

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 20TH JUNE, 2017

Present: Councillor K Shaw (Chair) and
Councillors R Arthur, Mrs J A Bell,
Mrs G Bleasdale, S P Colburn, S Cudlip,
Mrs V Cummings, Mrs S Forster,
G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy,
D McKenna, T Shepherd, B Taylor,
Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillor Mrs B E Allen, E Bell,
Mrs K Brace, D Cummings,
Mrs R M Gratton, Ms S Pratt

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 23RD MAY, 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 Creative Youth Opportunities

Ms Michelle Harland, Creative Youth Opportunities attended the meeting to update Members on events which have taken place in Seaham in conjunction with Seaham Town Council.

Ms Harland stated that Creative Youth Opportunities (CYO) is a community interest company 'not for profit'. CYO and Seaham Town Council started working together over the Easter holidays and events were held in Seaham Town Park, Deneside Park and Dawdon Welfare Park. The events were very successful with very good feedback received from the families over 100 children attended the event at Deneside Park where free activities were offered.

On 2nd June an event was held on Terrace Green, the weather wasn't very kind but still over 300 people attended. Excellent feedback was received via social media. A video was downloaded of the day which received over 2000 views.

Ms Harland stated she has been working with the Deputy Town Clerk and they had applied for some external funding which would assist with future events. They had placed the application in time but the lottery came back to them with questions which then made the application outside of the deadline date which was quite disappointing as a lot of work had been put into the application. Ms Harland stated that she would like to work with the Town Council next year on events and would like to start this from January so that bids for funding can be placed earlier. The funding is for £10,000 which will go towards any funding the Town Council put towards events. Ms Harland stated there is also another fund 'Celebrate Funding' which needs to be placed in January/February and she would be more than happy to work with the Town Council to apply for this funding. Ms Harland stated that both of the funding streams are best placed to be applied for by the Town Council as they prefer to fund larger organisations.

Ms Harland stated that she also has an idea for two projects which her organisation will apply for funding for but she needs to state that she has the backing of the Town Council that would support it. The first project would be based in Seaham Town Park at the Skate Park. Ms Harland noted that there are elements of graffiti at the skate park which is not appropriate. Ms Harland's suggestion is that she would like to get young people involved in creating street art which would encompass the heritage of Seaham. She would then like to hold an event to showcase the work carried out with maybe a skate competition to be included within that. Ms Harland noted that young people from Gateshead often use this skate park as they feel it is a better facility than the indoor facility they have at Gateshead.

A Member stated that it is good to hear that young people are using the facility from across the region as it was the young people who decided on the layout of the skate park. It is a good idea for them to then choose the appropriate art work. A Member felt that if the young people had their own art work at the park then they are more likely to look after the park and discourage other young people from abusing the park.

A further project Ms Harland wished to discuss was that she has been working with the local Police in the Deneside area with young people from the Youth Centre and Deneside Action Group on a large mural that will be placed in Deneside community garden. CYO have been working on this and the Police and AAP have contributed some funding. On the back of this project the young people are really enjoying creating the mural and street art and Ms Harland has attended a previous Town Council meeting where Church Street was discussed and how that could be made to look better. Ms Harland stated she would like to apply for funding with the support of the Town Council to look at an art project that could go on the shop shutters in Church Street. It has happened in other towns and cities across the country

and works really well and she suggested that she could work with the young people, shop owners and Town Council to come up with a brief for the young people to work to. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this has been linked into meetings held with the shop traders in Church Street. A Member stated that the work needs to be carried out with the young people so that they will respect the area more. Ms Harland stated that she would like the young people to come up with the ideas and then get them to present the art work to the shop owners for their approval. This will teach the young people the process of how they need to manage this. Ms Harland confirmed that she would be looking at a whole age range of young people from Juniors upwards.

Ms Harland stated that she engages with the Art Block in Seaham and they have been included in meetings and can be involved if they wish to do so.

A Member questioned how many people attended the Easter event at Dawdon Welfare Park. Ms Harland stated that there were approximately 35 children but it was a very cold and windy on that day and there were around 80 children at Seaham Town Park on the bank holiday.

A Member asked Ms Harland if she had engaged with the Cricket Club at Dawdon Welfare Park to use the facilities of the Cricket Club such as for refreshments and toilet facilities. Ms Harland stated she had engaged with the Cricket Club and had access to the toilets but not refreshments. It was noted that events are planned for the summer and it is a good idea to contact the Cricket Club and also the Café in Seaham Town Park so they can be open whilst the events are taking place and if the weather isn't very good the art work can be taken inside to do.

The Chair thanked Ms Harland for attending the meeting and she then left the room.

Members discussed the two projects and agreed they were excellent ideas which they would like to pursue.

RECOMMENDED that Ms Harland's projects should be pursued and that the Town Council will support the funding applications.

3.2 Northumbria in Bloom

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the Northumbria in Bloom judges will be returning on Friday 7th July, 2017.

The Deputy Town Clerk has contacted Durham County Council and requested that the weeds along pavements and gullies across the town to be removed and the landscaping across the town is looking very good.

A Member questioned whether Durham County Council had started this work as he hadn't seen anyone out. A Member stated that someone from Durham

had been out spraying weeds along Queen Alexandra Road and Long Newton Street. The Deputy Town Clerk stated he would contact Durham County Council again.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that following on from last year's Silver Gilt award he is hopeful for the Town to achieve a Gold award this year.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk will contact Durham County Council to ensure the weeds are removed.

3.3 Deneside Park Police Initiative

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that there had been anti-social behaviour, however this has been reducing over the last few weeks. A Member questioned whether the Police had any observation points that they could see into the park. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this had been raised at various meetings with the Police and CCTV cameras had been suggested but this is quite difficult due to the amount of trees in the park. The Police have contacted the High School who have texted out to the parents to let them know what is going on at the park. Parents were informed that Police and Security Guards would be wearing body cameras which would be sent to school to identify the young people involved. The anti-social behaviour did reduce after this had been carried out.

A Member suggested that the embankment next to Strangford Road roundabout that there is a lot trees there could some of the trees be removed so that a Police car would have a clear view of the park. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this could be a possibility.

A Member questioned whether Police surveillance could be carried out at the park as there is allegedly a local drug dealer who is dealing to young people in the park. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would report this back to the Police.

The Chair stated that a lot of resources have been put into the area due to the Police initiative and that following a meeting with local residents it has been reported that the anti-social behaviour has reduced.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk to look into the possibility of reducing the amount of trees next to the embankment into the park near to the Strangford Road roundabout.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk to report back to the Police with regard to the suspected drug dealing at the park.

3.4 Green Flag Award

The Deputy Town Clerk requested permission to attend the Green Flag Awards which is to be held on the 18th July, 2017 in Hull. The Deputy Town

Clerk informed the Council that the results of the awards are currently embargoed. Members agreed that it was important that the Town Council were represented.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk attends the Green Flag Awards on the 18th July, 2017.

3.5 Seaham Carnival

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that there are many new free events for families at this year's carnival such as children's electric go karting track which is chargeable on Friday and Saturday but through negotiation the ride will be free on Sunday which is the Carnival's busiest day.

There is increased costs for the security due to the incidents across the country of late. Members will need to approve the additional costs.

RECOMMENDED that Members approve the additional security costs.

3.6 Pony Rides

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the Town Council have been approached by Mayfield Stables Pony Rides to attend the Carnival and to provide pony rides on a regular basis on Seaham's sea front.

A Member questioned where the ponies would be kept, how long they would be working for and the general welfare of the animals and the standards of the company. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the organisation stated that they would clean up after the ponies and that he could look further into possible locations for the pony rides such as the promenade. Members did not think it appropriate for the ponies to be on the Terrace Green. It was also suggested that the company could be invited to attend a meeting to give a presentation to Councillors. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested that some tester days could be held with the pony rides over the summer months so that Councillors are reassured of the welfare of the animals and he could contact Durham County Council to discuss possible sites as most of the land belongs to Durham.

A Member stated that she is aware of this company and they have been used for other events in Seaham. She stated that the ponies are well looked after and the company are really good and always put the ponies first.

A Member noted that the Terrace Green is not the right location for the pony rides so Seaham Town Council would not be responsible for this as the land used would belong to Durham County Council and consent would need to be received from them which may not be approved in time. If this can be approved then I would hope that this is credited to Seaham Town Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk engages with Durham County Council over possible sites and permissions and then further explores the standards of Mayfield Stables Pony Rides.

3.7 Parkside Allotments

RECOMMENDED that Members approve the Parkside Allotments Association take-over of the piece of land subject to confirmation that it is Council land.

3.8 Vane Tempest Electric Site & Northern Power Grid Works

A Member stated that the Town Council's agents should be contacted to ascertain an appropriate charge for the works to be carried out and to ensure that all of the legal and surveyors fees are paid for by Northern Power Grid. Also that a valuation is carried out for purchasing purposes.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk contacts the Town Council's agents for a full valuation of the site and an appropriate charge for works to be carried out on the site whilst still in Town Council ownership.

3.9 Denese Action Group Official Opening 17th July, 2017 11.30am.

RECOMMENDED that Councillors note the invitation to the official opening of Denese Action Groups Community Allotment Site.

3.10 World War One Seats for Terrace Green

The Deputy Town Clerk requested permission to work with Julie Anson, Durham County Council and Destination Seaham to gain World War 1 seats to be placed on the Terrace Green. These will replace the older seats which are currently placed around the cenotaph.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk works with Julie Anson, Durham County Council and Destination Seaham to gain WW1 seats.

3.11 Red Star Football Club Requests for Improvements

Members were issued with a list of proposed improvements which the Red Star Football Club are requesting be carried out.

RECOMMENDED that costs are sought and the works be approved.

3.12 Earl House

Discussion took place around the cost of £70 for the Town Council to cut the grass at Earl House. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the cost had been derived by using the Gardeners salary against the time it takes to cut the grass and also the depreciation of equipment and diesel had also been factored in. Some Members thought that this was a low price in comparison to what private businesses would charge.

A vote was held and the following was decided:

9 for
3 abstained

RECOMMENDED that the grass at Earl House is cut by the Town Council at a charge of £70.

3.13 Events for 2017

The Deputy Town Clerk included the dates for the remaining events which are due to take place in 2017.

A Member stated that they had attended the Brass Band Day on the 17th June which had been an excellent day which everyone enjoyed. The bands were in both Church Street and Terrace Green which made the event inclusive for all. Members were also encouraged to attend the Armed Forces Day on 24th June which has a free public military parade.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

3.14 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.