**HENFIELD COMMONS JOINT COMMITTEE 27.7.2023**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Henfield Commons Joint Committee** held at 9.30am in the Committee room of Henfield Hall

Meeting opened with welcome from Malcolm Eastwood to attendees.

**Voting Members** Mr M Eastwood ME Ms G Perry GP **( HDC and HPC)**  Mr J Potts JP Mr R Noel RN

**Committee Members**  Mrs C Eastwood (secretary) Mr P Crawford PC Ms M Andersson MA

Mr E Colgate EC Dr J Coultas JC Mr T Baker TB Mr J Willis JW

**Public** Mr N De Moraes NDM

**Apologies** Mr M Morgan Absent Ms A May

Item Description

1. **Election of Volunteer to serve as Secretary for the coming year.**

Carol Eastwood was elected unanimously as the Volunteer secretary who will organise Agenda, take minutes and liaise with contractors.

**Declaration of Members Interests –** None

1. **Election of Chairman for the forthcoming year**

Mr M Eastwood was proposed by RN and seconded by JP andunanimously elected Chair of Henfield Commons Joint committee.

1. **Election of Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year**

Ms G Perry was proposed by ME and seconded by JP and unanimously elected Vice Chair

Henfield Commons Joint Committee

1. **Approval of minutes of 22nd March 2023**

Minutes were agreed by members and signed by ME

1. **Chairman’s Announcements** – None

1. **Matters Arising** 
   1. **Governance –** ProposedStructural changes( Agenda Attachment ) had been agreed by Vicky Wise at HDC with a review of the Governance structure and support deferred until the Autumn due to the change in Administration at HDC. Must ensure there is no conflict of work between HDC and HPC but it was agreed there is a positive overlap and HDC support is proactive and helpful. There may be special project funding required for larger projects but this should be applied for and tied in with the annual budget process which should be starting now ready for submission in September/October.
   2. **Henfield Common**
      1. Reed Bed Holes and Southern Water. Hole filled.
      2. Anti Social parking posts installed which has alleviated access to and from A281.
      3. Debris Area in Woods on common created by reed bed contractor agreed.
      4. Surgery to tree near cricket nets. Done
      5. Pendulous Sedge - Cut back and flailed. Being monitored.
   3. **Broadmare Common – Action Agenda**
   4. **Tanyard - Action Agenda**
   5. **Financial Matters – 2023/24 Budget agreed and communicated**
2. **Open Forum – None**
3. **Tanyard** 
   1. **Proposals by Henfield Shed ( see attached paper)**  Shedders are working on a Planning application to go to HDC in the Autumn and when it is agreed HPC will apply for rural prosperity fund grant monies to repair the existing Tanyard building including provision of Utility services. Water is already on site and nature of proposal means water neutrality has been considered. Shedders would then apply for Rural Prosperity grant funding to rebuild current building back to its original footprint. JW is working closely with project group to ensure ecological issues are addressed. When complete it is envisaged that the building will also accommodate storage for the Conservation group and the Parish Council works officers. HDC will retain ownership of the site but grant a lease to HPC who would the sub lease as required. Time critical for funding as first phase of work needs to be completed in this financial year. All present agreed to support the project and PC offered to review documents before submission.

**Action** Submissions to be prepared and shared with PC. ME, JP and GP agreed to work with Shedders on submission.

1. **Henfield Common Action Plan**
   1. New hole has appeared but this is caused by break in surface water pipe and is responsibility of HDC. **ACTION** Countryside Warden MA and PC will follow this up.
   2. Letter received from owner in Alma Terrace concerning parking spaces for residents of Alma Terrace. It was agreed to look into numbering the spaces and putting in lockable drop posts. PC will check Land registry entries and confirm ownership of car parking spaces to determine whether there is a right to a space or whether allocations are custom and practice. All agreed residents in cottages with no drive or garage should have priority for a parking space. May be asked to pay for posts. **Action** PC to check with HDC re legal position and Parking services.
   3. Fixed Point photography for the Commons. Mike Ainscough has offered to produce a fixed point panorama view of all the commons every three months. This will be shared with committee at meetings so progress and changes can be logged. Stakes will be put in the ground to mark photography points. MA offered to help with stakes.
   4. Grass Cutting and Commons Planting. It was agreed that the Bund and the Common should be cut at least twice a year in April and at end of August/September, timing depending on the weather and growth with a third cut if necessary. The western marshy part of the common should be cut three times a year but it will depend on the weather and the flora such as marsh orchids. It is critical that grass arisings are removed when grass is cut.It was agreed to plant wild flowers and yellow rattle in the western triangle this Autumn where a wild flower display would make an attractive entrance to the Common but we need to ask Works Officers to refrain from mowing this site once planting has taken place. A hard low grass cut will be required perhaps with some scarifying to prepare the site for planting.

**Action:** ME Discuss plan with Works Officers

* 1. Causeway ditches need to be re-profiled along the eastern bank so water runs into marshy land and reed bed. MA has spoken with Jake Everitt (JE) and agreed where flattening needs to happen (to north end of causeway). Possibly a job for Stuart Brierley.

**Action** MA to manage this.

* 1. Stuart Brierley to be asked to clear western third of reed bed and put debris in area created last year. **Action** MA to finalise contractor and costs.
  2. TB advised that there are willow trees in reed bed again which need removing, MA has a larger popper if needed. Contractors will be asked to remove willows if required ie if they are to well established for Volunteer Group. GP advised there is a willow near Alma Terrace that needs removal. **Action** MA will check this out.
  3. Tree work. Proposed one days work needed to lift canopy scallop edges around tree edge of the common. It must be within budget and will have input by JW and MA. **Action** MA and JW to liaise with ME.
  4. JC advised the residents on the common had paid £1800 to Battens for road repairs which have been done to a good standard. Four trees are blocking the horse trail but the works officers know where these are and will be clearing the trail.
  5. It was agreed to send out a newsletter next Spring to residents on the common advising them of the mowing regime and other initiatives.

**Action.** PHB will be contacted to undertake grass cutting this Autumn on both North and South sides of Common which will address overhanging bracken on South side.

1. **Broadmare Common Action Plan**

Bull rushes have invaded the ponds particularly Pond 5 at Pond House and it may be necessary to dredge as the silt is very deep and no longer possible to float a boat across. If mechanical digger with a long arm and off site removal is need costs will be

Significantly higher.

Three main priorities are

* Cut Fen removing arisings. MA and PC to obtain quotes and advise suitable contractor to undertake the works.
* Trees and willows around all ponds in Broadmare must be inspected and necessary work undertaken. **Action** PC to contact Tree Officer and ask him to inspect and if possible use HDC budget for this work.
* Dredging of Ponds. **Action** PC, MA and JE to arrange inspection and make proposals.

Community Payback Team will be asked to help remove dead wood and redundant tree house etc in the Autumn.

Works officers will be asked to clear blocked footpaths in the Autumn.

British Horse Society request for bridlepath upgrade between NepTown and Dagbrook Lane still in system and we will monitor its progress.

1. **Oreham Common**

Blackthorn hedges need to be cut back and Community Payback Team could be asked to undertake this work taking care to work in a way which support its use by wildlife ie nightingales. **Action** MEto add to schedule of work (Spring 2024) and alert MA when resources are available so that working party can be properly briefed.

Grass cutting regime to be in line with other commons. **Action**. Check contract with PHB.

Management Plan need to commission one to be reviewed in 2024.

1. **Correspondence Dealt with under 10.2**
2. **Budget/Expenditure**
   1. ME and PC will maintain the master records. At the moment we have spent very little so the focus should now be on pushing forward with planned and agreed work.
   2. Substitute Regeneration of Broadmare Common in place of Henfield Common Reed Bed on Parish Council IDP.
3. **AOB Tanyard –** Contractedhedge cutting work has been done but grass cutting is needed and PHB will be contacted. Tanyard needs to be managed and opened for Gardens and Art weekend next year with an organised event relevant to the space. A grass path needs to be cut in May and the internal metal gate needs to be fixed.
4. **Year of Biodiversity 2024**

GP proposed that some work and volunteering could be linked to Year of BioDiversity. Suggestions raised during the meeting included:

Species identification and recording.

Community Payback Team to tackle blackthorn on Oreham Common.

Commissioning and publishing a Management Plan for Oreham Common and perhaps the Tanyard during the year to give us a full set of Plans.

**17. Date of Next Meeting 9.30am Wednesday 4th October 2023**