

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	06/07/2015
Subject: Minutes of the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group meeting of 6 th May 2015.	Public
Report of: The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke and City Commons.	For Information
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report provides Members with minutes of the May 2015 meeting of the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group. Matters discussed included updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The merger of the Burnham Beeches, Stoke and City Commons Division • The Service Based review process • Dog Control Orders • Planning issues • Expansion of the conservation grazing scheme. <p>No new major issues were raised by members.</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of this report 	

Main Report



Title of Meeting: Burnham Beeches Consultative Group
Date: 06 May 2015
Time: 19:15 – 21:00
Location: Burnham Beeches Estate Office

Chairman: Alderman Gordon Haines

Attendees: Andrew Barnard - CoL
Helen Read - CoL
Hadyn Robson - CoL
Peter Cathcart - Farnham Common Parish Council
Alan Samson – Burnham Parish Council
Jane Griffin - SBDC
Mary Kohlhase – The Avenue Residents Association
Judy Tipping – Burnham Beeches Volunteers
Sheila Riley – Burnham Beeches Volunteers
Caroline Spicer – Nightingale Park Residents Association
Andrew Booth - FoSC Volunteer Group
Brian Bilgorri – Joggers & Wheelers Society
John Mellish – Local Visitor Representative
Natasha Bajwa – The Dogs Trust
Barbara Newman – CoL
Sylvia Moys - CoL
Deborah Harris - CoL
Martin Hartup - CoL
Karen Holman - CoL
Kavan Harley – Site Caterer
Christopher Mitchell – Regular site visitor (ex COL)

Apologies: Deputy Chairman, George Abrahams - CoL
Susan Ireland - CoL
Bill Lidgate - SBDC
Mark Frater – Local Business Representative
Andy McVeigh - Flora Group Rep
Adrian Sutton – Nightingale Park Residents Association
Joy Winyard – Local Bird Interest

Agenda

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. New Members
3. Minutes of the Last Meeting – Matters Arising
4. Superintendent's Update
5. Dog Control Orders
6. Planning Issues – Progress since December
7. Expansion of the Conservation Grazing Scheme
8. Projects and Achievements. October – March 2014/15
9. AOB
10. Agenda Items and Date of Next Meeting – July Site Visit

Topic	Notes
1. Welcome and Apologies	The Chairman welcomed all attendees and acknowledged all apologies.
2. New Members	The Chairman welcomed the following new members/attendees; Jane Griffin – South Bucks District Council. Hadyn Robson - City of London Support Services Manager. Karen Holman – Temporary PA to Superintendent Burnham Beeches. Natasha Bajwa – Dogs Trust Education Officer.
3. Minutes of Last Meeting	Agreed, no actions from matters arising.
4. Superintendent's Update	<p>i. <u>Merger of Division</u> - The Superintendent updated the meeting on progress of the merger of the Division. He took the meeting through the new organisational chart. The Support Services Manager commenced employment in March 2015 and has a remit to bring the administration teams together across the new Division and help to develop the division's vision and policy framework.</p> <p>ii. <u>Service Based Review</u> – There is a £2.18 million saving required across Open Spaces to be delivered over the next 3 years which represents 10% of City of London savings. Projects have been grouped and divided into 10 sustainable programmes. The Superintendent took the meeting through the Departmental and Divisional roadmaps and noted that the pace of change very fast.</p> <p>iii. <u>Comments/Questions</u></p> <p>Wayleaves issue raised. There are a great number of wayleaves across the division; Burnham Beeches have approximately 40-50. These costs have not been reviewed for many years, uplift of wayleaves to be addressed along with unpaid wayleaves. To be reviewed regularly in future. Investment may be required.</p> <p>Changing requirements within SBR. <i>What role could the volunteers have now?</i> Education/Walks suggested. Regime, ethos will continue. Most important are issues around sustainability, providing the right environment and commerciality. We will look at all possibilities. The BBCG will form a vital element of our communications and sensible plans are required to preserve and improve what we do. Please communicate this message to all contacts.</p>
5. Dog Control Orders	<p>i. <u>Head Ranger - Public Response and Impacts Arising following the introduction of Dog Control Orders in December 2014.</u> Enforcement protocol is not “zero tolerance”. 320 dog control incidents recorded and people spoken to at the time. 12 people unhappy to comply = 3.75%. In the 6 month period 19 emails have been received. 1 positive, 3 neutral and 15 negative, generally related to Schedule 2 Area but some wider ranging. In April Kennel Club campaign notices appeared and were removed from site.</p> <p>ii. <u>Monitoring Programme.</u> Dog related records have been</p>

monitored for the last 12 years and will continue together with Byelaw incidents and DCOs. No Fixed Penalty Notices, prosecutions or warning letters have been issued/required to date. Dog bin content and locations are being regularly monitored; bins have been relocated as required. Since December 2014 there has been significant decrease in unremoved dog waste in key locations including those used previously for 'flag the poo' events. This has improved in both Schedule 2 & Schedule 3 areas. Observation days will continue to monitor all areas of site. Visitor counts will be undertaken prior to the DCO review in 2016/17.

Monitoring of how/if other areas of the site have been affected continues. Presently car parking/café income seems unaffected by DCOs, both continue to reflect weather patterns. Donation income is the highest recorded for the month of April.

iii. Comments/Questions

How has Burnham Beeches dealt with the Kennel Club signage? We remove all signage and other material as City of London does not allow third party signage on site without prior agreement. We have not entered into any dialogue with them at this stage, if the campaign escalates then we will address as appropriate. They have a right to campaign on this issue.

The Chairman commented on the exemplary professionalism of the Burnham Beeches staff in the handling of the DCO and monitoring project.

The Dog's Trust gave their support to the DCO measures and the choices we have on offer to the dog walking community. The Dogs Trust is very impressed with high standard of statistics and data provided. The fact that no FPN's have been issued is a testament that choice is working and dog walkers are becoming better informed in such matters. The effort and knowledge put into the introduction of DCO's on the site is evident and the outcome achieved is a fair balance for all site users and is perhaps the best example the Dogs Trust has seen so far from a Local Authority.

Comment from a meeting attendee who is a regular dog walker at BB. *With regard to DCOs locals ignore it, some don't even visit the Beeches now due to DCO enforcement. Not personally happy with DCOs as this affects my daily routine, division of the site feels unbalanced. The speaker, also stated that this might be a very personal view as I neighbour the Schedule 2 area and must enter the site with my dogs on leads.*

Question from a member re ***rumour that dogs had been poisoned by Burnham Beeches using squirrel poison.*** MH said that there is no evidence that this was the case. MH gave a full explanation as to how our squirrel hoppers function and that this is not new and we have been undertaking squirrel control in this way since 2006 i.e. this

6. Planning Issues

is the 10th summer using warfarin bait without incident. MH assured the meeting that all the proper procedures have been followed – and control is very actively monitored. The poison used is warfarin which in the concentration and way it is used at BB is not accessible to dogs or likely to cause any issues unless someone deliberately emptied several hoppers on site in one go and a dog ate it all. Our hopper records show that this simply hasn't happened.

There has also been a recent incident of chopped meat being found spread within the site just off Halse Drive. This meat was collected by staff and dogs that ate some of it closely monitored. Environmental Health and Police were immediately informed and toxicology reports on the meat are being carried out. **(Post meeting update: laboratory reports confirm that the meat contained no toxins.)**

- i. South Bucks Local Plan – Due to national changes in planning control policy the Development Management Local Plan which SBDC were producing will now be superseded by a Local Plan. Over the last 2 years the BB Team has been working with SBDC over planning issues relating to the protection of Burnham Beeches and this work will now be fed into the new Local Plan, the time scale for production is 2 years. The BB Team is also working with Natural England to run a workshop in September this year for site managers and planners to discuss similar issues.
- ii. East Burnham Quarry –. Summerleaze Ltd have permission to extract gravel and infill with waste 3 areas of land south of Burnham Beeches. Phase 1 was completed in 2006. Phase 2 is due to commence soon. The boundary of Phase 2 comes within 600 m of the southern boundary of Burnham Beeches. There are concerns over hydrology and dust issues. The clay liner may cause water drainage problems thus a recharge ditch is a condition of the planning permission and this has recently been installed. Burnham Beeches is an acidic site and alkaline dust produced during infill has the capacity to change the pH which has implications for the plants, especially lichens which are very sensitive. Soil stripping can create large amounts of dust. All these issues are being monitored by CoL (including road traffic) independently, in addition to Summerleaze having to undertake monitoring tasks set down as a result of the 1991 public enquiry or in subsequent conditions by us. Extraction should be completed by 2020 and the restoration completed by 2021.
- iii. Comments/Questions
Slade Farm Hedgerley planning application has been submitted for a quarry. Will this impact Burnham Beeches? Probably not as it is a different company working the quarry. ***Is noise likely to be a problem?*** It is believed there will be one digger operating on site so noise is not likely to be excessive. Lorry movements are regulated and have set routes to follow. If anyone has any concerns please contact your Parish Council or HR here at Burnham Beeches. Liaison Meetings being set up to

<p>7. Expansion of the Conservation Grazing Scheme.</p> <p>8. Projects and Achievements</p> <p>9. AOB – The Café</p> <p>10. Date of Next Meeting</p>	<p>include Parish Councils, SBDC, Summerleaze Ltd. and City of London representatives.</p> <p><u>Timetable for Invisible Fencing 2015/16</u> – MH took the meeting through the actions for 2014 and proposals for the next three years. 2015 work will see the expansion of conservation grazing to cover 160 ha or 73% of Burnham Beeches. This should result in an additional grant from HLS of £25k. The overall plan is still to graze more than the 73% but this is an interim step. A trial of new collars on ponies is underway. For 2015 BB will graze the existing 3 loops + graze the middle section contained by them this September. 6 cows and 3 ponies to graze this year. Cows back on site today (06 May 2015).</p> <p><u>Projects</u> - DCOs and grazing to continue. A new 10 year management plan for the old pollards is being put together as BB completed the old one this winter. 2.5k – 3000 volunteer hours since we last meet, including several hundred hours from 'eco volunteers'. Friends of Stoke Common (FOSC) Reptile survey is underway and other volunteer tasks highlighted including the creation of 2 x water house log piles. Chairman requested his thanks be passed onto all volunteers for their excellent contribution to Burnham Beeches.</p> <p>A member queried the health of the trees – generally reported as being pretty good, although there are some concerns with nitrogen levels. Pollards are currently looking good.</p> <p><u>Café update</u> Generally quite busy and remains very weather dependent. DCO impact not felt as much as originally anticipated. The introduction of car park charges possibly had more of an initial impact on the Café income. The annual café finance meeting is planned for June 2015.</p> <p>July site visit confirmed as 09 July 2015</p>
--	--

Appendices - None

Andy Barnard

Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke and City Commons

T: 0207 332 6676

E: andy.barnard@cityoflondon.gov.uk