

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 11 October 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Rooms
- Second Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 11 October 2017 at 12.15 pm

Present

Members:

Wendy Mead (Chief Commoner)
Graeme Smith (Chairman)
Justin Meath-Baker
Robert Cazenove
Catherine Bickmore
Councillor Bryan Collier MBE
The Rev. Stennett Kirby

Officers:

Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens
Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces & Heritage

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Alderman Ian Luder, Oliver Sells, Karina Dostalova, Jeremy Simons and Michael Welbank.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Members noted an update from the Superintendent of West Ham Park and noted that the budget for West Ham Park is currently in line with anticipated expenditure

for this time of year. The gardening team saw one of its gardeners leave in August, this place is currently being filled by a temporary position. A further temporary member of staff has also been assisting with duties over the busy summer months. Five individuals were interviewed for an apprentice position at West Ham Park, the successful candidate has been offered the post and subject to references will start work with the team and join Capel Manor College in October.

In response to a query regarding the Wildlife Garden it was noted that the use of the wildlife garden at the rear of East Lodge has recently been reviewed. The garden is not big enough to accommodate a whole class of children and the pond is in need of renovation due to the liner being punctured. A future report will be brought to Committee regarding the extension of the garden as this would increase the area of land that is enclosed and therefore would have restricted public use.

In regards to property matters, Members noted the following:

- Nursery update: Tenders have been received for the appointment of a consultant to progress the nursery project. These are currently being reviewed by the Park Manager, City Surveyor and Project Manager.

- Upton Lane Lodges: 240 and 242 Upton Lane properties came to the end of the first year of being externally leased in September. Both of the original tenants are still resident in the properties. Strutt and Parker have completed an inspection of the properties to ensure that expected standards are being maintained and both properties are being well looked after.

- Park Cottage: the completion of the refurbishment works at Park Cottage has been delayed due to a problem with one of the windows, but it is anticipated that this should be completed by early October.

- Mobile food concessions: The wet August weather resulted in low numbers of park visitors and consequentially sales at the 'Snack Shack' were not as high as anticipated, however, a very warm bank holiday weekend helped to compensate for this. Snack Shack are continuing to trade on site at weekends until the end of September and then will remove their trailer.

5. BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER: EVALUATION OF 2017 EVENT AND PROPOSAL FOR 2018

Members noted that West Ham Park hosted a 'Bringing Communities Together' event featuring funfair rides, community and faith stalls, food and concessions on the 29th and 30th July 2017. Around 2,500 people attended the event, which was well received by local people.

In response to a query it was noted that minimal damage was caused to the park's grassland area which has also undergone reparation works to relieve compaction. The organisers would like to repeat the event in 2018. The Committee agreed that the event helped to bring new people to the park who might not otherwise visit it. It was noted that the event was open to all communities and should not be seen as an event for one community only.

Resolved – that Members:

- Approved the proposal to repeat the event in 2018
- Delegated authority to the Superintendent to finalise details of the 2018 event, event fee (including deposit and reinstatement), cancellation policy and pricing structure for fairground rides, food and other items to be sold by stall holders.

6. WEST HAM PARK PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT

Members noted that West Ham Park is a 77 acre award winning park in East London owned and managed by the City of London Corporation. It receives 1.3 million visitors per year and is the largest green space in the London Borough of Newham. The playground and paddling pool are popular facilities with 383,000 visitors being recorded in 2016.

In response to a query it was noted that a playground has been provided in West Ham Park since 1937. The last refurbishment took place in 1986 when all equipment was replaced and safety surface added. Members were also informed that a master plan was created in 2010 and 10 items of equipment were replaced with external funding. The remaining 15 items of equipment are now over 20 years old and require urgent replacement. The 2010 master plan does not reflect the changes in play design and safety standards that have taken place in the intervening years. Therefore a complete strategy refresh is required in order to meet those changes and provide a facility that is fit for purpose.

Officers informed Members that the playground contains a supervised paddling pool which has been provided since 1966 and is currently open daily in the summer. The cost of supervising the paddling pool with a first aid qualified member of staff and the maintenance costs associated with its upkeep mean that its future is being considered and alternative methods of water play sought.

Resolved – That Members approved the gateway 1 and 2 proposals.

7. YEAR 1 REVIEW OF LEARNING IN OPEN SPACES

Members noted that the Green Spaces, Learning Places, the Open Spaces Department's new innovative learning programme, was launched in April 2016 and has reached over 45,000 children, young people and adults in the first year of delivery. This programme represents a key method for the City of London to contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents of some of London's most deprived communities through connecting them more powerfully to their local green spaces.

The programme has achieved overwhelming success as highlighted in the first year evaluation report. However, the future of the project remains at risk due to uncertainty over the long term funding arrangements for the core areas of the work.

Resolved – that the report be received.

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

There were no questions.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT.

The Superintendent informed the Committee that he had received a B107 Registration Notice based on adverse land possession. Members noted that this small area of land lay outside of the park boundaries and had been transferred to the City in 1978 from the London Borough of Newham. The Comptrollers and City Solicitor's Department had registered an objection to the notice whilst a full investigation took place.

Chairman

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