

Friends of Victoria Park

Minutes of Public meeting 04 February 2019.

Ashford Indoor Bowls Centre, 7pm

1. Present:

Michelle Rowles, Bob Shrubbs, Robert Matthews, Janet Morton, Wendy Pooley, Lorna Bennett, Peter Goodenough (AIBC), Thereza Baker, Cllr Simon Howard-Smith, Terry Jones (ABC)

Apologies: Andrew Millen, Jon Paton

2. Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising

Logo – Robert Matthews has emailed Aardvark, but still awaiting response, Robert will try following up. Bob Shrubbs has not made any further progress on river based design.

The letter the Friends of Victoria Park wrote in support of the Council HLF bid has been seen by various groups at the council and we have received thanks from Emma Powell and Christina Fuller of Ashford Borough Council

4. Welcome

Simon welcomed those attending. Simon also explained again that he needs to step down due to his position as Councillor for Ashford Borough Councillor and him leading Junior Park Run, which could be seen to create conflicts of interest.

5. Committee Members

Jeanette Grundy has stepped down from the committee due to work commitments. This has left us a committee member short, as well as needing to find a replacement for Simon.

Peter Goodenough confirmed he is still interested in attending a committee meeting prior to deciding whether to join the committee. No one else present felt able to stand for committee or Chair Person.

6. Financial Update

Lorna confirmed that we have received £500 from ABC members grant, and also ABC have paid our insurance. After payment of the venue hire for this meeting the account balance stands at £505

7. Events and Activities

Park Run are trying to encourage a bit more interaction with the park in general. Junior Park Run have applied for a visit from Dame Kelly Holmes and the Junior Park Run Mascot – Wonky Bear. This may increase publicity for Park Run and also the park itself.

Photo competition:

Robert Matthews explained that due to slow initial response the deadline for the photo competition had been moved to end of April. Robert also had further information regarding the photo competition in written summary (copy attached to minutes).

Part of the Photo competition is to find a town centre venue to host the exhibition. Bob Shrubbs has contacted County Square, but still awaiting response, he will chase up over the next couple of weeks. Other options suggested were Ashford Gateway/Tourist Information, or an empty unit in Park Mall. However it was felt that before finalising a venue we would need Robert to obtain further details of the space required for the exhibition – print sizes, quantities etc.

Council Display about Victoria Park

There is currently a small display about Victoria Park and the HLF bid in the Tourist Information Centre, until 8th February 2019. Terry Jones also updated that the HLF bid will be submitted by end of February. The relevant planning application has also been submitted, but not made live yet, and the Friends of Victoria Park will have the opportunity to comment.

5k Fun Run

Simon explained that this may take longer to organise than originally planned, due to time registering with UK athletics, however this may bring in additional runners so be a worthwhile effort. A revised date for this would probably be April/May. This would have the benefit that we may be able to advertise in the Council 'For You' magazine.

Runners Numbers are sold in packs of 200, which is probably the upper limit which we want to be competing. This is well within the Park's capacity as Park Run has approximately 300 runners. Simon suggested the most effective day to hold the race would be a Sunday, avoiding other running events. It is likely that this would bring in approximately £4 per runner.

Initial investigations had found that using EventBrite for competitors to register would be expensive, so we will probably take payment via PayPal.

HomeStart Contact

We had an initial contact from Homestart offering us the opportunity of joining with their 'Chill with Dads' Easter egg hunt in the park. On further investigating this it became less clear what they were expecting from us, and when clarity was sought as to how we might work together on the event, they contacted us to say that they felt this event would not be viable at this time.

Photo Hunt Trail

Janet has taken photos to use for the trail but has not completed it yet. It was suggested that, rather than use for a one off activity, it could be used for multiple events such as the Armed Forces Day and possibly create, although certain areas are not accessible at Create so might not be appropriate. Simon said we could trial it at Junior Park Run.

8. Dates for the Diary

Sat 23rd March Litter Pick by Keep Ashford Clean 1pm

Mon 29th April Friends of Victoria Park meeting. Ashford Indoor Bowls Centre. 7pm

Tues 30th April deadline for entries to photo competition

(TBC) Friends of Victoria park 5k run

(TBC) Photo exhibition

Sun 30th June Armed Forces Day

Sat 20th July Create festival

Sat 3rd August Butterfly count

9. Any other Business

Bob Shrubbs raised that we need to confirm our financial year as this would influence when we hold our AGM. This could start from when the constitution was agreed or when we received our first Donation. Simon said he had sought advice on the matter, and whilst our constitution states that the group was started on 5th March 2018, that actually we were not a fully independent group until the constitution was signed off on 7th September 2018. It was suggested that at our next meeting we forward a motion to clarify this situation in the constitution. There were no objections to this.

It was noted that some people have received contact from Cllr Dara O'Farrell saying that he still has some member grant money to give to local groups. We have previously made contact but without success. Simon to follow up find out the situation; it is possible that this is from his KCC budget which is a fuller application process. (Update – Simon has spoken to Dara and he will help us make the application).

Janet and Lorna have investigated the Stronger Kent Communities funding options, and at the current time there is nothing appropriate for us to apply for, but it was considered that this may be something to review in the future.

Simon informed the meeting that it was now possible to install permanent markers for the Park Run route. This would enable people to log their own Park Run times outside of the normal run event. Ashford Park Run are looking to apply for this. It may be possible for us to contribute towards this from the proceeds of the 5k. This may have benefits as some people may find the formal events off-putting and prefer to run at a more suitable time.

Next Meeting: 29th April Ashford Indoor Bowls Centre, Jemmett Road. 7pm this will include the amendment to the constitution as outlined above, and if any candidates, election to the committee of new members. Keep an eye on the website for further details at <https://victoriaparkashford.uk/> . If you are interested in finding out about joining the committee then please contact us at secretary@victoriaparkashford.uk.