

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 24TH APRIL, 2018

Present: Councillor K Shaw (Chair) and
Councillors Mrs B E Allen, Mrs J A Bell,
E Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace,
S P Colburn, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster,
Ms R M Gratton, G N Hepworth,
Mrs L Kennedy, D McKenna, B Taylor,
Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillors D Cummings,
Mrs V Cummings.

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 27TH MARCH, 2018

RECOMMENDED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

3. PARKS AND EVENTS SERVICES

The Committee considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report which provided an update on the following items:

3.1 Request for Police to Attend Meeting

The Deputy Town Clerk welcomed Mr Terry Hill, Neighbourhood Sergeant from Seaham Police to the meeting.

Sergeant Hill stated that he had been asked to attend the meeting to clarify points about 2 people who have come into the public's interest with regards to crimes committed in Church Street predominately. These two people are causing issues and there have been a few reports of them begging and asking for money. The Police are aware of that but calls into the Police and the intelligence into the Police in relation to the begging issue have been few and far between and have only received one call since the 5th March, 2018. Sergeant Hill stated that if this is still ongoing in Church Street he would urge members of the public to contact the Police and then they can actively address the issue. In relation to the two people they are not historically from this area but have been here for around 18 months, one is from the

Yorkshire area and the other one is from Consett. They have both caused the Police a number of problems and they are a Police target. The Police have spoken to the Landlord of the property the two people reside at and the Landlord has served notice on the tenancy at Cottages Road as a result of the issues. Any information on these two people would be appreciated by the Police as begging is an offence.

Sergeant Hill stated that there has been a spate of burglaries, however Sergeant Hill couldn't confirm if the two people were involved in these. The Church and a Charity Shop were the most two notable burglaries and as a result of that one person has been charged for both of the offences. The person has appeared at court already and the next court date is in June, 2018 and the person involved is currently on bail conditions with a curfew overnight which is being checked regularly.

A number of other shops have been burgled including Crazy Clearance and The Bank. One person has been arrested in relation to the Bank and has been released under investigation while forensic work is taking place. All of the crimes are ongoing through Seaham Police Station and are being reviewed on a daily basis. Almost all of the burglaries that have taken place someone has been interviewed about them. Sergeant Hill stated that his team have changed shifts and have been working during the night.

A Member questioned whether Church Street was still a PACT priority. Sergeant Hill stated that it wasn't a PACT priority, however, it is being serviced to that kind of level. A PCSO is placed there permanently and another Beat Officer has been brought in to cover the area as well as the usual Officer so there is a stronger Police presence. The Police are working closely with CID in relation to the crime spikes and this has been the Polices number one priority for the last six weeks. There has been a drop off in the number of crimes taking place since the beginning of March so the Police believe they are targeting the right people.

A Member questioned whether feedback has been given to the shopkeepers who have been effected by the burglaries. Sergeant Hill confirmed that Victim Management had fed back to the shopkeepers.

A Member questioned how the Police were dealing with the motorbike issue. Sergeant Hill stated that the Police are aware of the problem and they have someone under investigation for neglect as they had a small child on the motorbike. The biggest problem is in Deneside. A Member noted that the cottages near the Mission are being used as a rat run to get into Dalton-le-Dale. Sergeant Hill stated that he had a good idea where the bikes are and the route that they take down the back of Bethune Avenue and they are actively being targeted but it is quite difficult when they have hoods up. The Police do have intelligence on who the culprits are its just catching them doing it. A Member asked whether the Police have the power to seize the bikes. Sergeant Hill stated that they do if they are on the road and they are off-road bikes. There are lots of different legislations in place for bikes if they are insured they can be served notice if they are uninsured then they can be seized as part of the offence. The person who was arrested for having the

child on the bike that bike has been seized as part of the offence.

A Member stated that there has been a few incidences near to the railway station which members of the public have complained about. Sergeant Hill stated that they are aware of them and historically it used to be a Sunday hobby but now appears to be increasing to all times day and night and the Police are doing all that they can. Deneside residents should have seen an increase in Traffic Officers over the last few weeks and this will continue going forward.

A Member questioned about incorrect parking. Sergeant Hill stated that parking is difficult to deal with as the powers were switched over to Local Authorities to deal with.

A Member suggested that people can attend PACT meetings. Sergeant Hill stated rather than waiting for PACT meetings if people have information they should contact the Police while things are still fresh in their minds.

The Chair thanked Sergeant Hill for attending the meeting and updating Members.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

3.2 New Disabled Play Equipment for Seaham Town Park

The Acting Town Clerk provided Members with information on a possible new disabled swing for Seaham Town Park. Members agreed that this was a good suggestion and should be considered in the next budget process.

RECOMMENDED that this item be raised at the next Budget Sub-Committee meeting.

3.3 Access at Princess Road Cemetery for People with Mobility Issues

Following a complaint from a member of the public with mobility issues the Acting Town Clerk suggested that the barrier lock be changed to a radar lock so that disabled users can remove the lock when the barrier is down on a weekend.

RECOMMENDED that a radar lock be fitted to the barrier at Princess Road Cemetery so people with mobility issues can have access to the cemetery on a weekend.

3.4 New Sculptured Benches for around the Cenotaph – Terrace Green

The Acting Town Clerk stated that it had previously been agreed by Members to purchase 2 war memorial and two mining memorial benches around the cenotaph. After further investigation it was noted that one of the mining benches was in fact too small. The Acting Town Clerk suggested that this should be changed to 3 war memorial benches and 1 mining memorial bench.

RECOMMENDED that 3 war memorial benches and 1 mining memorial bench be placed around the cenotaph.

3.5 Northumbria in Bloom – Going for Gold Again

The Acting Town Clerk thanked the Mayor, and Councillors for attending the judging earlier in the day. He noted that the judges were impressed and the Parks staff should be praised for the work they had carried out on the Terrace Green.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

3.6 Small A5 Booklet of Remembrance to Commemorate 100 Year Anniversary of the End of World War One

The Acting Town Clerk stated that a member of the public is working with Seaham High School on a small booklet to include all the names of those from Seaham who died during the First World War and has requested some financial support for the project and for the Mayor to choose the best schools work to put in the booklet. The Acting Town Clerk suggested that the High School completes a grant application form for the Council to assist with the printing and designing costs of the booklet.

RECOMMENDED that a grant application form be sent to Seaham High School to assist with the printing and designing costs of the booklet.

3.7 Brass Band Festivals

The Acting Town Clerk stated that the Brass Bash had only been possible in previous years due to the kind donations from the County Councillors. He will chase this up with the County Council to see if this will be taking place.

The more traditional Seaham Brass Festival is proposed to be held on either the 4th or 5th August, 2018, the Acting Town Clerk is currently waiting for confirmation of this.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

3.8 Pirates and Princesses

The Acting Town Clerk informed Members that this event is proposed to be held on the 26th August, 2018 subject to studio approval. The proposed films to be shown are Dead Men Tell No Tales the new Pirates of the Caribbean film and Strange Magic.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

3.9 Heritage Lottery Bid – Result Expected Next Month

The Acting Town Clerk stated that Ms Anson, Durham County Council has been doing some great work and she has been working in partnership with Seaham Town Council and members of the public across the town on this

bid which is hoped to bring improvements to Church Street and the sea front. Further news on this item is expected next month.

RECOMMENDED that the Acting Town Clerk updates Members on the progress.

3.10 St Johns Grounds

As previously mentioned at this meeting it is proposed to work with partners to create a wildflower meadow at St Johns Church for which the Church have given their support. Ms Anson, Durham County Council has been requested to question whether Durham County Council could do this themselves by offsetting their costs currently incurred by cutting the grass on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDED that the Acting Town Clerk will update Members with any progress.

3.11 Poppy Sculptures

The Acting Town Clerk stated that this had been to the Planning Department at Durham County Council but has since been sent to the Assets Department. A Plan has been drawn up of where the poppy sculptures are to be placed and how they will be attached to the fencing. Feedback from the Assets Department is still awaited. The Acting Town Clerk stated that he has informed Mr Parker at the High School to keep him updated. The Acting Town Clerk suggested that a further fence could be placed in the area if this was not approved by Durham County Council. A Member suggested that the Town Council awaits Durham County Council's decision on using the fencing already in place before anything further is suggested.

RECOMMENDED that the Acting Town Clerk updates Members with any progress.

3.12 Possible Heritage Centre

The Acting Town Clerk stated that Durham County Council are currently looking into funding schemes for this project and early discussions with the Heritage Group partners have been positive. It was noted that the Heritage Group could have the lease for the building which wouldn't impact on the Town Council. Seaham Family History Group have also shown an interest.

A Member of the public has asked if the Town Council wish to adopt 7 old mining plans which are expected to be of great interest to the public. A Member stated that the Town Council should take advice on how to store the plans. A Member also suggested that the Town Council should have a disclaimer for the plans if they are to be adopted. It was also suggested that the Count Archives could be contacted for advice on how to store them. A member of the public stated that it is worth keeping the plans here as the County Council are in the process of relocating all of their artefacts.

RECOMMENDED that the Acting Town Clerk contacts County Archives for advice on storage of the plans.

3.13 Seaham Carnival Update

An excellent programme of films has been handpicked by the Senior Clerical Assistant which includes The Greatest Showman, DreamGirls, Coco and the traditional Mary Poppins. The Acting Town Clerk has produced a promotional film for the Carnival which has had over 18k views to date. There has been little response to the letters sent out asking for interest in a vegetable competition with a representative from an allotment association suggesting that the competitions have had their day. A Member stated that Deneside hold a show every year and would not say that it has had its day it's just done in a different way to how it used to be. He would contact Deneside to see if they wanted to do something on a smaller scale.

The craft fair proved very popular at last year's Carnival and in order to save Council resources and confusion it is suggested that the traditional community stalls are also managed by the craft fair organisers but with the same low charge as always. A Member noted that the Council should have some control of how the community groups are located so that they get priority locations.

In anticipation of England doing well at the World Cup the Acting Town Clerk proposed that he investigate how to show the finals on the big screen at the Carnival. Members were concerned that this could lead to problems with people drinking alcohol and that the Police would have to be involved. The Acting Town Clerk stated that he would involve the Police if this was to go ahead and he also noted that the opening of the Olympics had been shown on the big screen and did not incur any significant costs.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information and the Acting Town Clerk to speak to the craft fair organisers to ensure that community groups are given priority locations. That the big screen showing of World Cup finals if England are involved be raised again at a future meeting for further discussion.

3.14 Proposed Floor Safe to go under a paving slab next to Tommy

Members of the public have been concerned about money being left at Tommy. It is proposed to put a floor safe under one of the slabs so that people can make donations to a good cause. Members discussed where the donations should go to. A Member stated that the Poppy Appeal already do quite well in Seaham and suggested that any donations left could be given towards the war memorials, Tommy and the cenotaph. A Member suggested that Mission 1101 should be consulted with as they still donate to local charities.

It was noted that the Council already have a statutory duty to look after the cenotaph so the British Legion should also be contacted.

RECOMMENDED that Mission 1101 and the British Legion are contacted for their suggestions on where the money could be donated to.

3.15 Seaham Town Park Cricket Club

Seaham Town Park Cricket Club requested whether the Council would agree to let them use this years and next year's payment to pay for the purchase of a ride on roller.

A Member suggested that the Cricket Club meet with the Acting Town Clerk, The Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee to discuss this further and for the Cricket Club to show evidence of their accounts.

RECOMMENDED that a meeting is arranged with the Cricket Club to discuss this matter further and for the Acting Town Clerk to provide a report of the meeting at the next Parks Committee meeting.

3.16 Dawdon Working Party Minutes from meetings held on 26th February and 8th March, 2018

It was noted that tenders for the football pavilion were opened on 23rd April, 2018 and a further meeting is to take place tomorrow to choose a contractor.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

3.17 Risk Management Issues

RECOMMENDED Members note the information being provided.

4. GDPR

The Acting Town Clerk informed Members that he had held discussions with a Data Protection Officer who was willing to become the Town Councils Data Protection Officer at a cost of £995 for the year and there would be an additional cost of £995 for the Data Protection Officer to carry out an audit at the Town Council.

A Member questioned whether this would give the Town Council an indemnity for the future. The Acting Town Clerk stated that it wasn't a total indemnity but if the Internal Audit Commission were to look at the Town Council this would be favourable to the Town Council. A Member suggested that the Town Council's insurer should be contacted to make sure this action is covered.

RECOMMENDED that the Data Protection Officer is appointed for the ensuing year.

5. Clarke Lister Feel Good Centre

The Acting Town Clerk requested approval to complete the works at the Clarke Lister Feel Good Centre which includes the irrigation system and some items for Northumbria in Bloom.

RECOMMENDED that the works at the Clarke Lister Feel Good Centre are completed.

6. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED the Council note that the Deputy Town Clerk will where possible encourage the press and media to promote the positive projects discussed at this meeting.