

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

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

Monday, 7th December, 2020, 3.00 pm

Councillor Rob Appleyard (Chair)	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Paul Myers	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Joanna Wright	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Graham Page	- Independent Member

#### **8 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There was no urgent business.

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

Derek Swift and Janet Marton had both submitted questions to the sub-committee. The Chair informed the members that responses would be prepared and sent to the questioners within 5 working days of the meeting.

*(A copy of the questions and answers are attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to these minutes).*

#### **13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### **14 CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair gave an update on the following matters:

(a) Skatepark

The skatepark has been constructed but some additional work still needs to be completed, including landscaping, other cosmetic work and the provision of permanent fencing between the skatepark and the sandpit. The area is currently fenced off as the skatepark is not yet open to the public.

(b) Tennis Courts

The legal process to approve the lease has been concluded. However, due to the impact of Covid-19, the Council's tennis concession had not been tendered. The project needs to be completed within 2 years to avoid having to go back to the Charity Commission for further approval (there are around 18 months remaining).

The Chair agreed to contact the Head of Leisure and Projects Development to clarify the position regarding the tennis courts.

(c) Café Lease

The formal legal agreement has now been completed. The former leaseholder now has a new lease and both parties are happy with the new agreement. The Chair congratulated Tony Hickman and his team and thanked them for all they have done to enhance the park and to provide such an excellent facility for the local community.

(d) Community Garden

The Chair reported that a request has been received to carry out some improvements at the entrance to the community garden. Some funding has been secured for this work and there will be no cost to the Trust. Improvements will be made to the gate, and some hedging will be provided. This will improve the area and will provide a better connection to the wooden structure already in place. The use of the wooden structure by community groups could also generate a small income for the Trust. The area will remain available to the local community. The Sub-Committee supported this proposal.

The Chair agreed to ask the volunteers who run the community garden to contact the B&NES Council Parks Team to discuss future maintenance of the hedge.

(e) Independent Member Vacancy

The vacancy for an independent member of the Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee has been advertised. Interviews will shortly be arranged, and it is hoped that a new member will be appointed before the next meeting.

(f) 10-Year Plan

The Council currently gives an annual grant to the Alice Park Trust to support its running costs. However, in the current economic climate, it is important for

the Trust to become more self-sufficient so that the amount of subsidy provided by the Council can decrease over time. It was agreed that the sub-committee should set out a 10-year plan to increase revenue opportunities for the park. The agreement of a new café lease will help towards this. A rate card is in place to charge commercial users of the park a small fee when carrying out their activities. This has raised about £1,800 so far and it is hoped that this will increase in the future. Most commercial users have responded positively to this approach. It would be helpful to find someone who could take on the booking process for events in the park before the summer activities begin.

(g) Community Engagement Plan

Members supported the proposal for the Trust to develop a community engagement plan and noted that more discussion on this was required outside of a formal meeting environment. Graham Page suggested that the creation of a “Friends of Alice Park” group should also be explored.

RESOLVED: To arrange a workshop to discuss the scope and objectives for both a community engagement plan and a 10-year business plan for the Trust.

15 **ALICE PARK BUDGET 2020/21**

Paul Webb, Finance Manager, presented the budget report. He informed members that income from the tennis courts had decreased this year and that income from events was higher than budgeted for. The majority of costs were fixed. The Council had budgeted for a subsidy of £24k and this was now likely to be about £21,800 this year.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

16 **SALE OF COTTAGE NO. 2, ALICE PARK**

The Sub-Committee considered a report which provided an update on the sale of Cottage No. 2 at Alice Park. It was noted that the Sub-Committee had accepted this position in 2016 and that the Charity Commission has now closed its enquiry into this matter following receipt of the Council’s explanation.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

17 **POLICIES FOR ALICE PARK**

The Sub-Committee discussed whether policies should be put in place to cover activities such as sky lanterns and barbeques within the park.

Graham Page noted the potential areas for conflict within the park such as the use of electronically propelled vehicles and drones. He felt that some form of regulation would be helpful.

Cllr Wright suggested that the Sub-Committee could adopt the regulations currently in place for the parks managed by B&NES Council as this would provide clarity

throughout the district.

Paul Pearce, Parks Team Leader, informed members that B&NES Council does not permit barbecues within its parks unless there are facilities provided to enable them to do this safely. Drones are not allowed within the parks. He stated that it is useful to have guidelines in place but if any behaviour constitutes a public nuisance then this is a matter for the police.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To request the Parks Team Leader to circulate details of the B&NES regulations which are in place for the parks managed by the Council.
- (2) To consider this matter at the next meeting.

## 18 **MEMORIAL TREES AND BENCHES**

The Sub-Committee discussed whether they should accept the principle of memorial trees and benches within the park.

Graham Page stated that this could raise revenue for the park and also provide an opportunity to improve the benches.

Cllr Myers pointed out that there would be a cost implication, as long-term maintenance would be required. Any policy agreed should be clear about the obligation to maintain and replace the trees and benches.

Paul Pearce, Parks Team Leader, explained that B&NES Council has two approaches to memorials. People can either sponsor a bench and maintain it themselves or sponsor a bench for a 10-year period. There is a need for someone to manage the process.

Cllr Wright stated that Alice Park has a number of trees already and that there will be opportunities for tree planting elsewhere in the authority area which people could donate to.

Cllr Appleyard stated that there could be one bench with a number of memorial plaques on it.

RESOLVED: To discuss this issue further at the forthcoming workshop and bring a proposal to a future meeting.

## 19 **SURVEY OF ALICE PARK**

The Sub-Committee considered a report by Graham Page giving details of a survey he had carried out within the park. This identified areas of work that needed to be carried out to improve the appearance of the park such as ironwork, benches, markings in the car park area, signage, the gate at the entrance to London Road and repairs to the tennis hut.

Cllr Appleyard thanked Graham Page for carrying out the survey. He noted that these works would require some resources and felt that the sub-committee should

focus on the more urgent aspects in the first instance.

RESOLVED: To discuss with Council Officers the best way to carry out a refresh on the following areas within the park:

- Park entrance and car park area.
- Gate providing access to London Road to ensure that this opens and closes properly as this could be a health and safety issue.

20 **MULTI-USE GAMES WALL**

The Sub-Committee considered a proposal to install a multi-use games wall in the park. This may require some ongoing maintenance.

Graham Page felt that an impact analysis should take place before a final decision is made including how it would affect interactions with other park users.

RESOLVED: That Graham Page carry out a SWOT analysis of this proposal and bring a report to the next meeting for consideration.

The meeting ended at 4.12 pm

Chair .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**