

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 25 November 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Rooms
- Second Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 25 November 2013 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

Alderman Ian Luder (Chairman)
Deputy Alex Deane (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Robert Howard
Wendy Mead
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons
Deputy Michael Welbank
Justin Meath-Baker
Robert Cazenove
Catherine Bickmore
Richard Gurney
Councillor Joy Laguda OBE

Officers:

Alistair MacLellan	-	Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	-	Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Edward Wood	-	Principal Legal Assistant, Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Sue Ireland	-	Director of Open Spaces
Martin Rodman	-	Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Bryan Collier and the Reverend Stennett Kirby.

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

Wendy Mead declared a standing declaration regarding Item 6 given her membership of The City Bridge Trust Committee.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 7 October 2013 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Staff

The Chairman noted that a staffing update would form part of the Superintendent's Update.

Tessa Sanderson Foundation Academy

The Superintendent committed to circulating a note on the TSFA to members of the Committee.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Staff

The Superintendent noted that the preferred candidate from the October interviews for the West Ham Park Manager post has decided not to accept the role. The role has been re-advertised and the recruitment package has also been circulated to the London Parks Benchmarking Group, The London Parks & Greenspaces Forum and other contacts within the industry. In the interim, a manager from North London Open Spaces continues to assist with the management of the park for 1-2 days per week. He added that the new City Bridge Trust (CBT)-funded West Ham Park apprentice has been awarded Highly Commended in the Young Gardener of the Year category of the Sunday Telegraph's 'Gardening against the odds' programme.

Works update

He reported that spring bedding had now been planted in the park and the final 1,700m² of CBT-funded wildflower meadow was sown at the beginning of October. The meadow was sown by 5 classes from 2 different primary schools, totalling approximately 150 children.

The park remained closed on 28 October as a result of the St Jude's day storm. Damage was relatively light, with only two trees having to be removed (London Plane and Maple). The only damage to property within the park was to some fencing around the tennis courts. Outside the park, a branch fell onto a car parked on Ham Park Road and was being progressed through the insurance section. Staff spent approximately 3 days clearing up debris.

The Nursery had now completed the dispatch of spring bedding and staff had reverted to asset maintenance duties, as well as securing quotes for the supply of seed and plugs for summer bedding next year. The Superintendent noted that he was meeting with The Royal Parks on the 27 November to discuss future bedding provision. He added that the nursery team had provided floral decorations for both the South Korean banquet and the Lord Mayor's banquet at Guildhall in November, from which positive feedback was received.

Events

The Superintendent reported that the final Gardening club for 2013 took place at the end of October and that it would next reconvene in early spring to help prepare beds for the next growing season.

He added that The Friends of West Ham Park held their annual 'Build the Biggest Leaf Pile in Newham' Event on 2 November. Overall 9 of the Friends gave a total of 32 hours of volunteering on the event, and approximately 80 people attended. The event had some online coverage in local media. The Friends of West Ham Park are currently organising the annual 'Park in the Dark' event, which will take place on 6 December.

He noted that in conjunction with the Newham Education Business Partnership, several education sessions had been held in the Park for children between the ages of 3 and 7, with the aim of inspiring youngsters from an early age.

He concluded by saying that the Tessa Sanderson Foundation & Academy (TSFA) 10k run was scheduled to take place on 6 April 2014. Organisation and preparation for the event would be carried out with TSFA's new business partner.

Asset maintenance

The Superintendent reported that the railings surrounding the ornamental garden had been painted as part of the City Surveyors' planned maintenance works. Other works due imminently include repairs to the tarmac path running from the main gate to the office and, within the nursery, maintenance of the barn building and glazing repairs to the glasshouses.

In response to a question from the Chairman on whether the Park had seen any growth in anti-social behaviour (ASB), the Superintendent replied that whilst the Park had not seen many dog-related incidents to date, there was the issue of drug dealing within a section of the Park. Staff were dealing with the problem by proactively removing bin bags in the area in question (given these were used to conceal stashes), keeping a high profile and liaising with local police.

In response to a query from a member, the Superintendent committed to ensuring both the West Ham Park newsletter and the City Gardens newsletter were circulated to members of the Committee. Furthermore he agreed to investigate whether it would be useful to provide a quarterly written update on activity in the Park.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk regarding its Terms of Reference. The following amendments were agreed:

Instances of 'Heirs-at-law' to be amended to the singular;
'Together with the ex-officio Members referred to in paragraph 1 above...' to be deleted;
Four representatives elected amended to 'appointed';
One representative nominated amended to 'appointed';
Two representatives nominated amended to 'appointed';

The Town Clerk committed to writing to members of the Committee to establish their preference over how their names and titles were displayed in the updated Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED:

- that subject to the comments above the Terms of Reference of the Committee be approved for submission to the Court of Common Council

on 1 May 2014 and that any further changes 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.

6. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2013-14 AND 2014-15

The representative of the Chamberlain introduced a report on proposed revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15. She noted that the report had been prepared in light of guidance set by the Policy and Resources Committee. She highlighted that a three year grant from The City Bridge Trust would come to an end in March 2014 and that a new bid was currently being prepared. She went on to explain that any works that were undertaken under the Additional Works Programme that were scheduled to be completed by March 2014 were included in the figures for 2013/14. Any works that were scheduled for 2014/15 had been approved by the Corporate Asset Sub Committee and would shortly go to the Resource Allocation Sub Committee for approval.

In response to a question from a member, the representative of the Chamberlain replied that the current Nursery budget had broken even and that in future any surplus would be reflected in the relevant budget reports that came before the Committee.

The Committee went on to discuss how the surplus from the Nursery should be allocated, with some members noting that it should be for the benefit of the Park as a whole, rather than the Nursery itself. The Chairman pointed out that the Nursery benefited all users of the Park and that it was important that any surplus should not be allowed to accrue to too great an extent. A member emphasised that the whole Park should benefit from any surplus, not just the Nursery itself, whilst another member suggested that the Nursery be given first-refusal on any surplus before it was then allocated to the rest of the Park.

Officers agreed to provide a report at the next Committee detailing the way in which funds were allocated within the Park. The report would be drafted in accordance with the existing legal agreement governing the management of the Park.

RESOLVED:

- The Committee had reviewed the provisional 2014/15 revenue budget to ensure it reflects the Committee's objectives and approved the budget for submission to the Finance Committee;
- The Chamberlain be authorised, in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces, to revise the budgets to allow for further implications arising from Corporate Projects, departmental reorganisations and other reviews, and changes to the Additional Works Programme.
- A report on the allocation of surplus monies arising from the operation of the West Ham Park Nursery be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

7. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

8. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

Item(s)	Paragraph in Schedule 12A
10-15	3

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2013 be approved as a correct record.

11. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER URGENCY POWERS - TREE INSPECTION CONTRACT**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk.

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

There were no questions.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

14. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2013 be agreed as a correct record.

15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 4.45 pm

Chairman

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