

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks
held at 9.30 am on Monday, 22 June 2015

Present:

Members: Councillor A Khan (Chair)
Councillor J Birdi (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate): G Hood, Place Directorate
G Paddan, Resources Directorate
A Walster, Place Directorate

Apologies: Councillor Andrews

Public Business

1. **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. **Withdrawal of Council Services from Spencer Park - Request that the Council keep the Pavilion open for at least part of each week in the 2015 season and to re-open the tennis courts and the flat green**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Place concerning a petition bearing 559 signatures, requesting that the Council keep the Pavilion open for at least part of each week in the 2015 season and to re-open the tennis courts and flat green. The petition was sponsored by Councillor Taylor, an Earlsdon Ward Councillor, who was invited to the meeting together with the petition organiser.

The petition organiser presented the Chair with additional 2608 signatures; total of 3179, including the 561 online e-signatures.

The report noted that Spencer Park was a relatively small but popular park situated in Earlsdon Ward in the Southern part of the City and covered an area of approximately 3.98 acres. The park was opened in 1883 and its formal layout includes a number of recreational opportunities and features including tennis and bowling facilities, a pavilion, seating, informal grassed areas, shrub planting and seasonal bedding. The Park has a well-established and very active Friends Group.

A consultation on the Council's budget was undertaken between November 2014 and February 2015; this had led to some early dialogue between the Friends Group and the Council. Elected Members were made aware of the proposal

affecting Spencer Park under the larger Savings Plan which was also discussed at a public consultation meeting and at Ward Forums. The consultation process was still on going and Council Officers would be meeting representatives of the Spencer Park Friends Group to discuss the proposal in more detail and seek their views.

The annual running costs for the maintenance of bowling green and tennis facilities were in the region of £30,000 which was only partly offset by income received of approximately £3,500, a net cost to the Council of £26,500 pa. There was also the extensive repair and resurfacing cost for the tennis courts within the next five years which would place significant pressure on the Parks budget.

The petition organiser spoke on behalf of petitioners in respect of maintaining the facilities and expressed concern in respect of the roof of the pavilion. It was confirmed that the roof would be repaired in time to celebrate the 100 year birthday. The future use of the park was also considered and it was agreed to support the Friends Group and maintain the dialogue with the Group to help with fund raising and events.

RESOLVED, that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member: -

- 1. Requests that officers continue to engage with the Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground regarding the future management and maintenance of the park.**
- 2. Notes the substantial reduction to the parks operational budget and ensuing implication on future service delivery and standards.**
- 3. Notes that adequate tennis and bowling provision is afforded by The War Memorial Park within one mile of Spencer Park.**
- 4. Agrees that the Council continue to maintain the crown bowling green only.**
- 5. Agrees that the tennis courts continue to be used by schools/clubs and that options are explored with local groups for wider public access.**
- 6. That a further update report be presented to the Cabinet Member in six months on the progress made with the Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground on the local management of the park and its facilities.**

4. Outstanding Issues

The Cabinet Member noted a report of the Executive Director of Resources that contained a list of outstanding issues and summarised the current position in respect of the item.

5. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 10am)

