

**NOTES OF
Hastings & St. Leonards Coastal Users' Group
Held on Tuesday, 7th March 2017 @ 1800hrs
Stade Hall, The Stade, Hastings**

Present:

Cllr Dawn Poole (Chair) – HBC (Old Hastings Ward)
Cllr James Bacon – HBC (Old Hastings Ward)
Laurence Bell – White Rock Business Group
Kevin Boorman – Hastings Borough Council
Hannah Brookshaw – Hastings Borough Council
Christine Boulton-Lane – West of Haven Beach Users Association
Alan Care – Hastings and Rother Disability Forum
Paul Carter – East Hastings Sea Angling Association
Paul Cosson – Hastings Borough Council
Dick Edwards – Hastings Old Town Residents Association
Amy Godfrey – Hastings Borough Council
Mike Hepworth – Hastings Borough Council
Theresa Hodge – Disability Inclusion CIC
Cliff Meaden – Epic Life
Yasmin Ornsby – Stade Partnership
Allison Pascual – Hastings Borough Council
Steve Peak – Friends of Hastings Country Park
Andre Palfrey-Martin – Save Our Heritage Group
Nick Sangster – Hastings Borough Council
Anne Scott – Old Hastings Preservation Society
Aaron Woods – Hastings Borough Council

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Apologies have been received from:

Di Cooke – Hastings Lifeguards
Cllr Colin Fitzgerald – HBC (Charity Committee Chair)
Cllr Mike Howard – HBC (West St Leonards Ward)
Cllr Judy Rogers – HBC (Castle Ward)
Cllr Trevor Webb – HBC (Central St Leonards Ward)
Karen Trimmings – Hastings Pier Charity

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. The Chair informed those present that this would be Nick's last meeting before he leaves Hastings Borough Council (HBC). Gratitude for his hard work over the years was expressed by all. It was also

explained that Kevin would be taking over some of the seafront work for the interim along with other HBC officers who were present at the meeting.

2. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING (29th November 2016)

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising:

- Preservation/cleaning of the net shops environment – issue will be passed on to HBC officers dealing with the FLAG funding, as it may be possible to include it when the next round of funding commences.
- Caves at Rock-a-Nore Road fence – this was discussed with HBC's Homelessness team, who was aware of the issue.
- Plant pots along the seafront – were removed and one set that was still intact has been put into storage.

3. ACCESS AUDIT FOR HASTINGS AND ST LEONARDS SEAFRONT

- Theresa Hodge from Disability Forum CIC and Amy Godfrey from HBC attended the meeting to talk about the Seafront Access Audit report which has been prepared by Disability Inclusion CIC.
- The audit was undertaken by Disability Inclusion with support from volunteers of the HAVE (Hastings Access to Venues and Events) group and was carried out along Hastings and St Leonards seafront.
- Accessibility issues along the promenade and other facilities were highlighted and it was suggested that accessibility arrangements should be met, publicised and included as a condition of any event contract.
- In addition, the available electronic pre-arrival mechanisms were tested, including the Hastings Borough Council, 1066 Online, Visit 1066 Country and DisabledGo websites, the 1066 Country Smartphone App, and the social media channels i.e. Facebook and Twitter.
- A number of potential improvements have been identified and recommendations made which will be used to inform decisions to be taken by the Foreshore Trust and Hastings Borough Council. The recommendations have been categorised according to cost and ease of implementation. The full report will be circulated to CUG members.
- It is recognised that the areas in question are either HBC, Foreshore Trust, East Sussex County Council or privately owned land so a number of people would have to be involved in discussions to establish responsibilities, costs and timescales involved.
- The full report will be circulated to CUG members.

4. FORESHORE TRUST ITEMS

Off-Street Parking Infrastructure Improvements

- Mike Hepworth, HBC's Assistant Director for Environment and Place and Paul Cosson, Parking Enforcement Manager, attended for this item.

- Mike explained that there is a need to upgrade the pay and display parking and associated signage in the off street car parks borough wide. Out of a total of 45 machines, 35 will soon be obsolete, hence the need to bring in new ones. In addition, in order to improve customer service there is a need to introduce alternative payment methods, including Ringo pay by phone, chip and pin and contactless.
- The total cost of the works to the Foreshore Trust would be £21,105. Approval will be sought from the Charity Committee at its meeting on 20th March. Feedback is also sought from this group. At its meeting last night, HBC's Cabinet approved its share of the capital expenditure (£50,000) for this work.
- Anne queried whether the 'pay on exit' option has been considered and would be made available. It was explained that this option was explored but the capital costs involved were very prohibitive and not viable. There would also be a need to build a special access road and it would be difficult to get wardens to respond quickly if problems arose.
- Alan asked if the machines could be made wheelchair accessible. In some cases, even though disabled spaces are already taken up, disabled people still may want to park and would need to pay in order to do so. This would be looked into.
- CUG members will be informed once the work has been completed.

Public Space Protection Orders for Hastings (PSPOs)

- At its meeting last night, HBC Cabinet also gave its approval to carry out a formal public consultation on draft PSPOs, relating to 1) dog control measures and 2) anti-social behaviour associated with drug and alcohol abuse in public places.
- CUG members will be informed once the consultation period starts and comments and feedback will be very welcome. Clarification around dog control measures and the need to have dogs on leads was asked for and will be made as clear as possible as part of the process.

Improving the Hastings Street Scene

- HBC Cabinet also approved a 6-12 month appointment with a specialist enforcement contractor, to supplement the warden service. It is hoped that the trial will start at the end of May.
- There was general agreement that there are many problem areas. CUG members were asked to put their feedback and proposals forward as responses to the PSPOs consultation.
- There was also discussion around cafes and restaurants spreading their tables and chairs across the street. CUG members were asked to give specific details and businesses which are not adhering to their licenses will be dealt with accordingly.
- Mike and Paul were thanked for attending the meeting and for all the hard work that they carry out to make the borough safer. Mike is happy to be contacted for any specific issues and emails should be sent to: MHepworth@hastings.gov.uk

Seaside Cycle Hire Review

- Aaron Woods, HBC's Facilities Development Officer attended for the item, for which a report is going to the Charity Committee on 20th March.

- The report reviews the operation of the service to date and recommends that 1) alternative options are explored to provide a more sustainable business model, 2) that the current services runs from mid-July to early September this year and 3) that £4.5k is committed from the 2017/18 Business Plan to fund the purchase of the replacement bikes
- The review is necessary as the existing business model is not financially sustainable. The service has proven popular, serving over 1300 users over the three years it has been operating, but there is a need to provide a different model especially with some of the bikes coming to the end of their life.
- Initial discussions have been held with the Bike Lab, who has expressed an interest in a potential social enterprise model and providing the service, although it is planned to engage with other potentially interested parties.
- It was suggested that Hastings Pier Charity be approached as there may be potential to move the operation onto the pier. Nick commented that it wouldn't be practical to relocate the existing cycle hire service onto the Pier but they could consider it themselves as part of their new business plan.
- The full report will be circulated to CUG members once it is published.

Seafront Water Play Facilities

- Hannah Brookshaw, HBC's Regeneration Officer attended to give an update.
- At its last meeting in December, the Charity Committee approved the proposal to have a water play facility installed on land owned by the Foreshore Trust at Pelham Place.
- The facility will be free to use for residents and visitors and will be made as accessible as possible, without blocking the cycle path or pedestrian access.
- As agreed by the Charity Committee, tenders will be invited shortly and once returned final approval to proceed will be sought from the Charity Committee.
- It is aimed that the facility will be open next year and anticipated that it will be operational between April to September every year.
- In addition to the water play facility, a small kiosk will be required to act as a plant room to house the pumping equipment and controls. This could also be used as a base to hire deckchairs, sun loungers, etc.
- Most of the group welcomed the introduction of another play facility, including the consideration of the disabled access, although it was noted that the St Leonards area could also use additional facilities. Hannah explained that an assessment of Foreshore Trust land was carried out but this was the only identified site that would be suitable to house the underground tank.
- Hannah and Nick were thanked for their efforts for the work carried out to date. CUG members will be kept up to date with progress.

Charity Committee Minutes (12th December 2016)

- The minutes of 12th December 2016 were noted.
- Minute 72, Annual report of Grant Advisory Panel (GAP) – Anne queried the membership of the GAP, as the minutes stated changes have been made. She expressed deep concerns about the two new members being related to current councillors or HBC employees. Clarification will be sought and the details circulated. **Action: Allison**

Review of Lifeguard Services

- Kevin explained that HBC is looking into the possibility of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) operating the lifeguard service for a trial this summer season.
- The proposal will be cheaper than in-house provision, as the RNLI will pick up training, overhead and management costs and the cost of providing any equipment.
- Kevin also explained that Di Cooke has been approached and is aware of the proposal. Di was also thanked for her hard work over the years.
- The RNLI has already spoken to the fishing fleet, who have indicated their full support.
- An urgent paper is being taken to the next Charity Committee meeting under urgent provisions.
- The meeting indicated its full support to the proposal. Kevin will report back in due course.

5. COASTAL ITEMS UPDATE

Harbour Arms Works

- Nick explained that further to receiving the funding to improve our sea defences, the first part of the work was completed last summer.
- The second part of the work will be to improve the Harbour Arm. HBC are just in the process of tendering for this piece of work. These tenders are due to be returned by Friday of this week and it is anticipated work will start in the first week of June and will be completed before the end of the summer season.

6. MEMBER UPDATES / ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Request to have written reports circulated prior to CUG meetings – will be carried out for future meetings where possible.
- Exhibition at the White Rock Theatre – will be taking place from 5th to 8th April to celebrate 90 years of cultural and musical experiences in the area. Andre advised that anecdotal stories are still being sought. Information will be circulated.
- Storytelling festival – Dick raised the safety issue at the Stade Open Space, as there is a need to find a way to reduce the risk to those attending this (and other) events. Often drivers may not be aware that events are taking place and there is a potential that someone may get hurt. Paul Cosson will be asked to look into the issue of the barriers being raised when events are taking place and the Chair agreed to facilitate a discussion between users.

Action: Cllr Poole

- Beach Clean event – is being facilitated by the Aquarium on the morning of 25th March.
- Gate at car park near fishmarket – HBC surveyors have been asked to look into the issue as the gate is yet to be installed.
- Shopmobility – query about available funding. Details to be sent through to Alan. **Action: Nick**

- New Beach Huts – these are currently being procured and it is hoped they will be in place by mid-May.
- Needles under the pier – Cliff raised the issue. Kevin advised that this has been brought up and discussion is taking place with Hastings Pier Charity.
- Pier to pier challenge from Hastings to Eastbourne – Cliff advised that this is taking place soon and Epic Life is looking for those who may be interested in competing as a two man team.
- Sign at St Leonards Pier – it has previously been agreed that this is a good idea. Steve was advised to send the relevant material through to HBC so this could be set in motion.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

6pm, Tuesday, 13th June, East Hastings Sea Angling Association

Meeting closed: 2003 hours

Distribution:

Hastings & St Leonards Coastal Users Group
Charity Committee