

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 2 February 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Rooms
- Second Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 2 February 2015 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Alex Deane (Deputy Chairman) In the Chair
Catherine Bickmore
Robert Cazenove
Councillor Bryan Collier MBE
Deputy Robert Howard
Councillor Joy Laguda MBE
Wendy Mead
Justin Meath-Baker
Barbara Newman
Deputy Michael Welbank

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	Town Clerk's Department
Sue Ireland	Director of Open Spaces
Sam Cook	Remembrancer's Department
Louisa Allen	City Gardens Manager
Martin Rodman	Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens
Lucy Murphy	West Ham Park Manager
Esther Sumner	Open Spaces Business Manager
Steven Chandler	City Surveyor's Department
Patrick Hegarty	Open Spaces Department
Alison Elam	Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Edward Wood	Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Alderman Luder, Graeme Smith, Jeremy Simons, Richard Gurney and Revd Stennett Kirby

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising: The Director confirmed that the Terms of Reference of the role of Park Champions would be confirmed once all Champions had been confirmed.

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received the following update from the Superintendent:

Finance – the park budget is in line with profile at the $\frac{3}{4}$ stage of the year. The majority of spend in the nursery is in line with budget profile, however an underachievement in floral income means that budget will be in deficit at year end. Members noted that floral income accounted for 30%-40% of the total income at West Ham Park Nursery.

Personnel – 2 new appointments started work on 2 February; the West Ham Park Manager and the maternity cover for the Support Officer for outreach, biodiversity and sustainability. West Ham Park is about to recruit a full-time replacement keeper, and a temporary nursery gardener for the summer season. The latter is being recruited through Groundwork, a charity that provides training and creates jobs both for young people and those looking to get back into a working environment or to re-skill.

Community & Events

The Friends of West Ham Park organised an RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch on Saturday 17th January. Fifteen people attended and a wide range of birds was seen including both Green and Great spotted woodpeckers, and Goldfinches. Results will be shown on the website.

The Friends are holding their first stargazing event of the season on Thursday 19th February. These have become a very popular regular feature at the park and, as numbers have to be limited, tend to sell out within a few of hours of being advertised.

Throughout the year the Friends Group and staff collect feedback from visitors and attendees at events using a sixty-second-survey. Last year's results have been collated and show that 14% of our users thought the park service was good overall, 40% rated it as very good and 43% as excellent, with 3% not answering this question.

Property – The City Surveyor's team has refurbished the old potting shed replacing lighting, work benches, sink and painting and decorating, including a new non-slip, easy-to-clean floor coating.

Under the City Surveyors Additional Works Programme, the cricket net boards have been refurbished and the Victorian park shelters have been redecorated. Maintenance of the brick pavers in the ornamental gardens was delayed because of frost, but the contractor will be starting work within the next 2 weeks.

In response to a query the Superintendent confirmed that, due to their popularity, Star Gazing events were being held more frequently. Members

requested other Open Spaces to investigate whether they could host similar events.

5. **SCHEDULE OF VISITS 2015**

Members noted that the visit to the Open Spaces and City Gardens would be rescheduled from 20th June 2015. The Superintendent would arrange a new date in consultation with the Chairman. Members also queried the dates of two consecutive visits by the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and asked the Town Clerk to investigate whether these could be rearranged.

Resolved: That the Schedule of Visits was agreed for 2015.

6. **INFRASTRUCTURE BILL**

The Committee noted the relevant provisions of the Infrastructure Bill, currently before Parliament, which would introduce a new regime to facilitate the control of non-native invasive species. Under this regime, Government bodies would be able to enter into voluntary agreements with landowners, setting out what measures are to be taken in order to eradicate or control an invasive species. Where the voluntary process was unsuccessful, it would be possible to make binding orders requiring the landowner to take action or to pay the costs of doing so.

A Member asked whether or not a new Electronic Communications Code might have consequences for the City Corporation's open spaces and Officers asked to answer this query via email after the meeting.

RECEIVED.

7. **APPLICATION FOR NEW PARK GATE BY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Committee noted a proposal from the London Borough of Newham (LBN) to permit the creation of a new entrance to West Ham Park opposite Park Primary School, in conjunction with the planned expansion of the school and a potential upgraded crossing between the school and the proposed new entrance. This is partly due to increasing pressure on existing space in and around the school premises. LBN's application is on the understanding that the project would be cost neutral to the City Corporation (CoLC), and that all aspects of the project, including the final design of the gate and the resulting mitigation works within the park boundary, must be to the satisfaction of CoLC.

The Chairman thanked Officers for a commendable report. Discussions ensued regarding the need for a gate with another gate already existing in close proximity of the suggested location. Members queried the design of the gate and were assured that any designs and cost analysis would be submitted to the Committee for consideration. Officers agreed that new pathways may be needed from the new gate and this would be considered in the design stage. Access to the gate would also be discussed with the school and these discussions would include who would open and close the gate and opening hours.

Resolved: The Committee approved the recommendations with 9 votes for and 1 vote against the following:

- Instructed the Director of Open Spaces and the City Surveyor to enter into negotiations with the London Borough of Newham in order to progress the design and costs of the proposed new gate;
- Agreed that Officers report back to this Committee seeking approval for the design of the gate and any reinstatement of park land resulting from its

installation.

8. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT.

There was no urgent business.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

It was agreed that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

11. WEST HAM PARK REFRESHMENT FACILITIES PROJECT GATEWAY 3 OUTLINE OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Open Spaces.

12. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 2.30 pm

Chairman

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