

ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held

Thursday, 16th September, 2021, 2.00 pm

Councillor Rob Appleyard (Ch) - Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Sally Davis - Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Joanna Wright - Bath and North East Somerset Council
Holly Dabbs - Independent Member (non-voting)
Bill Shaw - Independent Member (non-voting)

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and, in particular, Holly Dabbs the new independent member.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

There were no apologies for absence.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chair drew members' attention to the recent email that had been sent by the Democratic Services Officer setting out the requirement to complete a declaration of interest form.

5 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was no urgent business.

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

Some questions had been submitted by Paul Hooper. A copy of the questions and responses were circulated to members of the sub-committee and a copy is attached as *Appendix 1* to these minutes.

Graham Page made a statement to the sub-committee regarding health and safety issues in the park, Cottage No. 2 Alice Park, and the lease arrangements for the skate park and the tennis courts. He thanked officers for their responses to the issues he had raised. A copy of the statement is attached as *Appendix 2* to these minutes.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr Page confirmed that he was raising these issues as the Independent Member on the Charitable Trust Board.

The Chair explained that there are some aspects of the lease process that still need to be finalised and that officers have been asked to progress these. He stated that he shared the concern regarding what had happened with regard to Cottage No. 2 Alice Park, but noted that in December 2020 the sub-committee had agreed to recognise the error, accept that compound interest has been paid to the Trust and noted that there was no further action that can be taken. The Charity Commission has now closed its enquiry into this matter following receipt of the Council's explanation. The matter is now considered to be closed.

Work will be carried out to relocate the gate by the café and officers will ensure that its construction complies with current health and safety guidance.

7 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 29 MARCH 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

8 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair gave an update on the following matters:

- Correspondence has been received from the Alice Park Community Garden with a request to establish a more formal arrangement for the use of the gazebo area within the park. They have requested more clarity regarding the management arrangements.
- The Chair has asked officers from the Property and Legal teams to investigate the issues raised. He recognised the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the volunteers and this matter will be considered at a future meeting. It was noted that the community garden is volunteer led by a community group which provides excellent value to the park. The sub-committee congratulated the community garden group on their success in the Bath in Bloom competition winning the overall community champion category.
- Correspondence has also been received from the leaseholder of the Alice Park Café regarding the impact on the café of renting out the gazebo area. The café also rents an additional area of land which can be used for events. It is important for arrangements to be fair to all.
- The Trust has been asked to reduce the amount of support it receives from the Council and to become more financially self-sufficient. Revenue has increased slightly over the last year. The sub-committee has aspirations for the park but does not currently have sufficient resources to achieve these. In future a quarterly budget monitor report will be brought to sub-committee meetings to enable members to keep up to speed with the financial situation of the Trust.

9 BATH AREA PLAY PROJECT INVOICE

The Chair stated that the play area has had very little improvement for some time. The Bath Area Play Project has carried out some consultation work regarding the play area and has produced a report which has been circulated to sub-committee members. They will carry out some further consultation to gain a better understanding of the type of adventure play equipment and traditional play equipment that is required.

The sub-committee has previously agreed to make improvement of the play area one of its key priorities. The Alice Park Play Area project (APPA) has been set up and is looking to carry out a major refurbishment of the play area. The project will be made up of the following strands:

- Public consultation and engagement – Cllr Joanna Wright and Holly Dabbs
- Finance and community giving – Cllr Rob Appleyard and Bill Shaw
- Equipment sourcing and overall play area plan - Cllrs Sally Davis and Rob Appleyard

Each strand will be able to co-opt people to their group (but not to the sub-committee) and will provide a short update and timelines at future meetings.

The Bath Area Play Project has submitted an invoice for the work it has carried out. It is hoped that this will be covered by Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding in due course but needs to be paid from the Alice Park Trust budget in the meantime.

RESOLVED: To agree payment of the invoice for £2k which has been submitted by the Bath Area Play Project.

10 HEALTH AND SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDING ISSUES IN ALICE PARK

The sub-committee considered a report submitted by Graham Page, Independent Member of the Charitable Trust Board. The report raised some health and safety and safeguarding issues in Alice Park. Responses to the concerns raised were provided by council officers.

Cllr Joanna Wright stated that she would be meeting youth services in the park to discuss how the Trust and the Council can work more positively with young people. She agreed to report back following the meeting.

Members noted the officer responses provided.

11 CHARITIES COMMISSION RULING - COTTAGE NO. 2, ALICE PARK

The Sub-Committee considered a report by Graham Page, Independent Member of the Charitable Trust Board, expressing concerns regarding the disposal of Cottage No. 2 Alice Park.

Members noted that this matter has been fully discussed, reparations for the sale of the cottage have been made, accounting processes adjusted to the satisfaction of the Charities Commission and the matter is now considered closed.

12 ALICE PARK LEASING ARRANGEMENTS

The Sub-Committee considered a report submitted by Graham Page, Independent Member of the Charitable Trust Board regarding the leases for the skate park and tennis courts in Alice Park.

Members noted that some elements of the leases were still to be finalised and that all necessary agreements will be reported back to the sub-committee and completed in due course.

13 WILDLIFE MEADOW

Cllr Joanna Wright informed the sub-committee that she has volunteered to plant some wildlife meadow seeds in the area adjacent to the London Road. This will encourage more greenery and will be paid for by Cllr Wright.

14 CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS TO THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Bill Shaw suggested that a member of the community garden voluntary group should be co-opted to the sub-committee.

The Chair stated that the Council is the sole corporate trustee for the Alice Park Trust and that the composition of the sub-committee is laid down by the Charitable Trust Board. It is important to ensure that nobody on the sub-committee has a vested interest and that everyone works for the benefit of the park as a whole.

A "Friends of Alice Park" organisation could be set up which could then lobby and influence the overarching sub-committee to give other organisations and members of the public a stronger voice. The Chair agreed to look into this proposal following discussions with the Legal Services Team Leader.

15 TENNIS COURTS

Bill Shaw passed on thanks from the U3A organisation for the new improved tennis court facilities in Alice Park.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held in early December.

The meeting ended at 2.45 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services