

Minutes of the meeting of the **RECREATION COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe, on **WEDNESDAY, 3rd SEPTEMBER 2014** at **7.35 p.m.**

PRESENT **Councillor B. Hall** (Chairman) and
Councillors E. Adam, J. Atkinson, A.M. Chandran, J.D. Clare,
Mrs. B.A. Clare, J. Clark, Mrs. M. Dalton, M.A. Dalton, R.S.
Fleming, G.C. Gray, I. Gray, Mrs. I. Hewitson, J.P. Hillary, Mrs.
W.P. Hillary, M. Iveson, Mrs. S.J. Iveson, W. Iveson, P.
Kjenstad, Mrs. V.M. Raw and C. Wheeler.

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor D.G. Atkinson.

OFFICIALS Mr. A. Bailey (Town Clerk)
Miss A. Corner (Community Neighbourhood Engagement Officer)
Mr. S. Cooper (Environment Officer)
Mrs. J. Thexton (Leisure Manager)
Mr. D. Thompson (Works Manager)
Miss C. Ryder (Senior Admin Officer)

26. **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER**

It was proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson that Standing Order 1L be suspended owing to the new legislation which allowed the filming, photographing and audio recording of Council meetings.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That Standing Order No. 1L be suspended to allow for filming, photographing and audio recording of the meeting.
- (ii) That an item be placed on the Council meeting agenda for the amendment of Standing Order 1L in line with recent changes to legislation.

27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors W. Blenkinsopp, R. Bowman, N. Collinson, Mrs. S. Haigh, D. Summers and T. Twissell.

28. **MEMBERS' DISPENSATIONS**

No applications for dispensations had been received.

29. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

30. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

A large number of members of the public were in attendance seeking to ask questions on West Park Lakes which was to be considered under agenda item No. 12 (Notice of Motion).

Mr. Martin Ashcroft spoke on behalf of the residents who were in attendance and summed up with the following statement.

“That he would implore the Members of the Recreation Committee to return the lakes to their original purpose and make them an asset to the people of the town”.

Members thanked Mr. Ashcroft for his comments which would be considered under item No. 12 and that a formal reply would be made following any decision taken on this item.

31. **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor E.M. Adam, seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. Dalton and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on the 2nd July 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32. **FESTIVAL WORKING GROUP NOTES**

Notes and recommendations from the meeting of the Festival Working Group held on the 18th August 2014 were considered:-

- (i) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman’s decision to cancel the dance display and competition be endorsed.
- (ii) The possibility of training be organised for local groups to complete the paperwork and a basic risk assessment completion course be investigated.
- (iii) The notes from the meeting of Councillors R.S. Fleming, B. Hall, Town Clerk and Leisure and Environment Assistant be accepted.

It was proposed by Councillor M.A. Dalton, seconded by Councillor J. Atkinson and

RESOLVED - it be recommended that:-

- (i) The notes and recommendations of the meeting be agreed.
- (ii) The next meeting of the Festival Working Group would be held on Monday, 6th October 2014 at 4 p.m.

33. **OAKLEAF GOLF COMPLEX REPORT**

The Town Clerk and Golf Professional had submitted their report for the 9 weeks ended 24th August 2014. The report gave comparisons of income from the corresponding periods in 2013 and 2012.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the report be received.

34. **OAKLEAF SPORTS COMPLEX – USAGE COMPARISON**

The Leisure Manager submitted an income report for the 9 weeks ended 24th August 2014. The report compared usage figures and income from the same period in 2013.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended that the report be received.

35. **OUTSIDE EVENTS**

The Leisure and Environment Assistant reported on the recent Great Aycliffe Show and the Leisure Manager gave her report on the Fun in the Parks which had taken place over the school summer holidays.

It was reported that the Vintage Car and Model Show had been cancelled due to the organiser's ill health.

The firework display meeting and site visit by Durham County Safety Advisory Group (SAG) would be held on the 24th September 2014 to finalise the planning of the event.

It was being proposed that the firework poster competition be cancelled for 2014 due to lack of response and timing of the presentations.

RESOLVED - that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the Firework Poster Competition be organised for 2014 and that further consideration is given to the date of the presentation to the winners.

36. **SQUASH COURTS – OAKLEAF SPORTS COMPLEX**

The Leisure Manager submitted a report seeking clarification on the position of the use of squash courts during Council run coaching courses at the Sports Complex.

At the present time all courts are booked out for children's coaching sessions with no adults being able to book separate courts. This has been the practice for a number of years.

RESOLVED – that the existing Council policy for the booking of the squash courts be reasserted.

37. **SENIOR CITIZENS' EXCURSIONS**

The Leisure and Environment Officer submitted a report requesting members to consider the 2015 Senior Citizens Excursions and to consider the venues and the format of the trips.

The report set out the results of the Customer Survey forms.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That a list of venues be presented to the next Recreation Committee meeting for consideration.
- (iii) That the list take into account the Customer Survey results and that the top venues from the suggested list are included for next year.

38. **NOTICE OF MOTION**

The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor A.M. Chandran and seconded by Councillor E.M. Adam:-

The Council affirms that its policy on West Park is as follows:-

- (i) That this Park is to be viewed as a Recreation Amenity first and foremost for use and enjoyment by the general public. Wildlife are a welcome addition but not the primary purpose of the Park. Its primary purpose is to serve the public as an amenity open space, with play equipment and other recreational use, similar to the Parks at Woodham, Simpasture, Moore Lane, St Oswalds, Byerly Park, Horndale and Town Park.
- (ii) The West Park Lakes are to be managed for recreational purposes and kept as clean and clear as is possible from Weed/Algae and other detritus, this to be done within budgeted costs unless otherwise agreed by the Full Council.
- (iii) That this Council supports and maintains a balance between the parks green open space and the existing flora and fauna.
- (iv) This Council believes that Moore Lane Eco Centre, Aycliffe Nature Park, School Aycliffe Wetlands area, Byerly Park Nature reserve, Aycliffe Angling Pond, Cobblers Hall Plantation, North & South Agnew Plantations and the County Council lake facility at Ropemoor, within the Parish, already more than adequately facilitate Wildlife, Aquatic pond life and bio diversity.
- (v) That this Council authorises the Volunteers of the Friends of West Park to continue to keep the lakes clear of Weed/Algae and other detritus and to continue to consult and work in partnership with the Council and appropriate staff at all times.
- (iv) That in consultation with the Chair of Recreation and Policy and Resources Committees, Officers may seek consultant/expert advice, at a reasonable cost, on the continued maintenance of the lakes related to Water flow and their cleaning.

The following amendments to the Motion were proposed by Councillor R.S. Fleming and seconded by Councillor C. Wheeler:-

That paragraph (i) of the Motion be retained and that the following amendments be made to the subsequent proposals of the motion as follows:-

- (a) That Officers continue to seek alternative ways of dredging the lake.
- (b) That an advisor or advisors be engaged to comment on the hydrology and ecology of the lakes.
- (c) That the Council reaffirm its policy approved at the Council meeting on the 7th September 2011 regarding the maintenance and cleaning of the lakes, as the Officer's report item 3.1.
- (d) That the Council endorses the action of the Town Clerk asking the Friends of West Park to stop cleaning pond weed from the lakes unless specifically requested by the Environment Officer under his supervision.

Voting took place on the amendment to the Notice of Motion which was unanimously accepted.

Voting then took place on the substantive Motion which was unanimously accepted.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:-

- (i) That this Park is to be viewed as a Recreation Amenity first and foremost for use and enjoyment by the general public. Wildlife are a welcome addition but not the primary purpose of the Park. Its primary purpose is to serve the public as an amenity open space, with play equipment and other recreational use, similar to the Parks at Woodham, Simpasture, Moore Lane, St Oswalds, Byerly Park, Horndale and Town Park.
- (ii) That Officers continue to seek alternative ways of dredging the lake.
- (iii) That an advisor or advisors be engaged to comment on the hydrology and ecology of the lakes.
- (iv) That the Council reaffirm its policy approved at the Council meeting on the 7th September 2011 regarding the maintenance and cleaning of the lakes, as the Officer's report item 3.1.
- (v) That the Council endorses the action of the Town Clerk asking the Friends of West Park to stop cleaning pond weed from the lakes unless specifically requested by the Environment Officer under his supervision.

39. **HORNDALE MUGA**

The Works Manager had submitted an update report on the Multi Use Games Area at Horndale Park which has now been completed with the official opening ceremony taking place on Thursday, 2nd October.

RESOLVED – that the information be received.

40. **SMOKE FREE PLAY PARKS CONSULTATION**

Information had been received via. a Durham County Council consultation on a policy to encourage people not to smoke in play parks.

RESOLVED – that it be recommended:

- (i) That this Council would fully support Durham County Council with the introduction of a voluntary code making play areas smoke-free.
- (ii) That this Council agrees to implement the voluntary code in our own play areas.

41. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs. V. Raw, seconded by Councillor M. Iveson and

RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it was, in the opinion of the Council, advisable that the public and press be excluded from the meeting.

42. **GOLF WORKING GROUP NOTES**

Notes and recommendations from the meeting of the Golf Working Group held on the 14th July 2014 were considered.

It was proposed by Councillor J.P. Hillary, seconded by Councillor B. Hall and

RESOLVED – that it recommended:-

- (i) That an item be placed on the next Policy and Resources Committee agenda for a decision to be made.
- (ii) That the nature of the matter being contractual that the consideration be given following the appropriate motion to exclude press and public from that part of the agenda.

CHAIRMAN.