

## **MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH MARCH, 2014**

Present: Councillor B Burn Snr (Chair) and  
Councillors R Arthur, Mrs M R Baird,  
E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale,  
B Burn Jnr, Mrs H Cahill, S Cudlip,  
Mrs S Forster, R Meir, Miss S Morrison,  
I Paul, K Shaw, G A Shepherd,  
C Snowball, R Whitehead, K Younger

Apologies: Councillors B Allen, Mrs B E Allen

### **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 4TH FEBRUARY, 2014**

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 Red Star Football**

Prior to the consideration of this item, Councillor G A Shepherd declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Improvement works had been recently carried out by the Parks Department staff at the Red Star Football Club which included works to electrics, toilets and the floor issues. A letter of thanks, a copy of which had been recently circulated, had been received from the Club. The Committee was advised that a rent review was due for this particular club and the Deputy Town Clerk suggested an increase to £1,773 would be appropriate. In discussion a Member queried why only one Club shown on the schedule of comparative costs provided previously, had a council tax element shown against it. It was felt that there may be an anomaly and the Deputy Town Clerk was asked to review this.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) An increased rent of £1,773 be levied on the Red Star Football Club.
- (ii) The letter of thanks from the Red Star Football Club which thanked

the Town Council for the improvement works undertaken at the premises recently be noted.

- (iii) The Deputy Town Clerk review the council tax apportionment for all Clubs to ensure the figures shown reflect an accurate position, with a report being brought back to Members.

### **3.2 Hall Street Allotments**

Subsequent to attendance by representatives of the Hall Street Allotments at the last meeting of this Committee Members were asked to consider an increased lease period for either an extra year or for 21 years.

In addition a request had been made of the Town Council to resurface the internal pathways, which the Association claimed were not fit for purpose in relation to the Association's disabled members. The Deputy Town Clerk expressed concern that a precedent may be set for other sites in Seaham, if such work was undertaken and suggested that Allotment Associations should make their own provision for disabled members such as allocating them plots on the peripheries of sites.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council agree to extend the current lease for the Hall Street allotments for an extra year.
- (ii) Contact details for suppliers of pathways surfacing materials be supplied to the Association.

### **3.3 World War I Soldier Sculpture**

Prior to the consideration of this item Councillor B Burn Jnr declared an interest but indicated he may be able to assist in the discussion, and this was agreed by the Chair.

The Committee was reminded that the Town Council had agreed to support the artist Ray Lonsdale by allowing a sculpture of a World War I soldier to be displayed in Seaham. The artist had detailed the conditions he would adhere to in an e-mailed communication however this had not been made available to Members. The Deputy Town Clerk apologised for the omission and stated that there was no onus on the Town Council as the artist had indicated that he had his own insurance, including public liability. It was pointed out that if the artist was hoping that the Town Council would purchase the sculpture at some point in the future, there were elements in respect of risk assessments that must be considered before any decision was taken. It was envisaged that the sculpture would be erected in the Town as part of the Town's World War I commemoration event on the 4th August 2014.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council be provided with a copy of the conditions that the artist agreed to adhere to for further consideration at the next meeting of this Committee.
- (ii) Subject to clarification of the above issues, the Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to proceed with the installation of the sculpture as part of the commemoration event to be held on 4th August, 2014.

**3.4 Dawdon Football Pavilion Electric Supply**

A quotation had been sought from the Northern Power Grid, a copy of which had been previously circulated, to increase the electricity supply at the Dawdon Football Pavilion. The costs of such provision were significantly higher than the solar panel option and a further quotation had been sought in respect of overhead cables.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported, and await further information.

**3.5 Princess Road Cemetery Development Land**

An application for planning consent for the extended development land at Princess Road had been submitted. It was confirmed that the land in question would accommodate 9 properties and that there were two additional entrances on Princess Road. A Member commented that Kimmitt and Roberts were still advertising the original development site and this should now be updated.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the information now reported.
- (ii) Kimmitt and Roberts be advised of the updated development land.

**3.6 Circus during the Easter Holiday**

The Committee was advised of a proposal for a Circus and fun fair to be present within the town for the Easter Holidays, the envisaged location of which was to be either the Terrace Green or Seaham Town Park. Although the approach had initially been made to the Town Council, the organisers had been referred to Durham County Council as the current owners of the Terrace Green which was the preferred site. Members considered that the Terrace Green was a totally inappropriate venue as was Seaham Town Park and commented that the last time a circus was in town it was sited in Deneside Park and the damage caused in that location was extensive. An

amount of £200 for reinstatement would be totally inadequate and indeed any form of recompense should be made to the Town Council itself and not made as a charitable donation.

RECOMMENDED a letter be sent from the Town Council to Durham County Council to object to a circus being accommodated on the Terrace Green for the reasons outlined, with a suggestion that they seek approval for siting this attraction on the farmer's field adjacent to where the Car Boot Sale is usually held.

### **3.7 New Stage, Sound and Lighting Tender Process**

Durham County Council's Area Action Partnership, with approval from County Councillors, had proposed to provide funds for a demountable stage with sound and lighting. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that the specifications would be for two heights of staging, one for use within the new Town Hall and the other for use during external events. To ensure these were available for the 2014 events a tender exercise would need to take place and details of the companies selected for the tender exercise were detailed:-

1. Maltbury Staging Ltd. 87 Church Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 2BB
2. Stage Systems, Prince William Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 5GU
3. SPL PA and LIGHTING C/O - 2 Barwick Close, Ingleby Barwick, Stockton on Tees, TS17 0SY
4. Stage Electrics, Third Way, Avonmouth, Bristol, BS11 9YL
5. The Staging Company, Gallants Farm, Gallants Lane, East Farleigh, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 0LF

RECOMMENDED the above companies be invited to tender for the staging, sound and lighting as specified by the Deputy Town Clerk, with a report being brought back to a future meeting of this Committee.

### **3.8 Multi Use Sports Facilities**

Prior to the consideration of this item, Councillor Mrs G Bleasdale declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

The Committee was advised of negotiations that were taking place with regard to usage by football teams' on the outfields and pavilions when the facilities were not in use by the cricket teams in the autumn, winter and early spring. The Deputy Town Clerk elaborated on the content of letters from Seaham Town Park Cricket Club which conveyed their views with regard to

these facilities, and the advice the Town Council had obtained from its Solicitor. As previously instructed Mr Peter Tighe, the Quantity Surveyor together with the Architect, Mr John Elves would progress the new multi-purpose pavilion at Seaham Town Park and a plan was put on display for Members to view.

Concern was expressed by Members that there appeared to be some misunderstanding in existence with the Seaham Park Cricket Club with regard to the lease and proposed usage of the facility. Additionally the issue of the building housing a bar was also raised as it was clearly stated at the last meeting that this was only to be developed within phase 2 of the project. It was considered that measures must be taken to have these issues resolved at the earliest opportunity with a letter to the Cricket Club setting out clearly the Town Council's stance.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported, and subject to the anomalies being clarified, authority be granted for the work to progress on the new multi-purpose pavilion.

### **3.9 Underpass**

The Committee was advised that following a further request to Network Rail to address the outstanding works a response had been received which advised that most of the work had now been completed and the route was being well used. In discussion a Member stated that up to the present time there was no indication of Network Rail contractors being back on site.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported and a further communication be sent to Network Rail to convey the Town Council's concerns.

### **3.10 Seaham's Brass Event**

The Committee was advised that Durham's County Brass Band Association had been approached with regard to provision of a brass band day in Seaham later this year.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

### **3.11 Invitation to Durham County Councils Highways Department**

The Committee considered the proposal of the Deputy Town Clerk to extend an invitation to Durham County Council's Highways Department to attend the next meeting of this Committee to discuss partnership working with the Town Council to address problem areas and carry out landscape improvements within the town.

RECOMMENDED the Council send a letter to Durham County Council's Highways Department to ask for a representative to attend a future meeting of this Committee.

### **3.12 Clock Garden and Incline Improvements**

Improvements had taken place to both of these areas over recent moments. Durham County Council had requested a quote for the Town Council to do £10,000 of work to replace railings at the Incline.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information reported and approve progress of the works detailed.

### **3.13 Terrace Green Potential Handover**

The Committee considered the update provided by the Deputy Town Clerk in relation to the future handover of the Terrace Green to Seaham Town Council. The Town Council were now required to submit a management plan to the County Council in relation to this including the Cenotaph and Londonderry Statue and a draft of a proposed management plan was outlined verbally for consideration. The costs of taking over this land and the cenotaph together with the ongoing maintenance costs was questioned by a Member and the Deputy Town Clerk stated that these would be brought back to the Committee at a future meeting. The Deputy Town Clerk elaborated on the survey undertaken to assess the current condition of the statue and the funds available to improve this. It was also clarified that to take over this land would involve taking responsibility for the surrounding road, footpaths and parking area as well. Concern was expressed that there were some major liabilities to be borne in mind before a final decision could be made, i.e. the green energy car points, the cliff top erosion etc., and Members would need to see associated costs and risk management forms in relation to all the issues mentioned. It was also suggested that the County Council should be asked for a commuted sum in respect of some of the liabilities.

RECOMMENDED the Deputy Town Clerk submit a comprehensive report with details of all associated costs and risks in relation to this issue, to the next meeting of this Committee.

### **3.14 Londonderry Statue**

The Committee was advised that the Town Council's solicitor had confirmed that the Council were now in a position to take over the ownership of the Londonderry statue. Funding had been acquired and had been ring-fenced which would be used to restore the statue however a sum of £250 plus vat was due for legal fees. In discussion Members considered that to take over

a long term financial liability from a private landowner with the Town Council being asked to pay the legal fees was unacceptable and the owner should, in fact, be offering a commuted sum to cover future liability.

RECOMMENDED the Council do not approve the payment of the legal fees in relation to the transfer of ownership of the Londonderry Statue into the hands of Seaham Town Council

**3.15 Risk Management Issues**

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the Deputy Town Clerk's report of risk assessment carried out in relation to the various issues reported.

**4. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

RECOMMENDED the Council note that no press opportunities existed from this meeting.