

## **MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 2<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2016**

Present: Councillor Miss S Morrison (Chair) and Councillors R Arthur, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn Snr, B Burn Jnr, S Cudlip, R Meir, K Shaw C Snowball, B Taylor, R Whitehead.

Apologies: Councillor B Allen, Mrs B E Allen, Mrs H J Cahill, Mrs S Forster, I Paul, K Younger.

*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 5TH JANUARY, 2016**

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 Police Community Partnership Project**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the uncertainty of possible costs of repairing such play equipment and the potential for anti-social behaviour so close to local residences. He suggested that as an alternative the project group could be encouraged to provide robust outdoor gym equipment and a goal mouth/practice wall rather than the play equipment which would be expected to reduce insurance and on-going maintenance costs. Finally, the Council could assist with providing professional advice on each item of play equipment and provide assistance with choosing the best supplier, conducting risk assessments, on training residents to conduct inspections and grounds maintenance, finding suitable insurance and holding fund raising activities.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk provides the project group with professional advice and support as indicated.

### **3.2 Concluding the First year of “The Line of Reconciliation”**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on this recent successful initiative led by The Mayor of Seaham that gained international recognition for Seaham. The Mayor then elaborated on the following proposals for the poppy cross ashes:

- (i) The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers have offered to formally receive an urn of the ashes which will then be taken with them to Flanders when they go this year.
- (ii) The British Legion Bikers/Riders Association, which is a regional organisation have offered to disperse the ashes at war graves throughout the region.
- (iii) A ceremonial urn and a commemorative plaque has been donated and the intention is for this to be displayed at a suitable location in Seaham to mark the event.
- (iv) A regional event is proposed to take place on St George’s Day, the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, involving a suitable ceremony to mark the event. As there are no large events or ceremonies planned for this day there is an expectation that it will draw significant media attention and large numbers of people will attend.

Finally, the Mayor raised concerns over support received with regard to the Line of Reconciliation event from an external organisation and Members agreed the matter required further consideration at a future meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the information.
- (ii) The concerns of the Mayor and consideration of support for the event proposed for the 23<sup>rd</sup> April are deferred for consideration to the next meeting.

### **3.3 Lord Byron and the Promotion of Seaham**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the proposed promotion of Lord Byron, Seaham and Ada Lovelace. In discussion, Members highlighted that the sculpture was already in place prior to the request for funding being brought to the Town Council for consideration and that details of all potential costs and any contributions already provided by other organisations were required to enable a suitable assessment to be made by Members.

RECOMMENDED this item is deferred for consideration to the next meeting.

### **3.4 Allotment Issues**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the following allotment issues:

- (i) A recent meeting with Hall Street Allotments Association provided confirmation that they do intend to put a building up to be used by their members next to where the toilet is located. The association were asked to provide details of the size and look of the building so the Town Council could approve the plans before any works began. In discussion, Members asked if such a building would require planning permission and if local residents were going to be consulted.
- (ii) A visit to Ernest Field Allotments to meet a resident who had a complaint about a locked gate put up by the association behind his house. The issue is currently being raised with the association. Members also commented on how well maintained and pleasant the site is.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information.

### **3.5 Community Group Request for Utilising Land around Dawdon Park for Community Equestrian and Bird Centre**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on a proposal from a community group to use a site to the south of Edith Street, Dawdon, currently used for grazing, for a community equestrian and bird centre. The Council has been requested to provide a letter if they support the project in principle to be used within funding applications.

RECOMMENDED this item is deferred for consideration to the next meeting.

### **3.6 Dawdon Park Dog Fouling**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the current issues in the Dawdon area and the proposal for a week of action in February followed by a town-wide campaign working with local schools.

In discussion Members highlighted a significant similar six week campaign (October to December 2015) had recently taken place and within a week of this ending the problem had returned and was even worse. The issue is so bad that for health and safety reasons the football pitch within the park must be inspected and cleared of dog mess prior to any game being played. The conclusion is that there appears to be an element of deliberate anti-social behaviour amongst irresponsible dog owners in that area and positive enforcement action is perhaps the only option to deal with such individuals.

Members were informed that a similar week of action is planned by Durham County Council in the Deneside area and all Members acknowledged that dog fouling was a major concern of residents.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the information.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk investigate the legalities and options for enforcement in Dawdon Park with regard to dog fouling and provide a report back to Members.

**3.7 Northumbria in Bloom and Green Flag Award**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the associated costs and informed Members that he was meeting with the Northumbria in Bloom representatives on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February to discuss the competition and to identify under which category Seaham would enter. At present the costs for both competitions are as follows:

- (i) Northumbria in Bloom, £300 entry fee plus costs of buffet and transport for judging panel. n.b. there is provision in the budget of £1K for this.
- (ii) Green Flag Award, £363 entry fee plus cost of a buffet for the judging panel. n.b. there is provision in the budget of £1K for this.

In discussion, with regard to Northumbria in Bloom a query was raised as to whether the Parks department had sufficient resources to complete the additional works required to enter the competition. The Deputy Town Clerk assured Members that the Parks department had the required capacity and enthusiasm to meet the challenge.

The Deputy Town Clerk also informed Members that with regard to the Green Flag Award there was a need to increase the number of benches within Seaham Town Park. In discussion Members felt that sponsorship for the new benches should be obtained to minimize the cost to the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the information.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to enter the Northumbria in Bloom competition within the current budget provision and that Members are consulted immediately for approval if any additional funding is required.
- (iii) The Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to enter Seaham Town Park for the Green Flag Award within the current budget provision and that Members are consulted immediately for approval if any additional funding is required.

- (iv) The Deputy Town Clerk approach local businesses and other potential sponsors to obtain sponsorship funding for the additional benches required in Seaham Town Park

### **3.8 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. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RECOMMENDED in view of the confidential nature of the item to be discussed, the formal resolution be hereby passed to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1961.

### **5. SEAHAM HARBOUR CRICKET CLUB**

Prior to consideration of the following item, Councillor R Arthur declared an interest and left the meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk provided details on the required resources and staff time which would be required to undertake this amount of work of additional work. An indication of what the potential income would be was also provided and in the opinion of the Deputy Town Clerk, the Parks department does not currently have sufficient capacity to provide this service to the cricket club.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the information.
- (ii) The Town Council does not provide the requested grounds maintenance service to the Seaham Harbour Cricket Club at this time and Deputy Town Clerk inform the club of the decision as soon as possible.

### **6. REQUEST FOR CRAFT FAIR AND MINI FOOD FESTIVAL AT 2016 CARNIVAL**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided details on a request received from Pumpkin Patch Events to provide a craft fair at the 2016 carnival. In discussion Members thought this would be an excellent additional attraction at the event.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The provision of a craft fair and mini food festival by Pumpkin Patch Events at the 2016 carnival be approved in principal.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to enter into negotiations with Pumpkin Patch Events with regard to this proposal.

**7. SEAHAM JAZZ BAND**

A Member highlighted that as Seaham has a jazz band which had indicated an interest in attending the carnival and providing a parade.

RECOMMENDED the Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to contact Seaham Jazz Band and enter into negotiations with regard to the band attending the carnival and providing a parade.

**8. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

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