

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 10 June 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Rooms
- Second Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 10 June 2013 at 12.15 pm

Present

Members:

Alderman Robert Hall
Deputy Alex Deane
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons
Deputy Michael Welbank
Robert Cazenove
Catherine Bickmore
Richard Gurney
Cllr Bryan Collier
Councillor Joy Laguda

Officers:

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| Sue Ireland | - Director of Open Spaces |
| Martin Rodman | - Superintendent of West Ham Park and City Gardens |
| Edward Wood | - Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department |
| Esther Sumner | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Jacky Compton | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Alistair MacLellan | - Town Clerk's Department |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Ian Luder, Deputy Robert Howard, Wendy Mead, Mr Justin Meath-Baker and the Reverend Stennett Kirby.

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

There were no declarations.

3. ORDERS OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL 25 APRIL 2013

The Order of the Court of Common Council dated 25 April appointing the Committee and approving its Terms of Reference was received.

RECEIVED

4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 29. The Town Clerk read out a list of Member's eligible to stand and Alderman Robert Hall, being the only Member to express his willingness to

serve, was declared the duly elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 30. The Town Clerk read out a list of Member's eligible to stand and Alderman Ian Luder, being the only Member to express his willingness to serve, was declared the duly elected Deputy Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

The Committee then nominated Miss Catherine Bickmore as the West Ham Park Committee Representative on the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee.

6. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2013 were approved as a correct record.

**Matters Arising
Events**

In reply to a question from a Member the Superintendent of West Ham Park confirmed he had spoken to the organisers of the Newham 10K Run and Half Marathon regarding his concerns over the event and was reassured that for future such events better arrangements would be made.

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Superintendent of West Ham Park. The following points were made:-

Finance – Approaching the end of the first quarter, the budget for the park and office are in line with projected spend. As should be expected at this time of year, the Nursery budget is showing a much higher percentage spend, as a result of bulk purchases of pots, plug plants and compost, but without the corresponding income to balance. This will look healthier when we send out our first batch of invoices in a few weeks' time

Staff – in May, 2 students from the horticultural charity *Roots and Shoots* joined the team. This is as part of the CBT Grant funded 'Growing Localities' apprenticeship scheme. To begin with, the students will attend 2 days a week, progressing to 4-5 days from mid-July until the end of August. Similar placements are set up in City Gardens and with our partners, The Royal Parks, and at the end of the summer 3 candidates will be chosen to be taken on as full-time apprentices, training towards RHS level 2 over the next 2 years.

Works – The London Marathon Trust funded refurbishment of three of the tennis courts was completed to top course stage about 3 weeks ago; the courts have another 1-2 weeks of curing before the finishing painted surface is added. Elsewhere in the park staff have been hedge-cutting, strimming and grass mowing in preparation for the summer round of judging visits. The park is being judged for Green Flag on 13th June and London in Bloom on 11th July. The

Nursery has been dispatching summer bedding since 28th May and has so far delivered to Richmond and Greenwich Parks, Inner & Middle Temples and Lincoln's Inn, and our own North London Open Spaces. All deliveries will be completed by Wednesday 19th June, when preparations will begin for the arrival of the plugs and seed for spring bedding 2014.

Events – On April 27th heroes and heroines day took place organised by the Friends of WHP. Feedback on this is contained within the report on the Friends Group. In May the Biodiversity and sustainability officer held a Public Food Growing Day in the Jubilee Food Garden – 30 people attended of all ages. Building on this the fortnightly gardening club has started in earnest and vegetables, propagated in the Nursery, are now thriving in the raised planting beds.

Tessa Sanderson Foundation & Academy has approached us regarding the possibility of using the park to host a 2 week programme of sporting activities for young people in August. This can be seen as an opportunity to help ensure the Olympic legacy continues and the Superintendent is to meet with Ms Sanderson to develop her proposal

In response to questions the Superintendent made the following points:-

- The pool was not open during the Bank Holiday weekend as chemicals for the pool had not been delivered on time. The Director of Open Spaces would address this shortfall to ensure it was not repeated, at her next meeting with the City Surveyor's representative.
- The supply of bedding to The Royal Parks been going well and is helping to make up the shortfall resulting from the bedding reductions implemented by our other clients.
- The Nursery surplus account carried forward to 2012/13 was negligible, but this may change for 2013/14 as this year would be the first full annual cycle of bedding supply to the Royal Parks.
- There is currently no direct contact between West Ham Park Nursery and the new Stratford Olympic site, but officers would explore existing contacts to see if there was scope to develop a link between the two.

8. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FRIENDS OF WEST HAM PARK**

The Superintendent of West Ham Park introduced the report on the Friends of West Ham Park, commenting that there had been a slight decline in volunteer numbers over the past year, due in part to the change in emphasis to ensuring the quality of experience for volunteers over volunteer numbers, and to a natural draw-down in volunteer numbers following the 2012 Olympic Games.

During discussion amongst officers and Committee Members the following points were made:-

- Given the high density of residential housing surrounding the park, anti-social behaviour (ASB) was much lower than one may expect from similar areas across London. Where ASB does occur, the key to combating this was to imbue a sense of ownership amongst the local community from an early age which is an aim of the on-going events programme. There is a natural 'policing' of local anti-social behaviour by regular users of the Park such as dog walkers or joggers coming forward to report instances of ASB such as graffiti, or encouraging fellow dog walkers to clear up dog mess.
- The Superintendent planned to encourage the implementation of a volunteer model similar to that operating in the City Gardens, to encourage greater regular participation amongst the pool of volunteers in the Friends of West Ham Park. In time this would encourage volunteers to be more proactive and self-sustaining.
- The Superintendent undertook to provide a briefing note using existing RSPB data on the comparison of bird numbers in the Park to a future Committee, and this would be considered as a potential project for an interested volunteer.
- A Member commented that the high population churn in the local area of the Park was part-cause for the low number of active volunteers, with five particularly committed Friends of West Ham Park recently moving away from the area.
- The Chairman suggested that the Friends of West Ham Park would be a suitable area for consideration by the Volunteer Task Force. He endorsed a comment from a Member that volunteers should not be imposed upon too much and that, the emphasis should be on the quality of experience. They were a much valued aspect of the management of the Park.

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

There were no questions.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT
The Value of Green Spaces to London and Londoners

The Chairman invited the Director of Open spaces to outline her presentation on the forthcoming Corporation of London report on the value of Green Spaces to London and Londoners that she had given to the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee earlier that day.

During the discussion arising from her presentation the following points were made:-

- The Director of Open Spaces commented that the strategic emphasis of the Directorate was to increase the Corporation's existing Green Spaces in the City, and this was pursued through the Community Infrastructure

Levy rather than through Section 106 monies – an example of this approach is the Aldgate Gyratory.

- The Director of Open Spaces agreed that the use of delayed development sites as temporary Green Spaces such as in Newham was an excellent concept but that in the case of the City of London, land was seldom left vacant long enough for sites to be developed and planted.

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm

Chairman

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