

HAILSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ASSETS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF a meeting of the ASSETS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE to be held REMOTELY VIA THE INTERNET* (access details can be obtained from the Town Clerk on request, email john.harrison@hailsham-tc.gov.uk)

Wednesday 28th April 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

1. Public Forum

To deal with any questions or brief representations from members of the public relevant to the remit of the committee, in accordance with Standing Order 1. and Hailsham Town Council policy. (15 Minutes)

2. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence of appointed members.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive notice of declarations of personal or prejudicial interests in respect of items on this agenda.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – Assets Management Committee

4.1 To resolve that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Assets Management Committee held on Wednesday 17th March 2021 (Ref: AMC/20/13/181-195), as printed and circulated, may be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 To receive an update about progress of resolutions from the last meeting of the Assets Management Committee on 17th March 2021

5. Ersham Road Cemetery

To consider a request to set up a voluntary group

6. Sports Club Meeting

To receive an update from the meeting with Sports Clubs held immediately before this meeting.

7. Hailsham Byway 18a

To receive a proposal from Hailsham Active

8. **Benches at Western Road Recreation Ground**

To consider the situation regarding benches at the Western Road Recreation Ground and the newly installed perimeter track.

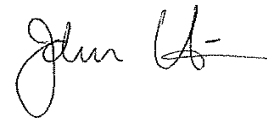
9. **Confidential Business**

To Resolve that due to the special and confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, and possible disclosure of personal or legal information not in the public interest at the present time, the following items of business be transacted following the temporary exclusion of members of the Public and Press, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders No. 1E.

Maurice Thornton Recreation Ground

The reasons for exclusion are: The beginning of legal proceedings and the terms of tenders for contracts or negotiations.

10. **Maurice Thornton Recreation Ground**
Update



John Harrison, Town Clerk

Committee Membership:

Cllr C. Bryant
Cllr B. Granville
Cllr R. Grocock
Cllr K. Hinton
Cllr P. Holbrook
Cllr M. Laxton
Cllr T. Powis

Substitutes:

Cllr N. Coltman
Cllr D. Cottingham
Cllr B. Holbrook
Cllr A. O'Rawe
Cllr J. Puttick

Report to	Assets Management Committee
Date	28.04.2021
By	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Title of Report	Ersham Road Cemetery

Purpose

To consider a request to set up a voluntary group

Background

The letter from Mr Walker asking to set up a 'Friends of Ersham Road Cemetery' voluntary group is attached to this report.

Considerations

The issue of the cemetery and the various interactions with members of the public is complex and of course extremely sensitive to those who have family members interred there. There are also significant legal implications. It is arguably the highest risk service that the town council operates, in terms of potential distress caused to the public, potential litigation and reputational damage to the town council.

The original approach was to use the 'unused' cemetery chapel for coffee mornings, help to repair it, raise funds and contribute to other things in the cemetery. It was explained that it is not actually unused, as it is used for storage and it would be necessary to incur expenditure on making the chapel fit for use plus find somewhere else for everything that is stored there.

The health and safety, insurance and risk-management issues for volunteer work in such a high-risk area are manifold.

Supervision and Management – volunteers working at the cemetery would require supervision by HTC staff at all times. HTC staff time and thus resources would be required to achieve this.

Training – volunteers would need to be trained on the various rules and guidelines for their activity. The risk of untrained volunteers joining on an ad-hoc basis would need to be minimised. A turn-over of volunteers would then require additional training.

Insurance - The Town Council's insurers have advised that a group of volunteers could not be covered under the town council's Public Liability Insurance and therefore would have to fund their own insurance.

Resources – many of the job suggested at the cemetery would require tools (for example trimming of hedges etc) – the town council does not have additional resources to provide tools or training for their use.

Grave Plots – these are owned by the purchasers of the plots. It would not be appropriate legally or otherwise to have volunteers tending, tidying or otherwise undertaking any work on graves. The risk of this happening 'accidentally' would have to be eradicated.

(The Town Council's Cemetery Superintendent has been approached by members of the public expressing their reservations at the idea that the public may be working at the cemetery or tending their family grave plots).

There have been a few occurrences when owners of graves have sought redress and compensation from the town council for alleged damage to graves caused by contractors. These were complex, time consuming and stressful disputes to work through, especially as they involved third parties. With volunteers working at the cemetery this would become an increased risk.

Cemetery Condition - The cemetery is currently in an excellent condition, due to the consistent hard work of the relatively recently appointed Cemetery Superintendent. Most of the jobs referred to in the letter are not actually required or would require professional attention. For e.g. the cemetery pathways have been agreed to be replaced.

Cemetery Superintendent – The potential impact on the current Cemetery Superintendent should be considered, in terms of workload, the need to supervise, and the improvements the current post holder had made to the site working under his own initiative and of which he is rightly very proud.

Alternative Voluntary Opportunities- there are many opportunities for voluntary activities to be undertaken in the town, such as organised litter picking activities, Environment Hailsham etc.

Dear John Harrison.

I was raised up in Hailsham most of my life in the 1980's and 1990' and I have family buried in the Ersham Road Cemetery.

I would like to form a group called Friends Of Ersham Road Cemetery.

I have seen in other cemeteries around East Sussex even though they have people taking care and maintaining the cemetery they still look overgrown and unloved unlike the Ersham Road Cemetery.

As a group I would like to gain people into as volunteers to raise funds to help cover the costs of maintaining the parts of the cemetery

- The pathway/driveways (overgrown weeds and grass)
- Boundary fences
- Upkeep of the toilet block and outside of the toilet block.
- Maintain the outside of both chapels (removing overgrown weeds etc.)
- Remove overgrown weeds from grave plots.
- Litter picking around the cemetery grounds

And to also help any way we can with the cemetery caretakers.

To raise money we would ask for donations and sell the donated items at table sales, boot fairs, events and if possible to get a funding grant.

I would like for the council committee to come on board with the idea of this group and keep up a high standard in the cemetery.

Yours Faithfully



Nick Walker

Report to	Assets Management Committee
Date	28.04.2021
By	Mr S. Wennington – Hailsham Active
Title of Report	Hailsham Byway 18a

Purpose

To receive a proposal from Hailsham Active

Proposal

Upgrading part of the byway known as Hailsham 18a – running from Diplocks Housing estate to Diplocks Industrial estate.

This is not the whole path, but about 150 metres worth.... A part of the path that is not useable in the winter – quite simply it becomes a bog.

We have discussed this upgrade many times before with the town council, Wealden and ESCC highways (Sustrans), and everyone agrees it is a prime candidate for improvement – it is just a lack of funds/commitment to the project.

Following the amazing success of the Western Road Rec path, we have targeted this as our next project, and in the same manner have tried to tick all the boxes to make life very easy for support from the Town Council.

The project consists of two parts – both related to our physical and mental health and also fitting in with the Hailsham Neighbourhood plan – policy TC2 under ‘public realm projects’.

- a. The upgrade of about 150metres of path to similar standard to western road rec (but slightly narrower)
- b. The clearance of the fly-tipping mess around the area, with a view to help increase bio-diversity

We have sought advice from ESCC byways and have approval for the project, including some very useful advice.

We have also discussed this with a local contractor, who in conjunction with Ralph have come up with the design and costings (circa £15k)

We have started discussions with Diplocks residents, Bramble Drive residents and the industrial units, and everyone so far has been very positive and supportive.

Funding

We are looking at 4 options for funding this:

- a. We have discussed this with Sustrans and they think there is a very good chance they could fund most/all of it and will know in the next 3 weeks (it fits one of their funding projects)

- b. Hailsham Roadway – we have had an amazing chat with the new owners, James Bailey, who by the way are giving apprenticeships to the area and is a leader in the field of sustainability for roads/paths. They will give us a free contribution to the works as part of their drive to support the local community
- c. If the above fail – we will be looking to raise money ourselves...
- d. or ideally, look at a CIL contribution.

Timescale – we would ideally like to conclude this before next winter.

Part 2 – the clearance of the fly-tipping/dumping of the area and cleaning up of the brook, plus creating a better habitat for wildlife.

We are very fortunate to have Charlotte Still and Clare Whistler join the project and link in with Hailsham Active as our 'ecological arm'. They have run clean up campaigns around Hailsham before, very successfully clearing the stream near Butts Field (which had a mattress and even an abandoned car there) so they know what needs to happen.

As well as their own usual contacts and volunteers, we have had two groups already come forward to help out – the fitness group 'atomic personal training' and Gracie Barra, so we hope it will be well policed!

All of this is free of charge to the council, residents and industrial units.

An amazing community project, something we hope is the start of many more, especially with the towns commitment to green travel.

The committee is asked to formally resolve to support in principle both aspects of the project as outlined above.

Any request for funding (from CIL or other source) would require a separate resolution to be made at as a recommendation to council.

