

BATHURST PARK AND RECREATION TRUST

PARK TRUST MEETING – 15 June 2020 - 01

THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF THE BATHURST PARK AND RECREATION TRUST held via Zoom on Monday 15 June 2020 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Trustees R Kemsley (Chairman), J Carr, J Greenwood, A Harley, R Holmes, S Holmes, W Leach, P Macklin, A Preest, S Stockham, T Tremlett and S Turner

In Attendance: Ms K Gueye & Ms E Eldridge-Tull - Organisers, Forest of Dean Black Lives Matter Demonstration
Ms T Saunders – Petition organiser
Inspector N Cook - Gloucestershire Constabulary
Eight members of the public
Mr S Holley –Trust Secretary
Miss C Wheeler – Lydney Town Council’s Assistant Clerk

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Trustee L Arnold.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **APPLICATION FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER DEMONSTRATION ON 20 JUNE 2020**

Trustee Kemsley advised that an invitation had been extended to the organisers of the demonstration and the petition to address the Trust. The demonstration organisers were invited to address the Trustees first.

A Point of Order was called by Trustee Preest concerning the governance of the meeting. Trustee Preest advised that he had been informed that Lydney Town Council’s (LTC’s) Standing Orders and Code of Conduct did not apply to the Trust; he therefore questioned what governance procedures had been adhered to in respect of the meeting. Trustees were advised that LTC’s Standing Orders complied with Local Governance legislation; that whilst it had been the practice of the Trust to follow LTC’s governing documents it was not a requirement for the Trust to do so; that three days’ notice of the meeting (including the weekend) had been given because, if any further notice had been given, the Trust would not have been able to accommodate the event organisers. Trustee Preest drew attention to the Government advice; the local MP had been quite clear in the House of Commons that gatherings of more than six people from different households was against said advice. Trustee Preest called for advice to be taken from The Charity Commission on the matter; stressed his intention to challenge the situation if an in-depth explanation was not forthcoming as to why the Trust had been placed in its current situation.

Trustee Kemsley welcomed Inspector Cook to the meeting. Trustees were reminded that prior to the meeting they had been provided with a copy of an e-mail which had been sent to the Trust Secretary by Inspector Cook; the Trust Secretary then proceeded to read out the e-mail to all present which advised that the Town Council was obliged to facilitate the event unless it had good grounds not to, and even then it would be required to apply to the Home Secretary for the event to be banned and a ban was unlikely to be approved. Inspector Cook made it clear that the Police would facilitate a peaceful protest but would not take sides.

The event organisers were then asked to provide Trustees with an overview of their event. Trustees were informed that the event had been planned to celebrate black culture; would include

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contributions from teachers, speakers and musicians; PPE had been purchased: violence/anti-social behaviour would not be condoned; confirmed attendance currently stood at 240, however, attendance numbers could not be guaranteed; would take place from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm; that Forest of Dean District Council had been contacted regarding safety measures; that people had only been contacted after permission had been given for the event to proceed.

The organiser of the petition was asked to provide Trustees with an overview. The organiser stressed that the petition had not been racially motivated but had been motivated by the potential to spread Covid-19 within the community. The organiser spoke of her personal situation; highlighted her involvement with the community initiative which had been formed at the start of Lockdown to provide support to those members of the community who were shielding/at greater risk of catching Covid-19.

During discussion Trustees provided their views on the event; the release of draft communication by the event organisers; the use of particular phrases in the draft communication; the fears of the community relating to Covid-19 and the poor communication to all Trustees regarding the request for the event to take place.

At the invitation of the Chairman the Trust Secretary reminded Members of the advice which had been obtained from the Police, namely the Town Council was obliged to facilitate the event unless it had good grounds not to, and even then it would be required to apply to the Home Secretary for the event to be banned.

Trustee Preest called a Point of Order and reminded Members that they were acting in their capacity as Trustees, not Councillors; highlighted CC26 which concerned Charities and Risk Management and stressed the need for his fellow Trustees to consider all the factors (e.g. public perception, adverse publicity for the Charity, Government advice) surrounding the event. The event organisers informed Members that if the event did not receive approval they would not attend and would publicise that the event was no longer under their control.

Trustee Preest called for a recorded vote on whether the event would receive the Trust's approval.

For

Trustee Carr
Trustee Greenwood
Trustee Harley
Trustee R Holmes
Trustee S Holmes
Trustee P Macklin
Trustee S Stockham
Trustee S Turner

Against

Trustee Preest
Trustee Tremlett

Abstentions

Trustee Kemsley
Trustee Leach

Vote carried.

The event organisers requested that the Trust issue a statement regarding the event.

Meeting closed at 7.43 pm

Chairman

Date