

ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held

Monday, 27th March, 2017, 4.00 pm

Councillor Rob Appleyard	-	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Michael Norton	-	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Geoff Ward	-	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Lin Patterson	-	Bath and North East Somerset Council (non-voting)
Paul Hooper	-	Independent Member (non-voting)

27 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

28 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer explained the emergency evacuation procedure.

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

Apologies for absence were received from Sujata McNab, Independent Member.

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

31 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

The Chair announced one item of urgent business which had been brought to his attention following the agenda despatch, and which required a decision before the end of next week.

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) had contacted the Council to offer family nature activities as part of their outreach work. If the Trust Sub-Committee agreed they would bring a gazebo and some simple fun activities relating to birds/nature for families to enjoy. If there was another event in the park then they could "piggy-back" onto this or could come along as a stand-alone activity in the summer holidays.

It was noted that the Larkhall Festival would be taking place during the May Day bank holiday weekend and that this could be suitable date. The park would also be busy during the school summer holidays if this was more convenient.

RESOLVED: To accept the offer from the RSPB to provide family nature activities in Alice Park.

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

(a) Petition

Anna Caron presented a petition to the Sub-Committee containing 179 signatures. The wording of the petition was:

“To decide against the construction of a skate park within the Alice Park Estate as this would change the character, ambience and family qualities of the park forever. We want active preservation of green space and trees for people of all ages to enjoy.

Why is this important?

Alice Park has very special qualities that are enjoyed by many generations. We recognise that improvement is required and support inclusive developments such as:

- Installation of all-weather perimeter track
- Upgrading of children’s play area
- Renovation of the tennis courts with one being converted into a multi-sport court for basketball, netball and badminton
- Creation of an adventure/wild play area
- Installation of an outdoor gym
- Repair and maintenance of existing facilities
- Restoring and refreshing of flower beds, ponds and gardens”

The petition would be logged and a response sent to the lead petitioner.

(b) Public Statements

The following members of the public made statements in support of the provision of a skate park in Alice Park:

Sally Wilson – Lecturer in Youth Work at Bath College
Kez Hawkins – Student Union President at Bath College
Rob Popejoy – Bath College Chaplain
Dr Bryn Jones
Niki Jewett
Otto White
Joanna Wright

33 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

(a) Page 6 – Minute Number 23 – paragraph 14 – second line – after the word “residents” add the words “and interested parties”.

(b) Page 6 – Minute Number 23 – delete resolution number 3.

34 DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN - ALICE PARK

The Sub-Committee considered a draft management plan for Alice Park. The Management Plan was written in a style that reflected the seven Green Flag principles:

- A Welcoming Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- Well Maintained and Clean
- Environmental Sustainability
- Conservation and Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing

Officers pointed out that the proposals were currently uncoded. It was noted that an annual report would be submitted to the sub-committee detailing progress and informing members of any issues that have arisen. The Plan also allowed for priorities to be set as and when funding allows and would enable the Sub-Committee to respond promptly to any future funding opportunities.

Members thanked officers for the excellent plan and noted the budget pressures that the Council was currently operating under. It was important to take a holistic approach to any improvements. Maintenance would be the main challenge.

Two areas of concern within the park were highlighted – the muddy area at the rear of the tennis court and the boggy central area which made it difficult to play team sports.

The Management Plan was a live document and would be updated as necessary. The Chairman proposed that an informal meeting take place to discuss the priorities for the park and action to be taken. It was suggested that this meeting could take place on site at Alice Park.

RESOLVED: To agree the draft management plan as set out in the report.

35 ALICE PARK USER SURVEY

Mr Tony Hickman (Lessee of the Café/Tea Chalet) had undertaken a survey of park users in the first part of 2017 and presented his findings to the Sub-Committee. The survey asked people how they would spend £100k to improve the park and set out a list of 22 different options. The results had been independently verified.

The Sub-Committee members thanked Mr Hickman for carrying out the survey which had been a worthwhile exercise.

Councillor Appleyard thanked the public speakers for their contribution to the meeting. He also thanked the Legal Services Manager for his helpful advice and clarification. He noted that the Council had identified Alice Park as the most suitable location for a skate park in the East of Bath. The Council could only proceed to construct a skate park in Alice Park with the agreement of the owners (i.e. itself

acting through the Alice Park Sub-Committee as Trustee). It was clear from the user survey that people wanted some funding to be spent on improvements to other facilities in the park.

Councillor Appleyard then proposed that the Sub-Committee request the Council to allocate £70k, of the £97k provisionally approved, to provide a skate park facility. If the Council then accepted the £30k that had been raised by community donations then this would be sufficient to provide a facility for young people up to the age of 14/15. The remaining balance of Council provisionally approved funding, totalling approximately £30k, could then be allocated to provide improvements to other facilities within the park such as children's play equipment.

The Legal Services Manager explained that because the proposal changed the way the funding would be spent this would have to be approved by the Council. The Council would require confirmation that the £30k raised via donations would be transferred to B&NES before any commitments to the skate park project were made.

Officers confirmed that the skate park facility would be governed by B&NES Council under the terms of a licence which would include maintenance costs.

Councillor Ward had some reservations about this proposal. He pointed out that the Trustees had to ensure the financial viability of the park. Alice Park was a small space used by a wide cross section of the community. He noted that some users were concerned about the provision of a skate park altering the nature of the park. He understood the arguments put forward about encouraging young people to be active to improve their health and would be in favour of a smaller skate park facility. He suggested a junior skate park costing in the region of £50-55k with the remainder of the allocated Council funding being used for other park improvements as there were a number of other facilities people would welcome. He was not in favour of a skate park that would dominate Alice Park.

Councillor Appleyard expressed concerns that a less expensive facility may not attract the community funding and that the Trustees would then forgo the £30k that had been offered.

Councillor Norton suggested that an impact assessment be undertaken to consider the effect of noise and general impact of the skate park on Alice Park as a whole prior to any development going ahead.

Paul Hooper stressed the need for any facility being provided to have the assurance of through-life funding to ensure that there were no extra maintenance costs for the Trust. He also asked members to consider the timing of the proposal as there was a possibility that further funds could be raised in the future.

The Legal Services Manager suggested that the Sub-Committee could agree to a skate park in principle subject to:

- The Council funds being made available
- The agreement of a site location
- Lifetime funding for the site from the Council
- Satisfactory licence terms

Councillor Patterson pointed out that the footprint of the skate park designs were similar regardless of how much they cost. The additional cost involved making the design more intricate and challenging rather than increasing the actual size of the facility.

Councillor Appleyard stated that the possibility of a £50k skate park had never been discussed either by the Council when allocating the funding or by the Sub-Committee. The cost mentioned had always been in the region of £100k.

Following further discussion the Chair put forward a proposal and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

- (1) To agree to the provision of a skate park in Alice Park, the size and design of which to be determined at the next meeting.
- (2) To formally ask the Council whether a proportion of the provisionally allocated funding could be reallocated and used to provide and/or improve other park facilities.
- (3) To confirm the availability of privately donated funding towards the provision of a skate park.
- (4) To request officers to carry out an impact assessment in relation to the skate park.

36 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: To hold the next Sub-Committee meeting in July on a date to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services