

HATHERSAGE PARISH COUNCIL

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Hathersage Parish Council Swimming Pool Committee meeting, Tuesday 18 July 2023, 7.30 pm MINUTES

Present Councillors W Hanley (Chair), Alex Campbell, B Hanley, Tim Hill, Jane Marsden, Rosie Olle, Heather Rodgers

In Attendance Chris Cave, RFO to the Parish Council; Maura Sorensen, Clerk to the Parish Council; Mike Wellington, Leisure Services Manager (LSM)

- 037/23 Apologies for absence – none. Cllr Alex Campbell was welcomed to her first committee meeting.
- 038/23 To decide any variation in the order of business – none.
- 039/23 Declaration of interests – Mike Wellington, Leisure Services Manager (LSM) – pool staff.
- 040/23 **Public participation** - a period of not more than ten minutes for members of the public and Members of the Council to comment on any matter – no members of the public attended.
- 041/23 **CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTER:** as this item references a named individual it is minuted separately.
- 042/23 Minutes of the 13 June 2023 meeting were **confirmed** and actions arising from the minutes (*referenced in the Action Log*) **noted**.
- 043/23 **Pool Manager's Report**
- .1 **Operations and maintenance** (*specific operational and maintenance actions and updates also referenced in the Action Log*) **including:**
- **Showers:** all outdoor showers now fully operational. There had been no issues with the new installation. Indoor showers – all bar one now fully operational. Wrong parts had been sent for one of the indoor showers – awaiting receipt of the correct parts; contractor (Percival) to instal. The refurbished showers had worked well with the pool at capacity in June. Confirmed recent comms with pool users including an update on the showers. Suggested, in future, maintaining a clear record/chronology of faults and repairs undertaken.
 - **Tile repairs:** confirmed a recent meeting (LSM and Cllrs Hill and Rodgers) with the contractor (Cumberlidge) and agreement on a solution to make some further repairs where damage had been caused by a lip on the pool cover. A quote is awaited. Noted satisfaction with the work undertaken by Cumberlidge to date. The pool will have to close – likely for a minimum of three days – for the additional tiling work; suggested dates – first week in October - to be confirmed with Cumberlidge. Weather will be a factor with the work unable to be undertaken in rainy conditions.
 - **Planning works to be undertaken during pool closure (for tiling work) – and communications with pool users:** list of maintenance jobs/work to be compiled to include resurfacing the veranda; clearing out the space beneath the bandstand; removing scale/rust from bandstand supports. SPC Chair referenced a recent Future Lidos meeting at which Sandford Park Pool (Cheltenham) confirmed they close for a week, annually, for deep cleaning and maintenance work; a dog swim is offered before deep cleaning undertaken – SPC Chair suggested this would be very popular and would generate income - **ACTION: LSM to liaise with Sandford Park.** LSM referenced potential issues with a dog swim including dog hairs clogging filters. Reference made to emptying the pool - agreed not to empty it – noted costs involved, time taken to refill, and potential damage.

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Communications ACTION: LSM to inform season ticket holders about the planned closure (for up to a week).

- **Cleaning and painting of woodwork:** rain had prevented the contractor starting painting work; LSM liaising with contractor on dates.
 - **Incidents/first aid:** SPC Chair commented on the apparent increase in numbers of incidents. LSM confirmed all incidents are recorded. Noted, during the spell of fine weather in June, the pool had been particularly busy. Flagged that most incidents were very minor. Many involved children; one adult user had slipped on the veranda surface highlighting the need for re-sanding the veranda floor. Suggested this job, along with other maintenance work, be undertaken during the pool closure while tiling work is being done.
 - **Pool etiquette:** poster circulated – similar to the etiquette poster at Woodhall Spa Lido. Noted support from pool staff. Cllr Campbell queried the wording of the reference to swimmers ‘pushing off the wall’ - **ACTION: Cllr Campbell to liaise with LSM on wording.** Cllrs recommended laminating the poster – copies to be posted around the pool. Also suggested flagging pool etiquette with season ticket holders when winter season tickets are being sold.
 - **Merchandise:** Cllrs referenced areas around the pool where merchandise can be optimally displayed/publicised. Reiterated that any print material be laminated.
 - **Instances where pool users are refunded:** for the benefit of Cllr Campbell, Cllrs expanded on instances where refunds are offered.
- .2 **Staffing – lifeguard hours; monthly planning; training; recruitment.** Cllrs asked for a staff photo board to be set up; suggested this could be delegated to a staff member - **ACTION for LSM.** LSM referenced ongoing staff NPLQ renewals.
- .3 **Fundraising / Events / Marketing:** LSM referenced events ideas shared at a recent pool staff meeting and SPC Chair referenced comms with the pool user group, inviting them to share events ideas. Noted the success of the recent solstice event, and the continued popularity of night swims with the next scheduled swim having sold out. Cllrs shared other suggestions including end-of-season (summer and winter) celebratory events; and a July pool birthday celebratory event – **ACTION, LSM to share proposed event dates.**
- .4 **Bandstand and solarium condition report: received** a supplementary report. Noted a recent meeting (LSM and Cllrs Hill and Rodgers) with the contractor (Nashmead) who had undertaken the survey. Cllr Hill referenced additional external input corroborating the majority of recommendations in the Nashmead report. Referencing the recommendation to clean/remove rust/scale from the bandstand supports, Cllr Hill commented on the challenges of finding a contractor. Cllr Hill also flagged suggestions shared to address corrosion impacting stonework – installing a dehumidifier under the bandstand; additional air bricks. Agreed to look to schedule works during the period the pool is closed for tiling work. Flagged that, in clearing out the space beneath the bandstand, empty chlorine barrels/tanks will need to be disposed of appropriately – **ACTION, LSM to liaise with pool advisor on safe disposal. ACTION: Cllr Hill to liaise with Nashmead on details of contractors to undertake cleaning/descaling of the bandstand supports, and work to the veranda.** Suggested, if a contractor is procured to clean the bandstand supports, they also be asked to quote for similar work in the playing field (on the old slide and swings). RFO flagged that the bandstand – and associated maintenance costs etc - is the responsibility of the Parish Council (and does not come under the pool budget).
- .5 **Swim Club** and using summer session times for Hathersage families. Noted sessions have been publicised in the Parish magazine. LSM liaising with swim club leaders re supporting/monitoring.

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044/23 **Pool electronic entry system: next steps:** confirmed the Pool Operations Manager had had some initial training with further training scheduled – training to be cascaded to all pool staff. Aiming to have the system in place from 1 September.

045/23 **Finance**

- .1 **Finance Report: received** the RFO report. Noted the slight downturn in season ticket sales. Suggested the drop (22) in out of area sales was likely to be in part due to the increase in charges to High Peak users (related to the HPBC reduction in funding). Flagged that, since the report had been circulated, more season tickets had been sold. Cllrs emphasised the need for broad, continuous publicity including showcasing the benefits of holding a season ticket. Cllrs also suggested considering offering an end-of-season event to ticket holders. The RFO referenced a request from a pool supplier about discounting his season ticket or offering a benefit in kind (in relation to invoicing/payment for his work; confirmed the Council did not want to enter this arrangement. Cllr Hill commented that, in challenging times, ticket sales reflected well on pool staff and on pool promotion
The RFO flagged there are currently four paid-for advertising boards at the pool – down from 14 (over 10 years ago). Suggested seeking pool user group support with this – **ACTION, SPC Chair to review initial responses from members of the pool user group where individuals identified skills/experience – and seek support from those with marketing experience.**
- .2 **Winter Season Tickets - to consider and agree** pricing. Three options were proposed:
- keep prices the same as last year
 - increase prices by 5%
 - increase prices by 7.5%

Cllrs noted winter season tickets are very good value – and underpriced - acknowledged this is somewhat dependent on the number of times a week season ticket holders opt to swim. Although benchmarking (prices against a range of other pools) had not been undertaken, it was noted that charges at the nearest open-air pool were significantly higher. Cllrs acknowledged cost of living pressures on households. Suggested, once the pool electronic entry system is installed, and data on users and attendance gathered, considering whether tiered ticket charges could be introduced. Cllrs also suggested further consideration be given to providing access to those struggling to afford entry.

Agreed a 5% increase on charges for adult winter 2023-24 season tickets. No increase to charge for juniors – noted prices for juniors had been held at the same cost for a number of years.

Noted, when selling winter season tickets, purchasers be advised that pool temperatures cannot be guaranteed through the winter and that the pool may have to close in extreme or dangerous weather conditions - **ACTION for LSM.**

- .3 **Funding:** agreed to look in greater depth at potential sources of funding in conjunction with future planned expenditure e.g. around the heating project.
- .4 **High Peak Borough Council (HPBC):** the RFO flagged the need to continue to pursue a response from HPBC about future funding. SPC Chair agreed to liaise with one of the HPBC Hope Valley Councillors - **ACTION for SPC Chair.** Cllr Marsden referenced liaison with HPBC Hope Valley Cllr Collins on the issue of HPBC funding, and her disappointment with Cllr Collins response.

046/23 **Winter Season Timetable:** to **agree.** LSM tabled a slightly amended timetable – proposing late afternoon/evening opening 4pm to 8pm instead of 5pm to 9pm. Cllr Rodgers queried why the pool did not open at 7am at weekends; LSM noted the significant difference in 7am attendance on weekdays and at the weekend. LSM flagged the aquafun session (alternating floats and the inflatable) scheduled 4pm to 5pm on Wednesdays. Referencing pre-booking, the LSM suggested the majority of season ticket holders can book the sessions they want. Cllrs flagged issues for non-season ticket holders in pre-booking sessions. The LSM noted all sessions after 5pm (on the summer timetable) are free flow and that there are also some walk-in daytime sessions.

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Cllrs queried the 'Weston Park Session'. Noted this was originally intended for those with cancer (and publicised accordingly at Weston Park Hospital and elsewhere). Suggested opening this session out to those with other health conditions who could benefit; further consideration to be given to this including how and where it could be publicised. The revised winter timetable was **agreed**. Suggested highlighting sessions which do not need to be pre-booked with all pool users.

047/23 **Pool Heating Project – the next stage: received** a report on which Cllr Hill expanded. Noted that Leisure Energy (LE) had delivered what was asked of them however Cllrs also noted dissatisfaction with some elements of the delivery. Cllr Hill expanded on options outlined by LE, and the task list shared by LE for moving to stage two of the project. Cllr Hill referenced proposed next steps:

- planning permissions - confirming what would be acceptable to PDNPA
- exploring/investigating providers of air source and ground source heat options
- exploring funding options – suggested liaising with DDDC Community Voluntary Service (CVS)
- exploring potential contractors and project managers to take the project forward

Cllr Hill agreed to write to LE with a statement on the Council's current position on the project. Cllr Hill also emphasised the need to address loss of energy and water through filters (back flushing) – agreed to add this to an agenda at a future meeting.

The SPC Chair commended Cllr Hill for his work on the project to date and asked that he keep Cllrs updated on progress with the steps identified. Agreed the heating project will continue to be a standing agenda item.

Cllr Olle referenced positive comments from the PDNPA Head of Planning on the project proposals.

048/23 **Pool Photography Policy: to consider** any policy amendments. A copy of the current policy had been shared along with a proposed poster advising pool users on what they could/could not photograph, based on the poster from Woodhall Spa Lido. The LSM noted he had asked Woodhall Spa for a copy of their policy. Cllrs agreed to defer in-depth discussion to the August SPC meeting. Suggested tying-in pool staff safeguarding training with any amendments to the policy.

049/23 **Pool User Group:** noted questions put to users in the most recent survey included what users thought should be the maximum number of lane swimmers – the majority had suggested 12. **Agreed** the pool will set a maximum number of 12 - **ACTION for LSM**. SPC Chair to produce a report summarising outcomes from the survey.

050/23 **Engagement with other pool and leisure organisations and services**

.1 **Future Lidos Project:** reference had already been made to some discussions at a recent meeting. SPC Chair also noted the Jubilee Pool representative had referenced promotion of a 'pool passport' (recording visits to pools across the country); LSM to liaise further - **ACTION for LSM**.

.2 **Other organisations, projects or services:** no updates/news of other services.

051/23 **2023-2028 Pool Business Improvement and Renewal Plan:** consideration of project management of elements of the plan. **Agreed** to add maintenance works planned for the period of the pool closure for tiling work; and plans for promotion of merchandise and events - **ACTION for LSM**.

052/23 **Clerk** – there were no additional reports and/or correspondence.

053/23 Next meeting – **8 August 2023, 7.30pm**; items for the August meeting noted within the minutes.

Meeting ended 9.30pm

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