

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 29TH APRIL, 2014

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

Apologies: Councillors S Cudlip, Mrs H J Cahill and I Paul

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 1ST APRIL 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 SEAHAM GRASS ROOTS FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Mr Kevin Turns, the Chairman of the Seaham Grass Roots Football Committee who was present to introduce the newly established Committee which had evolved from all the junior football groups in Seaham. The Committee also hoped to work in partnership with the Town Council in order to gain external funding for the proposed astro-turf facility and pavilions at Seaham Town Park.

Mr Turns began by introducing himself and said that the Football Committee's aim was to improve facilities and have better provision for pitches for junior teams. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the Town Council had been looking at ways to improve facilities by making use of pavilions that were not in operation over the winter period. He stated that it had been agreed to put under 13's and 9 a side football pitches on areas near those pavilions. It was also planned to have astro-turf facilities and additional pavilions at Seaham Town Park and he hoped to work with the Grass Roots Committee to further those aims as they shared the same priorities.

Mr Turns asked what the future plans were for the New Drive site as at the minute there were only two junior teams that played at that location. He was aware that Durham County Council owned the site and felt that as this was a vast area of land it could be better utilised and certainly could be improved. A Member stated that the Town Council hoped to support all such initiatives and he was aware that a lot of teams currently play outside of Seaham. He queried how many teams the Committee was talking about and Mr Turns stated that junior football was building up a lot more recently due to the Russell Foster League. At present the Under 8's teams up to the Under 11's play their football out of the town. Once they get to the Under 11's they need their own pitch and in the next 12 – 18 months there will be an influx of teams wanting a pitch. At present there is not adequate provision to accommodate these 17 teams, a number of which play under the Seaham name but have to play in Houghton and other areas. Members were advised that the FA had introduced new formats for under 11's under 12's and under 13's and the 9 v 9 and in many areas of the country there are no suitable pitches available and funding has therefore been put in place to assist clubs. Mr Turns stated that Seaham Coast has 6 or 7 teams and they are expanding quite quickly and are also trying to put together a girls' team. The Red Star Juniors hope to have 3 teams next year and there is another new Club called Seaham Athletic who are hoping to have 2 teams next year.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that it would be possible to work in partnership with regard to Council land i.e. Seaham Town Park, Dawdon and also at Parkside where it was hoped there would be more land forthcoming from the County Council. He stated, however, that unless Durham County Council transferred New Drive it would not be viable to do anything at that location. A Member commented that some years ago that site was vibrant with football and it may be prudent if the Deputy Town Clerk and Mr Turns combine all their information and try to negotiate with Durham County Council to use that facility and help local teams stay in Seaham. SF can we look at Parkside Community Centre who have a football pitch not being used and there are showers and facilities there.

At this stage the Chair thanked Mr Turns for his informative address and he then left the meeting.

3.2 APPRENTICES AAP FUNDED

The Committee was reminded that this item had been initially considered at the September, 2013 meeting at which time the expenditure of £2,000 was approved to enable the Town Council to gain significantly more match funding from other external sources to employ Apprentice Environmental Wardens. At a subsequent meeting it was proposed such recruitment should be left in abeyance due to the impending organisational review. The Deputy Town Clerk elaborated on the reasons why he felt it necessary to proceed with this recruitment.

In discussion it was felt that the title 'Apprentice' could be perceived as being only available to younger people whereby the title of 'Environmental Warden' opened the role to anyone of any age. It was felt, however, that this latter title could be perceived as having enforcement powers and this was not to be the case. As the individuals recruited were to be paid minimum wage, rather than an apprentice's rate of pay, and their duties were to ensure the cleanliness of the town and beach areas and maintain a litter free environment, a more suitable job title should be considered.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) Authority be granted to proceed with the recruitment of the individuals with an agreed expenditure of £2,000.
- (ii) The job title to be deferred for discussion at the next meeting.

3.3 UNDERPASS AND INCLINE ACCESS ROUTE

Phase One works on the underpass and incline had now been completed lighting had been repaired and measures taken to overcome the problems with the drainage, although since then, following inclement weather, pooling was still present in this vicinity despite the additional drain. Members were advised that Durham County Council had provided a grant to Seaham Town Council to upgrade hand rails along the route.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) A letter be sent to the relevant party to advise of the continuance of pooling water despite the measures taken to overcome this problem.
- (ii) The information relating to the upgrading of the handrails in the location be noted.

3.4 DEVELOPMENT LAND PRINCESS ROAD

Planning approval had now been submitted for the development land at Princess Road and interest had been expressed.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

3.5 WORLD WAR I SOLDIER SCULPTURE

The Committee considered a photograph of the World War I Soldier sculpture which it was envisaged would be sited for three months on the seafront, subject to approval being obtained from Durham County Council.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

3.6 FILMING PUBLIC EVENTS

The Committee was advised that NSPCC guidance in relation to filming at public events which involved children's groups performing had been circulated at the last meeting. It was proposed that the Council adopt this guidance and provide it to other groups who wished to utilise the Town Council's facilities and venues at the point of booking. In discussion it was questioned whether appropriate signage had as yet been agreed for display to advise members of the public when filming was taking place.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council agree to adopt the NSPCC guidance as set out and provide this to all external parties that book any Town Council facilities in the future.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk to progress the acquisition of suitable signage for display at entry points to future Town Council events.

3.7 NEW STAGE, SOUND AND LIGHTING TENDER PROCESS

The Committee was advised that subsequent to reporting the result of the tender exercise at the last meeting in relation to the new stage, sound and lighting, it had been identified that the company that appeared to provide best value to the Council was SPL. In examining the detail, however, it appeared that the allocated funds provided by Durham County Council would only cover the stage 10m x 8m, the trussing (which is a structure that goes over the top and holds the curtains) and 2 base sub-woofers for the total sum being allocated by the County Councillors – AAP grant. A Member stated that although the AAP had some input, the Durham County Councillors had contributed a considerable amount of money. A Member enquired whether this amount included any particular training required to erect the stage and the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that training for staff was included. This amount did not, however, include lighting or the total sound system but the Deputy Town Clerk did hope to obtain funding from other bodies, but in the meantime bands or am-dram groups would bring their own sound and lighting.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council approve the tender process and agree to award the supply and commission of all of the stage elements including the trussing, side wings, front, back and side curtains to the Company SPL and approve this recommendation to Durham County Council's Area Action Partnership;
- (ii) The final figures to be reported back to this Committee.

3.8 FIREWORKS EVENT

The Committee was advised that Friday, 31st October was the proposed date for the 2014 Fireworks Display. Members were advised that because of the complications experienced in the last couple of years with the seafront location and taking account of the budgetary cuts, a proposal to have the display in Seaham Town Park as a contingency plan had been put forward. The Deputy Town Clerk also reported that as the agreement with Highlight Pyrotechnics had now expired it was an appropriate time to review the Town Council's requirements and go out to tender for the supply and provision of the fireworks. The following three companies were proposed as the select tender list:

1. The Midnight Storm Firework Co., 2 Treespark Gardens, Barrhead, Glasgow, G78 1AH
2. Highlight Pyrotechnics, 18 Pimlico Road, Runcorn, WA7 4US
3. Britannia Firework Displays Ltd, 40 Rise End, Middleton by Wirksworth, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 4LS

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council approve Friday, 31st October, 2014 for the Seaham Fireworks Display to take place.
- (ii) Options for suitable venues for the 2014 Fireworks Display to be held be deferred for consideration at the next meeting.
- (iii) Authority be granted for the three companies detailed to be the proposed select tender list and they be invited to tender for the supply and provision of the 2014 Fireworks Display.

3.9 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

The Committee considered the items previously discussed and agreed that the soldier sculpture detailed in item number 3.5 should be notified to the press.

RECOMMENDED the soldier sculpture be promoted in the press