

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2019

Present: B Taylor (Chair) Mrs B E Allen, R Arthur, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace, S P Colborn, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton, G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy, D McKenna, T Shepherd, R Whitehead, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: D Cummings, Mrs V Cummings, Mrs S Pratt, K Shaw.

Officers: Mrs D Rickaby (Town Clerk)
P Fletcher (Deputy Town Clerk)
Miss A Rountree (Minute Taker)

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.

PE45/19 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.

PE46/19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 25th JUNE, 2019

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.

PE47/19 PARKS AND EVENTS SERVICES

The Committee considered the Deputy Town Clerk's report which contained the following items:

1.0 ALLOTMENTS

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that at the last Full Council meeting on the 16th July, 2019 it was agreed that Fishbone and Parkside Allotment Associations would be allowed to speak at this meeting.

Parkside Association stated that they wished to sign the original lease on condition that a Member who made a statement in November 2017 retract his statement. This was discussed by Members and it was stated that it was inappropriate to bring up a statement made 2 years previously. Parkside Association stated that talks were becoming too complex and complicated so

he would prefer to sign the original lease and move forward. He also stated that he had provided the Council with DEFRA and microchipping numbers but would not agree to give a list of the Associations members.

A Member questioned whether this information had been requested from the other Associations. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this had not been requested from Hall Street as they do not keep animals on the site and the information is requested so there are emergency contact numbers for the site. The Deputy Town Clerk referred to the recent fire at Station Road allotments which do not belong to the Council and informed Members of the deaths of dogs due to the fire and this is a reason why the Council needs emergency contact details.

Fishbone Association questioned whether the Council had asked Shrewsbury Street Allotments for the same information that they were requesting from Parkside and Fishbone and it was noted by a Member that all allotment sites should be treated in a similar and fair way. A Member noted that the Council have a list of names of people on the Councils sites, however Fishbone stated that there are people on Shrewsbury Street who the Council are unaware of. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would look into this.

Inspector Rachael Stockdale from Seaham Police stated that the Police are unaware of who are on the allotment sites and allotments can't be seen due to high fences and buildings. The Police had requested a list of association members from Fishbone and Parkside but this request had been declined by the associations. The Police did however receive a list of names from Deneside Association.

PCO Smith stated that he covers the Deneside area and there has been incidents of criminal activity at Deneside allotments.

A Member questioned the Police as to whether they are lawfully entitled to receive a list of names. Inspector Stockdale stated that the Police weren't entitled to this information but some allotment sites are working with the Police and some are not. Another Member questioned how the Police had become involved when they had never been involved with the allotments previously. Inspector Stockdale stated that this was due to the cannabis growing at Deneside and the Police have serious concerns about how the allotments are being ran and gave examples of information received stating that stolen goods are taken to these sites along with waste being dumped there and she had concerns that these sites are being used as safe havens for crime.

A member from Parkside Allotments Association stated that they wished to hold a meeting with the Police outside of this meeting to discuss these matters further.

A member of the public who is a plot holder at Fishbone raised concerns she had regarding the running of Fishbone Allotments and their lack of a Committee and how the allotments are generally ran. She had previously raised her concerns with the Association but was given a final warning letter as she stated that she would complain to the Council if her concerns were not

addressed. The Town Clerk noted that Fishbone were invited to attend a meeting to discuss these matters but refused to attend. However, Fishbone Association did say that they would attend a formal Council meeting to discuss these matters.

Officers also felt that they had some concerns but were not given the opportunity to share their concerns at the meeting.

A Member stated that some sites have names of plot holders and some don't. Some Associations have rules and some don't and moved that the Council take back control of all allotment sites until such a time that the Council are happy with the management of the allotments. This was seconded by another Member.

Another Member moved that the Council stand by a previous decision to give the Associations a new lease which was seconded by another Member. This Member showed concern that the Council would not have the resources to manage all of the allotment sites.

This item then went to a vote. A request was made for this to be a named vote:

Members were asked to vote on the Town Council taking back control of the allotments:

For: Councillors Mrs B E Allen, R Arthur, Mrs K Brace, S P Colborn, Ms R M Gratton, G N Hepworth, Miss L Willis. (7)

Against: Councillors E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster, Mrs L Kennedy, D McKenna, T Shepherd, R Whitehead (8)

Abstained: Councillor Mrs G Bleasdale (1)

There was some confusion around the voting as the Chair felt that he had voted 'for' whilst other Members felt that he had not shown his hand. The Chair had requested another vote but the Town Clerk stated that the original vote has to be held.

The outcome of the vote was that the Council would not take back control of the Allotment sites.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) Fishbone and Parkside Allotment Association hold a separate meeting with the Police to discuss Police concerns further.
- (ii) The running of the allotment sites stays with the Associations.

2.0 SEAHAM CARNIVAL WEEKEND 2019

A Member stated that he had received some good reports regarding the Carnival weekend. However, he raised the issue of the price of rides being £4-£5 for children which can be quite expensive for parents. He noted that the cost of rides at Peterlee Carnival were only £2 and felt that Seaham people should also benefit from this.

Members questioned whether the Council could come to an agreement over pricing with Nobles and Byron Place.

Another Member also stated that she had received good reports about the Carnival but a lot of people had brought their own alcohol and food so some stallholders didn't make a lot of money. The Member suggested that maybe the stalls and music events could be held separately. Another Member stated that not all families can afford to buy food from the stalls and that's why the bring picnics.

A Member stated that Peterlee Town Council own the land where their Carnival is held and Seaham don't and this is why Peterlee will be able to negotiate prices with the fair owners. The Member suggested that Seaham should speak to Durham County Council to control prices.

It was noted that the family area where there was no smoking or drinking allowed was not used.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk speaks to Nobles Fun Fairs regarding the fair ride prices and brings this issue back to a future meeting.

3.0 ST JOHN'S CHURCH GROUNDS

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he is still chasing Durham County Council regarding an update and will bring this back to a future meeting.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk will keep Members informed of developments.

4.0 MORE WILDFLOWER MEADOWS IN SEAHAM

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the meeting that he had met with an Officer from Durham County Council to discuss this further and he will bring this back to a future meeting once more information is available.

The Deputy Town Clerk also stated that a Member had contacted him regarding planting more trees in Seaham. Another Member noted that that there may be grants available for planting further trees.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk looks into this further and brings it back to a future meeting.

5.0 LONDONDERRY INSTITUTE PROPOSED HERITAGE CENTRE

The Deputy Town Clerk has recently chased Durham County Council on this project and they have responded in writing stating that it is very much still on their radar.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he will continue to keep pushing this and will keep Members up to date with any developments.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk will inform Members of any updates on this matter.

6.0 PIRATES AND PRINCESSES FESTIVAL 2019

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that this was a good event which has only been running for a few years.

There was an issue with a stall providing goldfish as prizes but the Deputy Town Clerk has sent emails reiterating that goldfish are banned from Seaham Town Council events.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

7.0 BEATING THE RETREAT 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2019 6.30PM

D McKenna stated that the Lord Lieutenant will be present at this years Beating the Retreat. He has also booked a singer to add to the bands performing and hopes that the event will show the town in a good light. He stated that all Members support at this event would be welcomed.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

8.0 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 10TH NOVEMBER, 2019 11.00AM TERRACE GREEN

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he has held meetings with the Royal British Legion regarding this year's event and he has also had confirmation from the Police that they will assist with the road closures.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

9.0 SEAHAM TOWN COUNCILS FIREWORKS DISPLAY 1ST NOVEMBER, 2019 7.00PM ON THE SEA FRONT

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that he is looking to have North Road closed off for the Fireworks Display.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

10.0 SEAHAM CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON EVENT 29TH NOVEMBER, 2019 5.00PM

The Deputy Town Clerk had had verbal approval from Durham County Council for the addition of LED Christmas lights to go across Church Street. Once approval has been received in writing the lights will be purchased and contact made with the shop owners.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

11.0 SEAHAMS FIRST ARTS MARKET 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2019 TERRACE GREEN

It was noted that Members had approved this event over the recess period via telephone calls from the Town Hall. The event is being hosted by Michelle Harland and it is hoped it will become a successful annual event.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

12.0 PROPOSED TOMMY RUN 10TH NOVEMBER, 2019 6.30AM – 9.30AM

The Deputy Town Clerk has received a request to close off roads for a group wishing to run in remembrance of those who lost their lives during the Great Wars. This request has been passed on to Durham County Council who organise the road closures.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

13.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

14.0 RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDED in view of the confidential nature of the following items which relate to issues of a commercially sensitive and confidential nature Members agreed to pass the formal resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960.

15.0 DAWDON CRICKET CLUB RENOVATION PROJECT

It was noted that this project had taken 3-4 years to come to fruition. A Member stated that the contractors never stop and they are ahead of schedule and Members were questioned as to whether the existing contractors contract could be extended to complete phase 3.

Members discussed moving onto phase 3 of the project and it was noted there is a requirement under due diligence to get a recommendation from the Councils Consultant that the contractor is offering the best value/price. The Town Clerk stated that she has received information from the Councils

Consultant and he has prepared a report and if Members are happy with moving onto phase 3 the report will be taken to a Finance and General Purposes Committee. It was also noted that Standing Orders would need to be suspended.

RECOMMENDED that this item is taken to the next available Finance and General Purposes Committee for further discussion and approval.

16.0 **LAND AT UNION STREET**

Following the sale of the above land the new owner has requested permission to build a Summer house and garage on the site. The current covenant imposed is that the land can only be used as a garden.

RECOMMENDED that the current covenant is not changed and permission is not given for a Summer house and garage to be built on the site.

17.0 **3 PIECES OF LAND ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF HILL CRESCENT**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that a request from a member of the public has been received to purchase the above land. Members discussed this and decided not to sell the land as the land is part of an allotment which is let to the allotment association.

RECOMMENDED that the sale of the land be rejected.

PE48/19 **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.