**HENFIELD COMMONS JOINT COMMITTEE 04.10.2023**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Henfield Commons Joint Committee** held at 9.30am in the Committee room of Henfield Hall

Meeting opened with welcome from Gill Perry to attendees.

**Voting Members** Mr M Eastwood ME Ms G Perry GP Mrs A May **( HDC and HPC)**  Mr J Potts JP Mr R Noel RN Mr M Morgan

**Committee Members**  Mrs C Eastwood (secretary) Mr J Everitt JE Ms M Andersson MA

Mr T Baker TB Mr J Willis JW

1. **Declaration of Members Interests** - None
2. **Apologies –** Dr J Coultas JC P Crawford PC
3. **Approval of minutes of 27th July 2023**

Minutes were agreed by members and signed by ME

1. **Chairman’s Announcements** – “Lost woods” initiative (Woodland Trust) now being undertaken by Michael Blencowe, so more info will be forthcoming.
2. **Matters Arising** 
   1. Governance – These changes have still not been agreed and JP and RN are meeting with Director of Comms re legal position. Proposed Structural changes ( Agenda Attachment) had been agreed by Vicky Wise at HDC with a review of the Governance structure and support deferred until the Autumn due to the change in Administration at HDC. Must ensure there is no conflict of work between HDC and HPC but it was agreed there is a positive overlap and HDC support is proactive and helpful. There may be special project funding required for larger projects, but this should be applied for and tied in with the annual budget process which should be starting now ready for submission in September/October.
   2. Posts for Alma Terrace to alleviate parking issues are still being looked at. RN and JP will also discuss this with Director of Comms and Legal.
   3. Fixed point photography. JE and MA will agree with Mike Ainscough the points and then stakes will show fixed points. Aim for 4 to 5 photos of each Common so they can be shown at meetings and differences and changes noted and acted upon where necessary. Photos of Henfield common ready to show. **Action: ME to share Mike A’s contact details with JE and MA.**
3. **Open Forum – None**
4. **Tanyard**

**7.1** Correspondence with local resident about overhanging trees and undergrowth on path. Discussion took place about the whole of the Tanyard and MM showed photos of how it used to look and said that residents would like it look like that again. It is very overgrown in places and is not the open space it should be. A contractor will be asked to undertake the work after Neal Matheson NM the HDC Tree officer has surveyed the trees and JE and MA have surveyed the ground cover.

**Action HDC officers to conduct surveys and include HPC Works Officersand Conservation volunteers in the agreed program of work.**

**7.2** Henfield Shed application has full support of HPC and MM is liaising with HDC over leases. Public concern about potential noise disturbance and access via private roads but Shed activities are unlikely to be any noisier than a lawn mower. Main access for construction and maintenance will be via Chestnut End, as it is now.

**7.3** Dog Bin “inside liner” has deteriorated and needs to be replaced. This matter was raised by a resident. **Action: JE and MA to investigate a solution.**

1. **Henfield Common Action Plan**
   1. There are still 7 bales by the gate to the common which need to be removed. It is confirmed that PHB do not have a contract for the work as this was not issued last year after the tender process. Agreed to pay up to £500 to remove bales and PHB will be given first refusal for this stand-alone piece of work. It was agreed that JE and MA would draw up a flexible cutting plan for Henfield Common to include verges which would mean a phased cutting programme. PHB, Grasstex, and ID Verde could be asked to quote for the work. **Action** JE and MA to draw up plan. **MM to talk to PHB.**
   2. Agreed that mowing should ideally be in September to protect devil’s bit scabious.
   3. ID Verde will be dealing with knotweed found on the bund. **Action MA and JE to arrange.**
   4. Agreed to ask Grasstex to cut bund. **Action** ME to contact Grasstex and arrange cut and invoicing.
   5. HCV and the Community Payback Team (CPT) have removed two thirds of the willows in the reed bed but it is difficult work even with HDC poppers. HPC Works officers undertake some jobs and liaise with CPT where appropriate work can be undertaken. It was good to hear that two young people have joined the HCV team. **Action:** ME Discuss plan with Works Officers
   6. A resident has complained about boggy path from concrete bridge to path through the woods. This is not a formal public footpath, more an informal track and hasalways had a tendency to be boggy.,***A*ction** JP to revert to resident.
   7. Agreed to change reed bed cutting from one third per annum to only cut an eighth of the reed bed at a time to ensure the area remains as wet as possible and invasive species undergrowth (brambles and nettles) is discouraged.
   8. Causeway ditches need to be re-profiled and squashed along the eastern bank so more water runs into marshy land and reed bed. Agreed. **Action** MA and JE to liaise with Stuart Brierley. **Action** MA and JE to manage this.
   9. Stuart Brierley is repairing the drain and hole on the common at a cost of £400 + VAT.
2. **Broadmare Common Action Plan**

**9.1** Meetings have now taken place with the Tree officer NM and it has been agreed that Southern Beeches will remove the dangerous fungicidal Ash tree near the footpath and leave as a 3M totem with chippings used on the footpath to help keep it drier in the winter and invoice HDC with costs to be applied against the HCJC budget. HCV will be involved. HDC contractors will remove all other Ash die back trees along the roadside. ID Verde will be asked to remove all designated willow trees and Southern Beeches will be asked to remove a large willow with an agreed budget of up to £1000 (the cost of 3 people working for one day). Invoices to be paid from Joint Commons funds and must be addressed to HDC. Three Ds for tree management are Dangerous, Dead, Dying. If any of these apply to our trees the ID Verde contract should cover their removal using HDC general tree management funding.

**9.2** Pond Management. Ecological surveys are needed to ascertain what wildlife and fauna exist and protect them before deciding how to manage the ponds. There is a problem with reed mace which is difficult to cut because of the thick silt in the bottom of the pond at Pond House. Boards are needed so that these can be laid to give safe access allowing the mace to be cut and removed. Another survey must be completed to ascertain extent of silt and how to remove it/where to put it as it is a difficult and costly operation. HCV and volunteers will be included in Survey work in Year of Biodiversity.

**Action** JE and MA to coordinate Surveysto take place by end of next year.

**10. Oreham Common**

**10.1** JE and MA **will** have a friendly chat with the owner of mobile caravan that is parked on HDC land and appears to have built a log store. They will also try and find out who has tagged trees on border with Horton Golf club and why.

**10.2** Grass cutting has been done but bales need removing.

**10.3** Small pond is overgrown and a glade needs to be created behind it so light can get in and it can be accessed**.**

**Action** MA to talk to Peter Booth re 10.2 and 10.3 and agree a way forward.

**10.4 Action** JE to talk to Kate Ryland about producing a Management Plan for 2024 which is Henfield’s Year of Biodiversity.

**11. Correspondence see 8.6**

**12. Budget/Expenditure**

Request current expenditure from PC.

**Action** ME to contact PC

**13.** **AOB** All to be aware of Japanese knotweed and report any cases/locations to HDC

**14. Date of Next Meeting**

**9.30am Thursday 7 December Henfield Hall Garden Room**