

ALICE PARK TRUST SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held

Friday, 24th November, 2023, 11.30 am

Councillor Alex Beaumont	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Deborah Collins	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Oli Henman	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Saskia Heijltjes	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Councillor Joanna Wright	- Bath and North East Somerset Council
Mary LaTrobe-Bateman	- Co-opted Member
Bryan Johnson	- Co-opted Member

29 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including new co-opted member, Bryan Johnson.

30 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

There were no apologies for absence or substitutions. The Chair asked that thanks and best wishes be passed on to Shaine Lewis, Legal Officer on his retirement from the Council.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

33 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There were no urgent items.

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

There were no items from the public.

35 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

36 ALICE PARK TREESCAPE TRAIL

The Chair reported that she had been approached by Bath Urban Treescape, a voluntary organisation, in relation to creating a trail for Alice Park and she had invited Fiona Bell to the meeting to brief the Sub-Committee on the plan.

Fiona Bell circulated a copy of the Bath Urban Treescape maps and reported that:

1. Bath Urban Treescape had produced 4 trails in the local area, information was available on the website and users could scan a QR code to get an electronic map with facts about trees.
2. Paper maps were also available, and these could be provided on request.
3. Following an offer from a company to produce free tree plaques, Bath Urban Treescape was working with B&NES tree officers to install the plaques.
4. She had emailed B&NES Councillors to ask for suggestions of other trails and Cllr Joanna Wright had responded to suggest Alice Park.

Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee members welcomed the proposal for a tree trail for Alice Park and thanked Fiona Bell for her attendance and contribution.

RESOLVED that the development of a tree trail for Alice Park be supported.

37 **TREE PLANTING - LAMBRIDGE COUNCILLOR EMPOWERMENT FUND**

The Chair reported that:

1. She and Cllr Saskia Heijltjes, as ward members for Lambridge, were looking to use part of the Ward Councillor Empowerment Fund for 2023-2026 to finance the planting of additional trees in Alice Park.
2. The ward members would be looking at providing extra seating in the park with the rest of the fund.
3. She had met with Tree Officer, Sally Crudge to discuss a long-term vision resulting in a plan being drawn up for the for sourcing, planting, and establishing of 14 trees at the cost of £2400.50.

In response to questioning, she stated that 14 was the number recommended for the park and had not been limited by budget and that sponsorship had been considered, but tree planting was a good use of the empowerment fund, and it did not preclude tree sponsorship in the future.

RESOLVED that the proposal for the additional 14 trees in Alice Park funded by the Lambridge Councillor Empowerment Fund be supported.

38 **EVENTS**

The Sub-Committee noted that this had been deferred from the previous meeting to give Members an opportunity to consider the options.

Cllr Deborah Collins commented that it would be useful to have the support and expertise of B&NES officers while maintaining some discretion in relation to fees to reduce charges where there was community benefit and increase charges where there was community disbenefit. The Director of Place Manager confirmed that it was within the gift of the Trust to maintain discretion.

In response to questioning, it was confirmed:

1. The £83 (plus VAT) application fee would be charged at the time of application to cover the costs associated with processing the application. This charge would be payable even if the Trust did not want to charge for the actual event.
2. In other parks, there was an option for a one-off administration fee to cover a number of low-key community events over a year. This option could be explored in relation to Alice Park.
3. In terms of timescales, if it was a small community event, this could be managed quite quickly through emails, but for larger events, a Safety Advisory Group for Events (SAGE) committee would meet 8 weeks before the event.
4. Officers would not recommend a dual pathway for applications through the Trust and the Council as this could cause confusion and would not achieve the Trust's aim of having a clear and robust process.

Members agreed unanimously that the option for utilising the support of the Council was preferable to the Trust independently managing its own process for events but agreed that further work was required on the detail.

RESOLVED that Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee agrees in principle to adopt the Council's events process for all future events held within the curtilage of the park (outside the café area) with further details to be agreed in consultation with the Council's events team.

39 **ALICE PARK PLAY AREA PROJECT - UPDATE**

The Head of Parks and Green Spaces introduced the report which recommended a way forward on progressing with the Alice Park play area project.

The following comments were raised:

1. The Chair reported that in early 2022 Alice Park Trust had undertaken a consultation process resulting in 300 responses and she did not see any value in undertaking a further consultation as recommended within the report.
2. Members expressed concern about the length of time it would take to apply for CIL funding with no guarantee that it would be successful.
3. It was suggested that it would be preferable to bid for CIL funding whilst at the same time identifying funds from another source, such as a corporate sponsor to pay for the sketch design (approximately £5k) in order to move the project forward.
4. It was noted that Alice Park Trust did not need to follow the Council's procurement process.

Following the comments raised, the Head of Parks and Green Spaces undertook to put together a one-page brief and speak to architects about the project on the basis that the consultation process had already been undertaken.

Bryan Johnson undertook to lead on submitting the CIL application on behalf of Alice Park Trust.

The Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee would meet informally once a month as the Alice Park Play Area Group with a view to moving the project forward.

40 **ALICE PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN LEASE UPDATE**

The Director of Place Management introduced the report which had been requested by the previous Chair of the Sub-Committee to formalise the position of the Alice Park Community Garden (APCG).

The Chair challenged some of the detail of the report in relation to the APCG volunteers as they had contacted her to advise that the wording did not accurately reflect their views. She confirmed identifying an individual to sign a lease was difficult for APCG, as a group of volunteers, in terms of liabilities.

Cllr Deborah Collins expressed the view that APCG was a valuable community asset and the amount of income to require it to be formalised was trivial. She confirmed that she was in favour of maintaining the status quo whereby APCG could operate without a lease.

Cllr Saskia Heijltjes concurred with this view and stated that APCG was an important space for children using the park.

This view was supported by other members of the Sub-Committee.

In response to a question about the best way forward in terms of events organised by the Community Garden, the Director of Place Management undertook to report back on this issue.

RESOLVED that Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee agrees not to pursue the signing of a lease with the Community Garden in view of the community benefits provided by the garden.

41 **ALICE PARK TOILETS**

The Director of Place Management introduced the report which outlined the options for the future provision of the public conveniences in Alice Park to either continue with the existing contract until 2029 or buy out of the contract.

Brian Johnson raised a number of questions in relation to the existing contract as follows:

1. What were the specific SLAs in place for evaluating Healthmatic's service effectiveness?
2. What had been Healthmatic's performance against these SLAs throughout the contract, especially in the past 12 months?
3. What were the penalties or remedies available to the council if Healthmatic fails to meet the SLAs?
4. What were Healthmatic's contractual reporting obligations regarding SLA compliance, maintenance issues, etc.?
5. How could the council request detailed information from Healthmatic about issues related to the facilities?
6. What specific maintenance and upkeep responsibilities were included in Healthmatic's remit?

It was agreed that these detailed questions be taken back to Council officers with a view to reporting back to the next meeting and that further discussion on the item be deferred until that date.

RESOLVED that a decision be deferred pending further information.

42 **REQUEST TO HOLD A CORPORATE EVENT IN ALICE PARK**

JW reported that L&C Mortgages Ltd had approached the Trust about holding a corporate event in Alice Park on Thursday 6 June 2024. The Sub-Committee noted that the company would need to apply according to the new process for events, but a decision was required on whether the proposed event was acceptable in principle.

The following comments were raised by members:

1. As this was a corporate event taking up an area of the park, there was a community disbenefit. In view of this, it would be appropriate to charge more than the standard fee for this event, £1,000 a day for the three-day period when the public use of the park would be impacted.
2. It would also be appropriate to ask the company to contribute to Bath Area Play Project, a charity which used the park to organise play events for children during the summer holiday.
3. A proportion of the money from the event should be used towards redeveloping the children's play area (not 100% as this was too restrictive in view of the Trust's financial position).
4. It was noted that the company proposed to increase consultation with local residents, and this was welcomed in view of concerns expressed by some local residents following the event held in June 2023.
5. A bond should be requested to insure against any damage to the park.

RESOLVED that Cllr Joanna Wright and Cllr Deborah Collins go back to the organiser with the views raised by Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee.

43 **PARKING/BLUE BADGE PARKING AT ALICE PARK**

In view of time restraints, it was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

44 **ALICE PARK TRUST - OPTIONS FOR FUTURE FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE**

In view of time restraints, it was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

45 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Climate Emergency

Cllr Deborah Collins suggested that the Trust consider what could be done in Alice Park to address the climate emergency. Keith Rowe, Parks Manager, undertook to report back on best practice.

Memorial Bench for Nick Allen

The Chair confirmed that a memorial bench for Nick Allen had now been installed in

Alice Park at the cost of £440 which was funded by donations.

Painting of Alice Park Notice Boards

The Sub-Committee thanked Mary LaTrobe-Bateman for painting the notice boards.

School Participation

The Chair suggested working with the two local schools, St Mark's and St Saviour's so that young people could have a voice on the Sub-Committee.

Craig Rogers Fun Fair

The Chair advised that she had been contacted by Craig Rogers Fun Fair to request a reduction in the price previously agreed to attend Park in the Dark as there had been a poor turnout due to bad weather.

Members did not agree to this request.

RESOLVED that Craig Rogers Fun Fair be asked to fulfil the charge of £556 which had been agreed in advance by all parties.

46 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that a date be identified before the end of January avoiding Mondays-Wednesdays.

The meeting ended at 1.30 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services