

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS &
CEMETERY COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 13th OCTOBER 2014

PRESENT: COUN R KYLE (CHAIR)

Mesdames: L Wood, C Baty, K Liddell, M Milsom
& S Simpson

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

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

46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Cowie (poorly).

RECOMMENDED that the apologies submitted be accepted.

47. WOODHOUSE PARK – SKATEPARK PROJECT

The Chairman welcomed Chloe Magee and Cliffy Remmer from Groundwork North East & Cumbria and youngsters from the Skatepark User Group, Michael Winn and Chris Mellor to the meeting who gave a verbal presentation on their current and proposed projects. A copy of the Presentation had been circulated to Members at the meeting for their information. During the presentation Members asked questions and gave feedback to the Group.

Members thanked the Group for their Presentation and assured them of the Council's support and asked them to keep up their good work.

Councillor J Alvey advised that he was to attend a meeting with the AAP that coming Friday 17th October 2014 regarding allocating monies to this project from the Neighbourhood Budget Fund. However, due to the lengthy procedures to release monies once the grants had been approved it was requested would the Town Council, in principle, finance the project until the funds were released by the County Council. There was also a direct request made by the Group for a grant of £380.00 towards a graffiti project.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) **the Town Council make a financial contribution in the sum of £380.00 for a graffiti artist to make over the Skate Park,**
- ii) **further consideration be given at the Council Meeting to the funding of this project over the next two years when the outcome the meeting to be held on the 17th October 2014 should be known.**

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

49. PARKS ANNUAL INSPECTION – FRIDAY 17TH OCTOBER
RECOMMENDED that Members make a note in their diary of this date and the transport details the Deputy Town Clerk had forwarded to those Members attending.

50. PROGRESS REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR

The progress report was considered under the following headings:-

- i) Maintenance Issues Overview
Winter bedding planting would commence week commencing 15th October and would consist of two deliveries of 15,000 plants in total.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

- ii) Shotton Hall
Work had been completed on the thinning out of the mirror image herbaceous perennial beds within Shotton Hall Grounds, prior to replanting other varieties of plant materials to extend the flowering periods of the existing beds (Oct-Nov). It was hoped

that this measure may increase the potential for winter weddings and events by extending the colour within the beds for photographic purposes.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

iii) Extended Tree Survey

An additional tree survey and bat survey had been completed to incorporate trees to the rear of Shotton Hall pond which had been deemed as a potential “risk area” in relation to the amount of overhanging trees around adjoining properties and the type of ground the trees were currently situated in, soft and in areas “boggy”. This survey would be the pre-cursor which would be required to be submitted to Durham County Council (Planning Section) in order to overcome the Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation area status. He reported there was work required to the rear of the lake area with semi rotten trees identified and included in the arbour report as category 1. Members were advised of the increase in the costs of tree maintenance, surveys and services budget in order to extend surveys to other areas and the Officer would report back further on the costs of the works that were required.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

iv) Wrought Iron bridge(Shotton Hall)

Members were requested to note the refurbishment and re-siting of the ornamental bridge within the grounds of Shotton Hall and the metal fabrication company would be preparing estimates to take from site, shot blast clean and paint the structure and to add some additional decorative features.

A Member expressed his concerns against any significant changes to the original bridge, as this was a replica of a bridge in Castle Eden Dene and was an award winner at the National Gateshead Garden Festival and was part of Peterlee’s heritage.

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor submit a design with costings for Member’s consideration.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED once the project was complete, that a plaque be erected explaining the significance of this bridge.

v) Maintenance Issues Overview (By area continued)

Woodhouse Park have had three metal benches supplied but fitted “in house” onto a two metre concrete raft to the Western side of the Skate Park area within Woodhouse Park.

The exercise had been completed after completion of consultation with the Woodhouse Have Independent Persons Group (WHIP) and other users and was enthusiastically received by the regular users. Unfortunately the fitting was held up by minor vandalism to the concrete raft. Information regarding the vandalism was given to Parks staff by a witness and incident sheets and information had been passed onto the Police (Beat Unit) for further investigation. The vandalism had been rectified by re floating of the damaged area and notices erected that if a repeat incident happened the Skate park would be closed indefinitely.

Upon return from the weekend, no further damage had been reported and volunteers from the WHIP group continued to patrol the area.

Woodhouse Park had also had a metal 1.5m free standing sign erected at the Balliol Close entrance which would enable the Parks staff to regularly update members of the public on events, revised opening times etc. the sign was ornate and heavy duty and was accessible via a padlocked door to the rear of the sign.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

vi) Woodhouse Park (Maintenance Plan)

The Parks Development Officer had been tasked to plan and indicate a series of horticultural tasks to improve and/or reduce planting within all areas of Woodhouse Park. These could include the potential of removal of large shrub rose beds around the anniversary tree planting scheme.

All works would be submitted to Members via the Woodhouse Park Maintenance Plan and would be presented over the winter months for Member’s considerations.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

vii) Signage for Play Areas

Members were requested to approve the information provided to improve the existing signage which was currently situated within all play areas and also at Woodhouse Park. It was recommended that signage be reduced from two metal posted signs, down to one per play area. This would be situated and attached to single or double maintenance gates within each play area, the exception being Woodhouse Park, which would decrease from five down to four but would be larger in size.

RECOMMENDED each sign include:-

- **The name of play area and post code;**
- **Age range identified and disclaimer regarding to be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times;**
- **Closing times, to be followed by “or Dusk” whichever is sooner;**
- **To advise any person found causing damage may be prosecuted, to make a report to 101 or (0191) 5182295 (24hr/answerphone);**
- **Peterlee Town Council accepts no liability for loss or damage to property belonging to a third party;**
- **To include warning symbol images with the wording “Not Allowed” of the following - Dogs (with the exception of Guide Dogs), alcohol, cigarettes, syringes, Fires, Skateboards, Skates, Bicycles.**
- **In relation to Woodhouse Park all the above to apply but to include exemptions for the following - Skate-Boards, Skates, Bicycles.**

FURTHER RECOMMENDED signage in other Town Council areas be progressed.

viii) Sports Pitches

The following works had been completed on the sports fields, aeration of football/Rugby pitches, scarifying of Newtown and Helford Rugby pitch (prevents “waterlogging”) Autumn fertilising of cricket, bowling greens and Newtown pitch.

The new tractor and “snake” grass cutting systems were continuing to create a faster cutting regime, but still maintained a high standard of finish. A number of approvals had been

expressed by teams from outside of Peterlee who were impressed by the Parks Department's standards.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

viii) Estates Management Issues

In order to satisfy insurance queries, public concerns over flooding (flash flooding etc.) the Supervisor had implemented a formal check system combined with a pro-active maintenance plan for the current numbers of drainage gulleys together with roles/responsibilities information.

Copies of the Maintenance schedule for Drainage Gullies, Health & Safety Inspection Checklist- External sites had been circulated to Members, for their information.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

51. REPORT OF AN OFFICER MEETING – HABITAT REGULATION ASSESSMENT – LAND AT EDEN LANE

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Members that she and the Horticultural Supervisor had met with Officers of the County Council which was a start of communication about the area at Eden Lane, identified as a really useful multi function open space which could be developed further, with the support of potential grant funding. This would be a benefit to the area and provide linkage.

Members were concerned that whilst they understood part of this initiative may include encouraging people to walk dogs nearer to their homes, it was dictating and restricting the use of the coastal walks and areas, which they were against.

RECOMMENDED progress be awaited and Members be kept fully advised.

52. FUNDING BID – AWARDS FOR ALL

The Horticultural Supervisor advised that an email with the outcome of the decision for a bid that had been submitted for funding for five pieces of outside exercise equipment at Helford Road. If this bid was

successful, then the Town Council could submit other bids for other areas of the Town.

RECOMMENDED that Members be kept updated with progress.

53. PROPOSED STOPPING UP OF HIGHWAYS AT:-

- a) Dunelm Walk
- b) Torver Close
- c) Brandlings Way
- d) Matterdale & Braithwaite Road
- e) Newark Close
- f) Tamar & Arun Close
- g) Westcott Road
- h) The Village, Old Shotton
- i) Helford Road
- j) Avon Road

Members were given details of the meeting held on 10th October 2014 where all of the orders had been considered in detail.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council's concerns be expressed to Durham County Council, in relation to the Order relating to Avon Road, Peterlee, only, and plenary powers be granted for the Deputy Town Clerk to advise Durham County Council immediately.

54. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS & 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.

55. GLOBAL SPORT – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

A copy of the Service Level Agreement for Global Sport had been circulated to each Member for their consideration.

RECOMMENDED that this Service Level Agreement be revised in liaison with the Deputy Town Clerk, Horticultural Supervisor, Sports Development Officer and Members who were involved with this project initially and this be re submitted for Member's consideration.

56. PLAY AREAS – REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR

(i) Replacement Play Parts

The Supervisor had identified items which were required to the play equipment up to standard or where indicated to replace completely including refurbishment of play surfacing. The Supervisor had obtained costings for Members consideration contained in the report.

RECOMMENDED that these identified areas be viewed at the annual Parks Inspection to be held on Friday 17th October, and be further considered at the Council Meeting.

(ii) Playground Maintenance & Inspection Training Course - Saltwell Park Gateshead - 29th & 30th October 2014 - Option of RPII Inspector Qualification.

Members gave consideration to the above training course being attended by the Horticultural Supervisor plus one other to RPII level (endorse by Ofqual) on this course.

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor plus another Parks & Cemetery operative attend this training course at a cost of £400.00 per person plus VAT.

(iii) NVQ Level 2

RECOMMENDED that twelve Parks Department personnel be signed up to a NVQ Level 2 to be fast-tracked over the winter months, to completed by Spring 2015, at no cost to the Town Council with Sunderland College.