

ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held

Thursday, 18th April, 2024, 12.00 pm

Councillor Alex Beaumont	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Deborah Collins	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Joanna Wright	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Mary LaTrobe-Bateman	- Co-opted non-voting member
Bryan Johnson	- Co-opted non-voting member

66 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

67 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

68 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Oli Henman and Saskia Heijltjes.

69 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

70 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no urgent items.

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

There were no items from the public.

72 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 25 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee of 25 April 2024 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

73 VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

There were no verbal updates in addition to those covered elsewhere on the agenda.

74 URBAN TREE MAP UPDATE

Mary LaTrobe Bateman reported that she had been working with the Chair and a group of volunteers led by Fiona Bell (Bath Urban Treescape) with a view to developing a tree map for Alice Park. She updated that:

1. A local photographer would be taking photographs of the trees.
2. There would be an event on 1 May to coincide with Larkhall Festival where members of the public could choose their favourite tree.
3. By the end of the year, it was hoped that two maps would be produced, one suitable for children 7+ as well as a more detailed map for adults.
4. There was also a plan to label trees.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

75 **WARD EMPOWERMENT FUND - BENCHES AND TREES**

The Chair reported that she and Cllr Saskia Heijltjes, as local members for Lambridge, had used their Ward Empowerment Fund for Alice Park to purchase 14-15 trees and 5 picnic benches, 4 of which would be located in the play area, where there was currently no seating, and 1 near the children's cycle track. She confirmed that the costs of securing the picnic benches to prevent them from being moved or stolen had been omitted from the original costs and although she had found a local volunteer to carry out the work, an additional sum of approximately £500 was required for materials. She asked the Sub-Committee to agree to the Trust funding the additional sum to ensure the benches were secured in a concrete base and this would also include securing an existing bench which was currently unusable.

Cllr Deborah Collins acknowledged the work of the local members in securing improvements to the park but expressed reservations about a decision being taken to spend Trust money without a written report, in the interests of transparency.

It was noted that the Trust was in a difficult position due to having an operating deficit funded by the Council and therefore no budget envelope to work within and that a decision on pursuing an annual grant from the Council to give the Trust an operating budget had been deferred at the previous meeting.

As a way forward in relation to the securing of the benches, it was agreed that the Trust fund the additional cost of approximately £500 subject to a retrospective report to include officer advice.

RESOLVED that the additional costs of securing picnic benches in place at Alice Park be met by Alice Park Trust (approximately £500), subject to a retrospective written report on the issue to include officer advice.

[Following the meeting the additional cost was met by public donations and so there was no need for the retrospective report requested at the meeting.]

76 **ALICE PARK PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

The Chair reported that there had been an incident where a member of the public had been locked in the toilet with their young child. She confirmed that she had met representatives from Healthmatic and it appeared that the incident had been due to the door being damaged as a result of vandalism.

The Director of Place confirmed that he was not aware of the particular incident, but that anti-social behaviour was an ongoing challenge for local authorities in relation to the maintenance of public conveniences and that in this case the contractor had been responsive in dealing with the incident. He undertook to ensure that there would be an investigation into the incident.

The Sub-Committee requested further information on the type of incidents that had been reported to the contractor over the last 18 months. It was also agreed that public conveniences would be a standing item on the agenda for future meetings.

RESOLVED

- (1) That further information be provided to a future meeting with details of incidents logged with the Healthmatic over the last 18 months.
- (2) That public conveniences be included as a standing item on future meetings of the Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee.

77 DRAFT 2023/24 ALICE PARK TRUST OUTTURN POSITION

The Senior Finance Officer introduced the report and confirmed that final accounts would come to the Sub-Committee to be signed off.

The following comments were raised:

1. It was noted that the deficit was less than in previous years and that this had been achieved without a deterioration of services.
2. It would be useful to have financial data in relation to other years as a comparison. The Senior Finance Officer undertook to provide this for the final accounts.
3. The SLA with the parks department had been updated at the last meeting. The information in the report related to 2023/2024 and so predated the new arrangements.
4. The investment income related to the small amount of money which was given as part of the bequeathment of the park.
5. It was noted that there was no benchmarking information to enable the Trust to make a decision about whether services were value for money. It was agreed that a benchmarking report be prepared by officers prior to the Sub-Committee making a decision in relation to whether the Trust should pursue grant funding from the Council in order to secure an annual budget.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the final accounts contain data to compare with other years.
- (2) That officers prepare a benchmarking report prior to the Sub-Committee making a decision in relation to pursuing annual grant funding from Bath and North East Somerset for Alice Park Trust.

78 ACCOUNTS AND DONATIONS

The Senior Finance Officer reported that there had been a request to set up a tab on the Council's website for donations to play park improvements in addition to the current tab to pay for events. He confirmed that there was already £1077 in the account due to donations raised by Alice Park café. He asked Members of the Sub-

Committee for views on what the tab should be called and the wording of an additional narrative which he advised needed to include a disclaimer to avoid liability in repaying donations.

It was agreed that the tab would be labelled “Alice Park Play Improvement donations” and the additional narrative would be drafted and circulated for approval.

RESOLVED that an additional payment tab be included on the Council’s website “Alice Park Play Improvement Donations” and additional narrative be circulated for approval.

79 **ALICE PARK PLAY AREA UPDATE**

The Chair confirmed that the company which had been working with the Trust to draw up a blueprint had withdrawn from further involvement in the play area improvement project. She reported that she had been in contact with Rachael Webb of DBD Play who had given advice on submitting a Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) bid, although it would not be possible to have a blueprint to submit with the application.

Bryan Johnson confirmed that the neighbourhood CiL application was nearly ready to be submitted and although it was disappointing not to have the blueprint, he was confident that it was a solid application. He reported that he had been advised by officers that it was not possible to bid for the £250k to deliver phase one of the project, but instead the bid would be for £75k which would be targeted towards delivering a tangible improvement between June 2024 and June 2025 including design, groundworks and equipment. He reported that securing these improvements would be a step to securing other funding and he would also be looking into the option of strategic CiL funding.

RESOLVED that the verbal update on the Alice Park Play Area improvements be noted.

80 **ALICE PARK EVENTS/CALENDAR**

The Chair reported that an Alice Park Events Outlook calendar had been created and access given to Council members of the Sub-Committee and officers so that all agreed events could be viewed in one place.

It was agreed that the associated email account should also be used as one place for Alice Park emails and the account should be renamed Alice Park_Trust@bathnes.gov.uk

81 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Events

The Head of Service for City and Town Centre Management advised that the Events Team had been working with the Café Proprietor in relation to events being organised as part of the Larkhall Festival. She confirmed that the fun run and now been cancelled but that other activities Paint the Park/Picnic in the Park/Party in the Park would be going ahead. She reported that there had not yet been an event

management plan submitted in relation to the Fun Fair. It was agreed if this could not be resolved by 12 noon on 19 April, the event would be cancelled.

The Sub-Committee agreed to a request to include Alice Park as a venue that could be hired on the Council's Events Webpage.

The Sub-Committee reconfirmed its position on the process for events as follows:

1. Requests would be made to Alice Park Trust in the first instance.
2. A decision would be taken as to whether the Trust would manage the event independently or advise the applicant to apply to the Council's Events team (and pay the administration fee).
3. The Trust would seek to manage low risk events organised by charitable organisations, but larger scale events would be referred to the Council's Events Team.

It was noted that there had been a successful event on 11 April held by Bath Area Play Project (BAPP) and sponsored by L&C Mortgages and that this event had not gone through the Events Team as it was considered to be a low risk event, however the Sub-Committee was advised that similar events run by BAPP had been managed by the Events Team. It was agreed that the Chair would raise this issue with BAPP.

RESOLVED

1. A deadline of 19 April at 12noon be given for the Fun Fair organisers to respond with an event management plan and in the event of no plan being submitted, the event be cancelled.
2. Alice Park be included as a venue for hire on the Council's website.
3. The process for managing events be as follows:
 - a. Requests would be made to Alice Park Trust in the first instance.
 - b. A decision would be taken as to whether the Trust would manage the event independently or advise the applicant to apply to the Council's Events team (and pay the administration fee).
 - c. The Trust would seek to manage low risk events organised by charitable organisations, but larger scale events would be referred to the Council's Events Team.
4. The Chair to speak to BAPP about whether events need to be managed by the Council's Events Team.

2. Reports

The Deputy Monitoring advised a report should be produced and circulated before any key decisions were made in advance to the Sub-Committee for the proposal to be considered. This would ensure that there is clear transparency and accountability and would assist with the governance for Alice Park Trust.

3. Date of next meeting

RESOLVED that the next meeting be held on Thursday 20 June 2024 at 12pm in Alice Park.

The meeting ended at 1.43 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services