

## **MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2018**

Present: Councillor K Shaw (Chair) and  
Councillors, Mrs B E Allen, E Bell,  
Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace, S Cudlip,  
Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton,  
G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy,  
D McKenna, Mrs S Pratt, T Shepherd,  
B Taylor, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillors R Arthur,  
Mrs J A Bell, S P Colburn, D Cummings,  
Mrs V Cummings, R Whitehead

*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 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER, 2018**

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 Inflatables**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that a Member wished to raise the issues of inflatables such as bouncy castles and recommended that they are banned from Seaham Town Council land and events and agreed with the Member that he thought this was a good idea but wanted to be clear on what exactly is to be banned and asked Members if they agreed that it should be the larger bouncy castles which are banned as they can easily be blown over or lifted off the ground whilst people are on them. The Deputy Town Clerk noted that the fairground people use inflatables for safety measures as barriers but these were not for banning as they are not used by children for bouncing on.

A Member stated that he had requested that this item be added to the agenda for discussion so that a policy decision could be made. The Member

stated that his concern was that the fairground operators bring various inflatable items with them and no-one knows what they are until they are set up. The Member noted that there has been some serious accidents in this area with inflatables in the past and also more recently there was a serious accident down south. The Member requested that the Town Council should move on this decision.

A Member stated that the other Member had remarked that there should be a ban on Council land and asked about bouncy castles used at christenings and children's parties within the Town Hall. The Member stated that the Town Council needs to be specific about the banning. Members agreed that bouncy castles used indoors do not need to be secured into the ground so inside use will still be allowed.

A Member suggested that Durham County Council should be contacted regarding this and be told what Seaham Town Council have decided and ask them if they would be prepared to enforce this policy on their land within Seaham also. Another Member stated that the land at the top of the docks which does not belong to Seaham or the County is often used by fairground people is also a very dangerous place to site inflatables due to the open positing and it can be often very windy at that location and suggested that Byron Place Shopping Centre should also be contacted by Officers and then report back to this meeting as the Town Council do not want any kind of disasters happening in Seaham. The Town Clerk also stated that SAG should also be contacted as they can carry out risk assessments. A Member stated that he agreed with the Town Clerk but felt that Members were saying they wanted a total ban on outside bouncy castles and SAG may just say that they need to be staked into the ground. Another Member referred to the accident which happened at Chester-le Street several years previous and noted that this had been risk assessed and was tied down and yet still there were deaths.

Another Member raised the question of Seaham Town Council land and leased land such as the Cricket Clubs who hold fun days with bouncy castles. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that they will also not be allowed to have bouncy councils outdoors. The Member stated that the Town Council will have to liaise with the Clubs to inform them of the ban. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that letters will be sent out to the clubs informing them of the Councils decision.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) Inflatable bouncy castles be banned from all Seaham Town Council owned land accept for indoor use at christenings and children's parties.
- (ii) Durham County Council and Byron Place Shopping Centre to be contacted and informed of Seaham Town Councils decision and a

request be made for them to make the same ban within Seaham.

- (iii) Letters to be sent to all of the leased Council owned buildings informing them of the ban.

### **3.2 Christmas Light Switch On 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2018**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that there had been a few improvements made for this year which included the parade starting at the top of Church Street at 5.00pm. A Member has been working with Creative Youth Opportunities and local school children to create Christmas lanterns which will also be part of the parade. The grand finale will take place at Terrace Green. The Deputy Town Clerk was also seeking approval for next years lights switch on to take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.

RECOMMENDED that next year's light switch on will take place on 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2019.

### **3.3 Seaham Fireworks Display – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the event was a huge success with even more people attending this year. The Deputy Town Clerk requested for Members to choose a date for next year's event.

RECOMMENDED that next year's event will take place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2018.

### **3.4 Remembrance Sunday Plus 6am Pipers and Beacon Lighting.**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the event went very well and there were improvements to the start of the parade.

A Member stated that staff should be thanked. The Deputy Town Clerk noted that speakers were again not using the microphones properly which is a simple mistake. A Member noted that speakers need to be placed at the back of the parade as people at the back could not hear what was being said and this should be looked into for next year's parade. A Member noted that rehearsals were offered by the Town Council but were declined.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

### **3.5 Parkside and Fishbone Allotments request to make changes to their agreement so they can keep dogs and other animals on their sites and other changes**

It was noted that a meeting had been held today with a representative from Fishbone Allotments Association. The Town Clerk stated that she wished to visit the sites before making any informed decisions and wished to review the agreements. The Town Clerk requested that this item be put on hold with the agreement of the Allotment Association until this item has been reviewed fully.

A Member stated that rather than changes to the agreements be made there needs to be an addendum to be added to the agreement and this can emerge from the Town Clerk's site visits.

The Chair of the Allotments Sub-Committee requested that a meeting is held as soon as possible as she was not happy at all. She stated that all the allotments made an agreement if the animals die or if they are given away or whatever then they don't get any more. The Town Clerk explained that this was the reason for the review and a cohesive approach to the whole allotments procedure was needed. The Town Council cannot agree to let two sites have animals and other sites not.

A representative from Fishbone Allotments stated that Parkside and Fishbone Allotments were the only two that had not signed the agreements and they were happy and quite willing to go along with what has been said today but could they have some sort of assurance that until the new agreements have been signed that the status quo is maintained. A Member stated that he could not understand how it wouldn't be as you cannot make changes unless its agreed by the Council and the Council is not agreeing to any changes so the status quo by definition continues.

The Town Clerk confirmed that there will be consultations with all allotment associations.

RECOMMENDED that the signing of the agreements be put on hold until a full review is carried out by the Town Clerk.

### **3.6 Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public**

RECOMMENDED that in view of the confidential nature of the following items the Committee passed the formal resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960.

### **3.7 Seaham Town Park Sports Pavilion Lease**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated he had met with the Council's Solicitor and Estate Agent to discuss the covenants on the land to reduce the valuation as this was valued far too high for a sports club.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

### **3.8 Seaham Street Small Triangular Plot of Land**

Members were reminded that they had previously agreed to sell this piece of land. Once the land is sold to a local resident it will be used to extend the residents garden.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

### **3.9 Seaham Railway Underpass and Princess Road Bridge**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he has officially lodged complaints with Network Rail regarding the underpass lights not working and the lack of disabled access at Princess Road. The cost of fixing the lights at the underpass is approximately £3500. A Member stated that it was his understanding that Network Rail are responsible for this area and they should pay for the lights to be fixed. The Member passed on the details for an Officer at Network Rail who the Deputy Town Clerk could contact to discuss this issue further.

A County Councillor stated that the reasoning given to Councillors from Network Rail about the lack of DDA compliance at the Princess Road Bridge is due to the distance it would take to walk around the area to get to the other side of the crossing wasn't too far away. County Councillors requested a lift be installed but they were turned down.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk contacts Network Rail regarding the fixing of the lights in the underpass.

### **3.10 New Drive Fencing**

Members discussed the costs for the fencing at New Drive as a recent quote received was for over £30k.

The Deputy Town Clerk also made reference to concerns over dog walkers being excluded from the field and suggested that the fence line be brought in by approximately 8 metres to allow for a linear dog training area. A Member stated that if there will be a dog walking area there will be dog dirt left around the perimeters of the fencing and it will imply that people can do the linear walk with dogs.

The Deputy Town Clerk agreed to produce a report to look at all of the different options available next year.

A Member stated that budget provisions would need to be looked at and it may be that the fencing may need to be done in phased stages.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk produces a report in 2019 outlining different fencing options for New Drive.

### **3.11 Dawdon Bungalow Sale Agreement**

Members were issued with a copy of the sale agreement for approval for the sale of the bungalow. Members noted the new sale price and were informed that the refund for the tenants would be paid once Members agreed that they were happy with the agreement.

The Town Clerk stated that she had been working on the Dawdon Park Project and had met with both the Architect and the Quantity Surveyor and

had chased them both up to complete phase 1. It was noted that the cost of the portacabin had increased slightly due to the DDA compliance.

The Town Clerk suggested that for phase 2 of the project she felt it would be better managed by the Quantity Surveyor who had also offered a 5% reduction in his fees. Members agreed that the Quantity Surveyor should take over the project management role and requested that the fees be reported back to the next Dawdon Working Party meeting.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The agreement for the sale of the bungalow be approved.
- (ii) The Quantity Surveyor to project manage phase 2 of the Dawdon Park works.
- (iii) The costs of phase 1 of the project be available for the next Dawdon Working Party meeting.

**3.12 Risk Management Issues**

RECOMMENDED Members note the information being provided.

**4. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

RECOMMENDED the Council note that the Deputy Town Clerk will where possible encourage the press and media to promote the positive projects discussed at this meeting.