

LANCING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities & Environment Committee held on Wednesday 1 May 2019 at 7:00pm.

Present

Chair: Lee Cowen

Councillors: Liz Haywood, Danny Jackson, Lionel Parsons and Gina Scotting.

Ex-Officio: Cllr Mick Clark.

Public: One.

Officer: Helen Plant, Clerk.

37. Apologies

Apologies had been received, and with the reason outlined, were accepted from Cllr Geoff Patmore.

38. Declaration of Substitute Members

None.

39. Declarations of Interest

None.

40. Public Forum/Questions

None.

41. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 6 March 2019

Resolved – That the Minutes of the previous meeting be approved.

42. Clerk's Report

42.1 Monks Rec Improvement Project Update

The Working Group met on 11 April to receive a further presentation from BDP in respect of the final shape and layout of the building, which also now included requirements from the Football Foundation. This had increased the overall size of the building and would ultimately have an overall effect on the build cost.

Samples of the intended build materials, i.e. concrete and wood, were circulated. It was outlined that the soffits would need relevant treatment to avoid damp due to the building's air circulation and expected humidity that would be created through the use of the kitchen and showers.

Images of the revised play space were provided which incorporated the preferred carriage works theme. Bespoke items of equipment could be made, which would be at a premium, but there were a number of play equipment manufacturers/suppliers that already produced similar themed equipment at a more reasonable price.

There was uncertainty as to whether the Parkour could be moved as the plans suggested the concrete had been cast as a whole and not in sections. However, there was scepticism on the current use of the item as no young people had been seen using it recently for the

purpose it was designed for, so Electric Storm Youth's Outreach worker had been asked to establish if the young people wanted the Parkour retained or not.

BDP had been requested to carry out relevant drainage tests and ascertain the anticipated costs for any necessary improvement works to be carried out as it was considered that the site did suffer from drainage issues.

BDP were now in the process of refining the presentation so it was suitable to accompany funding applications and for use by the Project Manager once one had been engaged, as well as firming up the building drawings and producing a Design and Access Statement in anticipation of the submission of the building's planning application.

It was confirmed that the Sussex County Football Association's Local Football Facility Plan was now in the final draft stage. It was hoped that it would be completed as soon as possible so it could be established whether a funding application could be made to the Football Foundation for this project. A revised grant application to Sports England was due to be submitted shortly.

Concerns were expressed in respect of the imminent tree planting and potential vandalism, but it was anticipated that due to the substantial size of the trees that were intended to be planted (approximately 2-3 metres high), this would not be a problem. However, enquiries would be made with the Co-op and Sussex County FA as to whether their CCTV covered any areas of Monks Rec. Nine locations had been identified for trees to be planted along the eastern boundary and potential shrubs along the southern fencing. Initial quotes for the supply and installation of nine trees amounted to approximately £4,000.

It was confirmed that the use of the not-for-profit organisation, Groundwork, was being explored to assist with the Project Management of the overall scheme and bid writing and who could also scrutinise the build cost and suggest alternative options in order to keep the overall expenditure down.

Resolved – That the associated costs for the supply and installation of nine trees be approved.

42.2 Beach Green and Beach matters

i. Beach Green Premises Licence update

Pursuant to Committee Minute 36.2vi/Mar/19, it was confirmed at the meeting that the Licence had been granted.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

ii. Beach Green Lighting update

It was confirmed that UK Power Networks had quoted £850 to put in a feeder pillar to install the necessary electricity supply for the intended units.

While it had proved difficult to initially work with SSE, with assistance from County Cllr Bridges and officers at West Sussex County Council, a relationship had been established and an engineer was currently in the process of putting together a quotation for the supply, installation and a maintenance package for 6/8 units.

It was confirmed that consultation on the scheme had been publicised, but comments had been of a mixed response. It was considered more appropriate to issue a further

consultation once the final scheme had been drawn up and images showing how it would look could be presented.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

iii. Beach Green Activity Day

It was reported that all partners had confirmed their attendance and a meeting to finalise the day's activities would be arranged nearer to the time of the event.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

iv. Skatepark Improvements update

It was confirmed that the extension works to the skatepark run off areas were now complete, and the works had been well received by the users. Attempts were being made to grass the bare areas, but this would be difficult given the high usage.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

v. Summer Skatejam

In conjunction with Electric Storm Youth, the Summer Skatejam was scheduled on 13 August between 2pm and 4pm. Blue Dawg Entertainments had offered to compare the event free of charge which would enable the agreed budget of £300 to be spent more on prizes, with sponsorship also being sought again.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

vi. Lancing Kite Surfing Club event – Pier 2 Pier

It was reported that the Club had involved itself in the national kitesurfing event, Pier 2 Pier on 26 October 2019. Kite and windsurfers would have the opportunity to race between Worthing Pier and Brighton's Palace Pier. It was anticipated that the event would further cement Lancing as a core kite surfing location in the UK and if relevant sponsorship could be sourced, it was hoped the event would become an international one.

There was a requirement for a small registration marquee to be sited on the Green and arrangements in respect of the use of the car park would be made between the Club and the car park Licensee directly.

The Committee wished the Club every success with the event.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

vii. Boat Winch Information Panel

The A1 size (841mm x 594mm) information panel for the boat winch had been designed and the final draft had been circulated for approval. It was confirmed that the wording had been approved by local historian Mr Robert Brown (Lancing & Sompting Pastfinders).

Once approved, the panel would be fitted within a specific frame stand and, together with the renovated winch, would be installed adjacent to the existing winch on the beach to the west of The Perch building.

However, the Committee felt that the image from R.G.P. Kerridge's 'History of Lancing' book was puerile and replaced with an alternative, but relevant, colour picture.

Resolved – That the boat winch information panel design be amended and resubmitted to the next meeting for approval.

viii. Installation of a Sand Pit

A suggestion had been put forward for a self-contained sand pit to be installed at an appropriate location on the beach, adjacent to Beach Green. The details of the one at Worthing near the Coast Café were provided, including how it had been funded, but it was felt that the associated maintenance difficulties were too fraught to overcome.

Resolved – That the idea of a sand pit being installed on the beach not be progressed.

ix. CYCALL – Inclusive Cycling

It was reported that CYCALL, a voluntary led organisation, had been fundraising to provide adapted cycling equipment for disabled adults and children or people with a health issue which prevented them from using a standard bike. There would be no charge for the use of the bikes and WSCC had given permission for the scheme to use the coastal cycle path along Beach Green towards Widewater Lagoon.

An associated request had been received for CYCALL to use part of Beach Green to set up a small gazebo to act as a meeting point for people wishing to use the bikes. Relevant Public Liability Insurance and Risk Assessments were in place. The scheme would be operating for 3 sessions a week for 3 hours at a time and would avoid operating on the days of other events.

Resolved – That the Committee supports CYCALL and permission be granted for the set up of a small gazebo on Beach Green.

42.3 Croshaw Play Area Renewal Update

Pursuant to Committee Minute 36.3/Mar/19, it was confirmed that three play area suppliers had been invited to provide the most play value for money design possible with the £25,000 available. The three designs were circulated for Members' information. It was anticipated that all the designs would be shown to children at The Globe Primary School (the nearest school to the site) to choose their preferred option and views would also be sought via posts on SBL and the Council's Facebook pages and websites.

While Members favoured the Kompan design, it was felt that one of the three springers should be replaced with a balancing item or spinner bowl.

In respect of Sompting Parish Council's response to the request for a funding contribution towards the renewal of Croshaw Recreation Ground's play area equipment, the matter was raised at the recent meeting with the Chair of that Council and a further explanation had been provided. Cllr Godley stressed that the decision had not been made lightly, but SPC was not in a position to support the project, due to financial constraints in setting the 2019/20 budget, adding that difficult decisions had had to be made during that process.

Resolved – That in order to speed up the project's progress, the chosen supplier be delegated to the Clerk in conjunction with Sompting Big Local's officer and following public

consultation, subject to one of the springers being replaced with alternative equipment, such as a balancing item or spinner bowl.

42.4 Metal detecting on Council land

A request had been received from a metal detecting enthusiast seeking permission to detect on Parish Council owned land, i.e. Beach Green, Croshaw/East Lancing/Monks recreation grounds.

Permission had already been refused in respect of Beach Green due to the unknown nature of what lay beneath and had been the previous standard response. Permission was also advised against at Croshaw rec due to the majority of the site being leased out. However, detection was considered possible at East Lancing and Monks recs.

Notwithstanding, it was noted that consideration should be given to specific points before permission was granted, including whether detection would cause a nuisance or not, would it destroy the surface, how deep could they dig and, if something was found of historic or monetary value, who owned it. The National Council for Metal Detecting had provided a model search agreement, which was submitted for Members consideration.

Members considered that if permission were granted, it could lead to unauthorised digs and subsequent holes all over the recreation grounds creating safety issues.

Resolved – That permission not be granted for metal detecting on Parish Council land.

42.5 Monks Rec Fun Fair – provision of portable toilets

As there were now no public toilets at Monks Rec, Members were asked whether some portable toilets should be hired for when the fun fair was in operation between 10-12 May. The cost of two toilets was £165 and could be paid from the Events budget. Members were keen for a disabled toilet to be provided if the cost wasn't too much more expensive.

Resolved – That two portable toilets be hired for the duration of the Monks Rec fun fair, with the cost being paid from the Events budget.

Note – at this point, Mrs Jo Proctor, the Secretary of World of Widewater and present at the meeting, was invited to join in with the discussion of the following items.

42.6 Widewater issues

i. Loss of overall support from West Sussex County Council

Members were reminded that Widewater Lagoon was officially declared a Local Nature Reserve in 1997 by an agreement between Lancing Parish Council, as the land owner, and West Sussex County Council, as the designating authority.

While the Agreement stated that WSCC 'shall not be required to give any assistance whether financial or otherwise in the management of the Reserve', WSCC's Countryside Team had provided invaluable support over the years, especially with ecology advice.

However, at the recent Steering Committee meeting on 20 March 2019, WSCC advised that a service plan review had been carried out which identified WSCC was performing activities above the requirements of the LNR legal agreement and it had therefore been decided to withdraw this support from 1 April 2019. It was considered that this decision was mainly

down to financial constraints as it was known that WSCC was having to find ways to reduce expenditure within an overall savings schedule.

This decision was obviously very disappointing and questioned whether the 2015-2025 Management Plan was possibly now too ambitious. Furthermore, the Steering Committee considered that there was a need to re-establish the aim of the lagoon site, i.e. what/who was it to benefit, were there any rare or key species to protect and how could this be achieved, and to have an overall reassessment of the lagoon's future, but this would require ecological support in some shape or form.

It was known that there were private environmental consultancy firms that could provide assistance, but initial enquiries indicated that for a site visit, review of all existing data/reports and a written priority management plan would cost approximately £3,500.00. However, enquiries had also been made to establish if Brighton University, who had produced baseline surveys for the site in the past, or other organisations, such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds or Sussex Wildlife Trust, could help at a more reasonable rate given that there was no allowance within the Council's 2019/20 budget for such expenditure. It was confirmed that the Professor of Ecology at Brighton Uni, the Clerk and Secretary of WoW were due to meet on 14 May 2019.

In the meantime, WSCC had updated the lagoon's general work programme for the immediate future which was due to be discussed at World of Widewater's next meeting to establish what work the volunteer group could undertake along with the Council's grounds maintenance team. Also, two people (the Clerk and a member of WoW) had been trained to take the future salinity readings and water levels. The equipment used by WSCC had been handed over to the Parish Council.

It was noted that the Environment Agency was responsible for the mitigation pipe which aided the flow of sea water into the lagoon. The EA had neglected the pipe for a number of years, mainly because the WSCC Park Ranger used to clear out the control chamber and monitor the level of the weir boards, but since WSCC's recent decision, the EA had recognised its duty and over the last few weeks, had arranged for works to clear out the pipe and chamber of shingle etc. The EA would be continuing to monitor the pipe on a more regular basis to ensure it was free flowing.

Members acknowledged the situation and of the need for additional specialist ecological support and recognised that the lagoon, as a local nature reserve, was likely to need specific funding in future budgets. Grant funding might also be available for certain aspects relating to the site.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted.

(b) That a funding request be made to Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club for a contribution towards environmental projects in Lancing, with a specific emphasis on the support required for Widewater Lagoon Local Nature Reserve.

ii. Antisocial Driving in the car park

It was reported that Widewater car park suffered from late night antisocial drivers with residents encouraged to report incidents to the Police. While this issue had been previously considered by the Committee (Minutes 8.15/Jul/18 and 15.10/Sep/18 refer), it had been requested for the matter to be raised again as the issue.

It was previously confirmed that the installation of speed humps/rumble strips could create further antisocial driving problems and the logistics of a manual barrier made it too difficult to implement.

Auto number plate recognition could be installed at the car park to deter the culprits, but as the car parks' licence was due for renewal at the end of March 2020 and would need to go out to tender towards the end of this year, District Enforcement were understandably reluctant to currently foot the bill for the required equipment and associated installation.

Mrs Procter reiterated the need for the matter to be discussed again; not only did it disturb local residents, it affected the lagoon's wildlife and was also a serious safety matter as two cars had been seen racing down the car park in daylight at the same time that two people and their dog were walking in the car park. Incidents were also occurring on a more regular basis. Residents were reporting to the police but had become dispirited from the lack of police response and as no action was being seen to tackle the matter in general. Notwithstanding, Members stressed that reporting must continue in an endeavour for the police to pick up on the issue.

Solution ideas had been gathered from World of Widewater's Facebook page which included those that had been previously considered, with the constraints of those recognised. However, it was viewed that Operation Crackdown, the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership initiative could be a potential solution by putting up posters around the car park, but further advice would be sought from the Partnership first.

In the meantime, WoW and the Council would promote the Operation Crackdown reporting form via their Facebook pages and the Clerk advised a meeting with Sussex Police's CCTV team to establish the technicalities of CCTV in public spaces was due to be held shortly.

Resolved – That advice on ways to curb antisocial driving at Widewater car park be sought from the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.

iii. **Widewater Kiosk Improvements update**

It was confirmed that the improvements to the seating area at Widewater kiosk had been carried out.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.