

Adults, Leisure & Culture Select Committee

A meeting of Adults, Leisure & Culture Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 26th July, 2006.

Present: Councillor Fletcher (Chairman), Councillors Cherrett, Dixon, Faulks, Frankland, Miss Inman, Lynch, Mrs Norton, Perry, Smith, Womphrey and Woodhead (vice Councillor Laing) and Mr T Maxwell (Diocesan Representative);

Officers: R Kench (CESC); G Mallory and D Lynch (DNS); Miss S Connolly and Mrs T Harrison (LD).

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Councillors Laing and Rix; Mr P Beach and Ms S Moloney (Parent Governor Representatives).

440 Draft Minute held on 12th July 2006

Members were to receive the draft minutes from the Democratic Services Officers via e-mail after the meeting for their approval.

CONCLUDED that subject to any amendment being made by Members, the minutes would be forwarded to Council

441 Performance Review Issues

Review of Performance Issues

Members considered whether there were any performance issues to discuss.

CONCLUDED that there were no performance review issues to discuss.

442 Review of Preston Park and Hall

Review of Preston Park and Hall

Members were advised that the representative invited to provide evidence on behalf of Events was not attending. An apology was provided by Mr Kench.

An invitation would be extended for a representative for Events to attend and provide evidence at the next meeting -17th August.

Members were also advised that Mr Mallory (Architectural Manager) had been invited to provide evidence in place of Mr Jackson and Miss Short of Planning services.

Mr Mallory provided Members with a plan which dealt with possible future developments in the park.

There was a backlog of work to be done including the winter garden, which caused concern. Government Office North East (G.O.N.E) had eventually approved the work under listed building consent which would make it a costly repair; however an application for a lottery grant had been submitted and was

going well.

The Lodges and Aviary would be dealt with but the aviary was currently used by the Rangers to look after endangered species. The café, Butterfly World, model railway and golf hut were all privately occupied. The toilets were the responsibility of Service Stockton but Mr Mallory advised that his department had carried out an assessment of their own of the toilets and advised that they would be improved.

It was envisaged that tenants of the houses in the grounds of the park would remain but would be the responsibility of Tristar.

Mr Mallory responded to the questions regarding the opportunities in the building that were not being exploited, access issues and the usefulness of the layout. He advised that:

- A number of heating and mechanical problems had been identified.
- Disabled access existed but the need for improvements were acknowledged and was being looked into; however getting listed building consent and funding were difficult.
- Build could be reconfigured but they needed to be careful regarding listed building consent
- Access – North Lodge access was blocked off and the south side access was not adopted highway.

Members requested that a report be provided regarding the toilets and enquired whether user groups had been consulted in respect of the disabled access.

Mr Mallory advised that he would provide a report regarding the toilets and that they did consult with user groups but not on every scheme.

Mr Lynch addressed the committee advising that there were problems due to park visitors parking in residential areas during events at Preston Park noting that it had been investigated many times without a permanent solution being found. Police assisted by putting cones on Yarm Road; however they could not put cones in the residential areas as residents would also be prevented from parking and would be ticketed if they parked in a coned area.

Waiting restrictions, high curbs or bollards could be put in place on Yarm Road or the residential areas to limit or prevent unwanted parking.

Mr Lynch responded to the following questions:

Q1. & Q4. Could anything be done to redirect congestion away from Yarm Road that was created by large popular events and had the options for park and ride been explored? Events had tried park and ride with limited success. Mr Lynch was unsure whether the government provided funding for park and ride schemes and advised that he would investigate.

Q2.What options were available for traffic management? (Mini roundabouts, traffic lights?), A suggestion for a roundabout had been previously been considered, however Highways did not have the required budget of £400,000 - £500,000 to install a roundabout so Preston Park would need to provide the funding.

Q3.What was the possibility of utilising the Preston Lane entrance more often?
It was possible and the junction was capable but it would take more traffic through residential areas which would likely result in more future complaints.

Q5. & Q6.What public transport options were available and had other options for travelling to the park been explored? Preston Park was in walking distance from the train station and bus stops. They were also trying to improve cycle routes. A new bridge had been suggested from Preston Hall to Ingleby Barwick which would improve the access and form a more direct route.

Concluded that:

- 1.The presentations be noted.
- 2.A report be provided to Members regarding the toilets at Preston Park.
- 3.Mr Lynch would investigate whether the government would contribute to a park and ride scheme.
- 4.A representative of the Events Team will be invited to attend the next meeting to provide evidence.