

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2019**

Present: K Shaw (Chair) and R Arthur,  
E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs K Brace,  
S P Colborn, S Cudlip,  
D Cummings, Mrs V Cummings,  
Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton,  
G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy  
D McKenna, T Shepherd,  
B Taylor, R Whitehead.

Apologies: Mrs B E Allen, Mrs G Bleasdale,  
Mrs S Pratt, Miss L Willis.

Officers: Mrs D Rickaby (Town Clerk),  
P Fletcher (Deputy Town Clerk)

*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 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 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 SEAHAM FOOD FESTIVAL 8<sup>TH</sup> & 9<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated as previously agreed Durham County Council are running their first ever food festival on the Terrace Green this year. It is hoped it will be as successful as the one they hold at Bishop Auckland. The local council funds the Bishop Auckland one by £10,000 a year. Durham County Council has asked whether Seaham

Town Council would help fund this one with £2,500. The Deputy Town Clerk explained he had reviewed the events budget and this can be funded by using the Classic Car and Motorbikes budget. These two events have been less formal in recent years due to the organiser who worked with the Council dealing with other issues and therefore clubs meeting up on the sea front of their own accord mainly in public car parking bays. The remaining £1,500 can be used from the summer events budget.

All members were in approval with the proposal

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Council contributes £2,500 to the Seaham Food Festival

### **3.2 ENGLAND THROUGH TO THE FIRST EVER NATIONS LEAGUE SEMI - FINAL 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2019.**

The Deputy Town Clerk referred to his written report and interjected verbally throughout the discussion explaining that he was anticipating a large section of the community wanting the Council to put the match on a big screen and expected that they would obviously want the same if England got through to the finals on the 9<sup>th</sup> June and detailed the costs. He explained that the Council received a lot of praise for showing the World Cup England game last year and that there was no trouble and again this would be clearly another positive event to put on and if Councillors were unsure then running public consultation on the matter would show the popularity of such an event.

A Councillor stated that he would not support this, the proposal was not near the standard of what Councillors would expect and that it was not a sensible suggestion and to carry out public consultation on Seaham Have Your Say or elsewhere we would end up with all kinds of yes's from anywhere without been able to track these down and he really didn't feel this was an appropriate spending for the Council.

A Councillor stated that he seconded the first councillor's comments and asked where do we actually stop as there is the Rugby World Cup coming up etc. so on this occasion he would support the previous Councillors suggestion.

A Councillor explained that she understood that all that has been asked for here is to run a consultation to ask the public what they want and why not ask them what they want as we represent them and if they say they want it then we stand by them and run the event.

Councillor S Colborn stated that it was just a war against FIFA and UEFA and that he didn't think it was worth spending the money on the event and that he agreed with the other Councillor that the other event coming up which is the Rugby World Cup in which we actually have a good chance of going all the way to the final and we were elected to make decisions and he wouldn't go for consultations and we do what we are elected to do and make a decision ourselves.

Another Councillor said he agreed with the first Councillor and thought it was a waste of money and that he didn't think the Police were very happy that the Council showed the World Cup England game. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the Police were in fact happy with how the World Cup Event went.

Another Councillor said that at the World Cup event there were people throwing cans and other trouble. Another Councillor and the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that in fact the event was a huge success and that they and the Police were very pleased with how the crowd behaved and the Councillor explained she had attended with her family and that it had been a great event for all. The Councillor asked whether the Councillor making the statement about trouble had actually attended the event and he said no. The Councillor said she puts forward the motion to go for consultation but this was not seconded by any other Councillor and she said that should could not believe that they were not even going to put it out to consultation, not even ask the people.

Another member put forward that the Council would not put on the event and this was seconded with the exception of the Councillor who had voiced her support for the event.

RECOMMENDED that the Council does not put on the event showing England in the first ever Nations League Semi Finals.

### 3.3

#### **SEAHAM FIREWORKS DISPLAY – 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2019**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the event was a huge success with even more people attending this year and that extra road closures would be needed for next year and that this would be investigated by the Deputy Town Clerk and brought back to this meeting

RECOMMENDED members note the information being provided

**3.4 SEAHAM PIRATES FESTIVAL 2019**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he has a meeting with the people who he works in partnership with on this event this week and will report back with proposed details of the event to this meeting. A Councillor asked how much the event cost and the Deputy Town Clerk explained approximately £4,500.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

**3.5 SEAHAM BRASS FESTIVAL 2019**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he has a meeting with the people who he works in partnership with on this event this week and will report back with proposed details of the event to this meeting. A Councillor asked how much the event cost and the Deputy Town Clerk explained approximately £1,500

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

**3.6 SEAHAM CARNIVAL 2019**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that work planning this event is under way and it is hoped that Seaham's very own David Bowie tribute band will headline the event and Mamma Mia Here We Go Again and Bohemian Rhapsody will be approved by the film studios to be shown on the big screen. A Councillor asked whether he could have John Wick 2 on instead and thought to be said in good humour.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

**3.7 SEAHAM CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON 2018/19**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the event held last month went very well with the improvements made starting at the top of Church Street and finishing on Terrace Green even though heavy rain both immediately before and after the event caused a few problems soaking participants and workers.

He explained that members will probably remember the Council used to install heavy metal framed lights across Church Street many years ago and had to stop this due to concerns of their weight and health and safety. Modern LED lights are very lightweight in comparison and the Deputy Town Clerk is working to try and get new light curtains across Church Street approved by Durham County Council ready for next year's events. A detailed proposal will be brought back to this meeting for Members to approve.

One member explained that she helped with the lantern parade and thought the event was great apart from stopping at Byron Place and suggested that next year if they do not have a Christmas Street outside that the parade just continues to Terrace Green. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that he was going to meet with Byron Place staff shortly and will put this to them.

It was also explained by the Deputy Town Clerk that it was the intention that some Councillors would continue to work with Michelle Harland to develop a Youth Council and that would be brought back to Council once more detail could be provided.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

**3.8 EAST DURHAM TRUST CHARITY STROLL EVENT**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that attached at Appendix B was correspondence from the East Durham Trust wishing to help organise a charity event in Seaham. The Deputy Town Clerk advised them that they needed to go through Durham County Council.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

A Member interjected at this stage and wanted to thank Dawdon Community Centre for the work on the food bank they ran over Christmas and it was agreed to send a letter to thank them.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information and send a letter.

A Councillor asked that the Council would liaise with the Artist who made the wave out of sea glass and it was agreed the Deputy Town Clerk would meet with the artist.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information and the Deputy Town Clerk liaise with the artist.

**3.9 Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public**

RECOMMENDED that in view of the confidential nature of the following items the Committee passed the formal resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960.

**3.10 DAWDON BUNGALOW SALE APPROVALS**

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the Council has finally received approval from CISWO and The Charity Commission after months and months of hard work chasing them. It is expected the sale will now go through quickly.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

**3.11 DAWDON PARK PROJECT**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that Phase One was now almost complete and that the Working Party will be meeting very soon to review this and the proposals for Phase Two. The Town Clerk explained some of the outstanding work and what the phases of work are and that the Architect was advised that he would not be needed for the next phase and that it would be project managed by the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Quantity Surveyor.

A Member asked about the condition of the football pavilion and it was agreed that the works had been completed for a few months and it was 100% better than it was.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

**3.12 SEAHAM TOWN PARK SPORTS PAVILION LEASE**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that it had now been established that the covenants on the land can be used to help reach a realistic valuation for use as a sports pavilion and not the higher sum of a commercial market rate. CISWO approval is now being sought but as previously experienced with other projects this may take some time. No Final Agreements will be signed until the Town Clerk and Council has agreed them as it has been suggested a full review of these facilities across the board, their costs and incomes should be undertaken.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

**3.13 SEAHAM RED STAR FOOTBALL LEASE**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained as previously agreed work on this lease would take place once work on Seaham Town Park Sports Pavilion lease has been undertaken. Now it is confirmed that the covenants can be used to reach a realistic valuation for sports use this will now be looked into for Seaham Red Star. No Final Agreements will be signed until the Town Clerk and Council has agreed them as it has been suggested a full review of these facilities across the board, their costs and incomes should be undertaken. As previously explained CISWO approval will be needed and this may through previous experience take some time to achieve. A Member reminded Councillors that the property was a charity and that it is important to note if anyone in the future says

the rent is far too cheap that it is not meant to be a full time economic commercial venture.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

3.14

**LIST OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL LANDS OWNED & NOT OWNED BUT WORKED ON.**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that it was previously agreed that in the New Year a list of land owned and not owned by the Council but worked on would be provided and that this was now attached at Appendix A. A Member stated that he thought the Red Star had been missed out.

The Town Clerk stated that this was only a small section of the overall structural review that she will be conducting in relation to skill sets and as a new broom she will be looking at cost savings, skill sets and the whole structure to see where we can make improvements.

A Councillor referred to a previous meeting where discussions had taken place about where Council staff were working and that on the list the adjoining field to the new cemetery needed to be added. The Council own the land but it is rented out to a farmer and that it was intended for an extension to the cemetery in the next 30 or 40 years. He went on to explain that particularly in relation to the last list the Council is doing work on land they don't own and they don't even have a licence and it was suggested that Officers have delegated authority to allow this work to happen on these particular areas and that it was for Members to decide. He explained there are roundabouts that have been worked on and approved by Council but it was disappointing that there's no documentation and that when the list comes back in two months' time or two meetings time to the Committee that the Officers will have sought approvals to be doing the work.

The Council should decide whether it's appropriate for the Council to continue working on these and whether if the Council were not working on these types of land whether Seasonal Workers would be needed as discussed at a previous meeting and that he had personally noticed that on two occasions over the last two months the Council had begun working on the roundabout at Dalton Heights. Dalton Heights isn't in the Town of Seaham, it's in the Parish of Dalton Le Dale and unless Dalton Le Dale Parish Council are being recharged and paying for that we haven't any right to be working outside the towns boundaries. The legality of that is an issue we need to be looking at and another point being raised by Members is the insurance aspect. The Council leaves itself open to some kind of criticism and the Councils insurers saying we

are off on a folly of our own. He said frankly we would like to think that the Officers are cautious but continuing working on land that's not owned by the Council but that in relation to Dalton Heights that he proposed that all works stop on that roundabout with immediate effect and how that's occurred, it escaped him. He said on a personal basis the roundabout looks better than it has ever looked and compliments to our workmen.

A Councillor asked whether a letter could be sent out stating it has come to our attention or words similar to that effect. The Town Clerk asked whether Members agreed that this is work that the Council continues with if we do get the paper work as this is the start of the process that is being reviewed. The Town Clerk stated she had discussed this with the Deputy Town Clerk and the Parks Supervisor and was made aware that this was on the periphery of Seaham and the entrance to the Bloom Campaign and again the question to Members is do you still want to be part of Bloom.? A Councillor responded and said it would be useful to know how many man hours it takes to do this and the Town Clerk stated that this was one of the things they were already looking at and just to advise Councillors there is a huge piece of work going on with all the services and all of the projects.

A Councillor asked would we have got a Gold and Best Coastal Resort because as you come into Seaham and out of Seaham all those bits have been done to make it worthy of note and I don't think it's been done for any other reason.

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that you only have to look at Terrace Green and the Clock Garden to see how well we have done as a Council and it's not just us, we have managed to work with members of the public and different organisations on all of these things and he was sure that the Councillor that has raised this does not see it all as a negative thing, he has said that some of it is attractive so he thought between himself; myself and the Town Clerk they could come back and provide as much information as they needed.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that it has been talked about in this Committee going all the way back to 2010 so there was a lot of agreement on the way that we did things, the intention to go for Bloom and hopefully get a Gold Medal which we have achieved and the town does appreciate all the things we have done.

Another Councillor said that generally we have enhanced the town but we need to make sure we are covered with liability. The second point he made was that some of the roundabouts people pay money to put advertising on them and the pay goes to the County Council and it's just ridiculous and we should get the money so we can go on and enhance other areas.

The Town Clerk asked Members whether they wanted to put a halt to this. A Councillor said that he thought we should continue as we are until we get a report back say within two months and it is for this Committee to agree and have the responsibility to do that and not Officers to decide and if you are working on the police station roundabout or Dalton Heights which have never been mentioned previously at any Council meeting then that has to be approved by Seaham Town Council not by an Officer.

The Chair stepped in and explained this could go on all night and he needed to draw this to a point and that he was no horticulturalist in any shape or form but if we put a halt on this for two months all the necessary preparation work to get these sites up to a decent standard which allows us to enter into the Bloom Competition. The previous Councillor stepped in again and said he was not suggesting putting a block on the works at all but to ensure all the permissions were there and that there was no further expansion of this activity in Seaham or outside of Seaham. It was agreed with the Town Clerk that there was a level of Officers responsibility and decisions. In the meantime before the report is brought back to Committee that no further work would be done on any additional land unless it was brought back to the Parks Committee for them to grant authority to be working on anyone else's land.

The Chair finished the debate by stating they should expect public concern to be raised by the Clock Garden, Westlea Shopping Centre, and Police Flower beds not being maintained as these areas are going to be left.

The previous Councillor came back in and moved it was agreed that the Council is to continue the status quo, carry out maintaining these areas until the information required is brought back and leave it to the Officers decisions on particular sites.

RECOMMENDED Members note the information being provided and approve works to continue on the sites in question with delegated Officer decisions on particular sites but not extending to any new sites and a report be brought back in two months' time with man hours and approvals.

**4. Risk Management Issues**

RECOMMENDED Members note the information being provided.

**5. 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.