

MARESFIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Minutes of Meeting of the Executive Committee 10th April 2019

Held at 7.30pm at Newnhams Cottage

Present

Dick Thompson, President [DT]

Pat Palmer, Chairman [PP]

John Smith, Treasurer [JS]

Stan Sadowski, Membership Secretary [SS]

Rob Penfold, Member [RP]

Alex Clarke, Member [AC]

1. Apologies

Ian Shaw, Member [IS]

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of a conflict of interest.

3. Approval of Minutes of 13th March 2019

The Minutes were proposed by JS, seconded by RP and unanimously approved.

Minor typo corrected page 3 item 4.16 line 2, should read 'on' not 'mon'.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Recreation Ground Sign: Claire Goossens has confirmed that the Parish Council will pay for the £954 plus VAT cost of the replacement sign at the Rec, although the funds will be deducted from their grant. The sign will be double sided and made of aluminium. It will bear the name 'Queen Elizabeth Field', will list the relevant clubs/groups, but will show the contact point for all as the Parish Council. The Parish Council will maintain an electronic list of the relevant representatives for each of the clubs/groups which will reflect any changes over time. The design of the sign is still to be finalised with the manufacturer. After some discussion it was agreed that, under those circumstances, MCG will not contribute to the cost of the sign but will instead seek to donate to another project at the Rec.

AP1: RP to advise Rob Taylor, Recreation Ground Committee, of this decision and invite further requests for funds in respect of future projects.

4.2 Tabard Printing: New MCG tabards were given to all committee members present to keep for future use. The others will be kept by JS. It is believed that Sheila Cummings also has some MCG tabards which are used for the village clean up days. RP has approx. 6 of mixed styles which will be given to DT to keep.

AP2: RP to pass tabards to DT for keeping.

4.6 Projector: The new projector has arrived and was handed to SS for safe storage. The purchase of a laser pointer was agreed.

AP3: SS will keep the laser pointer together with the projector.

4.7 Cemetery Gate: The gate now opens fully over the new flagstones installed by an MCG working party. Some kind of soil retainers will be required each side to finish the project and possibly two small steps. Oak sleepers have been suggested.

AP4: JS will investigate using new oak sleepers and whether any non-slip surface would be required on steps.

4.8 Membership: SS reported that the current situation is that we have 175 members, although 10 of these have not paid any subscription for the 2018/19 year. Still trying to find out why.

4.10 Bonners School Request for Funds: In December 2014 MCG sourced three picnic tables and a storytelling chair from Ken Francis at a cost of £685 – these are all thought to be fine. However, six other picnic tables not originally supplied by MCG now need refurbishing. The benches are currently standing on the grass and need to be placed onto paving slabs to give them a longer lifespan.

AP5: JS & PP will have a look at the benches.

4.11 Plot A Site Visit: The site visit has taken place. No further action at this time.

4.12 Grass Cutting: There has been no response from Martin Craddock, Parish Council about the extra grass cutting. The committee agreed, for now, to assume all is proceeding to plan.

AP6: PP to speak to Claire Goossens about grass cutting areas and try to ascertain who does what regarding urban and rural cutting.

4.13 Historical Society: RP would like MCG to forge closer links with the Historical Society. *SS will speak to them about the website and explore options.*

4.14 PA System: IS confirmed that he is in a position to store the PA System.

AP7: IS/RP to collect the PA system from the Village Hall.

4.15 School Hill Fence: JS reported that only the section of fence in front of the new houses has been replaced.

AP8: JS & PP will provide updates regarding any further activity by ESCC Highways Dept. or the contractor.

4.17 Royal Corps of Signals Centenary: PP has discussed the event with Martin Craddock (Parish Councillor) and it is not thought that a big event will be possible. It was suggested that a High Tea style celebration could be arranged with the Royal Corp of Signals in conjunction with their 2020 Armistice Day visit. On this occasion the usual working parties would not take place and the afternoon would be a celebration instead.

AP9: PP to speak with Angie Whelton about this.

5. Treasurer's Report

JS handed out copies of the Income & Expenditure Summary 1st April 2019 – 10th April 2019 and the Annual Income & Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2019. Everyone confirmed that they are happy with the accounts. JS will have the annual accounts audited and prepared for the AGM.

JS reported that ESCC Highways Dept. is to give MCG a £500 grant as a result of the fingerpost work being carried out. Also, the charities allowance from HMRC has been applied for.

6. Website Update

SS reported that the rate of total visitors and new visitors to the website continues unabated.

7. Membership Update

23 welcome notes have been delivered since the process started, leading to 5 new members (a 22% hit rate).

8. Cemetery & Victorian Lamps

The committee agreed that the existing quote should be accepted in order to expedite the work. There is an old noticeboard in the churchyard which could provide a site for solar panels. This will also be considered.

AP10: IS to give instruction for the electrical and restoration work to start on the Victorian lamps.

9. AGM Steering Group

The AGM Steering Group, comprising PP, JS, SS, IS, AC and DT met on Tuesday 19th March and agreed the content and format of the AGM.

Further to this it was agreed to offer all attendees tea, coffee, wine and a few nibbles after the AGM. The executive committee will personally donate wine, 4 bottles of red and three of white. SS was not at the meeting at this time.

AP11: DT, JS, PP, AC will each donate a bottle of red wine and RP and IS will each donate a bottle of white wine.

AP12: PP invite M. Craddock (Parish Councillor), C. Goosens (Parish Council Clerk), and R. Galley (Wealden District Council) to attend the AGM.

AP13: JS invite footpaths group volunteers who are not MCG members to attend the AGM.

AP14: AC check our constitution regarding nomination process.

10. AGM Newsletter

The next newsletter is due to be sent out early in June (well before the AGM on 2nd July). This edition will be significantly larger than usual due to the amount of information required for the AGM.

11. AOB

Collectors Evening: The event is simply an opportunity for the Collectors to speak to each other and the Committee Members in a pleasant social environment, and for MCG to thank them for their contribution. The term 'Collectors' will remain for the present. PP has created an invite which she will ask SS to distribute to Collectors.

It was agreed that wine and snacks will be provided and funded by the MCG.

Village Sign at The Parade: KO, the Parish Council, has advised that this has been refurbished but is awaiting installation. The supporting posts are rotten and need to be replaced. JS inspected the supporting base for the sign which is obstructed by old wood. No further action has been taken by MCG. Awaiting completion by the Parish Council.

Parklands Grass Verge: The grassland area adjacent to Parklands has been reseeded after recent works.

Village Clean-up Day: There were 23 volunteers collecting litter, 19 adults and 4 very enthusiastic children. This is by far the greatest number turning out to help in recent years. 22 bags of litter were collected + 2 footballs, 2 tyres, a variety of large pieces of hard plastic and a glass windscreen. Thanks have been passed on to Sheila Cummings for organising the event.

Minute Secretary: The MCG Executive Committee will advertise in the church magazine for a new minute secretary. **PP to send copy to Candy Donovan**

Bulb Planting: It was agreed that bulb planting would take place twice a year, spring and autumn and be funded by MCG. Areas such as Park Edge, Field End and the Bowling Club will be considered. Suggestions are welcome for other sites.

Summer Supper: It was agreed that this year the welcome drink will be Sangria. The executive committee will provide desserts as these are not usually included in the catering.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm. The date of the next meeting is **Wednesday 8th May 2019** at Newnham Cottage.