

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **GROUND AND ENVIRONMENT** Committee held on 25 March 2019 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

Attendees: Cllrs Jane Baker, Kate Bailey, Leslie Campbell, Frances Gaudencio, Peter Gibbons, Bill Hatton and Sue Hatton.

In attendance: Ian Cumberworth – Parish Clerk

Tracy Forte – Deputy Clerk

GE18/120 APOLOGIES. Apologies were received from Cllrs Georgia Cheshire, Ian Weir and Emma Wood, and co-optees, Tony Copeland and Penny Wadsworth. Absent without apology Sally Booker.

GE18/121 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllr Sue Hatton declared a personal interest in item 7.1 as a member of the Hassocks WI.

GE18/122 MINUTES.

RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Grounds and Environment Committee meeting held on 21 February 2019.

GE18/123 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. There were no members of the public present.

GE18/124 OFFICER'S REPORT. Members noted the Officer's Report.

GE18/125 PARKLANDS ROAD ALLOTMENTS. There was nothing to Report.

GE18/126 HASSOCKS WI 10TH ANNIVERSARY. Members were invited to consider a request from Hassocks WI to plant a tree in the Garden of Remembrance. Correspondence had been received from the President of the Hassocks WI to enquire as to whether the Committee would consider approving the planting of a native tree, ideally in the Garden of Remembrance, to mark the 10th Anniversary of the group. Cllr Jane Baker advised the Committee that she had explored possible options in the Garden of Remembrance for tree planting and had identified two sites, one which would be suited to a Golden Yew and one which would be suited to a Field Maple.

Members were in support of a tree being planted in principle, under the guidance of Cllr Jane Baker. Cllr Baker offered to meet with a representative from the WI at the Garden of Remembrance to discuss the two options in more detail.

18/126.1 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the planting of a Golden Yew or a Field Maple by the Hassocks WI in either of the locations Garden of Remembrance as guided by Cllr Baker.

It was **AGREED** that should the WI wish to display a plaque with the tree, this should be of the same material and design as the plaque currently displayed with the Twinning Association tree for consistency.

GE18/127 ADASTRA PARK TREE WORK. Members were invited to consider proposed tree works in three locations in Adastra Park at a total cost of £400. Proposed work as follows:

- The cutting back of an overhanging branch from a willow tree resting on the post and rail fencing at the bottom of the North Field.

- The felling of a tall rotting Poplar trunk along the eastern edge of the North Field. The trunk will be left in the undergrowth to provide a natural habitat for wildlife.
- The lifting of two large Oak trees by approximately 4 metres. The trees are situated on the Northern boundary of the South Field and are significantly overhanging the park and cricket boundary.

18/127.1 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the tree works as described above and the expenditure of £400.00 from the Adastra Park Tree Maintenance budget.

GE18/128 ADASTRA BENCHES. Members were invited to approve the installation of two benches donated from Network Rail within Adastra Park. The benches are 7ft solid teak seats very similar to the Roble range used by HPC for memorial benches.

The suggested locations for installation were as follows:

1. On the grassed area running N/S from the KHSSC and the Adastra pavilion, just in front of the car park.
2. On the Northern boundary of the first section of the Garden of Remembrance, to replace the bench removed due to damage last year.

It was recommended that the benches are installed on a concrete base for security and maintenance reasons. Members were informed that a quote has been received for the installation of the benches as follows:

- To dig out and concrete two 240 x 90 cm plinths for the two benches. The benches will be attached to the plinths with metal straps fixed to the back of the bench legs, on the two back legs.

Total Cost £571.00 plus VAT (£685.20 inclusive).

Cllr Gaudencio expressed some concern about the siting of one bench in the Garden of Remembrance given the size and design of the bench. This was discussed and it was generally felt that the location suggested would be suitable. It was also noted that the design was in line with the previously agreed design for all new memorial benches in Adastra Park and would therefore be consistent with the look within the park.

18/128.1 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the installation of two benches on concrete bases in the locations as described above at a cost of £571.00 plus VAT, to be funded from General Reserves.

GE18/129 ADASTRA PARK FENCING REPAIRS. Members were informed that following a safety inspection report, some of the fence posts around the children's playpark had been reported as being in need of repair or renewal. A quote had been received for the repairs as required at total of £685.70 excl. VAT.

18/129.1 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the repairs to the fencing around the children's playpark in Adastra Park as required, at a total cost of £685.70 plus VAT to be taken from the Play Equipment Repair and Renewals budget.

GE 18/130 GROUNDS EQUIPMENT. Members were invited to approve the purchase of a Long Reach Hedge Trimmer to be used for grounds maintenance at a cost of £600.00 incl. VAT.

18/130.1 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a Long Reach Hedge Trimmer at a total cost of £600 inc VAT. Expenditure to be taken from the Grounds Machinery and Equipment budget.

GE 18/131 ADASTRA FACILITIES HIRE FEES AND CHARGES.

Members were invited to approve the fees and charges for the hire of Adastra Park facilities for 2019-20 as shown in Appendix 1 of the agenda. The Deputy Clerk asked members to note that two figures were incorrect.

*The proposed fees for discounted Tennis Club Members should have been £46.00 NOT £46.80 and the proposed fee for couples should have been £138.25 NOT £138.50. Members noted these amendments.

18/131.1 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the fees and charges for the hire of Adastra Park Facilities from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 as shown in Appendix 1.

Members were also invited to approve the casual hire charges for the public use of the Tennis Courts remaining unchanged for 2019-20 at £7.00 per hour (Full Rate).

18/131.2 It was **RESOLVED** that the public hire charges for the Adastra Park Tennis Courts would remain unchanged for 2019 -20.

GE 18/132 TALBOT FIELD MANAGEMENT PLAN. In a written report provided by the Clerk with the agenda, Members were informed that earlier in the year the Council took up the offer from The Woodland, Flora & Fauna Group (TWFFG) to undertake some improvement /renovations to Talbot Field to enhance its appearance and improve the wildlife environment. The Council has worked with this group over a number of years and they have installed a number of bat and bird boxes on site to encourage wildlife. This initiative has been highly successful in encouraging wildlife into the field and the Council has previously received annual reports on the species occupying the site.

The group have very kindly agreed to work in partnership with the Council to maintain Talbot Field and to enhance its wild life value on the basis that their advice was sought as to the type of management regime they would recommend to maintain and enhance the nature value of the site. Members were invited to consider the continuation of the partnership and the adoption of the suggested regime as proposed:

- The woodland would benefit from having the bramble under-storey cut annually at the end of the summer when the flora has come to the end of its growing season.
- To remove any fallen branches and the random growth of tree seedlings that may have occurred during the summer months in preparation for the coming spring.
- Annual grass cut of the field at the end of July by contractors to keep the grass in a good condition, prevent the re-infestation of tree seedlings and restrict any outward spread of bramble from the woodland. The timing of this after the flower growing season will allow any flora to emerge, flourish and decline naturally.
- The field would benefit from the introduction of some wild flower species to make of more value to nature and to increase its value to that of a meadow. This could be tried gradually as such introduction is often difficult where coarse grass already exists. The best method would be by plug-planting a few at a time so that their progress could be individually monitored and nurtured. It could therefore take a few years before the improved appearance and increased nature value became

obvious. The timing and duration of this would be during the spring and summer months each year.

- The brush growth around the perimeter would be cut annually by TWFFG at the end of the summer. This would halt the inward spread of bramble and nettle into the field and hopefully prevent any complaints from the neighbouring properties whose owners currently appear delighted with the work already carried out in this respect.

18/132.1

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the continuation of the working partnership The Woodland, Flora & Fauna Group to maintain Talbot Field to enhance the wildlife value of the site and to adopt the proposed maintenance regime from the group, who will undertake the maintenance work on behalf of the Parish.

Members expressed their gratitude to the Woodland, Flora and Fauna Group for all of their hard work at Talbot Field and requested that the Deputy Clerk/Clerk passed on the Committee's appreciation to the group.

Members were also informed that the existing woodland in Talbot Field has 8 bat and 8 bird boxes in it. These are highly used by both bats and birds and are cleaned out by the TWFFG group in late summer/early autumn in readiness for occupation the following year. The bat boxes are monitored by a licenced team and the results are forwarded to the Parish Council and *Natural England (this is a statutory requirement placed on the licence holder). The boxes have an extremely high occupancy compared to many other locations and the woodland and bats would benefit from additional boxes being mounted high in the trees.

It is recommended that the Council consider acquiring and installing an extra 6 wood Crete (a mixture of wood-pulp and concrete for improved durability and thermal insulation properties) bat boxes with the option to install a further 4 bird boxes mounted on the trees in the eastern end of the field could be beneficial to the bird population. The installation and maintenance would be undertaken by TWFFG.

Members were invited to consider the purchase of the following bat and bird boxes as recommended by TWFFG:

Bat Boxes

3 boxes of type 2F Schwegler Bat Box at £29.00 each (net)

1 box of type 1FD Schwegler Bat Box at £51.65 (net)

1 box of type 2FN Schwegler Bat Box at £37.50 (net).

1 box of type 2F DFP Schwegler Bat Box (with double-fronted panel) at £37.50(net)

Total net cost £213.65.

Bird Boxes for the smaller new woodland at the eastern end,

2 of type 1B Schwegler Nest Box at £23.30 each (net).

2 of type 2GR Schwegler Nest Box (with oval entrance) at £29.15 each. (Net)

Total net cost £104.90.

The Clerk informed Members that due to the excellent work undertaken by the Woodland, Flora & Fauna Group on behalf of the Council, it has realised an underspend on the current budgets in relation to grounds maintenance and tree maintenance for Talbot Field cost centre therefore in accordance with Financial Regulation the expenditure for the boxes could be met within the total net cost centre budget if Members were minded to agree this proposal.

18/132.2 It was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of 6 bat boxes and 4 bird boxes as described above at a total cost of £ 318.55 net to be funded from the Talbot Field grounds maintenance budget.

GE 18/133 OPERATION WATERSHED. The Clerk had previously provided a written report updating Members on matters regarding Operation Watershed in Adastra Park.

Last year the Council received £15,433 grant funding from Operation Watershed towards developing a number of flood prevention initiatives within Adastra Park. At Grounds & Environment Committee 24th January 2019 (GE18/101.2) Members were advised that a meeting had recently been held with representatives from WSCC (Operation Watershed), Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust (OART) the Clerk, Cllrs Gaudencio, Baker and Bill Hatton. Following this meeting, the attendees representing HPC were of the view that after establishing further detailed information on the impact of a scrape within the North field this would impact adversely on the useable space of the park. Members expressed the view that it was important for the look and feel of the park to be preserved. The HPC representatives indicated that they were minded to write to OART informing them that the Council would not like to progress this element of the scheme. Grounds and Environment members discussed the merits or otherwise of a scrape and agreed to support the sub groups view not to progress this aspect of work.

The Clerk subsequently contacted OART to inform them of the Council's decision and sought clarification on the viability of the other elements initially proposed in the event of the scrape not being installed. Unfortunately without a holding area for surface water OART were unable to offer any further suggestions as to how the grant might be used for a flood mitigation benefit within Adastra Park.

To date the Council has incurred expenditure of £1,018 for work undertaken by OART on behalf of the Council to date leaving a balance of £14,415. In light of the advice provided by OART, Members were requested to consider whether they wished to return the balance of funds to Operation Watershed to reallocate to another scheme within the County or progress the installation of channel structures. The grant funding had been allocated specifically for work within Adastra Park and could not therefore be reallocated by HPC for use at other sites in Hassocks.

Members expressed disappointment that it did not appear possible to progress with the Operation Watershed project within Adastra Park. However it was agreed that if no further acceptable options could be explored, it would be more beneficial to return the remaining funds to WSCC where the grant could be reallocated and beneficial to other flood mitigation projects.

18/133.1 **RESOLVED** that the balance of £14,415 from the Operation Watershed grant would be returned to West Sussex County Council for reallocation.

Members raised concerns over flooding in New Road, Clayton and were aware that some work had already been undertaken to explore mitigation in this area. It was therefore suggested and agreed that when contacting WSCC to return the grant, the Clerk would ask County to consider reallocating the funds to address the flooding issues in Clayton.

GE 18/134 TRAFFIC AND PARKING. Cllr Leslie Campbell raised concerns over the unfinished resurfacing works in Woodsland Road, and that the Traffic Regulation markings had not been reinstated. The Deputy Clerk was requested to follow this up as a matter of urgency.

GE 18/135 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY (PROW). Cllr Leslie Campbell informed Members that Cllr Georgia Cheshire had taken over checking the Public Rights of Way on Cllr Campbell's behalf. Cllr Campbell expressed his appreciation that Cllr Cheshire was carrying out this role.

GE18/136 URGENT MATTERS at the discretion of the Chairman for noting and/or inclusion on a future agenda. The Clerk informed Members that a piece of equipment in the children's play park required an urgent repair. It had been very difficult to find a contractor who was able to undertake this repair, and a quote had finally been received for this repair for the sum of £800.00 plus VAT. The Clerk informed Members that there was not sufficient funding in the Repair and Renewal budget for this repair to be undertaken.

The Clerk asked Members to note that within the Standing Orders 'the Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £750. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chairman of the relevant committee as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.'

Although the total amount for the repair exceeded his permitted expenditure by £50, it was noted that there had been difficulty in locating a contractor who could carry out the repair and there was a need to progress the work as quickly as possible in the interests of safety. The Clerk informed Members that with the permission of the G&E Chairman and the Chair of the Council, he would be authorising the repair to be undertaken and would report retrospectively at the next full Council meeting. Members were in full support of this course of action.

GE18/137 DATE OF NEXT MEETING. The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 23 April 2019.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.20pm

SignedChairman Date.....

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL			
Adastra Park Sports Facilities Fees and Charges 2019/20			
General Conditions			
1.	The charges included in this leaflet are effective from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 in relation to the sports facilities operated by Hassocks Parish Council. Summer and Winter season dates are specific to each facility and activity.		
2.	All hirers must complete an official HPC application form and adhere to the Council's published Terms and Conditions of Hire prior to the booking period.		
3.	Payment for the hire of facilities must be made in advance unless otherwise are agreed.		
4.	Discounted Rates - where a discounted rate (50% of the full rate) is provided, the following conditions apply: Juniors-to qualify for the discounted rate, facility users must be under the age of 17 at the time of hire. Senior Citizens - to qualify for the discounted rate, facility users must be 60 or over at the time of hire.		
		Full Rate	Discounted Rate
SPORTS HIRE - SUMMER			
	Cricket Turf Wicket - per use	44.55	22.25
	Cricket Turf Wicket - evening rate	23.40	
	Juniors on Artificial Pitch		11.70
	Cricket Net Practice		
	Per session	23.40	11.70
	Water for cricket square will be recharged at cost		
	Stoolball - South Field per use	21.75	10.85
	North Field	N/A	5.45
	Bowls - Club Members	129.00	64.50
	Water use will be recharged to the Bowling Club		
	Tennis - Casual Hire per Court	7.00	3.50
	Key Deposit - returnable	5.00	5.00
	Tennis - Club Members	92.00	46.00
	Couples	138.25	N/A
	Children of Adult Members		16.15
SUMMER PAVILION HIRE			
	Changing Rooms/Toilets/Kitchen/Bar/Storage	37.90	N/A
	Changing Rooms/Toilets/Kitchen/Storage	25.60	12.80
	Toilets/Kitchen/Storage	12.80	6.40
SPORTS HIRE - WINTER			
	Football - per use	57.50	
	Junior Football on Senior Pitch		28.75
	Mini-Pitch		14.35
	Training Session (per session)	14.80	7.40
	WINTER PAVILION HIRE	31.25	15.65
	Community Pavilion Hire	9.50	
	Fitness Training Charges (4 hour session)	10.55	