

Minutes of Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee

Monday, 21st July, 2014 at 6.00 p.m.
In Committee Room 2,the Council House,Dudley

Present

Councillor J.Cowell (Chair)
Councillor M.Hanif (Vice-Chair)
Councillors I Kettle, I Marrey and H. Rogers

Officers

Ms M Wilcox, Interim Principal Lawyer, Ms R.Cooper, Group Accountant and Mr J.Jablonski (Assistant Principal Officer (Democratic Services) (All Directorate of Corporate Resources).

1 Apology for absence

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor G Partridge.

2 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillors J.Cowell and M.Hanif – Non-pecuniary interests as Trustees of Mary Stevens Hospice.

Councillor H. Rogers – Non-pecuniary interest as Chair of the Friends Group for Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common. Also in relation to her involvement with the Project Implementation Team - Heritage Lottery Bid for Mary Stevens Park and attendance at stakeholder meetings.

3 Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th April, 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4 Terms of Reference of the Committee

A report of the Director of Corporate Resources was submitted on the revised terms of reference of the Committee, as approved by Council on 2nd December, 2013. The Council had extended the terms of reference to include all trust land within the Borough.

Arising from consideration of the report, Members commented on the content of paragraph 12 of the report and on the car parking position at Mary Stevens Park and adjoining areas.

In respect of paragraph 12 it was considered that the content of the paragraph should be deleted and replaced with alternative wording in effect replacing the substitution suggested with the invitation of Members, as appropriate.

Regarding car parking at Mary Stevens Park, Councillor Rogers made the following principal points –

1. the car park was not a Council owned car park, as it was included in the deed of gift , although it appeared to be treated as if it were, and the public could not be excluded from using the car park. Issues were also being raised about controlling access to car parks and in relation to a public right of way and disabled access route, which again were contrary to the terms of the deed of gift.
2. the increase in numbers of officers being and to be accommodated at Mary Stevens Park had given rise to the parking problems affecting visitors and users of the park
3. no feasibility study or survey had been done of the impact of the increased staffing with regard to parking leading to complaints by the public and users at the lack of parking
4. this committee had not been consulted on the proposals regarding increased staffing in the building and its impact on car parking although these aspects impacted on the terms of reference of the committee and impacted on the role of the committee as trustees. It was considered that the committee needed to uphold the terms of the deed of gift.
5. the car parking situation was having an adverse effect on the use of the park which was particularly serious given the proposals for the making of a Heritage lottery bid. The matter therefore needed to be resolved.

In response to the comments made, the Chair reported that she was aware of the issue raised and acknowledged that the car park was not a council car park. The matter had also not previously been formally reported to committee as there had been no fundamental change of use.

It was also the case that a review of the arrangements at Mary Stevens Park was currently being carried out and it was suggested that Councillor Crumpton, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning, be invited to attend a meeting of this committee to report on the outcome of the review so that the committee could consider and make any recommendations it considered appropriate.

The Chair indicated that she would also speak to Councillor Crumpton and relevant Officers on the points raised.

Resolved

1. That, subject to the deletion of the wording of paragraph 12 of the report and the substitution of the following wording there for –

That, in occasional cases, where the Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee is dealing with matters not relating to the Ernest Stevens Trusts, individual Ward Members of the Council will be invited to attend and speak on the area concerned, the report submitted on the revised terms of reference of this committee, be noted.

2. That further consideration be given to the issue of car parking and related matters at Mary Stevens Park, as raised at this meeting, at a meeting of this committee to be held prior to the October 13th meeting of Council and that Councillor Crumpton, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning, also be invited to attend the meeting to report on the outcome of a review into arrangements at Mary Stevens Park so that this committee could consider the issues further and make any recommendations it considered appropriate.

The meeting ended at 7.05pm

CHAIR