

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 6th OCTOBER 2020

Present: Councillor B Taylor (Chair) and 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, K Shaw, T Shepherd, B Taylor, Miss L Willis.

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.

PE74/20 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.

PE75/20 ACCEPTANCE OF AMENDMENT

RECOMMENDED that Members accept the amendment to the standing orders to incorporate the new regulations from the Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, to conduct virtual Council meetings.

PE76/20 ALLOTMENT ISSUES

1.0 Fishbone Allotments Complaint about Caravans near to Neighbours Boundary – Hill Crescent

This item was deferred from the Full Council meeting held on 29th September 2020.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the neighbours were not happy with the caravans being sited next to their boundary fence and as a compromise he had requested in writing following Members instructions that the caravans be moved to the other side of the plot holders site. As this has not happened the Deputy Town Clerk was seeking further instruction from Members on how to proceed with the matter.

It was noted that the neighbour had made previous complaints in 2006 and 2008 and had not made any further complaints due to family issues.

A member of Fishbone Allotment Association stated that the plot holder has not refused to move the caravans but would wish to compromise by requesting permission from the Town Council to put down a concrete base on the other side of the plot with the understanding if he does this that there will be no further issues. It was noted that this was a sensible compromise and requested that the Deputy Town Clerk visits the site to see the exact location of the proposed area.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would request the plot holder and the association to draw up a map from google earth and this would be shared with Councillors.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk shares with Members a copy of a site map of where the proposed concrete base will be placed and bring this to the next available meeting.

2.0 Complains about animals at Fishbone Allotments

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that Durham County Council had confirmed that there were two plots which had received letters of complaint regarding dogs barking, one was in April and the other was in mid summer. He noted that there were no further issues with the first plot but was unsure about the second plot.

The poster which was attached as an appendix which was allegedly placed at Fishbone Allotments the Deputy Town Clerk did not fully understand. A Member asked who the Deputy Town Clerk had received the poster from but the Deputy Town Clerk stated he would not name anyone as this was a public meeting.

A member of Fishbone Association stated that he has been working closely with Ms S Gallimore from Durham County Council around the dog barking issues and it was two notices given for one plot. There was a complaint received from one resident who has made unfounded complaints previously and both complaints were not upheld. The member of the association stated that the plot holder no longer has dogs on site.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would circulate the information that he had been given to Members.

The Chair requested that the Deputy Town Clerk contacts Ms Gallimore for an update.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk contacts Ms Gallimore, Durham County Council for an update.

PE77/20 **GREENSCAPE**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that Members had previously requested that he write a lease for the Greenscape Community Garden. There are 3 plots in the community garden and the rent would be charged at slightly higher than an allotment plot and also there was a clause for Greenscape to pay their own utility bills.

A Member stated that item 20 on the agreement mentions the Greenscape Constitution and requested to see a copy of this. He also asked whether Greenscape were registered with the Charity Commission. The Deputy Town Clerk noted that he would look into this.

The agreement also notes that Greenscape will need to contact the Council for vehicular access as there is a pedestrian access only, this would be to stop vehicles entering on a regular basis. It was noted that there would need to be a dropped kerb.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the Greenscape Lease be approved.
- (ii) the Member be furnished with a copy of Greenscape's constitution .
- (iii) the Deputy Town Clerk to clarify if Greenscape are registered with the Charity Commission.

PE78/20 **SPORTS FEES AND CHARGES**

Councillor Mrs L Kennedy declared an interest and took no further part thereon.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the Bowls Clubs had requested their fees be waived for this year as they were unable to use the facilities due to the pandemic.

A Member stated that due to the current climate he suggested that all sports clubs fees be waived for this year. A further Councillor stated that the Council have to be mindful that the winter is approaching and there will be different issues to cope with and there could be very little sporting activity with the clubs having very little income.

RECOMMENDED that all sports fee charges be waived for this year.

PE79/20 **RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

PE80/20 **WOODEN PLANTERS**

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that he had received a request from Mr K Younger to use the Councils wooden planters which were previously sited at the Lodge traffic lights to be moved to the train station. It was noted that Mr Younger and his partner have made some very nice displays at the station.

A Member noted that approximately 8-9 months ago Network Rail had stated that they would look after the land next to the underpass but this hasn't happened and the area is untidy. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested that he could contact Network Rail and ask them for a contribution and Seaham Town Council staff could undertake the work. He noted that there may be staff availability to do this in January but he would have to contact Network Rail first.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The wooden planters be placed at the train station.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk to contact Network Rail regarding the land next to the underpass.

PE81/20 **HALLOWEEN**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that a member of the public had suggested that the Town Council could donate either Halloween decorations or sweets to the local schools to raise the spirits of local children. He stated that he thought a donation of money to each school would be a better idea so Seaham Town Council staff are not entering the schools under the current circumstances. A Member noted that the schools could run their own competitions with the money donated by the Town Council.

The Town Clerk stated that there is also a scarecrow competition being run by the Town Council at half term and suggested that they could be displayed in residents windows or yards if they do not have gardens and take a photograph of them so they can still enter the competition. It was noted that Ms Green has been promoting the competition as it was her original idea on facebook.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) £200 is donated to each Seaham School for Halloween competitions.
- (ii) The Town Clerk to pass on the information to Ms Green regarding the scarecrow competition on how it can be inclusive for all.

PE82/20 **REMEMBRANCE DAY RUN**

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that this item was on the Full Council agenda and was seeking clarification that the run was approved. He informed

Members that the run had taken place last year and the group had completed risk assessments and were in contact with SAG. There will be a staggered start and finish and the runners are wanting to start at Terrace Green at 8.00am.

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that there would be no involvement from Seaham Town Council staff.

RECOMMENDED that the Remembrance Day Run be approved.

PE83/20 **REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE DAY**

The Police have been in contact with the Deputy Town Clerk regarding the Remembrance Service and have stated that they will not be in attendance at either the Terrace Green or Seaham Town Park Cenotaph due to current circumstances and have not got their support to go ahead. He noted that due to this Seaham Town Council will not be involved.

D McKenna stated that he had spoken to the Royal British Legion and there will be no advertising for the service, however there will still be a 10 minute service with the vicar and buglar in attendance.

A Member stated that Councillors should bare in mind that Seaham Town Council are not the prime organisers of the Remembrance Services it is the responsibility of the RBL and the Council just provides support.

A Member requested that the Deputy Town Clerk contacts the RBL for an update and ask them to contact the public to say there will not be a public service this year.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk contacts the RBL for an update and requests that they inform the public that there will no service this year due to the current situation.

PE84/20 **LEEK SHOW**

A member of Hall Street Alloments has contacted the Council requesting support to hold a Leek Show. They have requested a donation of £500 and help with the loan of tables and chairs for the event.

RECOMMENDED that a donation of £500 and support with tables and chairs be approved.

PE85/20 **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he is in the process of ordering 4 Christmas Trees.

He has received a request from Seaton Parish Council to source a tree on their behalf which they will pay for and wants Council approval to do so, however he stated that Town Council staff will be unable to decorate or do the electrics for their tree.

The Deputy Town Council is also working around the technicalities of having the lights across Church Street again this year.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk sources a tree for Seaton Parish Council at their own expense.

PE86/20 **PEST CONTROL**

Members were informed of a visit by Pest Control to Seaham Cemetery as there have been complaints of vandalism on flowers which is actually being caused by rabbits.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

PE87/20 **DRAINAGE ISSUE AT SEAHAM CEMETERY**

The Deputy Town Clerk requested approval to go ahead with a test run for vertical drainage at Seaham Cemetery. The test run would cost £1250.00. He noted that the plastic will go between the graves and then goes several feet down into the ground. He noted that test drills need to be carried out prior to any works being done to see what the issues are. It was noted that the tests can take place in the next few weeks and once this system is in place there are no maintenance costs involved.

Members were shown some diagrams of the pipeworks and noted that they wouldn't want the white pipeworks on show as this may cause complaints from bereaved families. He suggested that the pipework be green plastic which would be disguised with the grass.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he had requested 3 quotes for the overall works and had only received quotes back from two companies. He noted that the Parks Supervisor and himself feel that this would be a good drainage system.

RECOMMENDED that Members approve the test run at a cost of £1250.00 and request that green plastic is used for the pipework.

The meeting then closed