

QUEEN'S PARK JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Wednesday, 18 November 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group held at the Guildhall EC2 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Virginia Rounding (Chairman)

Jeremy Simons (Deputy Chairman)

Barbara Newman

John Blandy (Queen's Park Residents' Association)

Helen Durnford (Queen's Park Residents' Association)

Observers:

Virginia Brand (ARK Franklin Primary Academy)

Jodi Gramigni (Kensal Rise Residents' Association)

Giovanna Torrico (Friends of Salusbury School)

Officers:

David Arnold

Bob Warnock

Richard Gentry

Jonathan Meares

- Town Clerk's Department

- Superintendent of Hampstead Heath

- Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager

- Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Karina Dostalova and Councillor James Denselow.

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

There were none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015 be approved.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE REPORT

The Group received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided an update on the operational work and accomplishments of the Queen's Park Team since June 2015. Members noted and considered the following matters:

Ecology and Environment

- Councillor James Denselow (London Borough of Brent), recently appointed Park Champion for Queen's Park by the Group, had put the Park Manager in contact with an Officer at Brent, who had now resumed collecting the Park's green waste.
- The Park often received many discarded Christmas Trees following Christmas and the New Year so the Park Manager had contacted Veolia to co-ordinate the collection and recycling of Christmas trees left by LBB residents, to ensure that they would be disposed of at no cost to the City of London Corporation.
- Christmas Trees would not be mulched and chipped for use at Queen's Park as this would provide little benefit to the Park and the process took too much staff time and resources.

Operational Management

- Since its installation in March 2015, the donation post in the Children's Farm had generated £1,475.00.
- The old cast iron bins were recycled, which generated £830.40 for the Park.
- The tender for a new three year lease of the Queen's Park Café would close on 18 December 2015 and meetings with some of the 12-13 prospective interested parties had been scheduled.
- Members noted that three offenders had been caught breaking into the Café at night by the Park Manager and were later arrested and charged for that and other similar offences by the Police.

Sports and Recreation

- A successful partnership agreement with the Lawn Tennis Association would provide access to an online booking system and the provision of new and different types of tennis coaching sessions.
- In response to Members' questions, the Park Manager advised that the online system could be implemented from February 2016 and users without online access could continue to book tennis courts in person at the Pitch and Putt booking office.
- A bid to seek funding from LBB to convert the Petanque pitch for Trim Trail equipment had been unsuccessful so the area would most likely return to grass following consultation with local users.

Children's Play Area

- Volunteers from the Queen's Park Area Residents' Association had applied for funding to install some swings in the children's sand pit area and play area, for which the Park Manager thanked Helen Durnford for her efforts.
- In response to a member's (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) question, the Park Manager advised that a recently appointed Open Spaces Department Projects Officer would provide support to the Park Team in the provision of a new suitable replacement safety surface for the sandpit area, which would include consultation with regular users.

- The Superintendent added this may include a phased repairs approach whilst specifications and costs were sought.
- The member (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) added that the need for urgency be noted to ensure the area was not closed for repairs and replacement during the busy spring period 2016.

Visitors and Community

- Children from local schools had attending bulb-planting events during the last few weeks, which had seen over 3,000 bulbs planted.
- A member (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) added that a parent from one of the schools had offered to provide some free bulbs to the Park, which the Park Manager noted.
- A Member thanked the Queen's Park Area Residents' Association for another successful Queen's Park Day event in September 2015.

RESOLVED – That the Superintendent's Update report be noted.

5. **UPDATE ON OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH (OPM) AT THE NORTH LONDON OPEN SPACES DIVISION**

The Group received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided an update on the OPM population and its management following the discovery of caterpillars and a nest at Queen's Park in June 2015.

In response to Members' questions, the Highgate Wood Manager advised that bacteria, parasitic flies, and birds were natural predators of the OPM in Central Europe but these predators did not exist in the UK. He added that OPM suffered in persistent cold, wet weather.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. **FEES AND CHARGES 2016/17**

The Group considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that set out the proposed fees and charges for the range of facilities and services provided at Queen's Park in 2016/17.

In response to a member's (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) question, the Superintendent advised that the 40% concessionary discount would be available for over 60s, under 18s, and the unemployed. He added that concessionary rates would be clearly signed at the Park and on the website to ensure that these users were aware.

Members continued to note and discuss the following matters:

Bandstand

- The Superintendent advised that a £5 increase from £55 to £60 was proposed for the hire of the Bandstand for a two-hour period.
- A member (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) queried why this increase was necessary as the charge had been raised in each year recently.

- The Park Manager explained that staff time was required for the provision and setting-up of tables and chairs around the bandstand if and when requested by the customer.
- Members concluded that the charge should remain at £55 for users who did not require tables and chairs and be increased to £65 for those who did.

Football Coaching

- The Park Manager advised that groups of friends would not be charged for casual games of football but a fee was currently being negotiated with a football coach who regularly used the Park.
- The Superintendent and Park Manager added that the fee from the coach was expected to be finalised by early 2016 and would come into effect immediately.
- In response to a member's (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) question, the Park Manager advised that the fee would be competitive with other local authorities who charged for similar coaching activities.
- Powers for future charges for events and licences were currently being resolved as part of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill, which would be deposited to Parliament on 27 November 2015.

RESOLVED – That the proposed fees and charges 2016/17 be noted and the views of the Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

7. **ZIPPOS CIRCUS PROPOSAL**

The Group considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath outlining a proposal to introduce Zippos Circus to Queen's Park during a number of consecutive days in May 2016. The Park Manager advised that the recommended option from Officers was to permit a licence for one year with a review after the event and consideration for further circus events to be permitted in Queen's Park on an annual basis.

A member (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) stated that she and the Residents' Association disagreed with the proposal to introduce the Circus due to concerns over the following matters: the condition of the lawn following the event; the additional large vehicles from the Circus causing congestion in and around the Park; and was it necessary as Zippos already held circuses at the nearby Grange Park and in Brent Cross. In response to a Member's question regarding the consultation process, the Park Manager advised that a member of the Residents' Association had viewed the Zippos Circus event in Twickenham with him and had expressed support for the Queen's Park proposal following discussions with the local Twickenham 'Friends' Group. He had also received additional positive feedback from another member of the Residents' Association who witnessed the Circus in Twickenham.

At this point the Chairman invited the observers from the ARK Franklin Primary Academy, Friends of Salusbury School, and the Queen's Park Ward of the Kensal Rise Residents' Association to speak on the matter. The ARK Franklin Primary Academy Governor echoed the Queen's Park Area Residents'

Association's member's concerns regarding vehicular congestion in and around the Park and suggested that further consultations should be carried out as local residents may not be fully aware of the proposed event. She added that alternative income generating events could take place at the Café during the evening or could include a Park Firework display in November 2016. The Park Manager advised that local residents would be consulted further as soon as possible.

The representatives of the Friends of Salusbury School and Kensal Rise Residents' Association agreed with the previously mentioned concerns regarding the introduction of the Circus. The representative from Kensal Rise Residents' Association noted that a similar circus was also held at Roundwood Park and suggested that a Halloween event could generate income for the Park due to the popularity of recent nearby street events. The Chair of the Friends of Salusbury School added that an alternative one day event would be more appropriate to the Park than the proposed five day event.

In response to questions from the Deputy Chairman, the Park Manager advised that Zippos Circus would arrive late on the Thursday and leave the following Tuesday, whilst vehicle movements would be limited. He added that negotiations regarding the fee from Zippos Circus had not started yet but he expected to receive in the region of £4,500 for the event. The Deputy Chairman and the other Queen's Park Area Residents' Association member professed their support for the recommended option but noted concerns with ground conditions following the event and the amount of space it would occupy in the Park.

The Superintendent and Park Manager noted the Group's comments and concerns. They concluded by advising that a bond would be agreed with Zippos Circus to guard against any ground damage. A Member added that she was confident in the ability of the Park Team to repair and restore the ground following the event.

RESOLVED – That the Group's feedback on the proposal to enter into a licence agreement with Zippos Circus to hold circus events at Queen's Park be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

8. NORTH LONDON OPEN SPACES - RISK REGISTER

The Group received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that set out the collective risk register for the North London Open Spaces (NLOS) Division, including the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Charity.

RESOLVED – That the NLOS Risk Register be noted.

9. QUESTIONS

In response to a member's (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association) question the Park Manager and Superintendent advised that they would look into the implications and the views of local residents and users regarding the provision of Wedding and Civil Ceremony receptions in the Park. A report

outlining the options for the provision of various events at the Park would be submitted to the next appropriate Group meeting.

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

The Chairman advised that any comments regarding the draft City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill that was circulated to the Group prior to the meeting should be sent to the Remembrancer's Office as soon as possible.

11. **DATES OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the date of the next meeting at 12:00pm on 1 June 2016 be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.45 pm

Chairman

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