

## **ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held**

Monday, 25th February, 2019, 6.00 pm

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

#### **35 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **36 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Democratic Services Officer explained the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION**

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Cassidy, Team Manager, Parks and Bereavement Services.

#### **38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **39 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

There was no urgent business.

#### **40 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions or statements.

#### **41 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 22 OCTOBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2018 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

#### **42 TENNIS IN ALICE PARK**

Colin Fairweather, from U3A, who organises tennis sessions in Alice Park, made a statement regarding the poor quality of the tennis court surfaces and asked what the

Trust planned for the tennis courts in the future. He stated that U3A members paid to use the courts and had concerns regarding the dilapidated state of the facilities. He also had concerns regarding health and safety and risk of injury. He informed the Sub-Committee that the nets had been replaced and should now last about five years. He also stated that the U3A organisation may be able to make a financial contribution towards any improvement if necessary.

Graham Page stated that moss was growing on the tennis courts and felt that it would be necessary to sweep and clean the surfaces to make them less slippery. He also felt that if professionals were using the courts for coaching purposes then they should pay a higher fee for their use.

Cllr Appleyard felt that this matter should be addressed to avoid losing the revenue from tennis court users. He also queried the position with regard to the long-term future of the courts and the Lawn Tennis Association offer. He raised the possibility of using the Community Payback service to undertake some of this work.

The Chair acknowledged the concern of the tennis court users and was keen to ensure that people continued to use the facilities. He explained that the Lawn Tennis Association hoped to carry out a largescale refurbishment of the courts in the future.

RESOLVED: To agree that the Chair raise this issue with the B&NES Parks Department and to request that some remedial work be carried out to improve the surfaces of the tennis courts.

#### 43 **ALICE PARK WILDLIFE GARDEN**

The Sub-Committee considered a report submitted by Sam McGuire, a local resident, which set out proposals to create a self-sustaining wildlife area in and around the ponds of Alice Park. The work would be carried out free of charge by local volunteers and the Trust would only need to pay for materials.

Cllr Patterson welcomed the proposals as she felt that a wildlife area would contribute to improved health and wellbeing and sustainability.

Paul Hooper supported the proposal and pointed out that he had previously suggested erecting a fence in this location.

Cllr Appleyard was encouraged by the vision put forward for this area and queried whether the water pump had been installed in accordance with relevant health and safety legislation. Mr McGuire confirmed that a qualified electrician had carried out the work.

Graham Page queried whether a natural barrier such as a hedge had been considered instead of fencing. However, it was noted that this would involve higher maintenance costs.

Cllr Norton asked whether volunteers would be covered by insurance while carrying out work in the park. Mr McGuire confirmed that his company would cover volunteers under its insurance policy.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To approve the proposals set out in the report to create a wildlife area in and around the ponds of Alice Park.
- (2) To approve the following expenditure for this project:
  - (a) £300 towards the cost of the purchase of plants.
  - (b) £1,050 including VAT to provide mesh and rail fencing.
  - (c) £75 for refreshments for the volunteers.

TOTAL: £1,425

#### 44 **WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT FROM COUNCIL EVENTS TEAM**

The Sub-Committee noted that the Council Events Team was no longer able to support and administer events within Alice Park as it was not a Council park but was owned by the Trust. The final say regarding events in the park rests solely with the Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee. Council officers would, in future, be available to provide advice and support but would not actually administer the events.

Paul Hooper noted that if someone wished to hold an event in the park they would have to apply to the Trust Sub-Committee. He felt that it would be advantageous to have control of this process.

Cllr Appleyard felt that the Trust should set its own criteria for events and have a point of contact for bookings. This should be seen as an opportunity to develop events within the park and the Trust could work up a plan for this.

Lynda Deane, Senior Events Manager, confirmed that the Council would still have some involvement if there was a very large event that required a premises licence.

RESOLVED: That the Chair meets with the Events Team to discuss the process that should be followed for future events within the park.

#### 45 **UPDATES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chair presented a briefing note giving an update on actions that had taken place since the last meeting and progress with ongoing projects. A copy of the report is attached as *Appendix 1* to these minutes.

##### (a) Heritage Notice Boards

The Sub-Committee discussed the provision of heritage notice boards in the park. A further quote for this work had been obtained by the Chair which was lower than previous quotes. There was also the possibility of obtaining sponsorship amounting to £400 from the Alice Park Café, the local nursery and B&NES Council.

Cllr Patterson expressed concern about the heritage noticeboard commemorating the service of Col Ritchie as she did not feel that it was appropriate to celebrate war. She felt that military history set the wrong tone and would be incongruous in the pond area which was a setting for quiet contemplation. The Chair explained that the

information board would not celebrate war but would simply provide information regarding Col Ritchie's service which was in line with the heritage of a 1930s park.

Graham Page did not subscribe to the promotion of war but felt that this notice board would simply provide historical facts and so was supportive of the proposal.

Cllr Appleyard was keen to improve the signage within the park but did not support the inclusion of information regarding Col Ritchie as he felt this should be provided by his family.

Paul Hooper was in favour of providing the noticeboards as proposed by the Chair including company logos as appropriate and the historical facts regarding Col Ritchie.

Cllr Norton was also in favour of the proposal.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To agree to provide two notice/heritage boards in Alice Park.
- (2) To approve the quote provided by Arien Signs to carry out this work at a total cost of £3,239.
- (3) To take up the offers of sponsorship toward this project amounting to £400.

(b) Skatepark

The Chair informed the Sub-Committee that the skatepark project was now awaiting final sign off. Work was due to start at the end of April 2019 with completion scheduled for May 2019. The project would run alongside the works to join up the footpaths within the park and an order had been placed for this work.

As a result of this work being carried out the boules area would have to be moved and would also be extended. This could be funded from the £25k allocated for further park improvements. It was noted that if the terrain was extended then the park would become the premier venue for Bath Boules. The new boules area would contain 4 lanes and would be approximately 4m larger than the current area.

Paul Hooper pointed out that the skatepark was a B&NES Council project which the Alice Park Trust was allowing on its land and that the Council had appointed the contractor to carry out this work.

(c) Tennis Courts

The Chair stated that he would meet with those concerned to find out the future plans for the tennis courts in the park.

(d) Flagpole

Graham Page had organised the reinstatement of the flagpole within the park and had obtained quotes for a flag containing the Alice Park Trust logo.

RESOLVED: To approve the purchase of a flag containing the Alice Park logo at a cost of £99.31.

(e) General Maintenance

Work needed to be carried out to repair structures, benches and fixtures to an acceptable standard. Graham Page agreed to prepare a snagging list for the park.

**46 THE BIG SLEEP OUT**

Graham Page raised some concerns regarding the Big Sleep Out event that would be taking place in the park on 8 March 2019. It was confirmed that Julian House who were organising the event had the necessary insurance policies in place. Members noted that this had previously been a well-run event.

Cllr Appleyard requested that the Council arrange to come to the park early the following morning to clear the park of cardboard and other waste that had been left following the event.

**47 WILD FIT PROJECT**

The Sub-Committee considered whether to look into providing some "Wild Fit" fitness equipment within the park. Members felt that this was something they could support but that more information was required. Child safety issues would also have to be taken into consideration.

Cllr Appleyard stated that park users should be canvassed for their views but that this should not be carried out by the Café. Tony Hickman, Café Manager, took objection to comments made by Cllr Appleyard and requested that this be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

RESOLVED: To request Graham Page to bring a report to the next meeting with further details including costings.

**48 TOILETS IN ALICE PARK**

Graham Page reported that he had been made aware of people defecating in Alice Park and had contacted the police. He queried whether the current policy that the toilets were closed at certain times rather than being available for 24 hours per day was appropriate and asked members to consider whether the facilities should be free of charge. He also asked about the revenue generated from the use of the toilets and whether the Trust should benefit from these funds.

Cllr Patterson supported making the use of the facilities free of charge but pointed out that there would be a cost implication and noted that there was an existing contract in place with Healthmatic to provide this service.

Cllr Appleyard noted that Healthmatic carried out the cleaning and maintenance of the toilets and felt that a charge of 20p was acceptable. He was concerned that a free facility would lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour and lead to a less safe environment for park users.

Paul Hooper asked whether there was a commercial break-clause in the contract. He also stated that local residents had expressed concern about members of the public using the hedges as a toilet facility.

RESOLVED: To request Council officers to prepare a report on the toilets and the Healthmatic contract addressing the issues raised for consideration at the next meeting.

#### 49 **PROPOSAL TO UNDERTAKE METAL DETECTION IN ALICE PARK**

Graham Page informed the Sub-Committee that an individual had approached the Trust seeking permission to carry out a systematic metal detection survey of Alice Park. He asked members whether they wished to permit this type of activity and, if so, whether there should be a formal policy or agreement.

Members considered some information provided by the Parks Manager explaining that metal detection is not permitted in parks managed by B&NES Council.

Cllr Appleyard proposed that the Trust adopt the Council policy not to allow metal detection in Alice Park. Cllr Patterson agreed with this proposal as allowing one person to carry out metal detection could encourage others. If there was a specific reason for permitting metal detection to be carried out then this could be considered by the Trust on its merits.

RESOLVED: To adopt the B&NES Council policy not to permit metal detection in Alice Park for the following reasons:

- B&NES sites are known to be historically significant (the City of Bath was inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1987) and various sites within Bath are periodically investigated by formal archaeological groups in association with B&NES. These investigations generally do not impact on the sites and take the form of geo-phys or ground penetrating radar and yet the findings from these investigations have built up a clearer understanding of our local history.
- The uncontrolled and ad-hoc removal of artefacts would reduce the ability of formal historians/archaeologists to interpret such investigations.
- There is a risk (albeit small) of contact with underground services, debris from landslips or potentially the Bath Blitz, causing damage and possible injury.
- Members of the public or animals would not be protected from risks of falling into holes or poor reinstatement caused by the metal detectorist.

#### 50 **DELEGATED POWERS**

The Sub-Committee considered approving some delegated powers.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To agree that the Chair and one other voting member of the Alice Park Trust

Sub-Committee be authorised to sign documentation (such as contracts) on behalf of the Trust following approval by the Sub-Committee.

- (2) To delegate authority to the Chair to spend up to £500 for minor works subject to reporting any decisions made to the subsequent meeting of the Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee. Any proposals to approve expenditure should be communicated by email to all Sub-Committee members one week before a decision is to be made.

**51 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED: To hold the next meeting on Monday 10 June 2019 at 6pm.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chair .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**