



Management Committee Meeting

Tuesday 11 February at 8½ Exmouth Place

Attendance

Dick Edwards (chair), Ann Novotny, Jill Bradley (JMB), Hazel Lloyd, Shirley Hawley, Cllr. James Bacon (JB), Cllr. Dany Louise, Mary Phillips, Richard Platt (minutes), Phil White (treas.), and guest Cllr Maya Evans [HBC spokesperson on Climate Change]. Apologies from Vivien Harrison.

Minutes of 14/1/20

...and any matters arising not listed below

Starrs Cottages lamp will be installed by the end of the week.

Climate Change

How can a town like Hastings respond ? DE said that HOTRA has suggested : press Stagecoach for **replacement buses**: ask them for a specific date ; suggest that each week includes FREE buses day?

ME said buses will be electric from 2025. She is trying to meet Stagecoach to press for an earlier date. She is looking at what Hastings can do to provide an incentive to Stagecoach to accelerate the change-over.

Ice Cream vans – HOTRA suggests HBC should only licence electric powered vehicles.

ME replied that license officer Bob Brown told her that budget constraints make this a problem.

HOTRA has expressed concerns about **solar arrays in the Country Park**. DE explained that HOTRA had been divided in opinion about this issue. He drew attention to a proposed change in bylaws that would result in a loss of 50% of space in the country park that is open to the public. He asked ...

Should the roofs of all publicly-owned buildings be part of a town wide programme to install solar PV?

ME agreed that “solar panels belong on roofs” but central government’s removal of the feed-in tariffs has made it less economical to install solar PV. She drew attention to HBC’s commitment to countering climate change: the council has recruited two new officers who are looking at roofs, council, commercial and private, which can be fitted with solar panels. The plans for the Country Park have changed and the scale of the plan has been reduced. She put the council's plans in the context of the wider issue of climate change. She canvassed the views of those attending the meeting.

DE raised the issue of **trees in the Old Town** and suggested that we need more. ME replied that she and JB are organising a *Tree and Grassland Community Consultation* on 12 March at the Bridge. She suggested crowd funding for tree planting, but mentioned that regulations restrict tree planting, and that in Hollington mature trees are causing problems.

Reports

Secretary’s Report – RP announced that he is standing down from the HOTRA committee and from his role as IT/website person. He reminded the committee that he had been in these roles for more than four years, and in that time he had taken on many other responsibilities in the community. He said that he would continue to maintain the website and do mail-shots until mid-May, so that HOTRA had time to find a replacement. JMB volunteered to do minutes.

Treasurer’ Report – Phil White Including Subscriptions.

PW said HOTRA had 161 paid-up members, and an overall balance of £1753.73, though only £350.73 appeared in the bank account; the remainder had been paid in too recently to be recorded.

Chairman’s Report

Old Hastings House Planning application DE has contacted all members of the planning committee urging them to support the application but there is no further news.

Isabel Blackman Centre

- Stage 2 pledge letter to be distributed soon.
- Building survey completed.
- VAT question unresolved though this has been challenged at County Hall.
- Business Plan has been submitted to ESCC in support of the bid.
- A company limited by guarantee is now most likely future management arrangement.
- Mrs Kisses campaign by Jane Watson aims to raise money for the IBC

Succession planning – DE intimated that he wished to stand down as chair (but will remain on the committee) and asked members to think about succession strategy. He suggested that perhaps the chair of HOTRA might be woman for the first time. Options need to be agreed in good time for AGM because a ballot will be required if there is more than one candidate.

The President is automatically the local MP at present. DE asked whether we should we reconsider this and perhaps change the constitution. There was support for a change. There was also some support for making the former Mayor the president. Carried forward.

Members Concerns

Pavements / potholes: JMB will accompany Cllr Bacon on a walkabout with ESCC Highways Steward.

JMB asked when **George St scaffolding** will come down. JB said the facade is still unsafe. She asked when the **West Hill lift** will be repaired. JB said perhaps Easter. **Loss of vegetable shop:** she complained that a small clique of incoming OT residents are posting negative reviews of local businesses on social media. DE drew attention to shop and bank closures in Rye. He said that retail is changing, but suggested there might be business improvement programme grants available.

AN danger of traffic on the Croft. Suggested bollards to protect pedestrians.

SH commented on the RNLI's rescue of a surfer at the weekend.

PW asked whether members use Fix My Street. JB said that HBC now has its own reporting system.

MP graffiti increasing

AOB

- Old Town Hall is being taken over by *Egg Tooth*, an organisation that helps troubled children who are in danger of being excluded from school. Will provide music mentoring, cooking, and other activities that are beyond the scope of the school curriculum. It will have a Temperance Bar. Has a 4-year grant from Building Better Futures (Lottery funding)
- DE met with Julia Hilton of the Green Party.

Future Programme

Tue March 10th at JMB's ; 7th OR 14th @ ?