

## HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee (POSAC)** held at  
**7.30 pm** in the **Congregational Church Hall, South Harting**  
on **Tuesday 11 February 2020**

**Present:** Mr Shaxson (Chair) (AS), Mr Bonner (TB), Mrs Bramley (SBr), Mrs Bull (SB), Mr Claydon (JC), Mrs Curran (PC), Mrs Dawson (SD) and Mr Palmer (AP).

In attendance: Mrs Walker (Parish Clerk) (TW).

**1. Apologies for absence:** None.

**2. Declarations of interest:** None.

### **3. Minutes from Meeting held on 26 November 2019**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Bull as a new member of the committee.

### **4. Matters arising:**

#### **4.1. Safety equipment for ponds**

This lifebelt and cabinet has been purchased and is ready for installation.

*Action: lifebelt to be installed at next Working Party event.*

#### **4.2. Flooring by new slide**

The condition of the flooring around the slide is still to be investigated

*Action: Clerk to contact contractor to raise concern*

#### **4.3. South Gardens signage**

The suggestions for signage are still to be developed, consideration needs to be given to the recommendations in the Play Area inspection report.

#### **4.4. Purchase of Furze Meadow**

Hyde Housing have agreed a budget for some new equipment at the play area in Nyewood. The timing of the work and items of equipment are currently unknown.

#### **4.5. Play area inspection**

The Inspector had raised concerns about the safety of pedestrians crossing the road to South Gardens. The Traffic Group has submitted a CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Grant application to SDNPA for a crossing at an estimated cost of £23,000.

### **5. Gates at Warren**

The bund at the entrance to the loading bay had been put in place after the completion of the tree works. The width of the bund will necessitate planning permission. TW will be making an application on behalf of the Council.

The entrances to South Gardens and the southern end of the Warren need to be secured by gates. The Warren top entrance will also need some secure fencing either side of the gate.

It is important to get this work done reasonably quickly to ensure the security of the area.

*Action: AS and clerk to progress this and gather 3 quotes for the gates and installation.*

## **6. Update on path closures**

AS outlined the current situation with regard to the footpath closures throughout the Warren.

An on-site meeting had taken place in January with WSCC, the Tree Working Group and the contractors to discuss the situation. The main paths are very wet, muddy and too dangerous for current use. WSCC had imposed two 21 day closures from December and it was agreed that a further 6 month closure should be implemented to allow the paths to dry and reprofiling works to be agreed and carried out. The £2,000 cost of the closure will be borne by the contractors who have taken responsibility for the situation.

WSCC had asked if the Council would create a promissory path leading up to the South Downs Way, but it was felt that this was not a good idea as the responsibility of that path would fall on the Parish Council.

The contractor had placed wooden frames at the entrances to the Warren to deter walkers and to reinforce the WSCC closure notices.

The members asked what would need to be done to get the paths back into a usable state. AS confirmed it was a matter of time to allow the paths to settle and then for the contractors and WSCC to agree a way ahead. It is hoped that the paths will be open before the 6 months elapses.

It was agreed that every effort should be made to communicate the situation to the community, as despite many efforts there are still people that do not know what is going on.

*Action: TW to continue to place items on Facebook, posters in shop and noticeboards.*

## **7. Update on planting and associated management**

AS reported on the Tree Council's planting day held in the Warren on 6<sup>th</sup> February. The event was attended by about 30 members from the Tree Council, DEFRA, SDNPA, Forestry Commission, EzeeTree and Network Rail. There had been about 440 trees and shrubs planted at the southern end of the Warren.

The company EzeeTree had donated all the shelters and stakes for the planting. The shelters are made from a recycled decomposable material designed to replace plastic shelters.

The Tree Council have said that this is the biggest community replanting scheme as a result of ash dieback that they are aware of in the United Kingdom.

It is hoped that grants will be available to cover the cost of the replanting works. Petra Billings, the ecological consultant appointed by the Council, is creating the replanting scheme and will be using this to apply for grants on behalf of the Council.

The recent letter in the Parish News was discussed by the members and it was agreed that an article should be submitted to the magazine to outline the positive way ahead regarding the replanting and restoration of the area.

It was noted that TW was meeting the Tree Wardens later in the week to update them with the situation and to ensure they are involved with future works if they wish to do so.

*Action: Tree Group to produce article for the Parish Magazine*

## **8. Donations and how they may be used**

A member of the community had made a donation towards the cost of new goal nets for South Gardens, these had been ordered and would be hung shortly.

A donation of £150 had already been received towards the replanting programme in the Warren. This would be ring fenced for Tree Works.

It is likely that other donations will be forthcoming as people are very keen to help toward the restoration of the area.

The members discussed the possibility of various fund-raising schemes that might help spark community interest in the replanting. Possibilities such as buying or sponsoring a tree may appeal to many. Also considered was allocating a specific area to trees that have been donated.

It was agreed that various ideas should be investigated once the replanting scheme and timescales are better known.

## **9. Working Parties - Dates and actions**

The Working Party held in January had cleared the car parking area and the access road leading to the Warren.

A further Working Party had been arranged for Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February at 9.30am. It was agreed that the aim of this group would be to install the life belt cabinet between the two ponds and to clean some of the play equipment and safety flooring. There are also some holes in the grassed area which could be filled with soil.

Ideally a jet washer is the best way to remove the green from the safety matting, but this would require a very long hose and extension lead to reach from the Scout Hut to the play area.

The Scouts had previously agreed the Council could have access to electricity and water for this purpose.

A further Working Party date for March or April will be agreed at a later date when further works in the Warren will be more evident.

## **10. Silt removal**

JC gave details of a possible scheme to pump the excess silt from the ponds to the gully in the Warren, a series of retaining walls would be created to hold the silt but at the same time allow water to filter through. Although the problem of the silt in the ponds is not immediately urgent it does need consideration as 50% of the ponds is silt.

It was agreed that the best way forward would be to raise this issue with Natural England to see if they would permit this, and to gauge the impact on the habitat. It would also be beneficial to speak to a potential contractor to see if it is actually possible.

The members recognized that the area had already gone through a great deal of upheaval with the recent tree works, and it may be a good idea to let things settle for a while.

*Action: TW to contact Natural England for advice and guidance.*

#### **11. Car parking area update**

The car parking area had been cleared during the January Working Party. Alex Levitt had very kindly filled in the pothole at the entrance to the area and has offered to continue to maintain it.

Alex has also offered to rebuild the end of the wall at the entrance to the car park and this will incorporate a galvanized pole to enable a notice to be placed there.

The flint wall surrounding the area is in need of repair, it was agreed there may be some local expertise that could be called on to help in this matter.

#### **12. Any other business**

- i. The Council may own some ash trees at the rear of the Village Hall, these need investigating as soon as possible.
- ii. Consideration to be given to a new Chair of the committee after the May AGM.

#### **13. Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 28 April 2020 at 7.30pm in the Congregational Church Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm