

HENFIELD COMMONS JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Henfield Commons Joint Committee held at 9.30am** in the rear of the Garden Room of the Henfield Hall.

PRESENT Mr. A. Sharp (Joint Chair) Mr M Eastwood (Joint Chair)
 Ms G Perry Mr R Noel
 Mr E Colgate Mr J Willis

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs P Grant (Clerk)
 Dr J Coultas

Item Description

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

There were no Declarations

2. APOLOGIES

Mr. M Morgan, Mr T Baker, Mr P Crawford, Mr J Potts

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 4TH JANUARY AND 8TH FEBRUARY 2023

JC Sharp signed both Minutes after they were agreed.

4. CHAIRMANS` ANNOUNCEMENTS

JC Eastwood thanked Patricia Grant for her many years of service now she is to retire and Mr Colgate seconded that and also for her work in the Tanyard Field. As JC Sharp is also to retire and leave the Parish Council, he was also thanked for his for his service to the Committee and toward the preservation of our Commons.

(i) Proposals for some Structural Changes

JC Eastwood had circulated proposals for some changes due to the retirement of the present Clerk and also looked at the future management of the Committee including trialling volunteers for the first year to deal with Agendas, Minutes etc and also to form a small Management Group who would meet before each meeting to look at Action Plans for our Commons and to agree to what works need to happen and by whom, e.g. volunteers, Works Officers, contractors and the Plans/proposals to be placed before the Committee and implemented if agreed. The Management Group to be comprised of the Chairman, Henfield Parish Council Works Officer, Volunteer Group Leaders and representative of Horsham District Council (to be chosen by them) The Group would also work closely with one of their Rangers.

Mr Noel has taken this proposal to Horsham District Council and he is happy with it but said there is a governance problem as the proposal will need to be approved by Vicky Wise at HDC. Any financial decisions will now have to be left now until after the May elections. JC Sharp said it is important to have one unbiased political person in the Management Group. Chairman to keep a financial spreadsheet as well as the

District Council - important to be keeping track of our budget with all expenditure to be advised to the Chairman.

Action: It was agreed following further discussion that JC Eastwood would amend this proposal and resubmit it for approval by HDC.

Dr Coultas commented that emails are not entered on the agenda as Correspondence and JC Eastwood agreed that these should be part of correspondence but that as part of the new governance proposals the Parish Office staff will now process Commons related emails and a separate account will be set up.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Henfield Common

(i) Reed bed – Works by Southern water

Concern was raised regarding the quality of water flowing from a leak in a pipe to the south east corner of the reed bed following work by Southern Water who said it was pure water but this was disputed by members. The deep hole was also a concern and it was agreed Southern Water should fix the problem and make good but that at the moment the cage surrounding the hole should remain for safety purposes.

Action: HDC Officers to raise this with Southern Water contacts

(ii) Anti Social Parking actions

A resident had objected to our proposed new posts saying it was overkill and suggested 7 or 8 instead. It was suggested to write to the Henfield Common North residents requesting parking improvements and explaining our reasons for placing a small number of plastic posts near the entrance on a trial basis with perhaps if successful extending it. Dr Colts explained that the Residents Association are planning some pot hole and road edge repairs using Battens.

Action: JC Eastwood to draft a communication to residents.

Action: JC Sharp & Cllr Perry to ask Works Officers to factor this work into plans to place plastic posts near the cricket pitch.

Action: Mr Willis to talk to Works Officers re the suitability of the Volunteer Groups auger.

(iii) Debris area

JC Eastwood said we need to designate an area for debris. It was appreciated reed bed debris may take a long time to rot down but the thinking is that the current pile can remain where it is. Mr Everitt suggested debris areas could be looked at over time although the one near the cricket pavilion could probably be designated now.

Action: JC Eastwood and Marlin to agree sites with Conservation Volunteer leaders.

(iv) Funfair visit

The Clerk reported they could not attend over the Coronation Weekend and that they were now looking at their timetable for this summer and would be in touch. It was noted that an extra grass cut would be needed in the funfair site area just before they arrive.

(v) Action Plan progress

JC Eastwood had forwarded an updated Action Plan and discussion took place regarding various items including fixed point photography, seeding of yellow rattle (which has to be in October), strimming to avoid snowdrops and orchids, causeway levels, mowing, scarifying bund and frequency of grass cuts, plant monitoring.

Action: JC Eastwood to amend and redistribute action plan.

(vi) Site inspection – report

Not applicable.

Mr Willis said there is a tree by the cricket nets which needs surgery and may be dangerous with time. The whole subject of trees and formal/informal inspections was discussed.

Action: This to be reported and an inspection regime explored by Mr Everitt.

Chairman adjourned the meeting.

6. OPEN FORUM

Mr Colgate said there are brambles at the end of the causeway but there is also an Alder Buckthorn and would not like to see it cut down. He commented as our next meeting is in July the *pendulous sedge* will have seeded so ideally should be cut back before then.

Action: JC Eastwood to notify the Works Officers to take action.

Chairman reconvened the meeting.

7. BROADMARE COMMON – RECENT VISIT REPORT

This was visited on the 8th February and duly minuted. There is plan to do work on one of the ponds in April.

Action: Action Plan to be produced by Marlin.

8. TANYARD

(i) Replacement tree to north of Tanyard – UK Power Networks

This was removed by UK Power Networks and a replacement will be planted in the autumn.

(ii) Gap in fence opposite Red Oaks

This could have been caused by animals and the gap could be filled in with hazel or Alder Buckthorn.

Unfortunately we missed meeting the Henfield Shedders in February as they had a proposal to move into the Tanyard Barn although it would require power and much more which would be expensive. It was hoped they could share the new Scout Pavilion but these discussions appeared to have stalled. It was noted that if water tight the Conservation Volunteers could utilise some space for the storage of equipment.

Action: Shedders to be invited to our next meeting.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) Mr. W. Smith (by email) – Concerns re posts on Common

10. BUDGET/EXPENDITURE

- (i) 2023/24 Budget arrangements

Discussed and expenditure of £15,415 for financial year 2022/23 has been agreed. A budget of £18,000 has been agreed for the financial year 2023/24 and JC Eastwood requested this be confirmed in writing.

Action: Mr Everitt agreed to confirm next years budget in writing

11. SUCCESSION ARRANGEMENTS

Discussed under governance proposals.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5TH July, 4th October 2023.

Meeting closed at 11.15am

Proposed Meeting Schedule April 2023/March 2024

| Commons Committees | Management Working Group |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 5th July 2023 | 22nd June 2023 |
| 4th October 2023 | 13th September 2023 |
| 24th January 2024 | 3rd January 2024 |
| 20th March 2024 | 6th March 2024 |

