



Devizes Town Council

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RECREATION AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Recreation & Properties Committee at the following, place and date.

Date: 2 MARCH 2010

Time: Immediately following the Planning Committee Meeting

Venue: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Devizes

Enquiries: 01380 722160

Councillors: Mrs Burton Callow Mrs S Evans
Gudgeon Hopkins Parsons
Smith A R Taylor Mrs Winchcombe

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the minutes of the meetings held on the 21 January 2010, which have been circulated with the agenda.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

To receive any disclosure(s) of interest by a Councillor or an officer in matters to be considered at this meeting, in accordance with provisions of Sections 94 or 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the National Code of Local Government Conduct.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

At the Chairman's discretion, members of the public attending the meeting will be allowed to ask questions, make a statement or address the Council upon a matter of concern to that person which is relevant to the Council. A time limit of 5 minutes per person will be permitted, but this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion and a maximum period of 20 minutes has been allocated by the Council for this item of business

5. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES INCOME FIGURES

Income figures for the Council's venues for the period April 2009 to January 2010 issued alongside this agenda (doc 5/1-5/2).

6. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION FEEDBACK

Venues Satisfaction Feedback is at 100% for January, although some events had to be cancelled due to the weather. Graph issued alongside this agenda doc 6/1.

7. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – VENUES OCCUPANCY FIGURES & MARKET INFORMATION

Bookings and income for February are up on the same period last year and we are on target for the year 2009-2010 in spite of the general financial situation. Wedding bookings for 2010 are down by a total of 9 compared with last year, although we are doing more wedding ceremonies alone. We assume this is a reflection of the recession overall and do not expect the situation to change in the short term. We are looking at different marketing options to promote venues and increase the room usage.

8. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – BENCHES ON THE GREEN

The working party has approved the siting of an additional bench on the Small Green near the play area. This will face the play area and the path along the Crammer. When the weather improves a hard standing will be laid and the bench put in place.

Two further benches will be placed along the path on the large Green. Two more litterbins will also be provided on the large green.

9. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – PLAY AREA ON THE GREEN

Being forced the opposite way damaged the gate opening onto the path from the play area. Bolts had been removed and this had to be repaired as it was in a dangerous condition.

The installers of the play equipment have been consulted again about the feasibility of reversing the gate that opens onto the path. A year ago when the play area was opened, we were told that the design was based on a health and safety recommendations and that the gates should open outwards to allow children to "escape" if being pursued. Following several requests, it has now been decided that one gate could open inwards and still comply with health and safety recommendations. This would entail removal and reversal of the gate and we are awaiting a quotation for the work.

A complaint was received from a member of the public about the condition of the path due to mud at the gateway. This was inspected and both gateways have now been paved.

We are still suffering from excess litter, including glass, in and around the play area. The Parks and Open Spaces Team clear this every morning and we also have a current arrangement with the Community Payback Team who clean up once a month as well as do other necessary tasks. From April we will employ additional casual staff.

Any damage is reported to the police as soon as it is discovered. Recently this has been every week.

10. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – USE OF TOWN HALL FOR NATIONAL TOURISM DAY

National Tourism Week in Devizes commences on 15 March.

Devizes Visitors Centre has asked that the Town Hall could be “open” from 10am – 3pm on that day (Monday) to the public. This has been agreed on condition that rooms are available and presentable – i.e. not being used for storage and staff are on hand to talk to the public.

Points of particular interest are the Insignia Display Cabinet in the foyer, the Woodcuts Gallery, The Cheese Hall, the Vestibule with the Mayor’s Gallery and the Assembly Room.

The old “lock-up” in the cellar will also be open on that day by special prior arrangement. It has been prepared with special lighting, sound effects and a resident miscreant to add to the atmosphere. This room will now be available for school groups to visit by appointment. It has also been listed as a possible location for film and television.

11. REPORT FOR INFORMATION – HILLWORTH PARK PROJECT

Following the announcement of the successful grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund of £1.2 million, officers can also advise that a grant application to Viridor, Landfill Tax Credits, for £30,000 is currently being considered and it is hoped that further news will be available at the meeting.

Additional bids for funding are being prepared to make up any shortfall, which is currently being underwritten by the Town Council and to develop added value.

Following the award of the Parks for People funding, a significant amount of work has been undertaken preparing the preliminary documentation to give the Council permission to start the project.

Once the consultant project team have been appointed, which is the subject of a separate report, the process of developing the tender documentation for the main contract will be undertaken.

In addition, a brief to tender for the project management of the scheme is also being prepared by officers. It was anticipated that this would be part of the consultant project team's brief, however, the HLF have advised that they would prefer us to let this as a separate contract. Therefore, the work to affect this is currently being undertaken.

The land, in the ownership of Sarsen Housing Association, adjacent to the Hillworth Park entrance, has been secured. A temporary fence has been erected on the new line of the boundary and work will be undertaken to tidy up the area and remove the tree stumps etc. A permanent boundary wall will be part of the main construction works.

Work is being undertaken to find an alternative compound to relocate the parks team whilst the park is unavailable to them. A number of options are being considered.

It is anticipated that work will commence July 2010, although until the main contractor is appointed it is not possible to be more accurate.

12. REPORT FOR DECISION – CRAMMER WALL

Recommendation

To decide if the Council will undertake work on the Crammer during the repair of the St James Wall.

Purpose of the Report

To decide if the Town Council would undertake work during the repairs to the St James Crammer Wall.

Background

The PCC at St James Church have now submitted plans and costs for the repair of the Crammer wall, which retains the Churchyard. Once this work is completed, there will be an opportunity for the Town Council to remove the silt which has settled adjacent to the wall, and which during hot weather rises above the water level causing an unpleasant stench in the area. The Council has funding for this work, which is the balance of the budget from the repairs of the Council's section of wall.

In the past there have been requests from the Church Council to financially support the repair and therefore by undertaking the work simultaneously with the repair the Town Council could support the project by paying for damming.

Based on the costs incurred during the Town Councils repair, the cost of silt removal including the damming will be in the region of £18,000, however should members decide to undertake this work simultaneously with the Church more detailed costs will be obtained.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide if they wish to support St James Church by undertaking work simultaneously with the repairs to the Crammer Wall.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Budget provision is available for this work through an earmarked reserved held following the completion of the repairs to the Council's section of wall.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

The 1936 Public Health Act s 260 give the council the power to deal with ponds.

Environmental Implications

The silt can become an environmental hazard and therefore an analysis will need to be undertaken and appropriate licensed tip used for its disposal.

Risk Assessment

There will need to be a full and detailed risk assessment for the project which will be undertaken by the appointed contractor. Should the Council decide not to undertake this work, then the will be the risk of ongoing complaints from local residents and possibly environmental health officers.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

13. REPORT FOR DECISION – COMMUNITY BUILDING - WINDSOR DRIVE

Recommendation

The committee decides if it wants to make any changes to the decision it made in respect of the use of the Community Building at Windsor Drive allotment site.

Purpose of the Report

To review the decision made with regard the to use of the Windsor Drive Community Building.

Background

At its meeting in September 2009, it was resolved that it would uphold its decision to allow the allotment association to make use of the Community Building on the Windsor Drive site, but its cleaning would also be the responsibility of the Allotment Association.

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The issues of the use of the community building by allotment holders had been a difficult one as some non association member were excluded from using the building as the allotment association was not prepared to use its fund to pay and take responsibly for action caused by non members. It was agreed that this decision would be reviewed in six months.

Since that meeting the allotment association has held its own AGM and at that meeting it was put forward and agreed that non-members could take up associate membership, which will give them access to the toilet facilities.

The policy is now reaching its review date.

Options Considered

The committee needs to decide if it wishes to amend the current policy regarding the use of the community building by allotment holders.

Implications & Risks

Financial and Resource Implications

Officers are not aware of any financial implication associated with the status quo. However should responsibility for the cleaning of building no longer reside with the allotment association then it will fall back to the Council.

Legal Implications and Legislative Powers

Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provided the Council with the power to provided Community Buildings for social and educational objectives.

Environmental Implications

Officers are not aware of any environmental implications associated with this decision.

Risk Assessment

Officers are not aware of any risk implications associated with this decision.

Crime and Disorder

Officers are not aware of any issues the Council should consider under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act 1998.

14. **EXEMPT REPORT FOR DECISION – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**
15. **EXEMPT REPORT FOR DECISION – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**
16. **EXEMPT REPORT FOR DECISION – RELATING TO RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES**

17. EXEMPT REPORT FOR DECISION – RELATING TO RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES

18. QUESTION TIME

Members will be allowed a short period in which to put questions on matters within the remit of this Committee which are not contained in the reports of matters formally considered by the Committee at this meeting. The question may be answered at the meeting or may be referred back to the Committee at a later date. The question may not be the subject of any further details.