchase of the bench.

Action Point – Works officer to prepare the concrete base when the weather is suitable and the Parish Administrator would liaise with the family over the installation of the bench.

3. Kings Field

This was considered under Open Forum

9. DOWNSLINK ACCESS FROM GUIDE HUT

The Chairman confirmed that the Land Surveyor has completed Survey and that five contractors had been approached for quotes which we are still awaiting. The Chairman wanted to thank Eric Holder who had carried out the survey for HPC without charge.

10. ADUR RESTORATION CORRIDOR

The Chairman confirmed that she had attended the meeting in November along with Councillor Goodyear and representatives of other Parish Councils and interested parties. Notes from the meeting had been circulated. She confirmed that HDC and Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) were involved in the project which would involve mapping in the first stages. Cllr Eastwood said that he felt HPC's position should be one of support especially since SWT was within the Parish. The Chairman said that she would report back after subsequent meetings.

All Agreed that this was a project that was worth supporting. Cllr Eastwood said that he

felt it would be good for HPC to write to HDC about preservation of wildlife in this area as well as maintaining the river to prevent flooding.

Action Point – Cllr Eastwood to write to HDC in support of The Adur Restoration Corridor.

11. YOUTH SHELTER

The Chairman said that following a recent request from the Youth Club Organiser to the HPC to consider installing a Youth Shelter, she and Cllr Jones had met (via Zoom) with youth representatives to better understand the proposal. This meeting had been useful in exploring the issues from various perspectives. One of the youth representatives had subsequently provided a written report of their ideal solution which had been circulated to the committee. Having considered a range of possibilities during the Zoom meeting, it was reported that the youth representative and Youth Club favoured siting any proposed shelter on the Kings Field near the Skate Park so it would be within the sound barrier. It was confirmed that if HPC chose to go ahead with this proposal, local residents would need consulting and planning permission would need to be investigated. Issues including sound, CCTV and lighting for visibility would also need to be considered. Cllr Eastwood suggested that it was necessary to consider the views of young people, especially as the village centre did not currently provide places for them to meet, and that HPC hoped to provide facilities for young people to thrive in Henfield. Cllr Farrell said that she felt that a wider range of ages and interests should be considered when looking at developing more facilities for the youth. The Operations Manager suggested that it might be possible to seek the opinions of a wider age range of children, youth and community through the proposed Communications Strategy, which could include a review to gather this sort of information. This suggestion was readily accepted by the committee.

Action Point – the Operations Manager would carry out a review of the opinion of residents of Henfield of all ages about what might be desirable for the village for the Youth.

Action Point – The Chairman would get back to the Youth Club to explain what the thinking of the Committee had been.

12. PLAY AREAS

1. Risk Assessments

The Chairman confirmed that the Skate Park had to close due to COVID-19 and was then opened again. Following the review of play equipment and discussion with local skateboarders in August 2020, it was understood that the Skate Park would benefit from improvements to some surfaces too improve its longevity. A response is awaited from Freestyle, the original installers with an idea of the likely cost.

2

The Chairman said that she would like to go ahead with the installation of a new Activity Trail at Chessbrook Green as the old one had been recommended for replacement by ROSPA. The Chairman further stated that she anticipated the costs to be covered by Section 106 money. Cllr Eastwood agreed that the Chessbrook Green was a greater priority than some of the other areas that had been looked at. The Chairman also said that it would be wise to check with the Works Officer about whether the whole of the existing trail needed replacing or whether any could still be used.

All agreed that this was a priority.

Action Point – Parish Administrator would look further to getting money from S 106 funding for the project with a more detailed breakdown of costs.

13. CRICKET CLUB

This was considered under Open Forum.

14. TENNIS CLUB

This was considered under Open Forum.

15. LOCAL CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT PLAN

1. Planting at Manor Way and Wantley and need for Rotavator
The Chairman asked about the need for a Rotavator and the Parish Administrator confirmed that the Rotavator would be £550+VAT for 26" and £620+VAT for 32". Cllr Sharp said that he felt the wildflower planting needed to be carried out sooner than waiting for a Rotavator and that he would like the Swales to be seeded as soon as possible. He felt that the turf looked easy to remove.

Action Point - Cllr Sharp and his team could commence work on the Swales as soon as possible.

2. Report from Sam Buckland
The Chairman said that the report from Sam Buckland had been sent in as he was not able to attend this meeting. Cllr Kendal said that the report was very ambitious and Cllr Eastwood said he thought it was an excellent report. The Chairman thanked Mr Buckland for his work.
3. Proposal to set up Biodiversity Working Group
The Chairman said that Cllr Goodyear had suggested the setting up of a new working group to consider Mr Buckland's proposals and Adur Restoration Corridor proposals.

It was agreed with a majority of 7 in favour and 1 against to the setting up of the new working group.

Action point – The Chairman would raise the matter at the next FRC Meeting

16. SAFE ROUTES PROPOSAL

1. Cllr Eastwood said that the first meeting had been very positive meeting and that seven routes had been identified and that it was hoped that a second meeting would take place late in January 2021.
2. Downs Link Access at Small Dole
Cllr Eastwood said that this was one of the routes he was looking at with the Safe Routes Group. Cllr Eastwood explained that the next step would be to approach the Landowners as well as letting the Cycling group know if any progress. He also said that WSCC were supportive of this route.

Action Point - Cllr Eastwood would talk to the landowners to see if they are amenable to assisting and to contact the cycling group.

17. CAR PARK ENTRANCE ON COMMON

The Clerk confirmed that WSCC had repaired some of the pot holes at the entrance but he was not sure how permanent a fixture this repair would be. This would be raised again at the next meeting.

18. CLERKS REPORT

1. Financial Update
The Clerk confirmed that only just over £1,000 had been spent in November. Only 59.3% of budget had been used and it was two thirds of the way through the financial year.
2. Any further updates
There were no further updates.

19. BUDGET FOR 2021/2022

The Clerk confirmed that the proposal is to reduce the budget by 12.4% to £44,780. This is mainly due to a drop in Works Officer's Equipment budget by £4,000. Cllr Eastwood

said that the Trails Budget for next year was reduced from £5,000 to £4,000

The Chairman said that she accepted that budgets would go down because there had been so little spending this year because of Covid-19 she had hoped that an Ecological Survey could be carried out on the Sandpit which was likely to cost £350 - £500. Hence it was agreed that the Clerk Will ask the Finance, Risk and Change Governance Committee if the Wildlife Planting budget could be raised back to £1,000 for 2021/22.

Action Point – the Clerk will raise this at the next Finance meeting.

20. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Easements over Common Land and Village Green
This was noted.
2. CPRH – email from resident
Cllr Eastwood said that he had spoken to this resident and she was already working with Natural England. Cllr Eastwood had pointed out that it was the bigger picture that was also important. The Operations Manager confirmed that she had already acknowledged the email when it had been received.

21. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

There were no other matters.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 9th February 2021 via Zoom conferencing.

The meeting closed at 4:37pm.