

HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS COASTAL USER GROUP MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2011 18.00 – 20.00 at Horntye Sports Complex, Bohemia Road.

Present:

Cllr Trevor Webb	HBC (Chair)
Cllr John Hodges	HBC (Chair)
Virginia Gilbert	HBC Head of Amenities Waste and Leisure
Nick Sangster	HBC Resort Services Manager
Jayne Butters	HBC Borough Solicitor
Amy Shortman	HBC Resort Services Administrator
Kevin Boorman	HBC Head of Communications and Marketing
Anne Scott	Old Hastings Preservation Society (OHPS)
Chris Richards	Hastings Adventure Golf
Dick Edwards	Hastings Old Town Residents Association (HOTRA)
Laurence Bell	White Rock and America Ground Business Group
Dean Baker	Hastings Lifeguards
Di Cooke	Hastings Lifeguards
Judy Scott	Castle Ward Forum
Richard Lane	West of Haven Beach Users Association
Paul Carter	East Hastings Sea Angling Association (EHSAA)
Phil Ornsby	Fishermen's Museum
Alan Blackwell	Sea Space
Paul Desmond Joy	Hastings Fishermen's Protection Society
Yasmin Ornsby	Stade Partnership
Steve Manwaring	Hastings Voluntary Action / Stade Community Facilities
Brendan McDonagh	Hastings and St.Leonards Hotels and Tourism Association

- 1. Welcome – Cllr Webb** opened the meeting, those present introduced themselves.
- 2. Apologies** – DCI Mark Ling – Sussex Police, Helen Truman – St.Leonards Business Group, Phil Askew – Gensing and Central St.Leonards Forum, Ian Sier – Hastings Urban Bikes, Lee Whitear – TS Hastings Sea Cadets
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting/action points** – **NS** apologised about quantity of reports that had been emailed. The group was asked if in future they wanted the full length reports or a briefing for each. The group requested that electronic copies of the full length reports were circulated for their information. It was felt by those present that as much information should be given as possible to the group about the matters for discussion. JB confirmed that it was desirable that the Group had full information so that they could give informed recommendations to the Charity Committee and Council when consulted.

DE asked that item 6C on the minutes be re-worded to say “The group shall be Chaired initially by the appropriate designated Council Officer”. It was suggested that this was discussed further at item 5 of the agenda.

- 4. Membership Update – Cllr Webb** explained the outcomes of the Membership Sub-Group meeting held on 2nd February 2011(see separate notes). It was agreed that to manage the size of the CUG, there should one representative from each organisation/group. There had previously been 45 – 50 organisations represented at the group, this has now been reduced to 42. The minutes and proposed organisations on the revised membership list have been circulated to the group.

NS informed the group that he had written to a small number of previous members who were not included on the revised membership list and advised them that they would still be able to express their views through alternate routes.

NS advised that other organisations could be co-opted and invited to attend meetings for particular agenda items. **JB** commented that it was easier to manage a smaller group but that it was important that the representation reflected all aspects of the foreshore. It had been agreed that the group come up with a recommendation, taking these views into account.

NS advised that the OHPS had been invited to represent heritage and local history groups. **AS** said that she was happy with that decision but agreed to see how it went and if necessary other members could be co-opted onto the group.

KB informed those present that Hastings Borough Bonfire Society had gone to the press due to being turned away from the group membership but that an explanation had been given as to why. **NS** advised the group that although a valuable event to the town, the groups direct interest in the foreshore is only for one night of the year and it was therefore not felt appropriate that they had full membership, however they it had been agreed that they would be invited to attend in respect of specific events/activities.

Steve Manwaring from Hastings Voluntary Action was co-opted onto group as he is directly involved in helping to support the Stade Facilities Group.

Cllr Webb asked the group for agreement on the recommendation by the Membership Sub-Group. **DE** proposed that Ward Councillors and Council Officers did not vote on items due to the potential conflict of interest. He said that it was important that the group remained impartial and that might be compromised by Ward Councillors voting. **Cllr Hodges** said that he was happy not to vote as long as he had representation. **JB** advised that the ward members attend in a representative capacity and so should have a vote.

The item was formally proposed by Dick Edwards and seconded by Anne Scott with 13 in favour and 2 against.

- 5. Terms of Reference/Constitution – JB** read to the Group from Charity Commission guidance.. The guidance suggested that the Charity Committee would have to decide whether the CUG as constituted was suitable to act as the Coastal Advisory Group under the Scheme. **JB** advised that detailed advice was still awaited from the charity law barrister and once received this will go to the Charity Committee. **DE** suggested that any decision of Chairing the group be deferred until the detailed advice had been received and that the group follow the decision made at the previous meeting that a designated Council Officer Chair the group. **JB** advised that the advice was for the

Charity Committee but that the Charity Committee would want to know what the group's view was on the issue of "Chairperson". **JB** confirmed that the Barrister's advice at the moment was that it was appropriate for a designated Council Officer to Chair the group. **VG** informed the group that if they were unhappy with a Council Officer as Chair of the group, they propose an alternative to the Charity Committee. There was general agreement from the group that they should decide who is Chair. **CR** proposed that the group should elect their own Chair rather than spend money on detailed advice. Concerns were raised about members of the group sitting on the Grant Advisory Committee, Charity Committee and Coastal User Group. **JB** clarified that no Council Officer or Councillor could sit on the Grand Advisory Panel. **JB** said that there was nothing in the Scheme to prevent a person sitting on both bodies.

Cllr Webb explained his reasons for not Chairing the CUG with regards to Foreshore Trust issues. **JB** explained to the group that a Council Officer had been suggested as Chair of the group due to their knowledge and experience in working for the Council. In respect of the issue of interests being brought to the group for discussion, the conflict of interest clause in the Terms of Reference protects against these issues.

CR commented that there needed to be a clear process for identify and dealing with a stakeholder who has a conflict of interest. **JB** confirmed that the stakeholder should make representation then leave the room and not take part in the discussion. Several members of the group openly declared areas where they may have a conflict of interest.

Chris Richards formally proposed that the group elect their own Chair, this was seconded by Laurence Bell. 15 in favour, no objections.

6. Events on Foreshore Trust Land/Management of Stade Open Space –
KB presented the two reports to the group. The following was recommended:-

Events on Foreshore Trust Lane

- *Any existing events that cost the Charity Committee money are listed.*
- *The Old Town Carnival is added to the list of events.*

KB clarified that HBC paid for the Seafood and Wine Festival and that the report relates to new events taking place which will require consent from the Charity Committee. **JB** clarified that these were draft reports and that they might be amended before be presented to the Charity Committee. **KB** will present the paper to the Charity Committee on 29th March 2011.

Management of Stade Open Space

- *Following concerns about being able to charge for events on the land JB to seek advice specialist advice.*
- *Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Report are isolated for further discussion.*

JB informed the group that The Stade land was legally extremely complex and that things have to be done in a way that is not challengeable. All aspects of use will need to be looked at very carefully. **DE** informed the

group that people paid for the Multi Use Games Area if they were pre-booking and that the income from these bookings went into a fund to help with the general maintenance of it. Agreement for this charge came from the previous Foreshore Trustees and their Solicitors, who said it was reasonable to charge on occasion if the use was mostly free to the public. **SM** commented that it would be extremely difficult to maintain The Stade Facilities if people were not permitted to charge for events and that if the charges are permitted on one part of the Foreshore then it was only equitable to be able to charge on another part. **JB** clarified with the group about Foreshore Trust Land edged red and Foreshore Trust Land edged green. She said that charging on these areas of land was permissible for certain uses as stated in the Hastings Borough Council Act 1988. She explained that if the land was not being used for these "Permissible Uses" then one had to look back to the original trusts for example to hold for the common use benefit and enjoyment etc. **AS** commented that the group should not preclude on charging ?? Most members of the group present expressed a wish to be able to charge for the Stade Facilities.

The report excluding paragraphs 6 and 7 was proposed by Paul Joy and seconded by Dick Edwards. 15 in favour no objections.

7. **NS** presented a report and forward plan in respect of an extension to the existing Cycle Route. The following was requested:-

Cycle Lane Extension

- *Clarification on the route and it's impact on the Blue Stade.*
- *That Bicycle Racks are installed by the Multi Use Games Area at Pelham.*

NS informed those present that two public exhibitions were being organised Saturday 2nd April – Café on the Beach, Glyne Gap and 8th and 9th April at Pelham by the Kiosks.

Dick Edwards formally proposed the report and Chris Richards seconded. Agreed by group subject to East Sussex County Council Safety Audit and Clarification of Blue Stade implications.

Forward Plan

- *Clarification of what is HBC responsibility and what is Foreshore Trust responsibility.*
- *Foreshore Trust assets are clarified in the report and list is given to CUG.*
- *Stade Open Space and Fishing Fleet are put down as a strength.*
- *A detailed draft forward plan are developed as an agenda item for the next meeting.*

Concern was expressed that the list set out in the Forward Plan was a definitive list. **AB** clarified with **NS** that there was no timescale on the list and that it's purpose was to illustrate what was needed maintenance wise for the Seafront. He proposed that the group accept the list as an indicative list of sorts of maintenance. **NS** confirmed that most of the Coast Protection works

was funded by grants from DEFRA. **NS** informed the group that Resort Services had arranged for various decorative works for Bottle Alley, the Alcove Seating, Marina/Solarium and West Marina Chalets was carried out by the Community Payback Team. **VG** confirmed that once the Forward Plan had been drafted and approved it would be followed by a three year rolling plan. **NS** updated the group in respect of the White Rock Baths proposal. **NS** advised that the survey had been delayed for health and safety reasons following an electrical failure. **JB** confirmed that no decision had been made on the allocation of the money.

8. Members updates

- **HOTRA** - Pelham Play is in good use. A Community Lottery Bid is in progress for a Fitness Trail, **DE** is waiting to hear the outcome and if unsuccessful will seek an alternative opportunity with the Table Tennis Association.
- **Hastings Adventure Golf** – Volley Ball Court to be completed middle – end of May 2011. **CR** to circulate information on Open Day Events to the group.
- **Beach Action Plan** –
 - **NS** is in discussion with Planning and will advertise for general expressions of interest for Seafront Activities. A draft brief for a feasibility study for Bottle is currently being developed.
 - **Quality Coast Award** - A new application for Marina and renewal application for Pelham Beach were submitted in December 2010. There will be an additional Lifeguard Service at Marina.
 - **Sustainable Transport** – **NS** in early discussion with local groups to explore options. The new owner of the Miniature Railway expressed an early interest in extending the track.
- **Jerwood Gallery/Stade Open Space** - KB updated those present on the progress of the project.

9. Any other business

LB informed the group of the “Party on the Promenade” event which is taking place on 12th March in order to raise money for Hastings Pier. The Heritage Lottery are coming to Hastings on Wednesday 16th March 2011. This is the only opportunity to put in a bid in respect of restoring the Pier and there is a poster which has been produced to help promote the importance of Hastings Pier to the whole town both old and new town residents. People are encouraged to show their support by displaying the poster.

10. Date of next meeting- Thursday 26th May 2011 18.00 – 20.00 – Council Chamber

Please note should the meeting have to be changed we will endeavour to give you as much notice as possible.