

Coastal Users Group
6pm, Tuesday 7th March 2023
East Hastings Sea Angling Association
DRAFT notes

Present:

Paul Carter, Chair

Nicole Brown, Simon Tomlinson and Tony Knott – Southern Water

Yasmin Ornsby – HFPS

Chris Richards - Adventure Golf

Melanie Clarke – Hastings and St Leonards Sailing Club

James Cook – Protector

Liz Gilmore – Hastings Contemporary

Andy Davey – RNLI

Hugh Richardson – RNLI

Di Cook – Hastings Voluntary Lifeguards

Peter Wheeler – Hastings Canoe Club

Christine Boulton Lane - WHBUA

Cllr Tony Collins – HBC

Cllr Julia Hilton – HBC

Cllr Karl Beaney - HBC

Abbie Williams, Aaron Woods, Sarah Crosby (notes) and Kevin Boorman – HBC

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting and to the East Hastings Sea Angling Association.

Apologies were received from:

Paul Joy

Nick Paige

Anne Scott

Cliff Meaden

Steve Peak

Cllr Claire Carr

Laurence Bell

2 ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED

Southern Water update

Tony and Simon gave a presentation on the various Southern Water projects.

A copy of the presentation will be sent to us so a copy can be circulated to all members.

There was a Q&A session following the presentation and points raised will go back to operations teams. This included assurance that their current plan B is a development on plan A, it has been enhanced as it was realised there was a better solution.

Regarding the Pelham Update, there was concern over the timescale, especially due to 1st May and 8th May bank holidays arrangements and start of lifeguard season. Kevin explained the numbers for these events and mentioned the concern if a lot of plant is moving on site. There was also a query why the timescale had changed, this was due to the pipe/piles and timber cradle especially if the pipe is being extended.

Southern Water Customer relations

A draft newsletter was circulated at the meeting and Nicole would welcome any feedback/comments on that. They want to produce this regularly so important to contain the right information.

The note about recent communications is that it was important to keep everyone involved especially if there has been any delay/change of dates.

It was also mentioned that other work in the area needs to be included so residents are kept informed (e.g. Gas works etc) and it was agreed that all information needed to be relayed if good bad or indifferent.

Compensation was also mentioned in the presentation.

There were comments that all businesses are affected if there are sewage leaks in the town and an example of that is the Hastings Contemporary. Southern Water explained that there is a process for businesses to report loss of earnings/visitors etc and **Southern Water would forward a link for Hastings Borough Council to send out.**

The issue of the compensation for the flooding at Bulverhythe will be discussed outside this meeting.

Tony, Simon and Nicole were thanked for attending the meeting, CUG appreciated the update and felt it was good to have them on board. They would like the date of the next meeting so they can come and update again.

RNLI Business Ambassadors

Hugh wanted to share a message from the water safety team. They have flyers etc for the various groups on CUG. It highlights the importance of water safety, and online there are lots of resources available. It was felt it was good to all share water safety knowledge.

Melanie mentioned that they are arranging a water safety session at the Sailing Club, and all would be welcome to attend. **Melanie would let Abbie have the details.**

Stade Footpath – to be an item on the agenda until situation is sorted.

3 MEMBER UPDATES

Fish Festivals

Kevin was asked to provide an update as to why Hastings Borough Council are no longer running the fish festivals. **The group were not happy with the decision.**

Yasmin firstly wanted to thank Kevin and his team for all their work, but it was disappointing to receive the email, and the very kind follow up call, but the HFPS have been involved from day one, and given a lot of goodwill and fishery support. It was a very strange way to deliver this message and very disappointed by that.

Kevin explained it was not in the budget proposals (other town events were) but he had learnt last week that the council was not going to run the fish festivals and they would be offered out for others to run. The council staff involved had not been expecting this decision, and work had already started on the two events, bands had been booked etc. Documents are now required 90

days before the event, leaving only two weeks for the Midsummer Fish Festival details to be submitted.

Paul/CUG feel that this was not in the best interest of them or the town, and they will be writing to the leader of the council. They feel it is a substantial loss to the town. They have had no consultation on this, despite being a consultative group.

They would like to know what the process is for choosing a new operator, Kevin explained that the detail/criteria was not set yet.

The group would like to know

Who made this decision?

Why did they make this decision?

Why were members of CUG not consulted?

What is the reasoning behind this?

The councillors at the meeting said that they were not aware of the decision until they saw the press release.

Yasmin also explained that they are part of a national fishery group which looks after management plans for the channel and looks at coastal communities. Hastings has always been held up as beacon because of the relationship between fishery, cultural community, gallery and the council. She has been invited to sit on a new national steering group and was going to invite them all to the fish festivals.

The group wanted it recorded that they pass on their thanks to the council's fish festival team.

Chairman News

Paul then informed the group that this would be his last night as Chairman and will be standing down after the meeting. He wanted to thank everyone for their support over the years.

This news was not expected, and the group wish Paul well.

Aaron (HBC)

Southern Water – wanted to mention that he does work very closely with Southern Water and will be having further conversations with them.

He also updated on the Cliff Railways. The East Hill Lift carriages will be lifted out this week and being sent for refurbishment, it is hoped they can reopen for end of May.

The West Hill lift carriages are being removed so work can start on the chassis.

He did arrange for the annual survey on shingle to be circulated to everyone and explained that the area between the outfall and harbour arm gained 700m of beach in one year (22000 cubic metres of shingle). Coastal protection works do recycle down the coast, but we do get beach growth. Any queries and want more info Aaron happy to help.

Melanie (Sailing Club)

Melanie asked about profiling especially outside the Sailing Club as their new season starts on 19th March. **Aaron explained no profiling was planned but would review this to see if a tidy up group can help.**

There has also been a block from the council re the new changing room project, and think it is linked with drains etc, **but the council have not been responding to emails.**

Will be holding another Water Festival in May following the success last year, **and members of CUG are welcome to attend like before with an information table etc.**

As the season starts soon lots of courses are being set up for youth and adults.

Chris (Adventure Golf)

Chris updated the group on his £3.7m investment. Currently out to tender for works but hoping to start mid-September and be completed by March 2024. They are working with Westridge.

Still waiting to hear from council planning department.

James Cook (Protector)

Has found this to be a very useful meeting

Liz (Hastings Contemporary)

Liz explained that they have an historic show of art around the world opening on 1st April, which echoes story forced out of Russia. It is a good important show and hope to have a large number of visitors attending.

Would like to thank everyone for their help over the years and was pleased that the building is now an asset to the town. Continuing to work hard to drive numbers through.

Sadly they had had a broken window and there was a discussion around CCTV. Agreed its costly but good to have your premises covered.

Andy (RNLI)

Roof works are continuing and still on target **but waiting on planning permission for PV panels**. As soon as they hear the scaffolding can probably start to come down end of April/May. Visitor numbers are very good. Wanted to say a big thank you for parking constraints etc whilst works are underway.

Operationally, like to say quiet but expecting this to pick up again. Main callouts are sadly for mental health cases walking into water.

Unable to use west side beach due to the profiling. Thank you to the fishermen for being sabbatical to use east side. Aaron explained that around 19 500 cubic metres of shingle was moved in November – but it comes back again so soon.

Cllr Tony Collins

It was his first meeting but has been fascinated by all the news this evening. He is vice chair of planning committee so will be happy to be a channel for communications around the issues. He cannot get involved in detailed discussions around planning applications

Cllr Julia Hilton

Also agreed it was great to listen and learn from the members.

Hugh (Lifeguards/RNLI)

Reported in full swing with recruitment for lifeguards. Have a 70% return rate and with the other 30% they are sending lots of emails and running media campaigns.

Busy with training, and this includes two seniors visiting schools to help educate about the safety in water. There will be an induction over the Easter period and start on 27th May for the half term week, then weekends until full time from 8th July – 1st September, and then back to weekends.

Peter (Canoe Club)

Waiting for warmer sea temperatures before for starting water courses at sea.

Peter asked about the pier columns. Kevin explained that the owners had been contacted and it was being discussed with other parties.

Di (Voluntary Lifeguards)

Still fundraising for a new boat. Sad the last course got cancelled due to lack of number but hoping for a better response for Easter. Still have on-going issues with pool training at Summerfields.

Member running half marathon and doing fundraising for them – details on their website.

Christine (WHBUA)

Wanted to ask about the net paving along the track, as when first laid it was agreed that cyclists were not asked to go above 5mph. They are a busy beach hut area with dogs and children and now there are a large number of electric bikes and scooters who seem to travel very fast along that area and feels that it needs to be addressed before an accident happens.

There are no guidelines or enforcement but Aaron agreed to take the issue up with Sustrans and ESCC

Kevin (HBC)

Kevin explained that the council has big budget issues at the moment and recent budget cuts have shown this. Alongside this there has just been a new management structure agreed.

Kevin reported that he will be leaving HBC in the summer.

This was a shock to everyone, and thanked Kevin (although he may be attending the next meeting) It was agreed it would not be the same without him.

4 FORESHORE TRUST CHARITY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Charity Agenda papers were issued to the group. Kevin would like any feedback so this can be mentioned at the meeting next week, he will raise the fish festival issue, but any other comments please let Kevin know by the end of the week.

5 FEEDBACK

It was felt that following the new of Paul and Kevin leaving, it maybe time to re-look at CUG and review its relationship with HBC and the constitution etc. There was mention of re-starting Stade Partnership.

The group were happy that Southern Water seem engaged and want to continue with regular updates with the group.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – To be Confirmed

A big thank you was passed to Paul and Kevin.

The meeting closed at 1950