

Friends of Dollar Park

Minutes of Meeting
held on
21st March 2017 at 6.30pm

Municipal Buildings Falkirk

Present – Les Pryde (Chair), LP, Morris Robb, (Vice Chair), MR, Ian Gourlay (Treasurer), IG, Provost Pat Reid, Alistair and Maureen Smith, Robert Menzies. Gordon Lumsden

Apologies – I Lumsden, Morven Mack, Jessica Paterson.

Minutes of meeting of 10th January 2016

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record.

Proposed- Gordon Lumsden Seconded - I Gourlay

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Tennis Court's

Since the official opening the facility is being well used. Problems with lighting within the park was highlighted unfortunately the Community Trust has no funding to install further lighting in the park Tennis courts re Easter and summer school holidays to be set up by the Community Trust

Walled Garden Development Group

LP continued to attend the group meetings, the aim is to focus on the day to day development and long term planning for the walled garden run jointly with Criminal Services and the Cyrenians.

Dollar Park Working Group

Under noted is the minute of the meeting held in Provost Reid's Office, Municipal Buildings, Falkirk @ 1.30pm on Tuesday 21st March.

Present Lynda Ross-Hale -Cyrenians
Ian Grimwade - Cyrenians

John Smith - Falkirk Council
Jessica Paterson - Falkirk Council
Kirsty Humphries - Tennis Scotland

Agenda :-

- Outcome of funding application by Cyrenians
- Update on tennis facilities
- Park Maintenance
- AOB

Funding Application

Funding application by Falkirk Council on behalf of Cyrenians had been successful and a total sum of £1.2million was now available. However this sum was only for Arnotdale House and did not allow for any separate improvements to either the JDI or the existing toilets. A number of people requested sight of the successful submission to ascertain actual scope of the proposal and it was agreed that this could be arranged. Aim was to have further community involvement in any case. May 2018 was proposed completion and entry date for Cyrenians.

Council architects were involved (Mike McGowan?) in the preparation of architectural plans as part of the submission. This is because Falkirk Council were the submitting party and this was the preferred option for managing the submission. Cyrenians had their own architect (INCH Architects, Glasgow - Alastair Clements) who would supervise the project implementation. R. Menzies asked if it was possible that he could see the current plans along with Morris Robb of FODP. As architects they would both be interested in these and may be able to provide additional suggestions before things progressed too far. (Submission had been taken to RIBA Stage 2). Linda Ross-Hale said she could arrange a meeting to view and perhaps discuss printed copies of the plans rather than rely on electronic issue as they were big files (30mb+). She would suggest a time and place for R. Menzies and M. Robb.

Ewan Aitken had made comments about an accessible toilet with a support rail. Cecil Meiklejohn suggested this may need to be looked at in more detail with a fold-down bed if it was to double up as a changing facility with shower for those needing specialist assistance with e.g. incontinence problems. Separate changing will be required for tennis if this is agreed.

Update on Tennis Facilities

Kirsty Humphries advised that they were keen to enhance community involvement by partnering the tennis facilities with other aspects of the park. Arnotdale House would have a changing room off the toilets for use by players. Ewan Aitken advised that in the first instance Arnotdale would be open from 9.00-5.00pm with this hopefully being extended till 11.00pm eventually. Kirsty advised that it might be possible to have coded access to the changing facilities for use at evenings and weekends if the rest of Arnotdale was closed. This could work on the same principle as the one provided for the courts.

R Menzies pointed out that an issue had been raised regarding access to the courts via the far gateway next to the childrens' play area. A number of people (including Chris Morris who lives nearby) had said the gate is unlocked and that people delivering children for coaching are speeding down to the courts past the childrens' area. This was creating a safety issue that could get worse in the summer months with longer daylight. Initial proposal was to have the gate locked but this was not happening in practice. If changing areas were proposed at Arnotdale then this might alleviate the problem, especially as a cafe there might encourage parents to attend that side of the park. However cafe is unlikely to be open at night initially at least.

There had been 570 uses recorded since the court opened and family membership now stood at 97. This indicated strong usage of the facilities. R. Menzies pointed out that the courts were in use at 10.00pm on a number of occasions recently. This was likely to increase with the arrival of better weather.

Park Maintenance

Jessica Paterson advised that planting around the sensory garden was being reviewed as it was felt use of lavender there had not been a success due to overshadowing by nearby trees. May seek advice from Les Pryde on this.

There was also a desire to recreate some of the herbaceous borders in the park with an area outside the walled garden immediately to the south being one area favoured for early attention.

Peter Pan mould has been borrowed from an English Council and used to create small (1.2m high) statue. Copy mould also created for future use. Names of four children would be installed on a plaque at the base. 2/3 months still required to finalise this.

Chinese lions at the gate were still under discussion due to emerging cost issues. Initial impression from Historic Scotland expert was that this was a very unusual type of marble and a test would be required to assess how it

could be cleaned. This would require ionised water, kitchen towels etc and would cost £400 for the test alone ! Funding from Tesco may be available for cleaning thereafter.

Small kiosk beside the tennis courts may not open in the summer if facilities at Arnotdale (cafe etc) are open at the same time. Toilet there is also not suitable for public use. Aim was to enhance facilities around the Arnotdale project to make it more viable. R.Menzies and Pat Reid raised the point as to the future of the existing toilet block if that was the policy. However that would be dependent on what was being proposed at Arnotdale given the pressure to provide a range of changing and toilet facilities within a fixed building footprint. Ewan Aitken advised that they were also hoping to have an events space within Arnotdale and that the toilets could become an extension of the walled garden with access off. This may help reduce current vandalism levels.

Walled Garden

Linda Ross-Hales provided an update. There were proposals to provide hard surface paths as site was becoming waterlogged very easily in wet weather. Seats would also be added at specific locations. A white garden project around the bandstand was under consideration and there was a desire to make the completed bandstand one of the main focus points in the walled garden with two bands being booked to play there in the summer. Two weddings were also planning to use the facilities for photographs. However there had been issues with event management with e.g. marquees being damaged due to weather and this had proved costly. Additional aim was also to enhance the planting areas with JDI encouraging patient participation. There was also talk of creating a Memory garden or area where a history of the park could be assembled. An arbor had been built to support honeysuckle and work on a polytunnel and greenhouse had been completed.

AOB

- There was a suggestion that the flower clock at the entrance to the Municipal Buildings could perhaps be moved to the Walled Garden or elsewhere but there was a lack of knowledge as to the clock's condition or to the feasibility of accommodating it.
- Pat Reid said that there had been discussion about reversing the war memorial to face into the park in order to avoid the disruption to traffic on Camelon Road but the main drawback was that there was a lack of space on the park side to accommodate the large number of people who usually attended.

- There was also a suggestion about moving the Sheila McKechnie statue but that would need agreement from her partner and family.

AOCB

The friends agreed to opening and closing the Walled Garden on Sundays.
Future meetings to be held at the Cyrenians offices Wellside Place Falkirk.

Date of next meeting

AGM 27th June 2017 Municipal Buildings