

QUEEN'S PARK CONSULTATIVE GROUP
Wednesday, 27 March 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Queen's Park Consultative Group held at Park Manager's Office, Queen's Park, London, NW6 on Wednesday, 27 March 2019 at 2.30 pm

Present

Members:

Karina Dostalova (Chairman)
John Blandy (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association)
Virginia Bonham Carter (Ark Franklin Primary School)
Helen Durnford (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association)
Giovanna Torrico (Queens Park Community School)
Vicky Zentner (Kensal Rise Residents Association)

Officers:

Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces & Heritage
Bob Warnock	- Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Richard Gentry	- Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager
Leanne Murphy	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Anne Fairweather and Ruby Sayed.

2. **DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were none.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2018 be approved.

4. **TREE PESTS AND DISEASES: OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH URGENT UPDATE**

Members noted a report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding tree pests and diseases providing an urgent update on Oak Processionary Moth (OPM). The following comments were made:

- The Director of Open Spaces stated that the report went to the Open Spaces & City Gardens in December to approve the submission of a bid for additional resources to the Resource Allocation Sub Committee for future financial years from 2019/20, highlighting OPM as a new and significant resource demand in the medium-term financial planning process which was approved.

- The report has gone as an update to all Open Spaces Committees as the spread of OPM now reaches all of the Corporation's Open Spaces and is recorded in all 32 London Boroughs and the City of London.
- Members were advised that the disease was a significant public health risk and the focus for controlling the pest was to protect public car parks, children's parks, paths and sports areas where members of the public were most at risk. An education programme is also in development to educate the public on OPM and what to do should they encounter it.
- Members were advised that Hampstead Heath was the longest affected space with OPM first identified in 2015. Based on the experience at Hampstead Heath, it was predicted that the number of nests in the other Open Spaces would increase dramatically in 2019 including Queen's Park; however, it was noted that Queen's Park only had a small number of oak trees.
- Treatment includes zoning targeted high-risk areas, the spraying of trees and nest removal, along with significant forest research in conjunction with the Forestry Commission.
- It was agreed with the Forestry Commission that Hampstead Heath would be used as a pilot site to tackle OPM. This pilot scheme would assist with the development of a national programme of best practice to control OPM.
- In response to a query regarding the education, Members were advised that the Forestry Commission and DEFRA were already working with schools and an educational programme would be coming to schools soon. PHE were also helping with education and good communication were ongoing with doctors and vets to ensure they were aware of the risks and signs.
- A Member suggested liaising with garden centres to advertise the risks of OPM.
- Members were advised that electronic versions of leaflets and information regarding OPM was available on the Forestry Commission's website and could be printed off. The Director of Open Spaces also agreed to supply some printed leaflets. The Chairman suggested that Members take leaflets to community groups to ensure the local community were aware.
- The Director of Open Spaces was happy for the contents of his report to be circulated and agreed to keep the Group updated on OPM matters over the season.

RECEIVED.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE - QUEEN'S PARK**

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent and the following points were made:

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Operational Management

- It was noted that the Team were recruiting for two vacant roles: a Team Leader and an Animal Keeper & Engagement Assistant.
- The Committee congratulated and thanked staff for their hard work on the redevelopment of the Children's Farm which Members viewed during the walk.
- In response to a query regarding the current audit of trees and whether there was a tree policy in place, Members were advised that locally there was no formal strategy for trees but there was an informal arrangement regarding the replacement of trees on an individual basis plus an overarching tree policy across the Corporation's Open Spaces Department.
- It was noted that a walkthrough of the plans for the Woodland Walk was discussed during the walk prior to the meeting and the feedback and ideas given by Members would guide the consultants going forward. A work programme would follow including details of the two capital project elements: fencing and a boardwalk.
- A Member urged caution when taking down things that already exist and opening up areas, noting that the native hedgerow available was great for birds. The Superintendent stated that balance and impact would be carefully considered.
- A Member noted the suggestion to remove the entrance gate(s) and argued that the gate gave that space sanctuary and a secret garden feel. It was noted that two areas would be separated in theory but still joined.
- Members liked the idea to include the unused edge of the golf course in this space.
- Members were unsure whether the suggested pond was necessary due to the small size of the park.
- The Town Clerk agreed to circulate a pdf of the Woodland Walk plans to the Group.
- The Superintendent advised that revised concepts would be brought to a future meeting for feedback.

Projects and Programmes

- A mid-term review of the Queen's Park Conservation Management Plan 2014–23 is due to take place and will be reported at the next meeting.
- Members were advised that the most costly option was supported at the HHHWQP Committee in November 2018 regarding the rebuild of the Public Toilet and the redevelopment of the Sand Pit, Project Sub Committee had given approval to proceed to the next Gateway process (Gateway 3) but wanted to see Officers present options for the project.
- The Superintendent advised that Officers were working on a full Options Appraisal and collaborating with the relevant Departments in preparation for submission to the Projects Sub Committee in May for approval.
- Members were advised that value engineered costs were being prepared and that the City Surveyor's Dept. would be informed that quality products were required but not high end. Currently, Officers were working from architect's industry standard estimated costs.
- A Member stated that a simple toilet block with the aesthetics of the Turkey House without cladding were desired. The Chairman requested that the Member send the photographs to the Superintendent.
- The Director of Open Spaces noted that the Corporation had a huge number of responsibilities with a large number of capital projects to prioritise. Members were advised that due to the significant capital expense from a number of key large projects currently coming through the Corporation, all projects that were not yet at Gateway 5 would be reviewed under new criteria as part of a fundamental review of revenue and projects.
- This project would be justified on the benefits it would provide for the community.
- A Member was concerned that the toilet redevelopment project's competition with the sandpit project made it more expensive and put the project in jeopardy. The Superintendent advised that the option of route was required before they could go out to tender and the value engineering would provide more accurate costs.
- The Chairman stated that she liaised with the surveyors regarding the high costs, notably the £37k for the wall. She felt that it would be worthwhile for the Group to reconsider some of the aesthetic aspects of the project and seek alternative funding to cover these requests as this would make the costs of the project more palatable to the Corporation and get less push back.

- It was noted that £80k had been fundraised locally in Tiverton and a similar approach could be taken for this project. Local and in-house labour was also suggested to work on the aesthetics which was the approach used in the redevelopment of the Children's Farm.
- Members were advised that the Park Manager was in consultation with the City Surveyor's Department to agree a date for Tennis Courts 1- 6 to be repainted and relined. This work would take approximately seven days to complete.
- Members were advised that the redevelopment of the Children's Farm was almost complete and had already received positive feedback on social media. The Chairman agreed to write to the staff members involved in the redevelopment giving thanks from the Group regarding the successful project.

Sustainability

- The Superintendent highlighted the need for an improved recycling system noting that the Divisional Waste and Recycling Review was currently under way investigating potential improvements to the current service.
- The City of London Corporation has changed its waste contractor and is now working with Veolia to manage the Corporation's waste.
- It was noted that a Member had previously agreed to provide more information regarding possible assistance from the London Borough of Brent to assist with Queen's Park waste. The Superintendent agreed to follow up.
- Members were advised that positive feedback was received regarding the use of LED lights instead of a Christmas tree in December 2018 and it was suggested that the lights be extended to other trees in 2019 for Christmas and evening events. Members agreed with this approach noting that the change from tradition was ecological and to stop vandalism.

Visitors and Community

- The Junior Parkrun has run for two years and attracts approximately 100 children each week every Sunday.
- The Corporation continues to liaise with the Lawn Tennis Association regarding increasing participation on the courts meeting quarterly.
- In response to a query regarding the licence fee costs charged for group play tag rugby, Members were advised that this information could only be provided to the Group as a non-public item. The Superintendent

noted that this fell under the event licensing scheme as participants were under 500. Officers agreed to bring more information to the next meeting.

- Members were advised that the Superintendent and Chairman were meeting with the Queen's Park Café vendors in the afternoon to discuss a longer lease agreement than the current three-year lease. The Superintendent confirmed that a longer lease agreement would require a new tender which risked the current provider staying. It was noted that the Highgate Wood Café was currently out to tender for an agreement of seven years plus three and would include a number of break clauses and service / performance standards.
- Members did not feel that the current providers had delivered on their promises offered when they took over the café site including picnics, catering for events, evening opening and ice creams. Members raised a number of concerns including the expense of products and the introduction of contactless payments which prevents children from using cash (unless it is the exact amount).
- Members requested sight of the new menu and prices being offered.

Learning and Schools

- The Park Manager advised that he would be meeting the Learning Project Officer regarding supporting a group of special education needs sixth form students who will be working in the reopened Farm at the end of March.
- The Chairman felt that more direct liaison with schools was needed to look at what could be offered.

Volunteering

- The Chairman stated that 9,000 volunteers covering the Corporation's Open Spaces attended the Volunteers Reception at Guildhall in January and was pleased to advise that the event was approved for next year and that more volunteers would be invited to attend in 2020.

Events

- The Superintendent stated that the Corporation had been approached again to host Queen's Park the Opera in July 2020. The event would last for one week and would be held either on the main field or on the bandstand.
- Members requested more information on the event but were concerned that it would take place in the middle of summer on a well-used space by the public. It was noted that information had been requested by the Park Manager to bring to the Group but that it was not received.

- Members were advised that Brent had won the award for London Borough of Culture 2020 and that the Corporation hoped to be involved in opportunities with Brent during the year like it had with the 2019 winner Waltham Forest. The Park Manager has been in liaison with Brent regarding the potential for a series of events and that ideas were required.
- A Member suggested focussing on history with a Victorian themed day including an agricultural fayre and classical music event on the bandstand.

RESOLVED – That:-

- Members provide feedback on the proposed events for 2019, as set out in paragraph 34 and Appendix 3 and the proposed event at paragraph 36;
- the views and comments of the Queen's Park Consultative Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 5 June 2019.

5.1 APPENDIX 1 - DIVISIONAL PLAN 2019-22

Members noted the Hampstead Heath Divisional Plan for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22.

It was noted that a page was missing from the Divisional Plan which was circulated to the Group.

Members were advised that the three-year Divisional Plan 2019-2022 had been reformatted to reflect the outcomes in the Management Strategy and was approved by the HHHWQQP Committee at its meeting in March. The Group was happy with the reformatted document.

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5.2 APPENDIX 2 - ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

Members noted the Queen's Park Annual Work Programme 2019/20.

The Superintendent noted that the Annual Work Programme was the next level above the Divisional Plan and the next step would be to consolidate and clarify the document in line with the Management Framework.

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5.3 APPENDIX 3 - QUEEN'S PARK 2019 EVENTS PROGRAMME

Members considered the provisional Queen's Park 2019 Events Programme. The Superintendent advised Members that the Events Policy 1 and 2 were fully operational and that all events went through the decision-making process based on size.

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5.4 **APPENDIX 4 - INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

Members noted the 2018/19 Income and Expenditure for Queens Park. The Superintendent advised Members that the income figures currently went up to 28 February 2019 and would be updated when the financial year finished on 31 March 2019.

Members thanked Officers for providing this information as requested at the last meeting.

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6. **QUESTIONS**

A Member raised a query from the walk requesting Officers to consider the feasibility of planting trees in front of the storage shed/barn in the Staff Yard.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

Friends of Highgate Wood Group

The Chairman highlighted the merits of Members considering and leading on fundraising opportunities for Queen's Park to fund projects. It was noted that residents at Tiverton Green had raised £80k to cover the costs of works in the area.

The Chairman asked if there was any appetite locally to form a Friends of Queen's Park Group who could raise project funds. This would have benefits such as legacies as the group would not be affiliated with the Corporation, e.g. like Heath Hands or QPARA. Members thought this idea was worth exploring.

8. **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Members noted that the date of their next meeting would be on 2 October 2019 at 3.00pm.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

Chairman

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