

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 28TH FEBRUARY, 2017

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

Apologies: Councillor B Allen, Mrs B E Allen, Mrs H J Cahill, Miss S Morrison, I Paul, B Taylor.

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 31ST JANUARY, 2017

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 Artwork for Church Street

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that a meeting was held at the Town Hall on Wednesday 22nd February, 2017 with local stakeholders to look into creating and funding a new sculpture for Church Street. At the meeting the following three proposals were discussed:

- A traditional miners sculpture at the top of Church Street, which seemed to be the preferred option for the traders and a number had already identified designs.
- Changes to the raised border with two trees that is part way up Church Street to make it slimmer or replace it with a slimmer structure.
- A modern artwork with lighting at the bottom of Church Street.

Costs for the traditional miners sculpture were requested from the traders for

the next meeting of this group.

The Deputy Town Clerk indicated that the Lumiere item which was yet to be discussed could link into this project as there was competition to obtain up to £10,000 of funding for a structure incorporating light.

At this point, Councillor B Burn Jnr declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

RECOMMENDED that this item be deferred to a future meeting.

3.2 Environmental Projects for Dawdon and Parkside

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that a he had met with local stakeholders from Dawdon to discuss planting designs and they would like something similar to the borders on Terrace Green. The possible locations at Dawdon and to be investigated and the Deputy Town Clerk intends to meet with local stakeholders from Parkside in the very near future. Once this has taken place, the details of the two proposals will be submitted to Mr Dean Henry of Durham County Council Clean and Green Team for consideration as most of the locations will be Durham County Council land.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported and await further information when available.

3.3 Lumiere Durham

Prior to the consideration of this item, Councillor B Burn Jnr declared an interest and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that BRILLIANT is a competition open to anyone originally from, or currently living in the North East and you don't need to be an artist to take part. If successful, *Lumiere* Durham producers Artichoke will work with the successful person to help make their concept a reality. Unique proposals that will stop people in their tracks are what they are looking for. Any material may be used, as long as light is at the heart of it. The Deputy Town Clerk, as mentioned under item 1, suggested that it maybe that this could be part of the Church Street Art project or the Dawdon and Parkside Project or even all three could be submitted. If successful Brilliant would help with up to £10,000 of funding.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk submit a proposal as suggested.

3.4 Northumbria in Bloom

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the application for 2017 has been submitted and works to further improve the landscaping around Seaham will continue. He hopes to do as well if not better than the Silver Gilt won last year.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

3.5 Green Flag Award

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that Seaham Town Park has been entered again and it is hoped that it wins a green flag award again this year. Improvements have already been made with the addition of stone benches and the creation of a “Gateway” view of Seaham by the removal of hedging to reveal the War Memorial, Town Hall and parkland views to visitors entering the town from Seaton Lane/Stockton Road.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

3.6 Proposed Easter and Summer Half-term Events

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that traditional Easter craft, fun and games will be provided by Michelle Harland as follows:

- Sunday 17th April, 2017 at Seaham Town Park from 11am until 2pm.
- Monday 18th April, 2017 at Deneside Park from 11am until 2pm.
- Tuesday 19th April, 2017 at Dawdon Welfare Park from 11am until 2pm.

A traditional seaside themed event will take place on Friday 2nd June, 2017 at the Terrace Green.

Summer events are also planned for Saturday 22nd, Sunday 23rd and Monday 24th July, 2017. An application is being submitted to Awards for All to fund these events.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

3.7 Carnival Line Up

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that for this year’s carnival weekend from Friday 14th July, 2017 through to Sunday 16th July, 2017 the musical acts were proposed to be as follows:

Saturday 15th July, 2017

- 5pm until 9pm - Local Bands.
- 9pm until 10.30pm - The Stone Roses tribute band and/or The Rolling Stones tribute band.

Sunday 16th July, 2017

- 10.30am until 1pm - Local Performers.
- 1.00pm until 4pm - Family Sports Fun in the Arena.
- 2.00pm – Otis Reading tribute/Sam Cook tribute/Marvin Gaye tribute.
- 3.00pm – tbc
- 4.00pm – Kylie tribute.
- 5.00pm – Cat Stevens.
- 6.00pm – ABBA tribute band.
- 7.00pm – The Beautiful South tribute band.
- 8.00pm – U2 tribute band.

- 9.00pm – Queen tribute band,

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

3.8 Proposed Megan Bell Fundraising Event – Terrace Green - 10TH June, 2017

Prior to the consideration of this item, Councillors E Bell and Mrs J A Bell declared an interest, left the Council chamber and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members of the details of the fundraising event proposed by Ms Laura Ward and Ms Gillian Graham who had approached the Council. They would like to hold a music event at the Terrace Green on Saturday 10th June, 2017 in order to raise funds to provide support to bereaved families who have recently lost anyone under the age of 18 and do not have funds for the funeral etc. In discussion Members acknowledged that this was a worthy cause and approved that the event be permitted to take place on the Terrace Green.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approve the event.

3.9 Potential Modular Buildings for Sports Clubs in Seaham

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that West Hartlepool Rugby Club have offered to donate their modular buildings to Seaham Sports Clubs at the end of the 2016/17 season. If located to New Drive or Byrons Walk sports pitches they could be utilised by a variety of sports clubs. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested that he arranged a site visit with suitable contractors to assess the condition of the buildings and the associated costs for transporting and installing them in Seaham.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk arranges a site visit with suitable contractors to assess the condition of the modular buildings and obtains the associated costs to transport and site them in Seaham.

3.10 Press Opportunities

RECOMMENDED the various events and projects discussed previously be publicised at the appropriate time.

3.11 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.

3.12 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.

3.13 Possible Sale of Plots of Land

The Deputy Town Clerk provided Members with details of the plots of land of interest to buyers and their associated land values as provided by Kimmitt and Roberts. It was proposed that any sales are subject to a covenant that either prevents any buildings being built on the plots or that if they do a large percentage of the increase in value is paid to the Council.

In discussion, Members highlighted that the Council must be protected against any challenges that the best price obtainable on the open market has been achieved. Members acknowledged that the valuations from Kimmitt and Roberts do not state that, nor do they certify that the land is being recommended for sale by private treaty, because it is in the Council and Taxpayers best interests, as it is inappropriate to be sold to anyone else.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the land sales subject to:

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk obtaining written certification, for each piece of land, from Kimmitt and Roberts that the valuations represent the best price obtainable on the open market, and certifying that the land is being recommended for sale by private treaty, because it is in the Council and Taxpayers best interests, as it is inappropriate to be sold to anyone else.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk ensuring that appropriate covenants are included to prevent any building on the plots of land.

3.14 Further Potential Land Transfers between Seaham Town Council and Durham County Council

The Deputy Town Clerk provided Members with details of the current status of the negotiations for future potential land transfers from Durham County Council to the Town Council. The three pieces of land were:

- New Drive playing fields
- Lord Byron's Walk playing fields
- Edith Street field

In discussion, Members suggested that immediate progress should be made with regard to the playing fields at New Drive and Lord Byron's Walk. With regard to the Edith Street field, Members were adamant that this land had been gifted to the Town Council in lieu of land lost at Ropery Walk nursery school as part of the moving of the Dock Company premises. Two Members who had been present at the discussions were willing to swear to that effect under oath.

Members felt that it was now at a stage with regard to the Edith Street site that it was possible to make a formal complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman on the basis that the County Council appear to be failing to honour the agreement that was reached in respect of the relocation of the Dock company and the land that was being lost adjacent to the nursery site playing fields. At the appropriate time the matter should be raised with the County Council in the strongest of terms once the New Drive and Lord Byron's Walk sites have been secured as gifted tracts of land freehold and not leased. This would also protect the site for future generations from sale and development for housing and retain it for recreation purposes.

A Member stated that these were huge landholdings from Durham County Council which would involve a massive revenue implication for their maintenance in future years and the possible purchase of suitable extra machinery to be able to do this. It would therefore require a huge commuted sum from the County Council to cover future costs if a lease arrangement were entered into but the Town Council could decide to waive a commuted sum if land were gifted freehold.

It was agreed that it was in the interests of the County Council to gift the land as they would have significant on-going maintenance costs and under Town Council ownership the land would be protected for the future from development.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk continues with negotiations to secure that the three areas of land are gifted freehold by the County Council to Seaham Town Council on the basis as indicated.