

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 2nd MARCH, 2021

Present: Councillor B Taylor (Chair) and R Arthur, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, 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, Miss L Willis

Apologies: Mrs G Bleasdale, K Shaw.

Officers: P Fletcher (Deputy Town Clerk)
Mrs J Knight (Finance Officer)
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.

PE27/21 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs L Kennedy declared an interest.

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.

PE28/21 ACCEPTANCE OF AMENDMENT

RECOMMENDED that Members accept the amendment to the standing orders to incorporate the new regulations from the Flexibility of Local Authority to conduct virtual Council meetings.

PE29/21 MEMORIAL – MR JOHN HAYS

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that he has arranged a zoom meeting with Dame Irene Hays next week and will report back to the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information and the Deputy Town Clerk will report back at the next meeting.

PE30/21 SPORTS MURALS

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he had received a response from the Red Star Football Club who had suggested various past local sports personalities that could be included in the mural. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would continue to work on this project over the summer months and also try to source some external funding.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

PE31/21 ELECTRIC MODEL CARS

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk meets with the model car club to visit possible sites around Seaham. The Deputy Town Clerk to also contact local schools to see if this would be of any interest to them.

PE32/21 AIR RAID MEMORIAL

A Member noted that this was still a sensitive subject even today as there are still people in their 80's who remember the bombings and who lost family members. It was suggested that a special evening meeting be arranged with interested parties at the Town Hall once the restrictions have been lifted and it was also agreed to invite the Cadets.

RECOMMENDED that a special evening meeting be arranged to take place at the Town Hall once the restrictions have been lifted.

PE33/21 SEAHAM CEMETERY (LORD BYRONS WALK) RULES

RECOMMENDED that the letter for members of the public to remove items from graves that do not conform to the rules of the cemetery so that maintenance can take place be approved.

PE34/21 CYCLING COAST TO COAST – WHITEHAVEN TO SEAHAM

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk arranges a meeting to take place with Whitehaven Council, Durham County Council, Seaham Town Council and the Marina to discuss the potential for the Coast to Coast cycling event to take place between Whitehaven and Seaham.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk to look into any potential funding for the above event.

PE35/21 MINUTES OF ALLOTMENTS WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 2ND FEBRUARY 2021

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the Allotment Working Party meeting held on the 2nd February, 2021 be approved.

PE36/21 PROPOSED VIEWING PATIO AT DAWDON CRICKET PAVILION

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that Dawdon Cricket Club have requested permission from the Town Council to create a patio area for outside viewing of their matches. This would be at the Cricket Club's expense with support from Seaham Town Council with items such as machinery and labour.

RECOMMENDED that Members approve the creation of a patio area between the pavilion and the practice nets.

PE37/21 COMPLAINT FROM GREENSCAPE

Members agreed that the complaint was a Police matter.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

PE38/21 PARKS & EVENTS AND LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS (JUNE 21st 2021)

The Deputy Town Clerk stated with the likelihood of restrictions being lifted in June 2021 he was seeking permission to start organising with partners the various events which Seaham Town Council hold.

Members discussed this matter in detail and suggested various risks and options involved. Members were concerned that if deposits were paid whether these would be lost if the events could not go ahead due to further restrictions. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that deposits could be held for a future event if restrictions were put in place and events had to be cancelled or moved back.

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would contact the Council's suppliers to request that dates are pencilled into their diaries and come back to them after April's meeting to pay deposits if Members agree to go ahead with the events.

It was noted that the Royal British Legion are proposing to hold an event to celebrate the 100th Anniversary. The Deputy Town Clerk proposed that the Town Council donate £2k to support this event. Members were in agreement that they would wish to support the RBL, however they suggested that the Deputy Town Clerk should contact the RBL for further information and bring this back to a future meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk requested approval for the Parks Department staff to return to full time working hours from 1st April, 2021. He noted that the staff would be on staggered breaks to aid social distancing.

The Deputy Town Clerk requested approval to open discussions with Ramside Event Catering to discuss recovery plans for the reopening of the Town Hall and the recommencement of events.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk contacts suppliers with proposed dates of events and bring this item back to the next meeting for approval of deposits to be paid.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk to contact the Royal British Legion for further details on their proposed 100th Anniversary event.
- (iii) The Parks Department staff to return to full time working hours from 1st April, 2021.
- (iv) The Deputy Town Clerk to contact the Ramside to open discussions regarding a recovery plan.

PE39/21 **RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

PE40/21 **RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

PE41/21 **CATERING CONTRACTS**

A Member questioned whether the contracts for both catering contractors were now finalised.

The Finance Officer noted that the Internal Auditor had carried out an audit and this would be an agenda item on the Finance & General Purposes Committee agenda. It was noted that both contracts have now been signed, however there had been an issue with the café contract regarding utilities which has now been resolved.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

PE42/21 **DAWDON BOWLS PAVILION REFURBISHMENT**

The Deputy Town Clerk noted that there is currently £22k left in the Dawdon Project budget. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that it is unclear how many players the club have and advised that the Council should wait to see how many players there are before committing any monies.

A Member noted that the club also allow 1 off plays who pay on the day. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that he would discuss this with the Bowls Club in September.

It was noted that there had been concerns raised regarding a reduction in numbers of members of the Bowls Club and there had been discussions regarding the potential for the two Bowls Clubs to merge. The Council needs to act without haste as the original costs for the Bowls refurbishment was £65k plus additional costs for fees and contingencies. It was noted that the Council would need to review this.

A further Member stated that this area should be looked at, maybe if there is a reduction in numbers that the Council can keep 1 bowling green and maybe change the other green to a tennis court. The Member noted that the Bowls pavilion was an eyesore especially now that the football and cricket pavilions have been refurbished.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk reviews the Bowls Club refurbishment in September.

PE43/21 PROPOSED PURCHASE OF LAND AT FIELD HOUSE FARM

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that a member of the public had expressed an interest in purchasing land between Burdon Crescent and the public footpath linking Stockton Road and the Industrial Estate classed as Seaton Burn. A Member questioned whether the title deeds had been looked at as he recalled that the land was gifted to the Town Council to remain as public open space and there could possibly be an impediment to prevent the Council from selling the land.

Members agreed that they were not in favour of selling the land.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) The Deputy Town Clerk looks into the title deeds for the land and reports this back to the next meeting.
- (ii) The land not to be sold.

PE44/21 PROPOSED PURCHASE OF ALLOTMENT LAND ADJACENT TO 1 HILL CRESCENT

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the current plot holder had requested to purchase the allotment land adjacent to 1 Hill Crescent.

A Member stated that the Town Clerk had previously stated that the land which is used as allotments is statutory and only with express permission from the Secretary of State can the land be sold and then the Town Council would have to locate another piece of land to replace the sold land.

A further Member noted that there is only the tenant who has access to the land as it is adjacent to his private access to his home. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that other access routes to the plot could be arranged.

A Member then moved a motion for the land not to be sold which was seconded and this then went to a vote.

Not to sell (12 votes)
To Sell (1 vote)
Abstained (1 vote)

RECOMMENDED that following a vote the land is not to be sold.

PE45/21 **SPORTS CLUB LEASES**

The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the Council needs to arrange draft leases for the sports clubs and requested that a small working party is set up to deal with this matter.

A Member stated that there are grants available for cricket clubs and suggested that the Deputy Town Clerk advises all of the Seaham Clubs on this matter.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) Interested Members to contact the Deputy Town Clerk to arrange a small working party meeting.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk advises all of the Seaham Cricket Clubs on how to apply for a Government grant.

PE46/21 **FOOD FESTIVAL**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the organisers are looking to run the Food Festival again in the summer which would be Covid dependent.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

PE47/21 **FOODBANKS**

A Member stated that it had come to her attention that Parkside Community Centre were also running a hot meal service to people in need and suggested that the Council donates £2k to the Community Centre as this has been given to the other Community Centres in Seaham.

RECOMMENDED that a donation of £2k is paid to Parkside Community Centre to assist with their hot meal service be approved.

PE48/21 **PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

RECOMMENDED that Members note there were no press opportunities from this meeting.