

## ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Meeting held

Thursday, 28th September, 2023, 12.00 pm

Councillor Alex Beaumont	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Deborah Collins	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Oli Henman	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Saskia Heijltjes	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Joanna Wright	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Mary LaTrobe-Bateman	- Independent Member

#### 15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### 16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

There were no apologies for absence.

#### 17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Joanna Wright declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Transition Larkhall.

#### 18 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no urgent items.

#### 19 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS

1. Tony Hickman, café proprietor – statement to confirm he wished to work with the Sub-Committee and was available to answer questions about the proposed Park in the Dark, Christmas Market and Funfair.
2. Kathy Cook, Alice Park Community Garden – a written statement was submitted in relation to the work of Alice Park Community Garden as a voluntary organisation.

#### 20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27 JULY 2023

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 21 REVIEW OF APPROACH TO EVENTS AT ALICE PARK

The Council's Director of Place Management introduced the report which set out options on how future events at Alice Park could be managed through a formal and robust process. He confirmed options included adopting Bath and North East Somerset Council's event process or the Trust managing all events using the Council's documentation as published as a template.

The following comments were made:

1. The Council's framework was useful, but it was important to allow the Trust some discretion, for example, the Trust may want to avoid events on certain days/times of the year.
2. In relation to Council-run events, a multi-disciplinary Safety Advisory Group for Events made recommendations as to whether an event should go ahead and the cost of this process was covered by the application fee. There were some restrictions set out in the Council policy and this would be circulated to members for information.
3. Members of the Sub-Committee were in agreement that the Trust should not manage all events independently and that it should work with the Council to find a solution going forward.
4. The aims and objectives of the Trust would be the overarching principles in deciding on events and each application would need to be considered against whether it would further these objectives. There was a risk of a complaint being made to the Charity Commission if the Trust did not follow its charitable objectives.
5. Consideration could be given as to whether an annual events fee for small events could be negotiated with the Council.

The Sub-Committee agreed that further consideration of the issues was needed before a decision could be taken. In terms of a way forward, it was agreed that a calendar of events be mapped out over a year with a view to agreeing which events would be supported.

**RESOLVED** that a decision on the future management of events be deferred pending further information and an updated report prepared for the next meeting.

## 22 **ALICE PARK TRUST - FINANCIAL UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2023**

The Council's Senior Finance Manager introduced the report and drew attention to the 2022/23 financial performance, 2023/24 performance to date and future budget considerations including the consideration of officer support which had not previously been included. He confirmed that a further report on service level agreements would be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Sub-Committee noted that if the Trust expected its operating deficit to materially increase over and above the £22,000 budgeted, it should make formal contact with the Council as this would need to be considered as part of the Council's budget setting process.

The Sub-Committee discussed how costs could be reduced/income increased and whether the Trust could undertake different arrangements for the maintenance of

public conveniences and also charge for the use of the car park.

The Chair advised that she was aware that the café proprietor had previously offered to take on the maintenance of the public conveniences and undertook to ask him to submit this offer in writing.

It was noted that income was modest due to the ongoing challenge of balancing the number of chargeable events with the charitable objectives of the Trust. The Chair reported that she had raised this issue with Cllr Tim Ball (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services) to seek the help of the Council in finding a solution.

**RESOLVED** – that the report be noted.

## 23 **REQUEST TO CONSIDER DOG GROOMING REQUEST**

The Chair reported that the Trust had received a request from a local business which offered a dog grooming service in the Bath area and had proposed using Alice Park as a venue for a new parlour. She confirmed the business proposed to pay for a suitable building which would be a pod/shed as well as paying rent for use of the land.

Members of the Sub-Committee agreed that the proposal did not align with the charitable objectives of the Trust which was to keep the park as a free public space for residents and space for children to play.

**RESOLVED** that the request to use Alice Park as a location for a dog grooming parlour be refused.

## 24 **PARK IN THE DARK/CHRISTMAS MARKET**

The Chair advised of two requests from the café proprietor to use the park for upcoming events.

### **A. Park in the Dark – Saturday 28 October 2023**

The Sub-Committee was advised that:

1. This event would be held in the curtilage of the café which would be open later than usual until approximately 8.30pm.
2. There would be a DJ playing music and children and adults would be encouraged to dress up for Halloween.
3. There would not be any activity within the park itself and people would not be charged for attending the event.
4. There was an original proposal for a laser show being projected onto the trees, but it was not possible to organise in time for the event.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the proposal did fit with the charitable objectives of encouraging play but asked the café proprietor to recommend the use of torches for people using the park and to encourage people to walk/cycle/use public transport to attend the event.

**RESOLVED** that the proposal to hold the Park in the Dark event on Halloween be agreed and attendees be encouraged to use torches and walk/cycle/use

public transport.

## **B. Christmas Market**

The Sub-Committee was advised that:

1. This was a proposal for 12 pop-up 6 x 3 marquees positioned either side of the pathway nearest the cafe.
2. The event would take place on the Trust's ground.
3. The market would only be open for local traders.
4. The event would be held on the first three weekends in December.

The Sub-Committee expressed concern that it did not have information about how much stallholders would be charged and how much income the Trust would receive from the event and also requested assurance in relation to public liability insurance.

Mary LaTrobe Bateman stated that, subject to the further information being satisfactory, she would be supportive of the event going ahead this year as a trial which could be reviewed to see if it would be an acceptable event to support in future years.

**RESOLVED** that a decision be deferred pending further information in relation to the arrangements for the proposed event including charging arrangements and assurances about public liability insurance.

## 25 **FUNFAIR IN THE PARK**

The Chair reported that the Trust had received a request from Albert Rogers Funfair to use Alice Park during October half term. The Sub-Committee noted that the Funfair had previously had an informal agreement with the former Chair to donate 10% of proceedings to the Alice Park Trust.

The Sub-Committee was mindful of the balance between creating an income from events and maintaining the park as a free open space for local residents and in view of this, consideration needed to be given about how many times per year it would be acceptable to allow a funfair use of the park. Concern was expressed that families visiting the park would feel pressurised to spend money on the attractions.

In relation to future charges, it was agreed that this should be in line with the Council's fees and charges rather than on a 10% of income basis and noted that the daily hire of a similar size Council-run park would be £556. It was also agreed that reassurance was needed that any company running a funfair had full public liability insurance.

**RESOLVED** that the request to use Alice Park as a location for a funfair during October half term be refused and future use be considered as part of the ongoing review of events.

## 26 **ALICE PARK PLAY AREA PROJECT**

It was noted that there had been a request for Community Infrastructure Levy

funding which was being progressed, but even if this was secured, it would not meet the total cost of new play equipment.

Following a request from the Chair for more information on how the Trust could work with the Council to take the project forward, the Director of Place Management undertook to report back to the next meeting.

27 **INDEPENDENT MEMBER UPDATE**

The Chair reported that there had been two applications in response to recent adverts and that interviews would be arranged to take place in the Guildhall with the panel consisting of herself as Chair along with Cllr Saskia Heijltjes and Cllr Oli Henman.

28 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Commemorative Bench for Nick Allen**

The Chair referred to the request at the previous meeting for a commemorative bench to be installed in the park in memory of Nick Allen (Alice Park café chef). She referred to the Council costs of £925 for a replacement bench and £1950 for a new bench but noted that the Trust could also look outside the Council to supply a memorial bench. She undertook to speak with the café proprietor about how the wishes of Nick’s family and friends could be met.

**Alice Park Noticeboard**

It was agreed that the notice board would be updated with a photograph of the Sub-Committee members and contact information.

**Painting of noticeboards**

It was noted that some of the noticeboards needed re-painting and Mary LaTrobe Bateman undertook to do this with the agreement of the Sub-Committee.

**Alice Park Community Garden – Bath in Bloom**

On behalf of the Sub-Committee, the Chair congratulated Alice Park Community Garden for being awarded a gold medal in the Bath in Bloom competition.

The meeting ended at 1.25 pm

Chair .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**