



FRIENDS OF THE STRAND POOL

COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Friday 24th June 2016 7.30pm at King George V, Prospect Row,
Gillingham ME7 5AL

Attendance: Peter Wright, Jackie Wright, Victoria Hill, Alan Blyth, Cllr. Pat Cooper, Adrian Sambrook, Graham Bourne, Jane Bourne, Heather Morgan, Patrick Nolan, Cllr. Andy Stamp

Apologies: Jo Matthews, Sally Smith

1.0 WELCOME

Victoria Hill welcomed Heather and Patrick to the Committee. Informal introductions were given by all attending

2.0 UPDATE FROM SPORTS, LEISURE AND TOURISM (S,L &T)MEETING

Peter Wright took the meeting briefly through the Council budget process for 2015/2016, with S,L &T being expected to reduce spending by £335k this year, and with further similar savings in the next two years. S,L &T are being tasked with eliminating all cost by 2018.

Victoria Hill, Peter Wright and Jane Bourne then reported back on their meeting with Bob Dimond, Paul Boyd and Paul Johnstone on 21st June.

S,L &T had agreed they were concentrating on opening the pool when there is customer demand'. FOSP explained the demand from different groups to use the pool at different times of the day Bob Dimond had offered to amend the core opening hours, and the suggestion made was to change from 11.00 to 5.00, to 1.00 to 7.00.

Action: 2.1 Communicate suggested revised hours for session 13:00 – 19:00 hrs with Medway Council

A further offer had been made to trial an early morning slot, with FOSP acting as a Club to book the pool. The usual rate of £175 p.h. to be reduced to cost, at £50. Discussion ensued but no agreement settled on to guarantee sufficient numbers attending any particular session.

Action: 2.2 Market research to be carried out around 7.00 – 8.00, 9.00 – 10.00, on various midweek mornings with people attending the picnic, through mailing list and swimming club contacts.

The '24 degree' condition to open the pool outside of 'core opening hours' had been rejected by FOSP as unworkable and unreasonable. S,L &T had requested an alternative suggestion. Committee settled on 20 degrees, with the expectation that this may be negotiated up to 21, or 22 maximum.

Action: 2.3 Advise Medway council of 20 degree suggested temp level.

3.0 PICNIC at the POOL

S,L &T had no plans to mark the 120th anniversary of the pool, but agreed to open from 15.00 to 19.00 on Monday 27th June. FOSP to promote this as 'Picnic at the Pool'.

Action 3.1: Jane Bourne to tell Strand café and get them to display posters. Also to get the music system working and playing appropriately.

Action 3.2: Graham Bourne to take lots of photos, please, especially family groups, people in the water and crowds!

Action 3.3: Pat Cooper agreed to man a FOSP table, with a visitors book to include suggestions and contacts list.

Action 3.4: All to distribute posters provided to Tesco, Wilko, Asda and to explain to visitors on Monday the work that FOSP was doing to get the pool to be more successful.

4.0 NOTICEBOARD and WEBSITE

FOSP had discussed the lack of communication from the Council regarding the pool, and the weaknesses of the Council website. This was accepted by S,L &T but no guarantee of improvement made. FOSP therefore offered to help market the pool, via a notice board (to be supplied by the Council) and a website, to be set up by FOSP.

Graham Bourne agreed to manage the noticeboard, and Pat Nolan was suggested as a potential website builder.

Action: 3.5 VH to follow up with medway council about info and noticeboard provision.

5.0 POOL MAINTENANCE

FOSP had advised S,L &T of the very poor state of the pool and its environs, and the suspicion was again voiced that their plan had been to delay opening until 1st July. We were not convinced that any proper cleaning would be undertaken under the present staffing arrangements and so had offered FOSP volunteers, an offer readily accepted! Committee members agreed to attend the pool on Sunday 3rd July at 10am with a view to cleaning and tidying.

Action 5.1: Victoria to contact Paul Johnstone to let him know details of clean up and what is required.

Discussion around the provision of lane ropes had not been productive with S,L &T, who claimed to have no capital budget for the Strand Pool, unlike other pools. FOSP had been urged to seek funding support from the ward councillors. Pat Cooper and Andy Stamp advised that they had a small budget each year and would help, but they could not cover the full cost, estimated by Victoria at around £2,000.

The pool management had appeared unsure how best to keep the algae level under control, so FOSP offered to research cleaning methods used at other salt water pools.

Action 5.2: Victoria to research lane rope costs

Action 5.3 Victoria to contact other salt water pools and liaise with Medway council

Action 5.4: Victoria to research crowd funding opportunities

6.0 MEMBERSHIP / ACCOUNTS

It had been intended to explore further the membership structure for FOSP but time was limited so this subject is to be carried over.

Alan Blyth advised that he had produced basic accounts for FOSP and distributed his report

Action 6.1: budget and membership to be agenda items at next meeting.

7.0 CLOSE

There being no further business to discuss, VH thanked everyone for their attendance and support. Next meeting to be arranged for two to three weeks' time, following the Picnic event and the pool cleaning working party.

Meeting closed at 9.30 pm.