

Present: (Chairman), (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Alison Austin, Alan Bell, Anton Dani, Anne Dorrian, Deborah Evans, Paul Goodale, Martin Griggs, Neill Hastie, Brian Rush, Yvonne Stevens and Stephen Woodliffe

Officers –

Assistant Director - Support Services & Partnership, Operations Manager and Local Communities Development Officer & BTAC Grant Administrator

84 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Paul Goodale was appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

Present: Councillors Alison Austin, Alan Bell, Anton Dani, Anne Dorrian, Deborah Evans, Paul Goodale, Neill Hastie, Brian Rush and Stephen Woodliffe

Officers: Assistant Director - Support Services & Partnerships, Operations Manager, Local Communities Development Officer & BTAC Grant Administrator and Democratic Services Officer

85 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Stephen Woodliffe was appointed Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

86 APOLOGIES

There were apologies for absence from Councillor Viven Edge and Yvonne Stevens.

87 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2020 were agreed as a correct record, to be signed by the Chairman.

88 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Committee Members confirmed they had received an update from the Assistant Director - Regulation regarding illegal encampments.

89 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Stephen Woodliffe declared an interest in the Small Grant Application, as an ordinary member of Blackfriars Arts Centre and refrained from taking part and the debate on this item (Minute 92 refers).

90 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

91 BTAC 2020/21 FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2020

The Committee noted a report by the Accountancy Manager - Revenue and Systems, which provided an update of BTAC's financial position as at the end of October 2020 with the projected outturn (full-year spend) for the 2020/21 year, and the projected BTAC reserve at the year-end 31 March 2021.

The Chairman expressed satisfaction with the Committee's expenditure, representing a large part of the budget, which it had used to carry out significant work.

92 BTAC SMALL GRANT SCHEME

The Committee considered a report by the Local Communities Development Officer & BTAC Grant Administrator, which concerned an application made to the Small Grants Working Group.

The application was from Blackfriars Theatre Academy for an amount of £1,000 to organise and perform a socially distanced pantomime in January 2021. Funds would contribute towards the script and performance rights; costumes; sheet music and backing tracks, and set hire (3 back cloths). The project was time dependent and was to be delivered before the review of Round 1 applications, which was not due until February 2021.

In accordance with BTAC's Small Grants Scheme, the Committee's Small Grants Working Group had agreed the application was eligible for consideration and had decided to award the full amount, as shown in Table 2, which had been circulated to Members separately.

Councillor Stephen Woodliffe explained that, as a Member of the Working Group, he had abstained from the vote of the Working Group due to a potential conflict of interest, as he was an ordinary member of Blackfriars Arts Centre.

The funding would be allocated from the remaining 2019/20 grants budget of £1,694.33 with the balance being brought forward to the grants budget for 2020/21 or put back into BTAC's reserves.

Members supported the application, with views expressed in favour of helping businesses and organisations in the town to recover from the impact of the pandemic. The theatre was commended for its efforts to provide much needed entertainment for young people in the current circumstances.

Concerns were expressed about Covid-19 in terms of people attending a performance in a small theatre, though it was acknowledged that the centre would take the necessary precautions for the safety of the cast and audience. In response, it was explained that the pantomime was going to be filmed in various locations and transmitted to the homes of those who purchased tickets, an idea commended by Members.

Councillor Woodliffe abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: That the decision of the Small Grants Working Group to award £1,000 to Blackfriars Theatre Academy towards the cost of organising and performing a socially distanced pantomime in January 2021 in relation to the costs of the script and performance rights; costumes; sheet music and backing tracks, and set hire (3 back cloths) be endorsed.

93 BTAC ASSETS - PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

[Councillor Dorrian joined the meeting at 6.55 pm. Councillor Alison Austin left the meeting at 7 pm.]

The Operations Manager presented an annual update on improvements made to BTAC's open spaces.

Members had attended a tour of BTAC open spaces and play facilities on 21 August 2019. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, no tour was undertaken in the current year; however, the improvements previously identified, had continued to be delivered and the details were set out in the report.

Following the illegal encampment at Woodville Road in August 2020, the Committee met in September and Members requested details of how other vulnerable public open spaces could be protected from any future illegal encampment. An assessment had since been carried out on all BTAC open spaces to identify those that had a vulnerability to illegal encampments. These were identified at Garfit's Lane, Burgess Pit, Shelton's Field and Broadfield Lane, as shown in Appendix A, and the report set out a costed solution to improve security. The Committee was asked to approve a total of £14,947 funding for these improvements.

The report also provided information with respect to the 'wish list' for the remainder of 2020/21 and plans for the coming year 2021/22.

BTAC had supported the practice of considering environmental impacts in recent years through planting projects across its open spaces and support for groups such as Boston in Bloom. Further community orchards across the BTAC open spaces would continue to support the town in its endeavours to capture and reduce its carbon footprint. Members were asked to consider reallocating the £3,000 saved from the Woodville Road security-fencing project to enable an external grant application to Trees for Cities for match funding for the establishment of new community orchards.

The Open Space Consultation 2020 had been limited due to COVID-19 restrictions, but had provided valuable information to help make informed decisions on future development opportunities within open spaces. Details were set out at Appendix B. Members were asked to consider the approval of funding for one improvement in 2020/21, which was for £16,000 for the delivery of new outdoor gym equipment in Central Park, and to refer the future 'wish list' improvements to the BTAC Working Group for Open Spaces to cost up options for a future report.

There was a view that security fencing should have been provided long before now, particularly to ensure children were safe from traffic, and there was concern as to

whether the fencing was fit for purpose, as it had been installed in soil with only 300mm concrete bases.

The Operations Manager explained that pedestrian guardrail fencing had been used, the same type was installed at Pelican crossings. It acted as a deterrent and afforded reasonable prevention of illegal encampments. A procurement exercise had been undertaken, with those participating offering the same specification, and a recommended installer had carried out the work. The fencing would be routinely inspected and its condition would be monitored so that any damage would be quickly repaired.

There was a call to install the proposed CCTV camera at Woodville Road immediately, as it was felt to be imperative to deter illegal encampments, and it was proposed that this be added to the recommendation set out in the report. It was noted that the camera would require planning permission.

There was a call for assistance for Fenside from the Ward Members, particularly the lack of provision for children in the ward. Lobbying of the Lincolnshire Housing Partnership (LHP), in whose ownership some of the areas lay, had proved fruitless. Other Members and the Chairman agreed, though it was noted that the Woodfield Road play area was used by children from Fenside and three other wards. It was explained that consideration was being given to a play area in Fenside, but it was subject negotiations with a developer. Information would be forwarded to the Members and then all Committee Members could meet informally to discuss questions that could be put to LHP regarding its plans for the improvement of open spaces in Fenside at a future meeting.

The Chairman of the Open Spaces Working Group noted that BTAC could have proposed that security fencing be installed at play areas in the past. The lack of provision in Fenside was recognised, but the work carried out in BTAC's open spaces in general was commended. There was particular appreciation of the work of the Play & Physical Activity Officer who had worked tirelessly on consultation and implementation of schemes. The Chairman asked that officers relayed the Committee's thanks to that officer and all members of the team working on BTAC's open spaces.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update be noted.

2. That the following funding be approved:

- **£14,947 for open spaces security fencing improvements;**
- **£16,000 for new outdoor gym equipment for Central Park;**
- **£3,000 savings re-allocation from the savings from the installation of the security fencing at Woodville Road open space to create a Community Orchard; and**
- **£4,935 for the installation of a public realm CCTV camera at Woodville Road open space.**

3. That the future 'wish list' improvements be referred to the BTAC Working Group for Open Spaces to cost up options and present a future report to BTAC.

94 DRAFT BTAC ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

The Committee considered the draft BTAC Annual Report for 2019/20 before its submission to Full Council for approval and publication.

The Assistant Director - Support Services & Partnerships commented that BTAC had had a very successful year and could be proud of its achievements, which included match funding of almost £300,000 for events and new facilities in Central Park.

The Chairman congratulated Members and officers for these achievements and commended them for their hard work.

RESOLVED: That BTAC's Annual Report for 2019/20 be recommended to Full Council for approval and subsequent publication.

95 WORK PROGRAMME - STANDING ITEM

The Committee considered the work programme and it was agreed:

- Members would hold informal discussions with respect to meeting with the Lincolnshire Housing Partnership (LHP) on its plans for improvements in Fenside possibly at the Committee's meeting in March.
- To consider the Guildhall as a more appropriate venue for a committee for the town centre once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted.
- To consider a future agenda item on the market, to look at its structure and ideas for revitalising it in liaison with the Portfolio Holder.
- To consider supporting Haven High Academy in its efforts to make Marion Road a school street, permitting only vehicles belonging to residents, staff and emergency services to use the road during dropping off and picking up times, in order to encourage highway safety and social distancing. Representatives from the school could be invited to address the Committee. It was noted that the school had contacted the relevant County Councillor without response. This was a national initiative and it would be the first in the borough.
- To consider an update on fly-tipping, including use of the tip. It was noted that sickness absence due to the pandemic had impacted on performance.

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their work throughout the year and wished them all a safe and happy Christmas.

The Meeting ended at 8.20 pm