

**MINUTES OF PORTISHEAD TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION AND WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING
29th AUGUST 2018 7.30PM**

- PRESENT:** - Councillor Koops - in the Chair
- Councillors: - Cottrell, M. Cruse, R. Cruse, Mason & Mitchell,
- Staff: - Jo Duffy – Clerk of the Council
- Public: - There were 7 members of the public in attendance and 1 member of the press.

RW1850 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item .1)

There were no declarations of interest recorded in the Declarations of Interest Register.

APOLOGIES (Agenda item .2)

Apologies were received from Councillors: Cameron and Lord

RW1851 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Agenda item .3)

There were 3 members of the public in attendance who addressed the meeting: -

- Mr. Geoff Hardman gave a report from WASP. He stated that the group had met a few weeks ago and looked through the surveys supplied by North Somerset Council (NSC). They have established that BT Openreach runs through the middle of the Majestic Wine site. He informed the meeting that WASP knows somebody who has contacts within BT Openreach and will contact them about the options for possibly moving it. The Lake Grounds and Kilkenny Fields are still WASP's preferred options.

Mr Hardman went on to speak about greenspaces and in principle he is supportive of better managing the towns green spaces. He felt more thought should be given before implementing any ideas. He questioned why some grass areas are not being cut regularly. Finally, he asked if he could be informed in writing of the procedures in place and surveys carried out to make the High Street a 20mph zone?

- Mrs Janet Davey asked why the town doesn't have a Gromit? In the absence of a skatepark, she would like to know where there is a set of goal posts that can be used at all times, within reasonable reach of the

Village Quarter and the Town? Could the Town Council install a couple of goal posts that can be used by anyone? Finally, Mrs Davey spoke about the complete cessation of the sales of Nitrous Oxide in the town.

The Clerk explained that they had tried to get a Gromit for the town but by the time they were made aware of the project, it was too late to apply. The police will deal with shopkeepers illegally selling Nitrous Oxide. Cllr. Cottrell confirmed the police have taken action in the past with regard to the illegal sale of Nitrous Oxide canisters.

Free to use goal posts can be found at Avon Way, Station Road and Fieldfare Avenue. The Town Council has a single free to use goal post at Mead Road play area. Furthermore, single goals can be found at NSC owned Blackdown Road and Merlin Park play areas.

- Mr. Jonathan Mock spoke about Green Spaces and the parlous state of wildlife in the UK due to farming and the loss of habitat. He went on to speak about the NSC owned field at Slade Road and asked if it could be conserved for the town as a community resource by the Town Council, to be run by a Community Trust. He stated he will write formally to the Town Council to ask that they look into formulating a green stance.

These minutes summarise what was said during public participation and were views expressed by the speaker, not the Town Council.

Clerk's note: It was agreed to alter the order of the business on the agenda to allow Mr. Edward Mckay of North Somerset Council to answer questions on the lake at the Lake Grounds.

RW1852 TO DISCUSS THE CONDITION OF THE LAKE AT THE LAKE GROUNDS (Agenda item .8)

Mr. Mckay introduced himself and explained that he is from North Somerset Council's Parks Department and has been with the department for 12 years. He knows the Lake Grounds very well and has been involved with the lakes sluice and the Blue/Green algae outbreaks.

Cllr. Mason explained to Mr. McKay that she was expecting the recent rain would have covered the mud. She was quite shocked, as where she expected the lake to have mud (near the café), it was covered in water, but the other side of the bridge was very muddy and the ducks were walking on top of the mud as there was no water for them to swim in. She expects NSC to remedy the situation by removing the mud and debris from the lake?

Mr. Mckay explained that this year has seen a prolonged period of drought, which is now at an end. A few days of rain will not fill the lake and he estimated that the lake won't reach capacity until around Christmas time. Most water courses throughout the country are suffering

with the same issue. He stated that there is nothing that can be done about the water levels until we are in the winter period. In regards to the silt, there has been discussion with the Lake Grounds Management Committee, they are aware that the costs for dredging the lake are upwards of £150,000 and this is money that NSC does not have. Clearing the mud from the shallow end equates to £150 per ton, as it is classified as contaminated waste. He stated the area has not seen a summer like this since 1976.

Cllr. Koops asked if NSC usually relies on sluicing from the springs on the hillside to clear the silt. How is it normally managed? When was the lake last done? Is it ever going to be done?

Mr. McKay said that approximately 30 years ago a bit of dredging was carried out. But the lake has never been dredged properly.

Cllr. Koops asked if there was a possibility, perhaps not in this year's budget, but maybe in a future budget to look at doing something.

Mr McKay said that if NSC are going to do anything, then it has to be done properly. In the current financial climate NSC cannot spend £150k on dredging a lake. The spring that feeds the lake from Kilkenny Fields does not produce enough water to fill the lake.

Cllr. Cottrell posed a couple of questions. Is there any wildlife that resides within the mud and silt, which would need to be considered or protected? Hypothetically how would the job be done, if there were the money to be able to do it?

Mr. McKay stated that there are no protected species in the lake. Last year the fish were thinned out from the lake following recommendations on the back of the blue/green algae issue. He advised that there were two options for dredging the lake. The easiest option is to get a licence to pump it out into the estuary, but there is an argument that the silt is classified as contaminated. The silt could be removed via tankers, but costs would be high for the transportation and tipping of the contaminated waste. This process would be quite disruptive and would involve heavy plant.

Cllr. Cottrell said that she understood the Friends of the Lake Grounds Management Committee was formed because such an organisation stands a better chance of obtaining grants, than a Local Authority. She asked if there is any chance that the Management Committee could apply for grants towards the cost?

Mr McKay answered that Charles Murphy who sits on the Management Committee has taken this on himself and has found it incredibly difficult to get external funding for this type of work. He has put in a number of applications and many have been refused because other priorities have taken the money.

Cllr. Cottrell asked if there is a dedicated officer at NSC to assist community groups with grant applications?

Mr. McKay explained that NSC does have officers with experience of applying for these types of grants, but there is no specific officer. Mr McKay will make the Management Committee aware of officers who maybe able to assist in applications and they will assist where ever they can. His repair and maintenance budget for the whole district is £113k spread across 1,200 sites.

Cllr. Mitchell shares the views in regard to the lake with the people who have commented and those of the Management Committee. He referred to the August Town Council meeting where Mr. Patrick Heaton-Armstrong and Mr. Charles Murphy had spoken about the lake. He has met with them and they are trying to come up with a plan, which may well include private investment, as the lake needs to be done.

Cllr. Koops asked if there are funds available in the Coastal Regeneration Fund? She was concerned that if the country continues to have very hot summers, the lake in a number of years' time will be a muddy mess.

Cllr. Koops thanked Mr. McKay for attending.

RW1853 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE WW1 CENTENARY WORKING PARTY (Agenda item .4)

The Clerk and Cllr. Cottrell informed the meeting that the events planned for Sunday 4th November have been altered slightly. The evening event at Somerset Hall is now scheduled to take place in the afternoon at 3.30pm and will include a talk by Sandy Tebbutt, music from Portishead Players, accompanied by Janet Davey, plus poetry readings. The Memorial Trail will now take place between 11am to 1pm on the same day.

RW1854 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON GREEN SPACES – Cllr. Cottrell (Agenda item .5)

Cllr. Cottrell spoke about the report on green spaces. She explained that she has met with Chris Sperring and they had a few thoughts. The outcome was that Mr. Sperring would get together a group of enthusiastic and informed individuals to consider specific green areas within the town. These could be very small areas, such as the verge a long Avon Way.

There have been no decisions yet, the group will discuss ideas and then bring this back to the Town Council. If the Town Council agreed with

these ideas, then Glendale would be involved and a plan agreed. The view is that they don't want a repeat of what happened this year where grass has been cut when it may not have been necessary. They also discussed the common assumption that the verges should be closely mown, when in fact it be better to leave some of the area to grow taller, to allow wildlife to thrive within simple grass verges for example.

RW1855 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE LAND AT HORATIO HOUSE (Agenda item .6)

Cllr. Cottrell asked whether the Town Council should consider being more pro-active and seek the District Valuers opinion as to the value of the land and then revisit this at Town Council, rather than waiting for NSC.

Cllr. Mason agreed with Cllr Cottrell with regard to seeking a valuation.

Cllr. M. Cruse reminded the meeting that valuations cost money and he felt that this is a matter for the owner to deal with and not the Town Council. He felt that the Town Council should wait for NSC to make the first move, otherwise the Town Council could be wasting its time and resources.

Cllr. Mitchell doubted that the land has any market value. He stated that it is not going to be built on now. There is a value to the community and the Council must consider what it is prepared to pay for it, for the improvement of the Town.

Cllr. R. Cruse commented that the Town Council needs to be very careful that it doesn't show its hand as the price may upped accordingly. It is very difficult to negotiate in the public domain, because as soon as you say you are prepared to pay tuppence, the person that you want to buy from will charge you threepence. Getting a valuation at this stage might be a waste of time.

Cllr. Koops commented that she was somewhat concerned about the termination of the licence granted to Portishead in Bloom after all the work that they have put in to the site.

Cllr. R. Cruse said that she was under the impression that in the last two years the Chairman, the Vice Chairman and the Chairman of the Committees have had meetings with NSC (DMT Meetings) and this could be something that is mentioned at one of these meetings.

Cllr. Cottrell explained that two senior members of NSC staff have left at the same time and the Chief Executive role is currently temporary. The Chief Executive has been charged with reorganising the hierarchy, so there may, or may not be a replacement for David Carter and until this has been established there are no dates for the next DMT meeting.

The meeting noted that Portishead in Bloom have been granted a further 6 months licence for the land at Horatio House.

Cllr. R. Cruse suggested that the Town Council writes to NSC and asks for a meeting.

The following recommendation was made:

Portishead Town Council writes to North Somerset Council and asks for a meeting with regard to its concern about Portishead in Bloom being able to adequately plan for its 2019 planting season, in respect to the Town Garden/Land at Horatio House.

A vote was taken with all in favour.

RW1856 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM WASP ON THE SKATE PARK PROJECT (Agenda item .7)

This item was covered by Mr. Geoff Hardman during public participation.

RW1857 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (Agenda item .9)

1. Town Orderly, to receive an update on works completed including photographs.
2. To receive a report on Green Spaces (if available)
3. To receive an update on the lake at the Lake Grounds
4. To discuss the state of the pavements outside the shops on the High Street. There is concern surrounding the lack of information regarding ownership of the land, which used to be the front gardens to the shops. The Clerk is to write to Bristol City Council in an attempt to establish which sites are owned by them between Cabstand and Roath Road/Albert Road.

RW1858 HEAVEN'S FIELD – UPDATE (Agenda .10)

The Clerk advised the meeting that she had nothing to report.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm.