



Notice of a public meeting of

Decision Session - Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Tourism

To: Councillor (Cabinet Member) Crisp
Date: Monday, 15 July 2013
Time: 4.00 pm
Venue: The John Carr Room - 3rd Floor, West Offices (T021)

A G E N D A

Notice to Members-Calling In

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item on this agenda, notice must be given to Democracy Support Group by;

Thursday 18 July at 4.00 pm if an item is called in after a decision has been taken.

Items called in will be considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations are to be received by Democratic Services on **Thursday 11 July 2013 at 5.00 pm.**

1. Declarations of Interest (Pages 3 - 4)
At this point in the meeting, the Cabinet Member is asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which she might have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)
To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 27 February 2013.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak at the meeting can do so. The deadline for registering is **Friday 12 July 2013 at 5.00 pm.**

Members of the public may register to speak on :-

- an item on the agenda
- an issue within the Cabinet Member's remit;

Information reports are listed at the end of the agenda.

4. Lease of Land to York Racecourse (Pages 13 - 20)

This report asks the Cabinet Member to approve the extension of the lease of the Racecourse by one third of an acre after consideration of objections and comments received in response to public advertisement of this.

5. Vision for Parks (Pages 21 - 30)

This report seeks the approval of the Cabinet Member to a refreshed vision for York's parks and gardens in light of the changing resources available to the Council to operate and maintain these key assets.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Cabinet Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name- Judith Betts

Telephone No.- 01904 551078

Email-judith.betts@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business on the agenda
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above.

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Would you like to speak at this meeting?

If you would, you will need to:

- register by contacting the Democracy Officer (whose name and contact details can be found on the agenda for the meeting) **no later than 5.00 pm** on the last working day before the meeting;
- ensure that what you want to say speak relates to an item of business on the agenda or an issue which the committee has power to consider (speak to the Democracy Officer for advice on this);
- find out about the rules for public speaking from the Democracy Officer.

A leaflet on public participation is available on the Council's website or from Democratic Services by telephoning York (01904) 551088

Further information about what's being discussed at this meeting

All the reports which Members will be considering are available for viewing online on the Council's website. Alternatively, copies of individual reports or the full agenda are available from Democratic Services. Contact the Democracy Officer whose name and contact details are given on the agenda for the meeting. **Please note a small charge may be made for full copies of the agenda requested to cover administration costs.**

Access Arrangements

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interpreter providing sufficient advance notice is given. Telephone York (01904) 551550 for this service.

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Holding the Cabinet to Account

The majority of councillors are not appointed to the Cabinet (39 out of 47). Any 3 non-Cabinet councillors can 'call-in' an item of business following a Cabinet meeting or publication of a Cabinet Member decision. A specially convened Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) will then make its recommendations to the next scheduled Cabinet meeting, where a final decision on the 'called-in' business will be made.

Scrutiny Committees

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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- Relevant Council Officers get copies of relevant agenda and reports for the committees which they report to;
- York Explore Library and the Press receive copies of **all** public agenda/reports;
- All public agenda/reports can also be accessed online at other public libraries using this link

<http://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Cabinet Member Decision Session: Leisure, Culture and Tourism

Agenda Item 1: Declarations of Interest

The Cabinet Member, Councillor Crisp, declared a personal interest as a retired member of UNISON.

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	DECISION SESSION - CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE & TOURISM
DATE	27 FEBRUARY 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR CRISP (CABINET MEMBER)
IN ATTENDANCE	COUNCILLORS BARTON, REID, TAYLOR, WATSON

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Cabinet Member was asked to declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests other than her registered interests that she might have had in the business on the agenda.

She declared a personal interest as a retired Member of Unison and a member of the Regional Arts Council, in relation to those agenda items where funding was provided by the Arts Council.

49. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 8 May 2012 be signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

50. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been three registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme, all in relation to agenda item 6 (York Museums Trust (YMT) Scrutiny Review Final Report).

Councillor Reid, Chair of the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee, commended the review and expressed her thanks to the work of the Task Group and confirmed that the Committee were supportive of the recommendations. She stressed the need for the collections to be retained in an acceptable way but also the importance of dealing with disposals and the need for a policy to cover this.

Councillor Taylor, member of the YMT Task Group, stated that the review had been an important piece of work to undertake as City of York Council were the ultimate guardians of the YMT collections. He confirmed that since the report had been presented to Cabinet, they had had to opportunity to meet with the Cabinet Member and relevant officers and were now comfortable that any issues had been resolved.

Councillor Watson, also on the YMT Task Group, advised that he was happy that the recommendations had been taken on board and cited the review as a good example of how scrutiny can be carried out.

51. YORK800: REVIEW AND LEGACY PLANS

The Cabinet Member received a report which reviewed the programme of activities that were undertaken in York as part of the York800 celebrations: including the two royal visits, the Olympic torch and Paralympic lantern relays. It also set out the aspirations and plans for continuing the cultural and community legacy in 2013 and beyond.

The Head of Culture, Tourism and City Centre advised the Cabinet Member that York 800 had exceeded their expectations and had been a success on all themes. She drew the Cabinet Member's attention to paragraph 30 of the report which detailed the legacy of York 800 including the involvement of strategic partners across the city from an early stage, the strong internal CYC team with membership from across the Council, the decision to be open and flexible regarding the use of the logo and branding of York 800, engagement with local media and recognition that as we move forward that outcomes cannot be achieved with CYC resources alone, but by working with partners a new culture of volunteering in the city has been developed.

The Cabinet Member expressed her thank to officers, York@Large, York residents and volunteers for their part in making York 800 a success. She noted that many events would be running again this year due to their success and Buskival would become an annual event.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Cabinet Member's comments on the effectiveness of the York 800 programme and her support for the principles outlined in taking the legacy forward be recognised.

REASON: To support the development of a world class cultural offer and build stronger more participative communities

52. YORK GOLD 2012: REVIEW AND LEGACY PLANS

The Cabinet Member received a report which reviewed the programme of activities that had been undertaken in York to support the Cultural Olympiad, the Olympic Games, and Paralympic Games held in London during the summer of 2012. The report also set out the aspirations and plans for continuing the sporting and community legacy of the games in 2013 and beyond.

The Head of Sports and Active Leisure briefed the Cabinet Member on the range of events which had been organised by the Sport and Active Leisure Team during the year, and the legacy of York Gold 2012, in promoting increased participation in sport and healthy lifestyles, creating new opportunities for disabled people, creating a new generation of community and elite sports facilities, encouraging a new culture of volunteering, establishing a reputation as a home for excellent sporting events and links to world class sport, and re-energising school sport.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged that the Cultural Olympiad and Olympic and Paralympic Games had brought many opportunities to York. She expressed her thanks to officers, especially the Sport and Leisure Team, and communities for the overriding success of York Gold 2012. She noted the legacy opportunities and the increase in the drive in community accessible sports.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Cabinet Member's comments on the effectiveness of the York Gold 2012 programme and her support for the principles outlined in taking the legacy forward be acknowledged.

REASON: To promote active and healthy lifestyles, cultural engagement and development of stronger communities within the city.

53. YORK MUSEUMS TRUST SCRUTINY FINAL REPORT

The Cabinet Member received a report which set out a recommended response from the Cabinet Member to the Learning and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee's report on "whether YMT have achieved appropriate collections management standards in line with the Collections Loan Agreement and Collections Management Protocol agreed in 2002".

The Cabinet Member explained that, following the Cabinet meeting, she had met with members of the York Museums Trust Scrutiny Review Task Group to clarify her concerns. Further to that meeting, the Cabinet Member had outlined the decision she intended to approve in response to the recommendations in the final report on the York Museums Trust Scrutiny Review. The Cabinet Member thanked the Task Group for their work on the review.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member agreed to:

(i) Request YMT to provide to the next meeting of the Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee a presentation on the key principles that their Acquisition and Disposal policy review will be based on - in order to help frame and support YMT's work on those revisions

(ii) Request YMT to provide a revised version of the Acquisition and Disposal policy for the Learning & Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee's consideration at their meeting in May 2013, prior to it being approved by the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism.

(iii) Note the willingness of YMT's Volunteers Manager to attend ward meetings / community events to identify ward residents who may have useful skills and to help facilitate the recruitment of additional volunteers

(iv) Ask YMT to provide for the Scrutiny Committee a brief report on their processes for training volunteers and passing on knowledge to enhance the training of new guides and volunteers

(v) Restate with YMT the relevant section of the legal agreement between YMT and the Council with regard de-accessioning unwanted / damaged / duplicate collection items, in order to provide clarity on the procedure and to allow the progression of work on the collections and the implementation of YMT's plans for the future.

(vi) Ask YMT to continue their bi-annual update reports to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, ensuring that they:

(i) Identify their progress against the Collections Loan Agreement and Collections Management Protocol agreed in 2002

(ii) Include information on any items disposed of since the last update report.

(vii) Note YMT's continued efforts to improve storage arrangements for the collections and continue to reflect the shared ambition to improve collections management and documentation in the next Partnership Delivery Plan.

REASON: To conclude the scrutiny review in line with the Council's Scrutiny procedures and protocols.

54. IMPROVING YORK GREEN SPACES: USE OF SECTION 106 FUNDS

The Cabinet Member received a report which sought her approval to use Section 106 payments that had already been received by the Authority to improve York's green spaces.

The Head of Parks and Open Spaces explained how Section 106 payments were received as part of the planning process and how these funds are invested in schemes . He drew the Cabinet Member's attention to the project list at Annex A which provided detailed of complete, ongoing and planned and possible new projects.

With regard to improving the transparency of the use of Section 106 funds, he confirmed that any Member can request to view this list at any time by contacting him.

He explained that from 2014, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would operate as one pot, driven by the local plan process, operating at different levels with neighbourhood plans feeding into it. He stated that this would result in larger scope and greater opportunities for accumulating funds for bigger projects. The Cabinet Member suggested it would be beneficial for Members to receive training on these changes in their role as Ward Councillors.

RESOLVED: That approval be given to the use of Section 106 funds on those schemes identified in Annex 1 of the report.

REASON: To meet the requirements of the planning process and Council ambitions.

55. RENEWAL OF THE YORKCARD

The Cabinet Member received a report which sought her approval for a re-launch of the YorkCard in April.

Officers advised that residents see the YorkCard as good value for money. They confirmed that there would be a modest price increase and explained that it was proposed that the York Card be renewable annually, with a personalised year for each resident depending on when was renewed.

The Cabinet Member expressed her support for the re-launch of the YorkCard. She acknowledged the need to increase the price of the card but agreed that it still remained good value for money. She voiced her pleasure that York residents in receipt of means tested benefits would be able to apply for a YorkCard free of charge stating this would encourage disadvantaged communities to engage more in sport and leisure due to significant discounts offered with the YorkCard.

RESOLVED: (i) That the re-launch of the YorkCard be agreed.

(ii) That the promotion of existing and new offers, as set out in the report, be approved.

REASON: To increase access by York residents to cultural provision and facilities

Councillor S Crisp, Cabinet Member
[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.45 pm].

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**Decision Session : Cabinet Member for
Leisure, Culture and Tourism**

15 July 2013

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture and Public Realm) and the Head of Asset and Property Management

Proposed Lease of Additional Land to York Racecourse**Summary**

1. York Racecourse Committee holds a 95 year lease of parts of the Knavesmire / Micklegate Stray from December 2010. The area exclusively occupied is approximately 20 acres and the Racecourse has applied to the Council to take into their lease an additional one third of an acre of the Knavesmire to permit the construction of improved facilities. Planning consent has been obtained for these works, but the Council is obliged to advertise the proposed disposal of additional open space for public comment, and this report is to put before the Cabinet Member the results of the public consultation accordingly.
2. The Cabinet Member is asked to approve that the lease extension should proceed.

Background

3. In January 2013 the Racecourse applied for Planning Consent for the following improvement works to their facilities which necessitated the expansion of their lease area by the one third of an acre now being considered:-

“Demolition of the existing north western perimeter wall, saddling boxes etc and construction of a new pre-parade ring and winning enclosure, erection of a new perimeter wall, saddling stalls and associated equine facilities including vets’ accommodation, and the provision of a replacement path and associated landscaping.”

4. Planning and Conservation Area consent was given for these works on the 18 of April 2013 reference 13/00090/FUL.
5. As well as providing new and improved facilities, the new pre-parade ring will enable the horses to be kept away from visitors to the Racecourse and be retained on the Racecourse side of the pedestrian entrance points. This will improve public safety. The additional part of the Knavesmire that would need to be enclosed by the Racecourse to do these works is shown by red verge on the attached plan, and the new replacement access to the Knavesmire for the public and the Council is hatched in purple.
6. Because the one third of an acre, verged red, is held for open space purposes, the proposed incorporation of this into the Racecourse lease must be advertised as a disposal of open space under the provisions of Section 123 to the Local Government Act 1972. This matter was published in the York Press on 14 and 21 May 2013 and any public comments or objections were invited by 11 June 2013.
7. The following responses were received:
 - (a) A letter of objection from Mr H of Dringhouses who has questioned whether the disposal accords with the Micklegate Strays Act of 1907.
 - (b) An email on behalf of the Ramblers concerned at the apparent loss of footpath access to the Knavesmire.

Analysis

8. In response to the letter from Mr H, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services it is confirmed that the Micklegate Stray Act 1907 does permit the Council to lease such parts of the Stray as may be necessary for racing purposes, in Section 17. It should be noted that Mr H may wish to address the meeting.
9. In respect of the comment from the Ramblers concerning the footpath access to the Knavesmire, also used for maintenance and access to the sports pitches, it is confirmed that a replacement access will be provided before the existing is closed, and this is the route hatched purple on the attached plan. A reply has been sent to this effect, and any further communication will be reported.

10. During the consultation for the planning application earlier this year, a positive public meeting was held by the Racecourse and no written objections were received during the planning process. Officers believe that the works are reasonably necessary for the proper and safe management of the Racecourse and that the one third of an acre applied for to extend the lease is the minimum necessary for implementation.

Consultation

11. The responses to the public advertisement have been circulated to Ward Members, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and to the senior officers responsible for the management of the Strays. No objections to proceeding with the lease have been received from Members and Officers. The result of the public consultation is reported above in paragraph 7, ie one objection and one comment.

Council Plan

12. The investment by the Racecourse in this proposed development would contribute towards one of the Council's priorities, to Create Jobs and Grow the Economy.

Implications

13. Implications arising from the report are as follows:
 - **Financial** – there are no material financial implications: A small additional rent would be obtained for the Council, to be approved by the Head of Asset and Property Management.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** – there are no HR implications.
 - **Equalities** – there are no Equalities implications. The proposed works will improve safety at the Racecourse for all.
 - **Legal** – there are no legal implications. Documentation will be dealt with in house.
 - **Crime and Disorder** – there are no crime and disorder implications.
 - **Information Technology (IT)** – there are no IT implications.
 - **Property** – There are no material implications in proceeding with this lease extension.

- There are no other implications arising from this small lease extension.

Recommendation

14. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the extension of the lease of the Racecourse by one third of an acre in order to incorporate the proposed works and improvements under Planning Consent 13/00090/FUL, after due consideration of the objections and comments received.

Reason: So that the proposed investment by the Racecourse in its facilities at York may proceed in order to retain the status of the facility and to and improve public and equine safety.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer:

Charlie Croft
Assistant Director (Communities,
Culture and Public Realm)

**Report
Approved**

Date
24/6/
13

Ward Affected: Micklegate

Specialist Implications

Officer(s) : None.

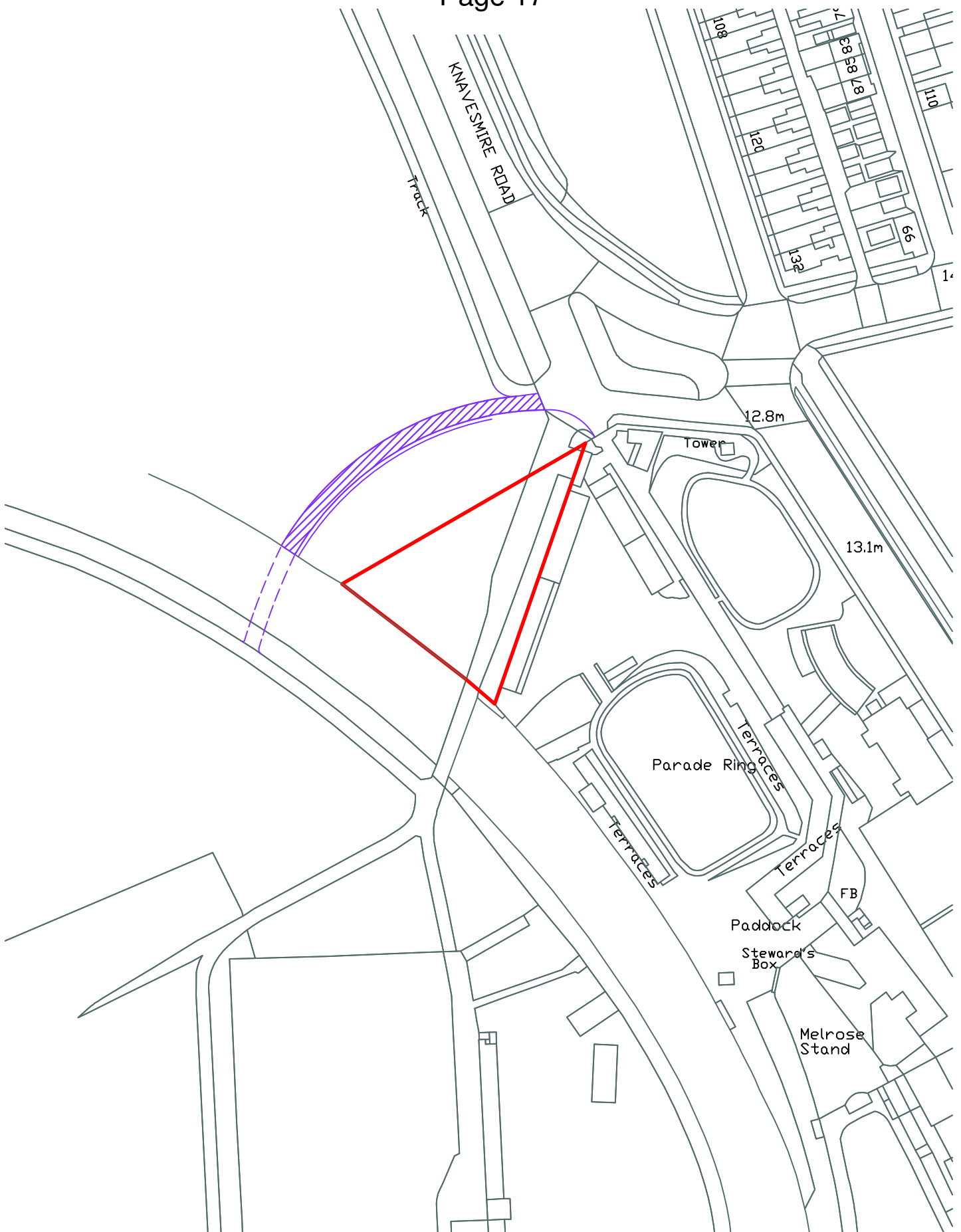
For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

The public advertisement for the disposal of open space and papers attached thereto.

Annex

Plan



CITY OF YORK COUNCIL
 Asset & Property Management
 CBSS
 West Offices,
 Station Rise,
 York, YO1 6GA

Contact
 Tel No:
 FAX No:
 Email:

Job Title
**York Racecourse
 Lease Plan For
 Parade Ring
 Improvements**

Drawn GR	Checked	Authorised
Date 27/06/2013	Scale@A4 1/1250	
Issue Status:		
Drawing Number E00796_B01_6B	Revision	

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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YORK
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
SECTION 123
PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC OPEN
SPACE
LAND ADJOINING THE NORTH-WEST
BOUNDARY
OF THE RACECOURSE, KNAVESMIRE
ROAD, YORK

Acting under its powers in the above legislation. Notice is hereby given that the Council of the City of York intends to dispose of 0.13 hectares (0.33 acres) of land on a 92 year lease. The land is proposed to be added to land already included in a lease to York Racecourse LLP.

A plan of the land involved and statement of reasons is available for inspection on weekdays at the Reception to West Offices, Station Rise, York from 8.30 am to 5 pm (4.30 on Fridays) from 14th May to 7th June 2013 and can also be viewed between these dates on the Council website at [www.york.gov.uk/Business in York/Commercial Property](http://www.york.gov.uk/Business%20in%20York/Commercial%20Property)

For further information. Please contact David Baren on 01904 553306 or email david.baren@york.gov.uk Any objections to or comments on the proposed disposal should be sent by 11th June 2013 (noon).
Dated 14th May 2013

PHILIP CALLOW
HEAD OF ASSET & PROPERTY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YORK
WEST OFFICE, STATION RISE,
YORK YO1 6GA

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**Decision Session - Cabinet Member for
Leisure, Culture and Tourism**

15th July 2013

Report of the Assistant Director (Communities, Culture and Public Realm)

Future Direction and Vision for York's Parks and Gardens

Summary

1. This report seeks the approval of the Cabinet Member to a refreshed vision for York's parks and gardens in light of the changing resources available to the Council to operate and maintain these key assets.

Background

2. The Council has over 200 green spaces in its care. These range in size from the Knavesmire to small street corner spaces, and cover a diverse range of landscapes from lakes, nature reserves and woods, to allotments, sports pitches and play areas.
3. Within this portfolio there are five traditional formal parks and gardens: Rowntree Park, West Bank Park, Hull Road Park, Clarence Gardens and Glen Gardens. For the last 10 years it has been the ambition of the service to have each of these sites maintained and operated to Green Flag standards. Green Flag is the national benchmark for quality for green spaces; the scheme is operated on behalf of the Government by Keep Britain Tidy. Each year sites are inspected by independent judges or mystery shoppers to ensure that standards are being met. See <http://greenflag.keepbritaintidy.org>
4. Four sites have consistently met the standard: Rowntree Park, West Bank Park, Clarence Gardens and Glen Gardens, with significant progress made in Hull Road Park towards meeting the standard. Rawcliffe Country Park which has a more informal landscape and a greater emphasis on nature conservation also holds the award.

5. The ability to maintain a blanket approach to standards is now under pressure following the government's reduction in funding for local authorities. As part of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 budget round some £20m has been cut from the Council budget, with public realm budgets which include parks and open spaces, contributing £750k to this. Changes of this magnitude inevitably require a different approach to the operation of parks. In the case of West Bank Park, Hull Road Park, Clarence Gardens and Glen Gardens, for example, the Council can no longer afford to staff these sites at all times and can no longer lock them overnight.
6. If our parks and gardens are to continue to flourish in the face of these challenges a greater level of community involvement in the management and operation of the parks will be essential. The community can play a critical role in ensuring that their parks are developed and animated in ways that meet their needs and in providing input through volunteering to add to the quality of the environment.
7. Community involvement in York's green spaces is not new: the friends groups at Rowntree Park and West Bank Park have been in existence for nearly 20 years. More recently Tang Hall Residents Association have invested estate improvement money in Hull Road Park, the bowlers at Clarence and West Bank have invested their funds into the sites, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust have instigated community food growing projects at Glen Gardens and Hull Road Park. Across the public realm Community Payback carry out maintenance work and York Cares facilitate company team challenge events. This is a strong base to build upon.

A Vision for York Parks and Gardens

8. The Council Plan sets out an ambition to engage the community and the voluntary sector in the provision of Council services. Co-production is a new vision for public services where, recognising people as assets, services deliver alongside users, their families and their neighbours in partnership, harnessing their capabilities and involving the community more deeply in service form and delivery.
9. To deliver this there is a need for a fundamentally different approach to leading the way parks and gardens are planned, looked after, and animated.

The traditional delivery model has to be reversed with the community taking a leading role supported by the Council.

10. For parks and gardens the following is proposed:
11. What is the vision? York's parks and gardens will be quality green spaces with a strong sense of community "ownership" and management to ensure that they meet the needs of local communities. They will be well used and animated with a wide range of activity.
12. What will it look like? Each site will have a Green Flag flying under-pinned by strong community leadership.
13. Who is going to make it happen?
 - The Council's Public Realm service will:
 - Provide the strategic overview and agree with the community the management plan for each site.
 - Ensure that the sites are safe e.g. inspecting and caring for trees, playgrounds, power supplies, water quality. Providing building and infrastructure maintenance e.g. drainage, footpaths.
 - Allocate section 106 funds to increase access to and capacity of sites
 - Deploy a mobile team to undertake core horticultural maintenance tasks e.g. grass cutting, hedge maintenance, shrub and flower beds
 - Provide seasonal bedding and replacement planting
 - Use the skills of Smarter York officers to support the community to become more involved and self-confident so they take a lead in the management of the sites and carry out more task themselves
 - Use the skills of the horticultural team to train users and the community in gardening skills – turf maintenance, planting, pruning, etc.
 - Provide support to the community in tackling issues such as anti-social behaviour
 - Other Council teams who will assist:

- The Communities and Equalities team will provide links into local Resident Forums, associations and other community groups to help get all sections of the community involved
- The Play Officer will commission free holiday activities in parks that i) the children and young people will be able to carry on, on their own, afterwards thus creating more long-term activity in parks ii) that get the participants involved in improving the park before and after their events
- The Sport & Active Leisure team will generate activities in the parks to showcase what is on offer and act as links to local communities and sports clubs.
- Libraries will provide information services, Wi-Fi and catering options
- Arts and Events Team will encourage appropriate events and festivals to take place that bring the parks to life
- Partners who will assist:
 - Community Payback will undertake simple maintenance tasks
 - York Cares will broker company and big team challenge days
 - Wildlife charities will bring specialist skills and access to funding opportunities
- The community will:
 - Take an overview of how the park is managed and developed
 - Fund-raise for specific projects and community lead developments
 - Find new uses for the spaces such as food growing
 - Manage and maintain specific facilities e.g. tennis courts, bowling greens and buildings by taking bookings, providing caretakers and key holders, and funding improvements
 - Maintain specific sections or areas of the site by gardening, planting, weeding, edging off

- Carry out work as volunteers across a range of functions – management, events, maintenance
 - Run events such as summer fairs
 - Involve all user groups in order to create a sense of “ownership” and tackle anti-social behaviour
14. It is suggested that this vision is not restricted to the five formal parks and gardens. This approach can be developed for smaller sites that in themselves do not qualify for the Green Flag award as they do not have the range of facilities required, but would benefit from the adoption of this aspiration.

Consultation

15. In light of the above a series of councillor briefings, discussions with local community representatives, and meetings with friends groups and key users has taken place over the last few months.
16. Two principles were endorsed through this process:
- That the community needs to take a lead role in the future development of parks and gardens to ensure that these facilities continue to flourish and to develop in line with the needs of communities.
 - That the quality of the sites will continue to be judged through the Green Flag award.
17. West Bank Park The key action points were:
- That the Summer Fair of the 30th June be used to raise the issues facing the park, seek new members for the Friends and interest in the community running 2014 Summer Fair.
 - That the former parks property at 14 New Lane has the potential to be come a community hub and heritage centre from which greater community ownership and activity within the park would be possible. Two local residents are leading this with the support from appropriate council officers. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3Ha1I7PBwE>
 - Additional security measures may be required for the parks buildings and the views of the Police Architectural Liaison officer be sought.

18. Hull Road Park The key action points were:

- That the Tang Hall Residents Association will take the lead in exploring a community management model for the park.
- That the former park ranger pavilion be the focus of investment and effort this summer using Tang Hall Residents Association and section 106 funds to deliver a community hub.
- Community input into the improvement programme will focus on the pavilion, re-use of the bowling greens, additional footpaths, improvements to the beck, possible lighting and formalised, cycle path.
- That the Summer Fair of the 3rd August be used to promote the role of Tang Hall Residents Association and the improvement programme.
- The Residents' Association offered to take responsibility for talking further to local residents (especially those whose houses front onto the park) about their views of the local community locking / unlocking the park.
- The park should be integral to the delivery of Big Local lottery programme for Tang Hall.

19. Clarence Gardens The key action points were:

- That the two local residents association can act as a gateway into the local community, and that the York St John University can also contribute to the debate about the Gardens.
- A starting point for greater community input into the improvement programme could be a refresh of the play area (much of the equipment is now looking dated and is getting towards the end of its economic life).
- That the further work is required to test out the local community's interest in locking / unlocking of the Garden.
- Additional security measures may be required for the buildings and bowling greens and the views of the Police Architectural Liaison officer be sought.

20. Glen Gardens The key action points were:

- That the potential exists to create a "friends of" or community panel based on the work by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to establish a food growing programme in the Gardens.

- A starting point for greater community input into the improvement programme will focus on the play area.
- That the further work is required to test out the communities' interest in locking / unlocking of the Garden, and / or solely the play area.
- Additional security measures may be required for the buildings and bowling green and the views of the Police Architectural Liaison officer be sought.
- That the further work is required to support the bowls community to come together to form an association to manage the greens in 2014.
- That Heworth Tennis Club is interested in managing the two courts on behalf of the Council and is prepared to upgrade the courts in return for a suitably long lease e.g. 10 years.

Next Steps

21. In order to progress the vision the first step will be to get the necessary community structures and organisation in place, working with and through existing organisations such as the Tang Hall Residents Association, as appropriate. The first things to talk about will be responding to the challenges and issues identified above including exploring community interest in locking and unlocking of sites, any additional security requirements, external funding opportunities and community maintenance, events and activities.

Options

22. The options available to the Cabinet Member are:
 - Option 1: Agree to the vision and work plan set out above
 - Option 2: Suggest further and/or alternative proposals for inclusion in the work plan

Analysis

23. Option 1 is recommended as it will provides a comprehensive response to the challenges that the service is facing, it sets out a refreshed vision within which the service can be judged and provides a way to meet community need whilst delivering the savings required through the Council's budget process.

Bowls

24. A petition of 568 signatures has been presented to officers on behalf of Clarence Gardens Bowling Association objecting to the Council's decision to charge £2,000 rental per green from April 2014. There have also been a number of representations in writing on this issue.
25. The key points about bowls are:
 - Each green costs the Council around £7k per annum to maintain. The Council has had to make some extremely difficult financial decisions in the face of the enormous savings that we have to make. Under the circumstances, a charge of £2,000 is more than reasonable. It is the norm for other outdoor sports clubs to pay their own way in terms of the costs of their facilities whereas with bowls the Council will continue to provide a very large subsidy. In addition, a number of clubs enjoy use of additional facilities such as pavilions at no charge.
 - The charge will be introduced next year and will be the only charge for use of the green. Clubs have the choice of doing their own maintenance and using the green at no charge if they prefer.
 - For a club with a healthy level of membership a charge of £2,000 would represent a very modest charge per person for a season's bowling (late April to mid September) when divided amongst the membership. The real issue, however, is that the sport is in serious decline. Many clubs have folded in recent years, (and several greens have closed) and some remaining clubs have dwindled to only a handful of active members.
 - Clearly it is important that we have healthy bowls clubs in the city capable of managing their affairs and promoting the sport to future generations. To assist with this our Sport and Active Leisure Team have recently run a session for our bowls clubs covering club development issues such as recruitment of members and fundraising. We will continue to offer a support package for clubs covering training and development on governance, development of facilities, membership recruitment and retention, and, via the national governing body, funding opportunities.

- In addition the Public Realm team are able to provide support to clubs through horticultural training including grass cutting, machinery use and specialist fine turf operations.
- Clearly a number of clubs now face a decision: either to get themselves into a viable state, to merge with other clubs, or to fold. Where clubs choose to fold we will use the land for other leisure facilities for which there is real demand and which do not place an unreasonable demand on the Council Tax payer. An example of this would be creating additional allotments for which we currently have long waiting lists.
- Associations and Clubs will be asked to confirm their intentions for the 2014 season this September; this will determine what winter maintenance is undertaken.

Council Plan

26. The actions set out in the report contribute to the following corporate priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2011-15:
- Building stronger communities - by encouraging and involving residents and users in green space design and management. And, by supporting the voluntary sector and creating volunteering opportunities.
 - Protecting the environment by enhancing green space for public, wildlife and habitat benefit and making spaces more accessible

Implications

27. **Financial** – The approaches outlined in this paper will contribute to savings as outlined in paragraph 5 above. Site based investments will be reported through the annual work plan and Section 106 updates. Should additional security measures be required this will be considered as part of the Council's annual capital allocation (CRAM) process this autumn.
28. **Legal and Property** - Where specific projects have property implications e.g. lease or lettings Legal and Property Services will be involved in any arrangements.
29. **Equalities** - The initial community impact assessment indicates that key equalities issues will concern ensuring that all parts of the community are enabled to participate in community led initiatives.

These issues will be addressed in conjunction with the action plan for neighbourhood engagement and in respect of each initiative where relevant.

30. There are no additional Human Resources, Crime and Disorder, or Information Technology implications over and above those outlined in the body of the report.

Risk Management

31. There are no identified risks associated with the work plan in the report. Any changes to site operations are likely to be within the normal bounds of open space management and no different from other area of public land in the city.

Recommendations

32. The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the vision set out in paragraphs 11 to 14.

Reason: To deliver excellent parks and gardens in York.

Contact Details

Author:	Chief Officer Responsible for the report:			
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	Report Approved	✓	Date	2.7.13.
Specialist Implications Officer(s): N/A				
Wards Affected:			All	✓
For further information please contact the author of the report				

Background Papers: None

DECISION SESSION – CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE & TOURISM

Monday 15 July 2013

Annex of Additional Comments received from Members and the Public since the agenda was published.

AGENDA ITEM	REPORT	RECEIVED FROM	COMMENTS
5	Future Direction and Vision for York’s Parks and Gardens	Erica Deighton	<p>I write as a bowler from the York Police Bowls Club. In 2012 we were evicted you might say from what had for several years been our “home ground” at Connaught Court Masonic Home.</p> <p>With help from Sports and Development at COYC, for which we were most grateful, we gained a new home at Scarcroft Green for this 2013 season, however, we now find that our situation is likely to be repeated. The Council must have been aware at that time and probably sometime before of the budget shortfall and the decision to charge £2000 per green, so why not make the individual clubs and their respective Associations aware of it back in 2012 or earlier. I have already emailed Dave Meigh with my thoughts on the matter, and can only see you taking money from bowlers to pay for grand schemes to bring the York Parks up to “Green Flag Status.</p> <p>As I have already said in the aforementioned email, the meeting on 25th June was a total farce, apart from the fact that COYC appear to have no knowledge of the individual clubs and where they play, hence an invite to someone representing indoor bowls from Thanet Road. The whole meeting was geared around ridiculous offers of courses to aid development, health and safety, or how to be a club chairman etc etc (all of which had to be paid for) to clubs of 10 or 12 members. We play bowls because we love the sport ...and the challenge and comradeship in</p>

AGENDA ITEM	REPORT	RECEIVED FROM	COMMENTS
			<p>attempting to beat the team who last beat ours...the whole ethos of sport in general.</p> <p>The majority of bowlers by nature are of the almost or already retired generation along with the inevitable drop in income. Dave Meigh has said he needs to know the Associations/Clubs decision by the end of this bowling season and will stop green maintenance for any who can't pay. At this late stage in the process, it is too late to apply for grants from whatever body and any application sent earlier this year would probably not yet have had a decision. With insufficient funds, to pay £2000 per green, correspondingly, we would not have the funds to pay for machinery or fertilisers to do our own maintenance, but being forewarned of your intentions, this may well have been an option. £2000 per green may well be a fair amount to pay against the £7000 you say it costs to maintain each, but with such a short time span for the Associations and clubs to come to any decisions this has become a fait accompli!!</p> <p>In a recent letter to Malcom Dewhirst of SGA on June 18th, Charlie Croft wrote that it was important we have healthy bowls clubs in the city capable of managing their affairs and promoting the sport to future generations. In taking this action, you will more than likely kill off a high percentage of clubs leaving little or no competition for those remaining let alone an option for future generations, unless of course they become gardeners and use the newly created allotments where once stood bowling greens.</p> <p>Please give this matter a lot of consideration before making such a drastic decision!!!</p>