

Charitable Trust Board Wednesday 29th January 2020

Public Questions and Statements

Graham Page - (Reference Agenda Item 10)

Statement

I have read the details as laid out in item 10. I note the concern by the Director of Environmental Services. Whilst the Council are concerned about its own liabilities it does not fully address the issues surrounding the governance of the Trust and makes reference to the management of the Park.

Point 1.

The management of the Park has improved significantly under the stewardship of former Councilor Geoff Ward and built on by the present chairman Councilor Rob Appleyard. However, the involvement of BANES is primarily related to service agreements i.e. Horticultural and arboreal services, playground equipment and litter collection.

The main managerial service that was provided by the council was help with Events management in the park. This service was withdrawn in February 2019.

There are many issues such as licensing arrangements for commercial users of the park, regulation of activities e.g. barbecues, use of drones that the Trust has yet to get to grips.

Point 2.

The Board discussion covered the issue of voting. The present advice restricts decision taking to elected representatives of the council. The requirement to appoint independent members but without voting rights re-enforces the that activities in the park are totally under control of BANES.

Point 3

Whilst the council have been generous in their financial support, all financing of the park is dependent on the council. As a government organization many grant giving bodies who have funds are deterred from making grants in support of the activities the park provides as they not seen as a truly independent charitable trust.

Question

Bearing the above points in mind, how far without wishing unduly reducing the support that Banes gives to the Trust, that an alternative model of governance be devised to allow both for attracting wider sources of funding and enhancing the management of the park?

Response

This is a strategic issue to be determined by the members of the Charitable Trust Board. It very much depends upon the risk appetite of the Council in how far it is prepared to go in either divesting itself of responsibility for the Trust or delegating its decision-making function. Once that strategic decision is made there is still a risk that the perception of the Trust's Independence is considered to be insufficient to attract funding from other sources.