

# Alice Park: Developments and Processes

## Statement from Janet Marton on behalf of residents living around Alice Park

### Council Meeting 15 January 2015

I am making this statement on behalf of residents living in and around Alice Park. We have 4 key issues:

#### 1) How the Alice Park Charity is being run

- a) Alice Park is a registered charity. Originally there had to be at least 7 trustees. Today, Bath and North East Somerset Council is the trustee, and the leader of the council acts as the sole trustee, responsible for decisions about AP.
- b) But, the lines between the affairs of the charity and those of BANES appear to have been blurred:
  - i) Information about Alice Park is held in different departments of the Council
  - ii) A sole trustee means no trustee meetings, no minutes of decisions or priorities and no transparency/accountability
  - iii) Nobody can explain variations in revenue reported to the CC.

#### 2) Failure to comply with the law

- a) The council as trustee has a **legal** duty to produce annual accounts for the Alice Park charity, and make them available to the public on request.
- b) The Council as trustee has failed to prepare these accounts. This is a major failing!
- c) We do not know how much revenue has been raised, or whether the money has been spent in accordance with the trust deed on park maintenance.
- d) This raises serious questions about competence and oversight.

#### 3) Existing facilities have been neglected

Any park visitor can see the neglect. e.g.

- i) the tennis courts
- ii) the pond
- iii) the memorial garden and flowerbeds

#### 4) Failure to consult with residents and address their concerns

- a) The proposed skate park is just the latest example of ignoring local residents.
- b) Since 2009 BANES has consistently failed to consult local residents **in advance** about developments in AP e.g.
  - i) music and events license for the café
  - ii) Gifford's Circus for a week around the August Bank Holidays
- c) The council has consistently failed to deal with the annoyance and problems caused by their decisions,

- i) regular loud music from the café
  - ii) loud noise and music from the circus
  - iii) major parking problems
  - iv) road safety problems.
- d) With a single trustee and blurred boundaries, conflicts of interest can arise when political decisions (such as the skate park) and charity decisions are both involved.

## 5) To sum up

What we would like is:

- i) A number of councillors acting as a board of trustees for Alice Park immediately
- ii) Production of accounts for the last 5 years within 1 month
- iii) Money to be found this financial year to address neglect of existing facilities.
- iv) A commitment **today** to **advance** consultation for significant developments in Alice Park