

## **Full Council Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**FC076: To consider the request from the Parochial Church Council to modify the level of the new north path pavers adjacent to the vestry steps, review the options and associated estimated costs identified and resolve how to proceed**

### **1. Introduction**

The replacement pathways at the churchyard were completed and a site meeting was held at 10am on 15 October 2020 with Hobart, Cuckfield Parish Council and Church representatives to review the completed work and any snagging.

The join between the pathway and the vestry steps was flagged as a concern. However, agreement was reached that a line of red pavers would be installed to highlight the join to the vestry steps as shown in the following images.



A further meeting was held at 10am on 16 October 2020 with Hobart, Cuckfield Parish Council and Church representatives who confirmed they were satisfied with the additional line of bricks installed between the path and vestry steps. Church representatives further advised they would place a brighter bulb in the overhead light and install two battery-operated sensor lights in the ground at the top of the steps on both sides to reduce the risk of a potential trip hazard occurring.

### **2. Issue**

Since the above meetings took place the Parochial Church Council has advised they are unhappy with this pathway and have requested the Parish Council re-lay this section of the pathway at our expense.

On 19th October, the following email was received:

The second issue is more difficult as it concerns the steps to the Vestry Door. To say that members are unhappy about the way in which the join between the new brick path and the steps has been executed would be an understatement. It is strongly felt that

this invalidates the work that was done two years ago to make the steps safer to use, that it is contrary to building regulations and that it introduces an unnecessary trip hazard, the liability for which must surely rest entirely with the Cuckfield Parish Council. Whilst it was recognised that alterations to the lighting may mitigate the risk, it will not remove it.

Whilst I am aware that this issue was discussed with colleagues on site and that there may have been some level of agreement to the current compromise, it is clearly not a solution that is acceptable to the PCC as a whole. I must therefore ask that the Parish Council review this aspect of the work and consider asking the contractors to lower a sufficient length of the path to enable a satisfactory level join to be made with the uppermost step.

Brian Cutler, Church Warden  
20 October 2020

Consideration needs to be given to the statement that the new pathway would fail buildings regulations requirements. The MSDC Conservation Officer has been contacted regarding building regulations. Hopefully, a reply will be received prior to the Full Council meeting on 5 November 2020.

The Church Warden has also prepared the following risk assessment:

### **Holy Trinity Cuckfield Risk Assessment – External areas General**

The area in the immediate vicinity of the church, although owned by the Diocese, is managed by the Cuckfield Parish Council. With the exception of the path between the north door of the church and the north lychgate and the north door of the church and the Old School all the paths in this area were re-laid in either brick in 2020 or concrete in 2019, significantly reducing the risk of tripping generally in the churchyard and removing a potential trip hazard at the south door.

#### **Identified Risks**

##### ***Diagonal path from north lychgate to the north door of the church***

This York stone path, deemed to be part of the historic heritage, becomes slippery when wet, particularly when yew berries are falling. The path has a significant footfall, not only for services and special events but also by local residents. Cuckfield PC manage the risk by regularly blowing off the debris, warning signs and management of the yew trees. There have been at least two falls in the last three years resulting in the subject being assessed at A & E.

##### ***Paving within the north lychgate***

The York stone paving within the north lychgate is uneven and contains a trip hazard which has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

##### ***Steps leading to the vestry door.***

The steps leading to the vestry door were rebuilt in 2018, improving their safety by equally spacing and levelling the steps and adding a handrail and lighting. Unfortunately, the new brick churchyard path has been laid on the top of the existing tarmac creating an additional small step which is a trip hazard. This risk will be managed with a warning sign and additional lighting pending discussions with the Parish Council about the possibility of rectifying the problem by lowering the path. At least one person has already tripped ascending the steps.

Brian Cutler, Church Warden  
29 October 2020

### 3. Findings

The pathway was laid as per the specification prepared by CPC, so there would be additional costs involved in making any changes to this section.

Hobart have provided the following options;

Option 1 - Lower 21 square meters to level of vestry steps creating a dip in the path;

Option 2 – Completely relay 26 square meters of path to level of vestry steps;

Option 3 – Rebuild vestry steps to include 3 new step lights using left over pavers;

Option 4 - Illuminate the path and steps with additional lighting;

Option 5 – Supply and install an additional reproduction lamp post.

Option 1 would create a risk of water run off towards the Vestry door as lowering this section of path would cause a dip in the path level. Whereas if the whole section of path were re-laid to the lower level it would result in water shed to the grass verges.

### 4. Costs

Hobart have provided the following estimated cost options, which need to be confirmed. These are excluding VAT.

Option 1 - £4,746.27

Option 2 - £5,878.42

Option 3 - £4,823.00

Option 4 - £ 534.78

Option 5 - £1,980.00

### 5. Recommendation

In view of budget constraints Council are requested to carefully consider the options after review of the business plan.

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Title: Parish Clerk  
Date: 26 October 2020

Name: Caroline Hansen  
Title: Assistant Clerk/ Project Owner  
Date: 26 October 2020