

CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND TOURISM

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham. S60
2TH**

Date: Tuesday, 22nd April, 2014

Time: 10.00 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for absence.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 18th and 25th March, 2014. (Pages 1 - 6)
6. Public Petition regarding Play Provision at Horsefair Park, Swinton. (Pages 7 - 10)
7. Date and time of the next meeting: -
 - Tuesday 17th June, 2014, to start at 10.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND TOURISM
18th March, 2014**

Present:- Councillor Rushforth (in the Chair).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrews and Dalton.

F48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

F49. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC

Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended March 2006) (information relating to the financial or business affairs).

F50. CLIFTON PARK WATERPLAY - REPAIR PROCUREMENT - PHASE 2

Further to Minute No. F5 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism held on 4th June, 2013, consideration was given to the report presented by Andy Lee, Urban Green Spaces Manager, which sought an exemption from Standing Order 48.1 (requirement to invite between three and six tenders for a contract with an estimated value of £50,000 or more) to allow an order to be placed with Ustigate Ltd to undertake essential repairs to the water play facility in Clifton Park following their completion of Phase One of the works

Consequently, approval was given to suspend Standing Orders to allow Ustigate Ltd to be appointed to inspect the design and installation of the visible plant and controls, and to recommended remedial works. Two phases of works were suggested and a decision was taken in June 2013 to proceed with the first of these only and to review detailed proposals for phase two afterwards.

The first phase of works had now been completed successfully and would allow operation of the main jets and high jets in 2014. A proposal for the second phase had now been submitted which would enable other components of the water play, including the paddling area and rill, to operate again. Agreement was now sought to appoint the same specialist contractor directly without attempting to seek competitive quotes for this highly specialist area with an immediate start and to ensure its completion ready for the summer period.

Resolved:- That the exemption of the contract for repairs to the Water Play facility at Clifton Park from Standing Order 48.1 (requirement to invite between three and six tenders for a contract with an estimated value of £50,000 or more) and award the contract to Ustigate Waterplay Ltd. be approved.

(The Mayor agreed to exempt this item from call-in to allow the Council to ensure the highly specialist work to the Clifton Park Waterplay was completed on schedule)

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND TOURISM
25th March, 2014**

Present:- Councillor Rushforth (in the Chair); and Councillors Andrews.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dalton.

F51. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this meeting.

F52. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18TH FEBRUARY, 2014

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Culture and Tourism held on 18th February, 2014, were considered.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record.

F53. TOUR DE FRANCE - COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Members welcomed Rachael Ellis and Tom Sweetman (Communications and Marketing), who gave a presentation about the communications plan for the Grand Départ of the Tour de France cycle race in Yorkshire during July 2014.

The presentation and subsequent discussion highlighted the following issues:-

- the context of the Tour de France – the number of spectators along the route and the world-wide television audience;
- the three stages in the United Kingdom on 5th, 6th and 7th July 2014 (Leeds-Harrogate; York-Sheffield and Cambridge-London);
- promotional films were viewed, including ‘Made in Yorkshire’;
- regularity and reliability of public transport links, enabling people to move between Rotherham and the Tour route in the Sheffield area; whether additional buses and trains will be provided;
- the economic benefits to Yorkshire from the staging of this event;
- Yorkshire Festival 2014 – 100 days of arts and culture, which will be launched on Thursday 27th March 2014 and last until Sunday 6th July 2014; free admission to events;

- Cycle Yorkshire, The Legacy (launched in November 2013);
- Rotherham's proposed participation in the fringe festival events and in Cycle Yorkshire events;
- promotion of events; use of the Tour de France name (but not the logo); shared access to web site images of the Tour de France;
- ways of increasing participation in cycling; ensuring that the Rotherham Borough area is marketed as a place for people to visit by bicycle;
- ways of increasing visitor numbers to Rotherham, both during the Tour de France Grand Départ in July 2014 and afterwards;
- Bikeability cycle training projects in Rotherham schools; ensuring publicity for other cycling opportunities and projects in the Rotherham Borough area;
- promotion of the health benefits of cycling; availability of cycles for hire at the Rotherham railway station; proposed cycle centre at the Rother Valley Country Park (and the provision of cycles for hire at the Country Park);
- public cycle rides, with leaders (sponsored by the 'Sky' company) which will take place from June 2014 and onwards into 2015;
- St. Thomas CE Primary School, Kilnhurst has won a regional film-making award, using a history theme, about cycling – the award was presented by the Sustrans organisation;
- 'Popped Art' events during June 2014;
- Gallery Town exhibition of art and paintings, with a cycling theme, which is planned to take place in Rotherham;
- the Bike-It project and the Dr. Bike cycle maintenance scheme;
- ensuring that Rotherham has a strong presence on the Tour de France web site, in order to attract visitors to the Borough area.

Resolved:- That the details of the communications plan be noted.

F54. CUSTOMER AND CULTURAL SERVICES - FEES AND CHARGES 2014-2015

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Customer and Cultural Services Manager, concerning the annual review of fees and charges for services within Customer and Cultural Services. The report

contained the revised fees and charges proposed for the 2014/2015 financial year.

Members noted that several core services still remained essentially free of charge, such as the public library service, the archives and local studies and museum services. Where charges were levied, there was often also a concessionary rate.

It was proposed that the revised fees and charges would take effect from 1st May, 2014. However, the proposed fees in relation to the Civic Theatre would be in place for the period from 1st September, 2014 until 31st August, 2015, in part to reflect the seasonal nature of the programmed schedule of shows, events and performances.

Other changes to the fees and charges structure included:-

- Blue Badge (disabled persons' parking) – charges brought into line with those of other local authorities;
- Heritage services – new minimum charges for school sessions;
- Heritage activity sessions/Reminiscence/talks and tours – minimum charges;
- Charges for marriage ceremonies at the Clifton Park Museum;
- Gallery room hire charges brought into line with other services within the Directorate;
- Theatres – the booking fee for debit card transactions will no longer be levied;
- Civic Theatre night retainer.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That, subject to resolution (3) below, the revised fees and charges for Customer and Cultural Services, as set out in the report and appendices submitted, be approved and implemented with effect from 1st May, 2014.

(3) That, further to resolution (2) above, the proposed revised fees in relation to the Civic Theatre, as now submitted, shall be levied during the period from 1st September, 2014 until 31st August, 2015.

F55. YOUR ACCOUNT - PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Customer and Cultural Services Manager, relating to 'Your Account', an online portal which allows citizens to access personal information about the accounts they hold with the Council.

Members were informed that the Library Service wishes to develop its online service offer by providing personal library account information within the Council's existing, secure citizen's account portal, 'Your Account'.

The service will be developed by the existing ICT system suppliers, Gandlake (providing the citizen's account) and Capita (providing the library management system). This is a development to the existing ICT systems of the Council and the work cannot be completed by other suppliers. An exemption to standing orders is therefore required, enabling procurement to proceed from the companies referred to in the report.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the inclusion of personal library account information in the 'Your Account' citizens' account portal, provided by this Council, as detailed in the report now submitted, be supported.

(3) That, further to resolution (2) above, the development costs of the 'Your Account' portal shall be exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.3 (requirement to invite three written quotations for contracts valued between £20,000 and £50,000), enabling the service to be developed by Gandlake and by Capita.

(nb: subsequent to this meeting and in view of the need to incur expenditure during the current financial year, The Mayor gave the necessary authorisation to exempt this decision from the Council's call-in procedure)

F56. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Culture and Tourism take place on Tuesday 22nd April, 2014, to start at 10.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism
2.	Date:	Tuesday 22nd April, 2014
3.	Title:	Public Petition regarding Play Provision at Horsefair Park, Swinton
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

A petition with 400 names was submitted to full Council in January 2014, requesting the provision of a new play area at Horsefair Park, Swinton to the rear of the Robin Hood pub car park. This has been considered, taking into consideration recent reductions in resources for maintenance of such facilities, and the availability of alternative play areas in the vicinity.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That the request to provide a new play area at Horsefair Park, Swinton is not supported due to the relatively good level of provision elsewhere in Swinton, and the need to target scarce resources in areas of greatest need across the borough.

6.2 That the lead petitioner is informed of the decision.

7. Proposals and Details

Petition

The receipt of a petition with 400 names requesting the provision of a new play area at Horsefair Park, Swinton was previously reported to Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism on 18th February, 2014. Since then, contact has been made with the lead petitioner, Sharon Potts, who explained that the type of play area envisaged would be for pre-school children. She also suggested that this location is appropriate because a lot of children use Horsefair Park as a route to school (Queen Street and Brookfield). She believes that a new play area should include a bin, seating, fencing and safety surfacing.

The petition is supported by the Wentworth North Area Assembly (including Swinton Ward members), Area Housing Panel, and Swinton Sports & Health Group. It is understood that the Wentworth North Community Planning Officer would be able to support a funding application if a decision were made to proceed with the project.

The requested facility would replace an earlier play area which was removed over a number of years due to the age of the equipment and vandalism. There was a proposal in 2009 to replace the old play area through the government's Play Pathfinder funding programme. However, this proposal was withdrawn due to the presence on site of Japanese Knotweed meaning that the project could not be delivered within the available budget and timescale. Later, when the old play area had to be removed, Leisure and Community Services concluded that they could not justify its replacement because of reductions in budgets for play area maintenance from 2011, and the level of alternative play provision in the vicinity. Swinton Ward members were advised of this at the time.

Assessment

The service aims to ensure a balance of play provision across the borough. However, there are areas in Rotherham where access to play equipment is limited. Currently there are no adopted standards for play provision in Rotherham. Previously, recommended standards published by the National Playing Fields Association in their 'Six Acre Standard' were applied informally to guide decisions about investment in play areas, but these are no longer considered sustainable following reductions in budgets for play area maintenance. Leisure and Community Services now consider proposals to remove and/or install play areas on a case by case basis taking the following factors into account:-

1. The condition of the existing play area (if there is one)
2. Availability and quality of alternative play areas accessible to the community in question
3. The suitability of the site, including ground conditions, accessibility, level of surveillance, and possible nuisance to neighbouring properties
4. Local demand
5. The impact the proposal would have on the service's ability to maintain its entire stock of play areas in a safe and useable condition.

Whilst the capital cost of a new facility and the availability of external funding to cover this can also be an issue, an 'in principle' decision on whether to seek to

provide a new or replacement play area depends less on this than on the factors listed above.

Since 2011, just four new play areas have been installed by the Council. Two of these have been in Swinton Ward. Over the same period, six play areas have been removed across Rotherham, including Horsefair Park. Some other play areas have been reduced where selected equipment has had to be removed, mainly due to vandalism or difficulties maintaining certain products. Since 2011 between 15 and 20 items of equipment have been removed in this way, and none has been replaced.

Swinton Ward currently contains four play areas including:-

- Highfield Park, approx. 400 metres from Horsefair Park,
- Thomas Street, approx. 530 metres away
- Dun Street, approx. 800 metres away
- Albany Road, approx. 1,100 metres away

All four are in good condition, and those at Dun Street and Albany Road are amongst the newest play areas in the borough. Thus, the availability of alternative facilities in Swinton is good, and provision of a further area, whilst desirable, is not a high priority for the service.

Horsefair Park has suffered from relatively high levels of anti-social behaviour and vandalism, possibly due to restricted natural surveillance of some areas. The presence of a car park close to the proposed play area site increases the level of risk for children, although this could be mitigated by the installation of a boundary fence around a play area. A current bid to the HLF's Landscape Partnership fund include proposals designed to enhance the site's natural character and biodiversity; these might make Horsefair Park a less suitable setting for formal children's play than other green spaces in the vicinity containing play areas.

Based on this assessment, it is recommended that a decision be taken not to install a new play area at Horsefair Park.

8. Finance

The capital cost of the project would depend on its size and specification, and the cost of site preparation, but would probably exceed £50,000. WREN (Landfill tax) can support improvement of a public park at this location through their main grant scheme (between £15,001 and £75,000) as it is 8.62 miles from Scalebrook Landfill in South Emsall, near Doncaster. The community support suggested by the petition would be a consideration for WREN when assessing a funding bid. However, any grant would be subject to 'third party funding' being made available (at 11% of the total grant value). Rotherham MBC was previously able to make such contributions, but this facility was withdrawn in 2012. The WREN funding allocation to Rotherham is finite and if funding were to be awarded to this scheme then it might affect bids elsewhere in the Borough.

To date, the only capital funding pledged to the project is £1,500 from the local Area Housing Panel and £1,000 from Swinton Sports and Health Group.

The cost of inspecting and maintaining play areas has to be covered from service revenue budgets. Following significant reductions to these budgets since 2011, there have been efforts to reduce commitments to help sustain acceptable maintenance standards at remaining play areas. Therefore, a new play area here would have a negative impact on the Service's ability to maintain its entire stock of play areas adequately.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The cost of dealing with Japanese Knotweed depends on the extent of rhizomes and is not known at this stage. It is highly unlikely that the costs of containment/removal can be built into any potential funding application; costs will probably be relatively high and a budget for this element adds to the cost of any potential scheme.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda

The recommendation not to develop a play area at Horsefair Park, Swinton will help Leisure and Community Services to sustain adequate levels of maintenance equitably across existing play areas, and thereby help to ensure better quality public places.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Petition - submitted January 2014

Report to Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism - 18th February 2014

Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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