

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE
AND
ENVIRONMENT
CABINET MEMBERS**

ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOSTING CIRCUSES AND PLEASURE FAIRS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To approve new arrangements for the hosting of Circuses and Pleasure Fairs on council owned land and property assets.
- 1.2 The key points in this report are:
- The council occasionally allows the use of various land and property assets in its ownership for the purpose of hosting temporary circuses and pleasure fairs for the enjoyment of local residents
 - Most events usually pass without incident
 - A recent event held on council land caused a number of problems leading to a review of the robustness of our existing procedures
 - New arrangements are proposed going forward

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The council occasionally allows the use of various land and property assets in its ownership for the purpose of hosting temporary circuses and pleasure fairs for the enjoyment of local residents. These events usually pass without incident and rarely give rise to any significant concerns.
- 2.2 In February 2016, a travelling circus took temporary occupation of land adjacent to Everest Road, Scunthorpe. The council consented to the use of the land in question in August 2015. The consent covered the period from 28 February 2016 to 6 March 2016. Some limited conditions applied to the consent in line with long standing policy, custom and practice. The fee charged by the council amounted to £167.00 per day inclusive of VAT in accordance with the schedule of Highways and Neighbourhoods fees and charges approved by the Neighbourhoods Cabinet Member in August 2015.
- 2.3 Unlike previous events, the circus in question resulted in a number of complaints to the council from local residents. In particular, these related to excessive noise, light pollution and parking congestion affecting local streets. On vacating the site, the council had to put in hand significant remedial works to make good damage to the green space caused by the circus and to clear up litter. A condition attached to the consent granted for the use of the site was that *"the field must be left in the same condition as*

you found it with no litter. Any damage to trees, turf or any other aspect of the park should be rectified by yourselves' if caused during the event."
The council is pursuing the full recovery of all costs incurred to make good the site from the circus in question.

- 2.4 The issues raised as a result of this event have led to a review of our existing arrangements for hosting circuses and pleasure fairs. A new licence arrangement is proposed providing greater clarity on the requirements for the operators of circuses and pleasure fairs seeking to temporarily occupy council land and property assets.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet Members are asked to approve the adoption of a licence to cover the use of council land and property assets for the purposes of hosting circuses and pleasure fairs.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Adopting the recommendation will strengthen our existing arrangements for hosting circuses and pleasure fairs on council land and property assets. This should help reduce the risks of similar issues to those experienced as a result of hosting the circus at Everest Road, Ashby in February 2016, occurring in the future.
- 4.2 The Estates Services team will in the future deal with all applications and thereby ensure a consistent approach to considering requests to allow the use of council land and property assets for the purposes described.
- 4.3 The proposed licence will make clear to the operators of circuses and pleasure fairs the standards required by the council when making available sites for the hosting of events.
- 4.4 Requiring the payment of a bond of £2,500 will help to ensure that funds are available to help the council to deal with any making good and cleaning up of sites, should operators fail to satisfactorily meet their obligations in these respects. Additionally, it is suggested for these reasons that the existing daily hire fee of £167 is increased to £250.
- 4.5 A small number of mainly locally based Circus and Pleasure Fair operators have held events in North Lincolnshire over many years. In the main, these have passed without any significant issues arising and these operators have consistently demonstrated a responsible approach in occupying council land and returning sites to an acceptable state. There may be other exceptional reasons to justify some discretion in the requirement for a bond payment. Each case would require individual consideration on its own merit. It is therefore suggested that the Director of Places is authorised to exercise some discretion to waive the requirement for the payment of a bond, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, where long standing confidence applies to particular operators in these regards or other exceptional circumstances might apply.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial – None.

5.2 Staffing – None.

5.3 Property – adopting the proposal will regularise our arrangements for making available council owned sites to host circuses and pleasure fairs.

5.4 IT – None.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 A number of residents supported by their local ward members raised concerns with the council both during and after the circus event held in February 2016 on land adjacent to Everest Road, Scunthorpe. The proposal seeks to strengthen our arrangements in response.

7.2 Officers from our Highways and Neighbourhoods, Asset Management and Construction and Environmental Health teams have contributed to putting together the proposed licence arrangement.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Cabinet Members are asked to approve the adoption of a licence to cover the use of council land and property assets for the purposes of hosting circuses and pleasure fairs.

8.2 That the Cabinet Members approve a change to the daily hire fee from £167 to £250.

8.3 That the Cabinet Members approve £2,500 as a bond payable by applicants wishing to hold a Circus or Pleasure Fair on council owned land and property assets.

8.4 That the Cabinet Members authorise the Director of Places to exercise some discretion to waive the requirement for the payment of a bond, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, where it is considered that particular exceptional circumstances apply.

8.5 That officers periodically review the effectiveness of the new arrangements once implemented and update Cabinet Members accordingly.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None