

Present: Councillor Sue Ransome (Chairman), Councillors Alison Austin, Anton Dani, Paul Gleeson, Martin Griggs, Yvonne Stevens, Nigel Welton and Stephen Woodliffe

In the absence of Councillor Evans, Councillor Paul Gleeson acted as Vice-Chairman for this meeting only.

Officers –

Head of Place and Space, Local Communities Development Officer & BTAC Grant Administrator and Senior Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance: County Councillor Paula Cooper

99 APOLOGIES

There were apologies for absence from Councillors Viven Edge, Ben Evans and Brian Rush.

100 MINUTES

The minutes of the Committee's last meeting, held on 27th February 2019, were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

101 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Head of Place and Space advised Members that:

- The Head of Regulatory Services was in contact with the Road Safety Partnership regarding attendance at a future meeting;
- A letter had been sent to Royal Mail advising them to stop dropping rubber bands and quoting the relevant legislation;
- Parts had been ordered to replace the ashtray removed from the Market Place and a bar from a litter bin near Curry's / PC World.

102 BTAC 2018/19 FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE

The Committee received the regular update report on the BTAC financial position, which set out the budget and projected outturn (full-year spend) for the 2018/19 year, and the projected BTAC reserve at the year end.

The budget and projected outturn position were detailed in Appendix 1. At the 11 months year to date, the projection for the full year was showing an under-spend of £71,726 and the report outlined the main reasons for this, primarily the amount of other expenditure of £48,664 to be allocated. The closing balance on BTAC's reserve monies was projected as £203,617 at 31 March 2019.

RESOLVED: That the projected financial position for the year and the reserve amounts at the year-end be noted.

103 BTAC GRANTS SCHEME

The Local Communities Development Officer and BTAC Grant Administrator presented additional information, as requested by the Committee at its last meeting, which had been provided by the Parish of Boston application in relation to its application for a BTAC grant.

At its last meeting on 27th February 2019, Members rejected the Parish of Boston's application for £15,000 towards the Schools Festivals element of the project and deferred its application for £3,000 for Community Building projects and £2,000 for Supporting the Arts Projects to request further information in terms of a breakdown demonstrating the proportion of residents of the BTAC area that would specifically benefit from the projects. This additional information was set out in Appendix A. The report to the Committee's last meeting was attached as Appendix B for reference.

The key points of the additional information provided by the Parish of Boston were that:

- An estimated 37% of visitors to The Stump resided in Boston Town Centre;
- According to projections, the project would lead to an additional 9,250 visits annually from people living within the BTAC area;
- 53% of The Stump's volunteers resided within town centre wards; and
- Approximately 50% of the community choir members resided within town centre wards

During Members' debate, the projects were fully supported and the work of the church in bringing people and communities together was recognised. However, it was remarked that a financial breakdown should have been provided and that it was not apparent how the projects represented value for money for BTAC residents. A suggestion that the application should be deferred until after the elections was not taken up as it had been before the Committee three times. There was a view that the new information made no difference in that the projects involved pastoral work that the church should be carrying out anyway.

RESOLVED that the Grants Application from the Parish of Boston for £3,000 Community Building projects and £2,000 for Supporting the Arts projects be refused.

104 BTAC WORKING GROUP REPORT: EVENTS

The Head of Place and Space presented an update by the Events Working Group on the 2018/19 programme of events and a summary of the events programme planned for the 2019/20 financial year, with budgeted financial breakdown attached, for the Committee to note and approve.

Following the increase in the number and breadth of the events programme, Boston was developing into a town more noted for its events, with a wide mix of family-oriented and more commercially-focused events. It appeared that local people were starting to stay within town to find activities and more visitors were also starting to travel from further afield to Boston for BTAC events, as previously reported.

The Events Team would continue to establish new relationships with businesses to create further sponsorship opportunities to support the costs of running events where feasible.

The current capacity within the Events Team was sufficient to deliver the 2019/20 programme. However, any ambition to expand the events programme further was likely to require additional resource in order to ensure it is delivered safely and further reporting to BTAC.

The Chairman of the Events Working Group asked that the four members of the public serving on the Group be formally recognised and thanked. Some events would not have taken place without them; they had carried out the work in their own time, saving officer time. It was good to see families attending free events in the park and even free events would have helped finances through the increase in car parking income. Some events made a profit, but the free events were enjoyed and generated goodwill. The Committee needed to keep up the momentum. Individual events could be considered in terms of a cost and benefits analysis to decide whether to hold them again. The Council had received 17 compliments relating to events and no complaints. The Working Group had done a fantastic job and the Committee was urged to continue to fund events.

Other Members echoed these views. The Committee's decision to reinvigorate the town had worked; BTAC Members and members of the public had worked hard, people had attended events and others had returned to the town. It was suggested the Committee should now try to take steps to hold major events to attract people from other countries.

Members expressed appreciation of the work of the members of the Working Group, particularly the volunteers involved who had given their own time. They had brought people together and there had been a marked improvement in events. It was important to continue holding free events for those already paying for them through the BTAC precept and there was general agreement that there should be some much larger events.

The Chairman of the Events Working Group confirmed that the situation where three different prices had been advertised for one of the events would not reoccur; pricing had been re-examined and had been simplified.

[Councillor Alison Austin arrived at 6.55 pm]

Another view was expressed that it would be beneficial for the town if there were more ideas in terms of encouraging integration of the communities from the many different nationalities in Boston, perhaps relating to food and/or music, and that these should be well publicised.

Action: JC/Chairman

Send letters of thanks to the members of the public serving on BTAC's Events Working Group in recognition of their hard work and achievements.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The outcomes of the 2018/19 events programme be noted and approved.**
- 2. The planned programme of events for the 2019/20 financial year be approved.**

105 BTAC WORKING GROUP REPORT: PLAY AREA IMPROVEMENTS

The Head of Place and Space presented a report from BTAC's Play Area Working Group, which outlined the outcomes of the Open Spaces Working Group's proposals for the use of £40,000 allocated to support Open Spaces improvements.

Following the 2018 play site tour, BTAC Members requested details of potential future play area improvements to BTAC play areas to enable the Committee to continue its investment in outdoor play areas.

At its meeting on 30 January 2019, the Committee proposed that £40,000 be allocated to support open space improvements and that the Open Spaces Working Group be tasked with preparing detailed proposals for the expenditure and reporting back to the Committee as soon as practicable.

The Working Group agreed to prioritise St John's Park and Shelton's Field and asked the Play & Physical Activity Officer to obtain quotes in line with Boston Borough Council's Procurement Regulations, from Play Equipment suppliers on behalf the Working Group, as follows.

Site	Improvements	Available Funding
St Johns	Play Panels – Musical, Manipulative Goal Posts	£4,674
Sheltons Field	Higher Slide Four Tower Unit with two bridges Play and Stay with Net Crazy Scrambler Springer	£18,431
	TOTAL SPEND	£23,105

The Working Group met to evaluate the quotes and agreed that a spend of £23,105 would provide the new equipment needed on both St John's Park and Shelton's Field. A breakdown of the preferred quote is appended for reference at Appendix A. The Group also proposed that £1,800 of the budget be set aside to support the cost of a replacement gate.

The Group had previously discussed a bid to Boston Big Local (BBL) for a grant of £19,000 towards a Pirate Ship to be located at the Woodville Road Play Area. BBL had since provisionally approved a grant, subject to Board approval, which would be known in April 2019. The Working Group proposed the matching of the remaining £15,095 against the BBL grant for provision of a Pirate Ship subject to further quotes being sought from Play Equipment Providers.

Future budgets would include increased costs associated to the maintenance of any new play equipment, once any warranty periods ended. Additional inspection costs would be incorporated in future year's budgets from the 2019/20 financial year onwards.

Any improvements agreed by BTAC would be subject to Contract Procurement Regulations and any expenditure over £10,000 would be subject to Cabinet approval.

Once approval was granted, works would be issued to a relevant supplier so they could be delivered as soon as practicable.

The Chairman commended the hard work of the Play & Physical Activity Officer, who had secured various grants of around £70,000.

During debate, it was remarked that the Committee's annual coach trip showed that improvements had been much needed, that much had been achieved already, and that the current proposals would result in further significant improvements. The Play & Physical Activity Officer and Chairman of the Working Group were commended. The Play & Physical Activity Officer had obtained good discounts and secured a considerable amount of funding. The match-funding with Big Boston Local (BBL) was particularly pleasing. The provision of play and fitness equipment would certainly help those on low incomes in particular and they improved the appearance of the town.

Members welcomed the investment at all the play areas. However, the question of maintenance was raised and the timescales involved, as improvements would be needed before the summer holidays.

The Head of Place and Space referred the Committee to the increase in revenue costs of £2,000 and advised Members that, should they wish to use the £40,000 funding as set out in the report, then this would be subject to Cabinet approval in the new Municipal Year. The aim was for the equipment to be in place as soon as possible; if the recommendation was put to Cabinet in June then it would be ready to be put in place within the summer programme. The Pirate Ship would be subject to another procurement process to ensure value for money was achieved.

The Chairman of the Open Spaces Working Group gave credit to the Play & Physical Activity Officer for going "above and beyond" in her work.

There was discussion regarding older children littering in the Burgess Pitt play area and a report that equipment had been installed and in use at Broadfield Lane play area under a Section 106 Agreement.

Action: PP

Consider signage at Burgess Pitt play area to raise awareness of CCTV being in operation in order to deter littering.

In conclusion, following consideration of the potential improvements identified in the report and inspection and ongoing maintenance costs it was:

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Cabinet to use the £40,000 funding allocated to support open space improvements as follows:

- 1. £24,950 for play area equipment in Shelton's Field, St John's Park and Central Park;**
- 2. £15,050 to match a Boston Big Local grant for provision of a Pirate Ship on Woodville Road Play Area subject to quotes.**

106 UPDATE ON WORK OF BTAC OPERATIVES - STANDING ITEM

The Head of Place and Space presented the regular update on the work of the BTAC Operatives for February 2019 with 'before and after' photographs.

The report also listed the equipment purchased from the £5,000 allocated by the Committee, with a spend of £2,839.20 so far, and an update on bin refurbishment, with 17 bins completed and 28 remaining to be done.

During debate, reference was made to negative local press coverage despite BTAC's reports of extra events, compliments from members of the public, improvements to open spaces, new play and fitness equipment and the town centre being cleaner than it had ever been. The Committee had all pulled together across parties to achieve significant improvements and was still looking to achieve more and it should increase publicity of the work it was doing.

Members repeated their grateful appreciation of the work of the BTAC Operatives and applauded the initial idea of engaging them. It was remarked that problems were caused by the behaviour of a minority of people, but it was recognised that the Council's and volunteers' efforts were paying dividends with the annual Big Boston Clean Up demonstrating that the amount of litter that needed cleaning up was declining year on year.

The Head of Place and Space reported that the former toilet block on London Road, which was still being used as a community storage facility, had been looked at and a work request had been submitted to the street cleansing team.

Action: PP

Action a Member's suggestion to add street names to the 'before and after' photographs.

107 WORK PROGRAMME - STANDING ITEM

Members considered the work programme.

The work and achievements of the Committee during the last four years was commended, but it was asserted that a significant amount of work remained to be done and the momentum needed to be kept up.

It was reported that the Willoughby Road Allotments Association sent their thanks to BTAC for its award of a grant that kick-started the association. The association's achievements and plans were praised and it was suggested that the Committee should hold briefing meetings with local groups carrying out such work in the area in order to improve working relationships rather than purely providing funding.

The Meeting ended at 7.40 pm