

Friends of Marple Memorial Park Committee Meeting

Monday 15th December 2003

Minutes

Present: Peter Clarke, Mark Whittaker, Brian Nash, Cllr Hunter, Sally Curley, Dave Burrows, Adrian Ellis, Jay Havoleana, Peter Bardsley, Chris Armitt, Bill Arden, Mike Spreckley, John Francis.

(1) Welcome

Sally welcomed everyone to the meeting.

(2) Purpose of Meeting – support from SMBC

Sally re-capped on the previous two meetings and explained that everyone attending tonight had expressed an interest in being part of the Friends of Marple Memorial Park committee. Sally explained that the Community Development Team within the Parks and Recreation Service would help support the group development, help organise task days and events and any fund raising the group would like to undertake.

Sally then ran through the agenda for the meeting.

(3) Election Officers

Sally gave an introduction to the roles of officers. Most of the new committee members already have experience of serving on other committees.

Peter Clarke said he would be happy to take on the role of Chairperson and this nomination was seconded by Peter Bardsley.

Nobody was forthcoming regarding the role of secretary. It was agreed to leave this role vacant for now and re-assess at a later date. Sally offered to take notes at the meeting.

Jay Havoleana offered to take on the role of Treasurer and this was seconded by Bill Arden.

Peter chaired the rest of the meeting.

(4) Constitution

Sally had brought some example constitutions from other Friends groups. Peter offered to read through and have some possible suggestions for the next meeting. Mike Spreckley asked if Peter could circulate suggestions for the constitution before the next meeting.

Action: Peter to circulate suggestions for constitution before next meeting.

(5) Bank Account

Sally explained that most Friends groups have bank accounts, which allows them to fund raise and apply for grants.

Action: Jay to investigate possible bank accounts and bring information to the next meeting.

Jay asked if there were any start-up grants for which the group could apply. Sally explained that there is a Community Grants & Voluntary Sector Liaison Service within the Council that provides a start-up grant for new groups, of £95. However, on a recent enquiry Sally was told there is no money left in this pot at present but that the group would be able to apply in April.

Cllr Hunter stated that the Marple Area Councillors were fully supportive of the group and that the Area Committee has a flexibility budget that the group could apply to.

(6) Information from Community Meeting

Sally had produced a short write up of the consultation information provided at the last community meeting, which was circulated. A more detailed report is to be produced.

Action: Sally to e-mail Peter the more detailed report before next meeting.

Sally explained that as well as physical on-site improvements, Friends groups also look to promoting and raising the profile of the park and their hard work, encouraging more people to become involved and look at encouraging positive use of the park.

There was some discussion around the information including the production of a newsletter and also setting up a website. Mark Whittaker who runs The Marple Website offered to put some information about the new Friends group on that site and he also suggested that the group could have a consultation form on-line for people to complete.

Peter mentioned about contacting British Waterways and it was agreed to invite a representative to a future meeting. Cllr Hunter suggested that it can be a good idea to have themes at the meetings to encourage interest. Cllr Hunter also suggested that the group could invite other Friends groups to future meetings to share experiences.

Jay asked about the best way of involving young people. It was agreed that the group could make contact with the Youth Worker to look at such involvement. Jay also suggested that the group could involve schools in their

activities and Cllr Hunter agreed that running specific activities and task days is a good way of involving young people. Jay also proposed that the Friends have a stall at the Marple Carnival next summer.

Jay had a copy of the Stockport Communities in Greenspace Forum's newsletter. She had seen the article about the new Crime in Greenspace Officer in Parks and Recreation and requested that he be invited to a future meeting.

Peter Clarke suggested that the group try to encourage all park users to be involved. It was agreed to write to all stakeholders informing them about the new group.

There was discussion about publicity and the possibility of a notice board. Peter Clarke enquired whether any signage in the park had to be approved. Cllr Hunter said that the councillors would appreciate being kept informed of any potential developments organised by the Friends. Peter also asked about press releases and whether any releases should go through the council press section. Cllr Hunter said that it would not be a problem if the group wanted to draft a release and send to the council press section for distribution, or send a release directly to the papers.

(7) AOB

Peter Clarke asked if there was any other business.

Mark Whittaker mentioned that there was supposedly a time capsule laid under the Memorial in the park. Mark and Peter were looking into this and finding out when the Memorial was enlarged. It was suggested that this be included in the history of the park and to keep a record of it, particularly if the group was going to look at interpretation boards in the park.

Peter Clarke mentioned that small grants were available for improvements to War Memorials from the Friends of War Memorials.

Peter also mentioned that he was involved in organising a bi-centenary event in the park and he enquired about a licence for using the park for events. Sally said that groups need to complete an 'Application for the use of parks' form which goes to the Area Committee for approval.

Jay said that most of the group had experience of organising events and undertaking publicity and should be able to bring these skills to the Friends group. Cllr Hunter agreed and stated that everyone should use their contacts with others to bring in support for the group. Cllr Hunter offered to include some information about the new friends group in the Councillor's publication that is distributed widely throughout the community.

Peter Clarke said that a lot of the comments made from the consultation reflected those of the Green Flag Judges and everyone was positive that the Friends could help work towards these improvements.

Cllr Hunter stated that Friends groups are very important and can make a real difference, and the group should focus on their aims and what they want to achieve for the park and the local community.

(8) Date of Next meeting

Peter Clarke asked when the most convenient time to meet would be and also about the venue. Cllr Hunter said that the Library was a good venue as it was central to the park and in the spring/ summer it will be possible to have a walk round the park as part of the meeting. Everyone agreed. The most convenient evening for the Library is on Mondays.

Date of next meeting is Monday 19th January 2004 at 6.30p.m. at Marple Library.