

LANCING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities & Environment Committee held on Wednesday 4 September 2019 at 7:00pm.

Present

Councillors: Lee Cowen (in the Chair); Ann Bridges, Danny Jackson, Geoff Patmore.

Ex-Officio:

Officer: Helen Plant, Clerk.

Public: Two

9. Apologies

Apologies had been received, and with the reasons outlined, were accepted from Cllrs Mick Clark and Jean Turner.

10. Declaration of Substitute Members

None.

11. Declarations of Interest

None.

12. Public Forum/Questions

None.

13. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 3 July 2019

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

14. Clerks' Report

14.1 Monks Rec Matters

i. Improvement Project Update

It was confirmed that the final design drawings and plans to complete Stage 3 of the process had now been checked over by a member of the Working Group for assurance that all was in order with them. The documents had also been shared with Helen Blanche from Groundwork South, this Council's appointed Project Manager for the scheme, and who was also present at the meeting.

The Design and Access Statement and associated documents to accompany the planning application in respect of the new building had only recently been received, so the application would be submitted as soon as practical.

It was also confirmed that the Clerk and the Vice Chairman of Lancing Football Club, had met with the Football Foundation (FF), in conjunction with Sussex County Football Association, on 18 July. It was noted that this clarified the fact that a funding application to that body could only be submitted once all necessary permissions had been received for the construction of the new building and three quotes based on the build specifications had been obtained. Furthermore, if a grant application was submitted to the FF, it was unlikely that a similar application to Sports England would be granted. Therefore, as more funding was available from the FF, it would be prudent to apply to that body only. However, it was highlighted that the FF would expect the full amount of the funds

earmarked for the project to be used as match funding, thereby potentially leaving no means to progress the scheme any further. As such, it was therefore suggested that any more funds that might be allocated to the project should be separately earmarked.

The FF also advised that a pitch analysis was required. The subsequent report would advise the Council as to what, if any, improvements needed to be made before the realignment of the pitch was effected as per the design. It would also provide a future maintenance plan for the Council to follow. As the cost was only £150 which could be absorbed by an existing budget heading, the Clerk had instigated an analysis; the report was due to be received shortly. Members were also asked to note that an analysis had been requested for Orient Road as this pitch was now regularly required during the football season.

It was unclear when the Working Group needed to next meet, but the Group had been advised of the current situation.

Helen outlined her career background to Members and provided examples of recent projects similar to Monks Rec that she'd managed and answered questions. Members noted that Helen and the Clerk would now meet to discuss the project's way forward.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted.

(b) That a recommendation be submitted to full Council for £60,000 from General Reserves to be specifically allocated towards a new play area at Monks Recreation Ground.

ii. **Memorial Tree request**

It was reported that a request had been received from Keep Lancing Lovely to plant a tree at Monks Rec in memory of the late Dinah Wheatley, who had been a staunch volunteer of KLL and supporter of Parish Council projects.

It was noted that should the request be agreed, a suitable tree would be chosen from the list provided by the landscape architect and planted in an appropriate area according to the masterplan.

Resolved – That approval be given to a suitable memorial tree being planted at Monks Rec in memory of Dinah Wheatley.

14.2 **Beach Green Matters**

i. **Beach Green Lighting update**

It was confirmed that further investigations into the costs of installing CCTV to one of the new columns on Beach Green remained ongoing. A public consultation had yet to be undertaken to establish whether there was public support for CCTV on Beach Green, but this would be carried out in conjunction with the issue of the Council's next Newsletter, but the delay on this element would not prevent the overall lighting scheme from progressing.

Clarification had been provided by PSR Lighting as to how much extra the stated works "as supplied by others" would cost, so the previously submitted table of estimates for the supply and installation of eight lighting columns and lanterns had been updated, and as full Council had given approval for £15,000 to be allocated from General Reserves to complete the Beach Green lighting project, Members were asked to choose a preferred supplier.

Members were reminded that there was an additional cost of £850 for an electricity feeder pillar to be installed by UK Power Networks before any lighting scheme could be powered.

Resolved – That SSE be the chosen supplier to provide and install the Beach Green lighting scheme.

ii. Beach Green Activity Day

It was confirmed that the Activity Day on 9 August was well attended and enjoyed by all who took part. Thanks were extended to Cllrs Jackson and Clark and the Assistant Clerk for their support given to the event.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

iii. Summer Skatejam

Electric Storm Youth had confirmed that the Summer Skatejam on 13 August was a great success, with approximately 100 skateboards and scooter users taking part.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

iv. Boat Winch Information Panel

It was confirmed that the panel and associated frame were due to be delivered towards the end of September and that in the meantime, arrangements would be made to have the reconditioned winch installed.

It was considered appropriate for an unveiling event to take place once the panel was in situ.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

v. Wildlife Information Panel

Pursuant to Minute 8.2v/Jul/19, it was confirmed that the Sussex Botanical Recording Society had now carried out a second plant survey at Beach Green and the beach and a more complete list of identified species had been provided.

A total of 75 species were recorded, but as this was too many to list on an information panel, the most abundant would be selected and those, along with the most common bird life that frequented the area as provided by the Shoreham District Ornithological Society, would be included. Arrangements would now be made for draft panels to be designed.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

vi. Craft Makers & Food Market 2019 - Outcome

The above event duly took place on 17 and 18 August, despite the high winds which were nearly a cause for cancellation, but the event organisers considered it a success.

It was noted that due to the weather conditions, the amount of income was not as much as anticipated, but £250 had been paid to the Parish Council, as previously agreed.

The organisers were keen to grow the event and were looking at suitable dates for 2020, mindful of avoiding the regular village market days.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

vii. Water Fountain/Bottle Filler update

An update was provided in respect of the problems arising in respect of the water fountain that had been purchased following the receipt of a Drinking Water Foundation grant. The installation delay was due to quoted fitting costs being extortionate, so an alternative solution had to be found and additional parts being required so the unit complied with UK water standards. Southern Water had recently agreed to use one of their staff community volunteer days to help with the installation of the unit, so the fountain would be installed as soon as possible.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

14.3 Croshaw Play Area Renewal Update

It was reported that the start date for the improvement works had been put back to 9 September, with the project completion being 20 September, primarily due to prolonged school projects that had been hampered by testing weather conditions.

In respect of the anticipated replacement fencing, the contractor who had quoted a reasonable price for powder coated bow topped railings and self-closing gate, had had to retract that quote due to an administrative error. The initial amount was quoted as £4,175 but the correct price was actually £11,755. The alternative cheaper option was for a similar arrangement as the existing fencing in the sum of £6,950.

While the existing fencing was considered ‘unwelcoming’, it was fit for purpose. Members’ views were therefore requested as to whether this expense was actually warranted, given the funds could be put to better use elsewhere.

Resolved – Notwithstanding the decision taken at Minute 8.3b/Jul/19, no new fencing be installed at Croshaw play area at this time.

14.4 Widewater issues

i. World of Widewater Visitor Centre update

Pursuant to Minute 8.4ii/Jul/19, it was reported that the Clerk had met with the World of Widewater’s Visitor Centre Working Group on 16 July.

The Group had been able to arrange a preliminary set of design plans, which had been previously circulated for Members information. The layout allowed for a kitchen area, which could be easily adopted as a replacement kiosk and adapted to suit. The layout would also allow the kiosk to offer an internal seating area when the visitor centre was not in use by WoW and would therefore allow the kiosk to potentially open more often. The location of the building would ideally be on the south side of the cycleway, on the existing information booth site, to provide a better viewpoint of the lagoon. Indicative costs for the construction of such a building were estimated at £100,000, but it was anticipated that this amount could be reduced.

As previously reported, WoW were determined to see this project through to fruition and were continuing to source grants and organise fund-raising events. However, the grant aid situation was more likely to succeed if other funds were available to act as match-funding. This was suggested to be in the form of an earmarked sum provided by the Parish Council in respect of the replacement kiosk element of the building.

Members were reminded that some structural work was needed on the kiosk before it could open for the season this year and it was likely that other works would be necessary before next year's, due to the general state of the building. It was therefore stressed to Members that whether there was to be a WoW visitor centre or not, serious consideration needed to be given to the provision of either a full revamp or replacement kiosk at Widewater.

However, Members were not enamoured by the preliminary design plans and felt the building should be more robustly built and have a larger community space. Furthermore, Members were unwilling to consider any monetary contribution to the scheme at this stage, citing that if WoW were so minded to progress the centre, it should be prepared to raise all funds necessary for a design as approved by the Parish Council, given that the building would ultimately become the Parish Council's responsibility.

As such, Members considered that a scrutiny of the design brief would be beneficial to both parties and to establish whether evidence of community support had been gathered, e.g. had local schools, organisations indicated whether they would use the centre.

Resolved – That an on-site meeting between this Committee and World of Widewater be arranged to discuss a potential way forward for the Widewater Visitor Centre.

ii. Widewater Footbridge update

While the anticipated replacement footbridge works had been scheduled for September 2019, it was confirmed that the Project Manager had indicated a delay was expected, but the exact reason was unknown. The Clerk would endeavour to clarify the situation as soon as possible.

Members expressed their extreme disappointment at this news.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

iii. Widewater east car park

Pursuant to Minute 8.4i(b)/Jul/19, it was confirmed that initial investigations for the eastern car park layout being changed to design out antisocial driving had been made. Three companies, as recommended by West Sussex County Council Highway's team, had been contacted for a concept detailed design and construction information, with the cheapest fee proposal being £2,785.

Members were taken aback at the cost of such a design and were reluctant to approve payment.

Resolved – That the Clerk seeks to work with District Enforcement Ltd to come up with a suitable car park design, given that company's experience in car parks.

14.5 Christmas Festival

Pursuant to Minute 8.6/Jul/19, it was confirmed that as the date of the Festival was after the end of the school term, no schools had taken up the invitation of taking part in a Carol competition.

Notwithstanding, in conjunction with Adur Markets, Lancing Brass was booked for the Communal Carol Singing, along with other local entertainers to fill the other time slots and the other elements were also confirmed.

However, Members felt that more local talent should be involved and that they themselves would make investigations, but a suitable advert should also be posted on this Council's Facebook page.

Resolved – That an advert for local talent to take part in this year's Christmas Festival be posted on the Council's Facebook page.

14.6 Antisocial Parking

Following Minute 8.8/Jul/19, Cllr Jackson's 'Antisocial Parking' flyer was submitted for approval. The flyers would be located on culprit's car windscreens to act as a deterrent. Enquiries would be made as to whether Sompting Parish Council wanted to share the flyer so that Council's logo could be included before it went to print.

Resolved – That the 'Antisocial Parking' flyer be approved.

14.7 2020/21 Budgetary Considerations

Members were asked to consider whether there were any potential schemes that would require scoping out for inclusion in the Council's overall 2020/21 budget considerations, in addition to already identified projects, which had come about as a matter of course, suggested by Members or other source. Any approved items would be initially considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

1. Beach Green Fences, Barriers & Bollards – increase sufficiently to allow for the replacement of the perimeter birds-mouth fencing rotten sections. It was noted that quotations were currently being sought.

Resolved – That approval be given for a sufficient increase to the Beach Green Fences, Barriers & Bollards to allow for the replacement of the perimeter birds-mouth fencing rotten sections.

2. Grounds Maintenance – increase from £5,000 to £6,500 to cover the cost of inspection surveys on trees sited within this Council's recreation grounds and any associated works. All local councils had been recently advised to have such inspections as part of their overall risk assessments, in the light of a court case judgement against a parish council, as well as maintaining a species record and tree locations.

Resolved – (a) That approval be given for an increase of £1,500 to be included in the Grounds Maintenance budget for one-year only to cover the cost of inspection surveys on trees sited within this Council's recreation grounds and any associated works.

(b) That investigations be made into a Grounds Maintenance Officer being appropriately trained to carry out relevant tree surveys and necessary works beyond 2021.

3. Grounds Maintenance Wages and Associated on-costs – increase of £1,500 to cover the costs of a weekend litter picker from the beginning of April until the end of September (26 weeks) to specifically pick at Monks Rec and Beach Green. It was noted that the increased amount had been derived by using the same hourly rate of pay as a

casual caretaker. However, difficulties for this work to be carried out under existing staff contracts was outlined.

An alternative option would be to 'buy into' Adur & Worthing Council's Street Cleaning services at a cost of £5,000.

Resolved – (a) That the increase to cover the costs of a weekend litter picker be rejected.
(b) That consideration be given to the role being included within the Grounds Maintenance Officer and Casual Caretaker job descriptions when the next vacancy occurs.

4. Beach Green Litter Bins – increase from £2,500 to £5,000 to cover the purchase cost of a large fish shaped wire cage plastic bottle/can bin.

Resolved – (a) That the increase for a fish cage bottle/can bin be rejected.
(b) That the Parish Council works with Keep Lancing Lovely in an endeavour to progress the fish cage bottle/can bin initiative.

5. Village Planter Sponsorship (New item) – The West Adur Capital Projects Group admin team had been trying to encourage local businesses to sponsor the planters located around Lancing village centre, but without success. Businesses considered the cost too expensive and Adur District Council did not have the budget to cover the costs itself.

For the tubs to be planted with flowers bi-annually and regularly watered equated to £250 per planter. Members' views were requested as to whether the Council should sponsor one or all fourteen at a total cost of £3,500.

If funding was not found, ADC would revert to perennial planting only.

Resolved – (a) That the introduction of a Village Planter Sponsorship budget be rejected.
(b) That the Parish Council endeavours to work with the Lancing Traders Association to find ways for the tubs to continue to be planted with flowers bi-annually and regularly watered.

The meeting closed at 9.21pm.