

OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS
Monday, 7 December 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 7 December 2015 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Ian Luder (Chairman)
Graeme Smith (Deputy Chairman)
Alderman Robert Howard
Barbara Newman
Virginia Rounding (Ex-Officio Member)
Jeremy Simons
Michael Welbank
Verderer Peter Adams (Observer)
Catherine Bickmore (Observer)

Officers:

Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Financial Services Director
Sue Ireland	- Director of Open Spaces
Louisa Allen	- City Gardens Manager
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, Parks & Gardens
	- West Ham Park Manager
	- Business Manager, Open Spaces
Lucy Murphy	
Gerry Kiefer	
Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Edward Wood	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Nigel Lefton	- Remembrancer's Department
Roger Adams	- City Surveyor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Alderman Gordon Haines, Wendy Mead, John Beyer and Deputy Alex Deane.

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

No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES

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

Matters Arising:

Open Spaces Bill

The Remembrancer informed Members that the Open Spaces Bill had been deposited in Parliament on 27th November 2015. The first reading was due to take place in January 2016, with a second reading soon after. Members thanked all the Officers who had been involved for their work and commended useful and in depth consultation which had taken place.

St Mary-At-Hill Churchyard Gateway 4

Officers informed Members that the St Mary-At-Hill Churchyard Gateway 4 project had been approved by the Project Sub Committee at their meeting on 4th November 2015, subject to all funding being provided as stated in the report.

4. TO REVIEW THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk regarding the terms of reference and frequency of meetings. The Committee agreed that they had considered some light agendas over the past year and it would be helpful to investigate the possibility of altering the frequency of meetings from six to five meetings per annum. The Town Clerk agreed to submit a report with proposed dates for five meetings in the 2017/18 municipal year to the February 2016 Committee meeting.

Resolved – that the terms of reference be agreed by the Committee.

5. OPERATIONAL PROPERTY

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain and City Surveyor in relation to the Operational Property review and noted that this was a cross-cutting Service Based Review which was taking a more strategic view of the operational assets the City of London Corporation had. The review aimed to identify opportunities to rationalise the Corporation's operational property portfolio and reduce the high and rising cost of property.

Members were informed that this report would now be considered by the Corporate Asset Sub Committee and then the Resource Allocation Committee in December 2015. Services Committees would then receive reports for decision from January 2016 onwards.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. 2015/16 BUSINESS PLAN QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE UPDATE - QUARTER 2

The Committee received the report of the Director of Open Spaces summarising the performance against the 2015/16 – 2017/18 business plan. With regards to the Learning Programme, Members were informed that this had now achieved a 'green' rating as the City Bridge Trust funding application had been approved. Alternative sources of funding were also identified and submissions made but had yet to be realised. In response to a query, Officers agreed to include information regarding unsuccessful funding bids in the annual report for the Committee's information.

Officers informed Members that the ten green flag awards and six heritage awards had been retained by the City.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. **OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH IMPACT ON CITY OF LONDON OPEN SPACES IN 2015 AND FUTURE PLANS**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Open Spaces that provided an update on the OPM population and its management at the North London Open Spaces, following the discovery of caterpillars and nests at Queen's Park and Hampstead Heath in June 2015. Members were advised that the total spend on inspections, admin time and nest removals in 2015 had been £9,480 and this figure was expected to rise year on year as more nests were found and more treatment required.

In response to a query from Members, Officers said public notices were displayed to raise awareness regarding OPM which should help identify the pest. Members agreed that it was very difficult to identify the pest until it was too late but hoped that raising public awareness would help the situation in the future.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. **REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS - 2015/16 & 2016/17**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding the revenue and capital budgets for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

Resolved – that the following be approved:

- The budget for submission to the Finance Committee; and
- Authorised the Chamberlain, in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces, to revise these budgets to allow for any further implications arising from Corporate Projects, departmental reorganisations and other reviews, and changes to the Additional Works Programme. Any changes over £50,000 would be reported to Committee.

9. **UPDATE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS AND GARDENS**

The Committee received an update on management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since October 2015. Members noted that the Superintendent and City Surveyor were consulting with Transport for London regarding the layout of the proposed Cycle Superhighway to ensure deliveries to the City Gardens depot could still be made in a suitable manner.

In response to a query, it was noted that "Voluntary No Smoking" signs around some open spaces had encouraged the public to not smoke in these areas. Officers said that there had only been one complaint received to date.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

There was no urgent business.

12. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

13. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

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

14. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS NON PUBLIC APPENDIX**

The appendix was considered in consultation with the Revenue and Capital Budgets report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

There was one question.

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

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm

Chairman

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