

**Minutes of the Parks, Open Spaces and Events
Committee Meeting
held in The Council Chambers, New Mills Town Hall, New Mills
At 7.00pm on Monday 28 October 2024**

Councillors Present Lyn Bannister (Chair), Steve Davey, Andrew Denton, Beth Eadie John Reed, Margaret Ritchie.

In Attendance Clare Wild (Clerk), Stephen Lewis (Parks and Open Spaces Manager), Tracey Dawson (Administrative Support Officer (ASO)), Two members of the public

POSE/24/33 Introductions and Apologies for Absence

Absent Cllrs: Katy Pearson, Matthew Donovan, Simon Evans and Michelle Bancroft had presented apologies.

POSE/24/34 Variation of Business

Bring forward

- Item 9 to Item 6 – Biodiversity
- Item 13 to Item 10 – Improve signage project

POSE/24/35 Declaration of Members Interests & Dispensation Applications

Cllr Lyn Bannister (LB) declared a personal interest in Item 9 as neighbour to the Town Hall and the external lighting would be discussed. LB would remain in the meeting

POSE/24/36 Public Speaking – None

POSE/24/37 Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED The minutes of the Parks, Open Spaces and Event Committee meeting held on 22 July 2024 had not been available to present to the committee. The Clerk would provide minutes as soon as available.

POSE/24/38 Biodiversity

Stephen Lewis (SL), Parks Manager confirmed that no changes had been implemented to the Torrs lighting when asked.

The Committee discussed the concentration of lighting at the front of the Town Hall. The floodlight overspill had been reported as a concern by a local resident. Members discussed the front light and a side light and asked Rachel Clearly (RC), a Lighting Technician by profession who had been asked to attend the meeting by LB, to make recommendations for improvement night time illumination.

RC suggested that a timer and red/orange light would be more suitable for nighttime illumination and would be better for plant photosynthesis and to place a shield on the side light

LB referred council to a previous resolution **2023/026** made 13 February 2023 that the Town Hall lights would be switched off at midnight. Members shared a safety concern that not lighting the car park and Town Hall correctly at night could place members of the public and officers, especially those attending emergency call outs, at risk. RC recommended the installation of a timed sensor.

SL advised that the lighting was fed by only one power cable, RC recommended the supply could be split for greater lighting options. SL confirmed a solution would be to install a timer on the post and split the cable at that point and that all light would need a filter change.

The Clerk advised that completing the action would be possible but this cost had not been accounted for in the 2024-2025 budget. Finance Building, and Asset committee chair expressed concerns of covering the cost of lighting improvements, inc installing lower wattage lighting.

SL asked RC for suggestions regarding the lighting in High Lea Park. RC recommended darksky.org for options on lighting and stated that lights should be placed facing downwards and wherever possible change to a low wattage bulb with orange filters

Action: Clerk to investigate costs regarding splitting the power supply to the floodlights so a timer can be fitted and the fitting of required shields/measures to limit the range of the illumination to remain on the building and required areas in the car park for safety.

POSE/24/39 New Mills Town Signage – Joint Project with RMC and NMTC

Clerk had been provided with the signage mapping completed by Zena Aris-Sutton, who had also kindly agreed to continue to support the project if required. Toby Hardwick (TH), Rock Mill Centre (RMC), stated that RMC had bid for Levelling up Funding but outcome still remained unknown. Members agreed that there was not enough signage in the Torrs and Riverside Park locations to direct visitors to New Mills Town Centre. TH advised that Councillors Initiative Funding had been secured already that would cover a small budget for improvements if needed and Town & Village Regeneration Funding. NMTC had also been provided with ring fenced donation from Torr Vall Mill Trust, where this project would meet the edibility criteria. TH stated that should a larger grant be secured a consultant would be employed to advise best practice for the Town.

Committee agreed that LB would be placed to lead the joint signage project with RMC on Behalf of NMTC

Clerk advised findings from the survey had recommended making current signage clearer and cleaner. Members commented that some signposts were outdated and a strategy for new signage should be considered, this would allow maps and signage need to link together. It had been noted that the project would involve Derbyshire County Council (DCC) due to Highway signage and requirement for planning permission would need to be sought from High Peak Borough Council.

ACTION: Clerk to send out a review to all Cllrs, and explore if High Peak Borough Council (HPBC) Move More Initiative would be able to support the venture.

POSE/24/40 NMTC Parks & Open Spaces Strategy

LB had developed and circulated terms of reference to establish a working group to support the formation of the five year plan of NMTC Parks & Open Spaces Strategy Working Party.

ACTION To recommend to the Council that a Working group to work on a Parks & Open Spaces Strategy is resolved.

POSE/24/41 Ollersett Fields

A public consultation has been arranged at Low Leighton Methodist Church on Friday 15 November 2024 for the proposed New Mills Junior Football Club (NMJFC) welfare facility. Cllr Steve Davey, as lead on this project, had offered to Chair the meeting. The event would be well publicised with local residents as some had raised concerns.

Following a discussion regarding tree replacement options for Ollersett Fields Members agreed that the Clerk should proceed to invoice for the trees that had been recommended by the Parks Manager. As they had been favourable to the ground conditions and soil type, which would be too wet for fruit trees.

It had been noted that the installed memorial bench had not yet been completed by NMJFC.

ACTION: To follow the Parks Dept. recommendation for replacement trees and present invoice to NMJFC

POSE/24/42 Events

Members discussed the option to introduce charges for the use of open spaces for events on a three-tier rates system, similar to the one adopted for Town Hall bookings.

ACTION: Members recommended that a charging system is to be implemented that follows the suggested 3 tier system used for room hire. To refer to Finance Committee to investigate appropriate charges as part of the review of room hire charges

Bonfire and Fireworks - 2 November 2024 at High Lea Park. LB, as Event Co-ordinator, advised the committee that NMTC had sufficient volunteers come forward to assist with the marshalling of the event. Clerk advised that the event plan document used for the Bonfire would become the template for future NMTC events.

LB advised she would be presenting changes to the Volunteer Policy to support occasional, 'one off' volunteering to the Council. The Clerk had recommended that the Council made a provision in the policy to complete ID checks if the event would bring volunteers into contact with children and vulnerable adults, committee discussed and whilst acknowledging importance it would not always be possible and therefore would not be included in the policy recommendation as a mandatory requirement.

Remembrance Sunday 9 November 2024– ASO provided an update of the event planning, including the installation at High Lea Hall of a donated plaque commemorating those who lost their lives in the Great War in the Newtown area which will be acknowledged in a short service at the Hall after the Memorial Service at High Lea Park.

It was suggested to serve light refreshment at the High Lea Hall post event, cost for this would be met by the Town Hall budget.

Christmas Lighting of the Town – 30 November 2024- SL advised that the Metal Christmas tree had been installed at Newtown. Regarding a NMTC event at the Town Hall LB, as Event Lead, had contacted Thornsett Band who had indicated their availability to support and perform and would approach and invite local school choirs. Further event details needed to be decided. Clerk advised that event details would need forwarding to Visit New Mills by 31 October 2024 for inclusion in their event programme.

POSE/24/43 Funding/Grant Applications

Following a discussion it had been established that there would be no officer capacity to look at the eligibility for the Peak District Community and Nature Fund whose deadlines are 30 Jan, 30 Apr and 20 Sept 2025. Expressions of Interest for Nature Towns and Cities Grant funding are to be submitted by Noon on 12 Nov 2024.

ACTION: Cllr Beth Eadie agreed to look at criteria and feed back to council if any suitable eligibility.

POSE/24/44 Rowarth Parish Statements for 2025

LB had not been in contact Friends of Rowarth (FoR) to complete drafting the statement.

ACTION: LB to speak with FoR to develop the statement for Councils Approval and submission.

POSE/24/45 Parks Budget for 2025-26

Members discussed possible improvements for next year and the expenditure required to complete work or projects. Possibilities that had been presented by the Parks Manager included

- Erection of a shelter and resitting of the Storytime Bench at High Lea Park. NMTC owned the shelter already but repair work would be required. It had been noted that planning permission may also be required.
- Replacement equipment at Newtown play area as existing requires removal for safety reasons. The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed as a true and correct record of the meeting

Chair _____ Date _____

** Please ensure that each page is signed and dated**