

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS &
CEMETERY COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 14th JULY 2014

PRESENT: COUN. R KYLE (CHAIR)

Mesdames: C Baty, S Simpson, L Wood,
V Watson & M Milsom

Messrs: D Milsom, C Watkins, C J Metcalfe,
C Robbins, W M Jeffrey, J Alvey,
L Cook, G Cowie, D Sillito, A Watson
& S Miles

**MEMBERS WERE REMINDED OF THE NEED TO
DISCLOSE ANY INTEREST, PREJUDICIAL OR PERSONAL,
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT.**

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors;- K Liddell
(work commitments).

RECOMMENDED that the apologies submitted be accepted.

9. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, a copy of which had
been circulated to each Member, were approved.

10. PROGRESS REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL
SUPERVISOR

The Horticultural Supervisor's progress report had been
circulated to all Members, consideration was given to the
following headings:-

a). General overview- (Shotton Hall)

Additional planting of the front areas of Shotton Hall entrance had meant that an additional 500 no. plants had been utilised which would otherwise had been surplus to requirements. This would complement the other 2,500 used in the over-grown herbaceous beds which would be replanted in October. This was in conjunction with improving the photographic areas and creating points of interest, which for marketing purposes could increase the hire potential of Shotton Hall for summer events.

The Supervisor had also devised an area based plan which would attempt to improve the possibility of year round colour within the grounds of Shotton Hall, particularly in the late Winter/early Spring which again could see an increase in early weddings and other functions. Estimates had been requested for the refurbishment/relocation of the ornamental bridge at the front of Shotton Hall, the bridge could possibly be moved closer to the lake area and creation of spring flowering bulb area (blue/green) to resemble a waterway.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

b). General Overview- (Woodhouse Park)

There had been several instances of damage within the toddlers play area which had resulted in equipment having to be cordoned off prior to repair, these included the top slide area (play surfacing), horse springer (play surfacing) as well as instances of children removing parts of the equipment. Additional checks had been sanctioned by the Supervisor for staff to follow and additional checks were to be made by the Parks Development Officer on a morning basis.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

c). Family Fun Days

Members were advised of the following dates which had been organised by the Parks Department and assisted by Durham County Council (One point Hub). The dates were as follows; Friday 25th July 2014 and Friday 15th August, both events would run from 11.00am to 4.00pm and include the following- Free Kiddies rides, Childrens entertainers, football kick about, crazy golf, trampolines and face painting and skate/BMX competitions.

Members made reference that these Town Council activities had not been promoted in Durham County Council’s “Summer Days” leaflet which had been distributed free of charge to the public. The Supervisor advised that there had been cross over of deadlines so had missed this opportunity, but would ensure whenever possible the Town Council events would be included next year in liaison with Durham County Council; however, there were posters and leaflets being distributed locally.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

d). General Overview - (Sports Issues)

Members had been advised of a letter sent to all team secretaries in relation to the standards required for the seasonal hire of pitches once all fees had been paid and the allocation of pitches had been completed, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member for their information.

To date, two local Sunday League teams allocated at Lowhills Road had either folded or gone elsewhere and this had meant that the back pitch at Eden Lane (Pitch 2) could now be used exclusively for the four youth teams who played in the Russell Foster league (9x9). This would also mean that unauthorised play/training on Pitch 1 (Newtown) would hopefully be eradicated for the forthcoming season. The Horticultural Supervisor commented that it was likely there would be some feedback from the Teams on these changes and he asked for Council’s support with his actions.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council fully support the Horticultural Supervisor with these changes in pitch allocations.

e). General Overview - (Roundabout Dur 200 Essington Way/Surtees Rd)

A site meeting had been held on the above roundabout in order to alleviate several problems which had manifested since the introduction of a sponsorship scheme of roundabouts within Peterlee and surrounding areas.

The sponsorship scheme itself was designed to generate income from monies received from local businesses to be re-invested into

tackling the number of potholes within Peterlee and other areas, therefore the scheme was implemented and organised by Durham County Council Highways Dept.

A second potential problem in relation to this matter related to a historical Service Level Agreement which related to a reciprocal arrangement between Peterlee Town Council and the former Easington County Council, a copy of which had been circulated to Members. This agreement fell under the remit of Durham County Council's Clean Green Team and impacted upon the number of plants purchased for roundabouts, provision/emptying of dog bins, grass cutting within the Dene Parks and other miscellaneous projects.

After a meeting with several departments the following had been agreed;-

- Removal and re-positioning of one sponsorship sign (by contractors),
- Meeting to further discuss and report back to Members the formalisation of an updated Service Level Agreement in relation to roundabouts/bedding displays & dene parks maintenance from 2014 onward,
- Updated risk assessments to incorporate roundabouts maintenance,
- Discussions for feasibility of Peterlee Town having a local flowerbed sponsorship scheme,
- Possible assistance from Durham County Council to provide winter bedding for roundabout schemes.

RECOMMENDED that the above information, be noted and further meetings be held with the Supervisor, DCC Clean Green Team Officers, Highways Dept and DCC Health and Safety Unit (Advisory), in order to determine the benefits to Peterlee Town Council of continuing to be in a joint management programme for roundabout/bedding sites and Dene Parks areas.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED the Horticultural Supervisor then report back to Council with his suggestions on which areas and where this SLA should be re-negotiated to give Members the opportunity to have input on what the Town Council would provide.

f). Woodhouse Park (Catch 22 Project)

With the demise of the youth workers projects who were attached to Woodhouse Park in order to coordinate basic activities such as football training, skateboard competitions etc, the Supervisor had made investigations into the supply of a group of trainees to carry on with outstanding day to day tasks associated with Woodhouse Park and secondly to maintain a daily presence of personnel within the Park itself, in order to boost public confidence amongst its regular users.

A large area of Woodhouse Park had now been designated as recreational use, i.e. grassed areas for sport and open play and maintenance consisted of regular repetitive tasks which could be achieved with a limited amount of skills and these skills could be taught relatively quickly depending on the trainer's input and interpersonal skills (Parks Development Officer/ Catch 22 Managers as support.) The Horticultural Supervisor confirmed this would be at no cost to the Town Council and Catch 22 were covered by their own health and safety and insurance.

The Horticultural Supervisor intended to second the Parks Development Officer to work with an organisation called Catch - 22 which was a social business who had a base within Peterlee Town Centre (18 Upper Chare) for several hours per week in order to facilitate a works program for park related mini projects.

RECOMMENDED that a trial period of one year (August 2014 to August 2015) be agreed for the implementation of this scheme (Catch 22).

FURTHER RECOMMENDED that the Parks Development Officer ensure a work plan and work assessment programme for trainees was implemented, in addition to providing Members with up to date relevant reports.

12. GARDEN COMPETITION

The Supervisor advised Members that the number of entrants for this year's Garden Competition had significantly increased from 12 no. to 24 no. all of which were of a high standard.

The Supervisor expressed his thanks to the Receptionist at the Pavilion for her help in generating interest and attracting additional entrants with this event.

The Supervisor advised Members that he hoped to try and get the National Garden Scheme involved with next year's Garden Competition.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs B Taylor,**
- ii) representatives from the National Garden Scheme be invited to the Garden Competition Presentation afternoon**

13. HAMPSHIRE PLACE PLAY AREA – PROBLEMS

A local Member advised the Supervisor and Members of the increased problems with older youths at the above play area, which the Police and wardens were aware of the current situation. Constant vandalism to the play equipment and fires were being lit after the Park has been closed.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that a local resident, Mr Walker had asked to come along to a meeting on this matter and he was coming along to the Council meeting.

RECOMMENDED a press release be issued informing the public that this constant vandalism of the play areas within Peterlee was costing a vast amount of money, which in turn was at the cost of the Council Tax payer of Peterlee.

14. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE PASSED THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PERSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1961 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

15. BREWERY TENDERS

A copy of the Report of the Facilities Manager had been circulated to Members for consideration.

Councillor G Cowie advised that he was not in agreement with the recommendation in the Facilities Manager's Report, and asked that a copy of the Deputy Town Clerk's notes from the meetings held by the Sub-Committee, be circulated to all Members of the Council for their further consideration.

RECOMMENDED that this item be deferred to the Full Council Meeting.