

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Friday, 12 February 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Virtual Public Meeting (Accessible Remotely) on Friday, 12 February 2021 at 12.27 pm

Present

Members:

Oliver Sells QC (Chairman)
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)
Graeme Doshi-Smith
Alderman Ian Luder
Barbara Newman
Deputy John Tomlinson
Catherine Bickmore
Richard Gurney
Rafe Courage
Rev Simon Nicholls

Officers:

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Joe Anstee	- Town Clerk's Department
Kristina Drake	- Media Officer, Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Aqib Hussain	- Chamberlain's Department
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens
Gerry Kiefer	- Business Manager, Open Spaces Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Wendy Mead.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The Committee considered the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held on the 12th of December 2020.

Responding to a query from a Committee member the Chairman explained that the meeting date was changed due to a clash of committee meetings on the previous date and had been completed in accordance with Standing Order 29(1,e).

RESOLVED- That the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held on the 12th of December 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk on the West Ham Park Committee's Terms of Reference. The Town Clerk introduced the report and explained that the only recommended change was to update the membership with Reverend Simon Nicholls and Rafe Courage added accordingly.

Following a question from Committee member the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that, due to other commitments, Councillor Tahmina Rahman would need to step down from the West Ham Park Committee and a replacement London Borough of Newham representative would be confirmed.

It was suggested by a Committee member that 4 (a) 'have regard to the overall policy laid down by the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee.' and (b) 'be responsible for the ownership and management of West Ham Park (registered charity no. 206948) in accordance with the terms of conveyance of the Park by John Gurney, Esq. to the City of London Corporation dated 20th July 1874 and in accordance with the Licence in Mortmain dated 22nd May 1874.' of the West Ham Park Committee Terms of Reference be switched in order to reflect the relative importance of these two points. The Committee discussed this suggestion noting that all sections of the Terms of Reference were allocated equal importance, irrespective of the order in which they are listed, and that the relationship with the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee meant that it would not interfere directly with West Ham Park Committee business.

RESOLVED- That:-

- I. The terms of reference of the West Ham Park Committee be approved for submission to the Court of Common Council in April with the inclusion of Reverend Simon Nicholls and Rafe Courage; and
- II. That any further changes required in the lead up to the Court's appointment of Committees be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman; and
- III. It be agreed that no change is required to the frequency of the Committee's meetings.

5. SUPERINTENDENT' UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the management and operational activities at West Ham Park since December 2021.

The Chairman thanked Officers for their tireless work in supporting West Ham Park and keeping it open in an extremely difficult period effected by COVID with a huge increase in visitor numbers. The Committee agreed and extended their sympathies for staff members personally effected by COVID.

The Committee discussed opportunities for securing external funding sources for the West Ham Park Playground project. The Deputy Chairman commented that she would be reporting to the next committee meeting on these funding sources and invited Members to be in contact regarding any interested organisations.

Following a query from a committee member the Director of Open Spaces explained that an update on the involvement of Savills Ltd could not be provided in the public session and all required details be included in the detailed report to be considered by Members. In addition, it was added that, although it was possible to circulate this information to the Committee, it would not be helpful to involve Members with operational matters of this nature.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

6. FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the fees and charges review for West Ham Park. The Director of Open Spaces introduced the report and explained the rationale behind the recommended level set for the fees and charges in West Ham Park.

Responding to a query from a Committee member the Director of Open Spaces noted that a report to be considered by the West Ham Park Committee would address potential fundraising events.

The Chairman commented that it was important for the fees and charges at each open space to be reviewed noting the specific details of the open space in question. The Deputy Chairman responded that it was sensible to approve the fees and charges in the report to allow access to the Park for the widest possible group. It was added that it was important to encourage access to West Ham Park for supporting the health and wellbeing of the local population. Responding to a query from a member of the Committee the Director of Open Spaces explained that the West Ham Park Management Team worked extensively to encourage use of the Park for exercise purposes and liaised closely with the London Borough of Newham regarding this.

RESOLVED- That the proposed schedule of charges as summarised in Appendix 2 for sports facilities in West Ham Park for the 2021/22 financial year be approved.

7. DEPARTMENTAL AND SERVICE COMMITTEE BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021/22

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces on the Departmental and Service Committee Budget Estimates 2021/22. The Chamberlain introduced the report and highlighted the twelve percent reduction required across the City of London Corporation's budget.

The Chairman commented that, while the twelve percent budget reduction was difficult, many other open spaces were facing significantly higher percentage cuts in their management budgets. A Member of the Committee highlighted that

funding for West Ham Park still remained at over a million pounds a year which was a significant figure.

Responding to a question from a Committee member it was confirmed that the disposal cost of the West Ham Park Nursery would not be met from the local risk budget. In addition, it was explained that all of the City of London Managed Open Spaces were considered for use in the Carbon Sequestration Project but that the majority of majority of the initial spend will be at the Epping Forest buffer land.

RESOLVED-That: -

- I. The West Ham Park Committee's proposed revenue budget for 2021/22 for submission to Finance Committee be approved; and
- II. That the West Ham Park Committee's capital and supplementary revenue projects budgets for 2021/22 be approved for submission to Finance Committee; and
- III. The Chamberlain be authorised in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces to revise these budgets to allow for any further implications arising from Corporate Projects, the City's new Target Operating Model, and changes to the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP); and
- IV. That minor amendments for 2020/21 and 2021/22 budgets arising during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain.

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

There were no questions received in the public session.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT.

There was no urgent business considered in the public session.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: 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. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the previous meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held on the 12th of December 2020.

RESOLVED- That the non-public minutes of the previous meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held on the 12th of December 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

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

There were no questions received in the non-public session

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business considered in the non-public session.

The meeting ended at 1.45 pm

Chairman

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