

OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS
Monday, 5 February 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 5 February 2018 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Graeme Smith (Chairman)
Oliver Sells QC (Deputy Chairman)
Alderman Ian Luder
Wendy Mead (Chief Commoner)
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons
Michael Welbank
Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Ex-Officio Member)

In Attendance:

Verder Peter Adams
Caroline Haines

Officers:

Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, City Gardens
Alison Elam	- Chamberlain's Department
Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Colin Buttery	- Director, Open Spaces & Heritage
Carl Locsin	- Town Clerk's Department
Patrick Hegarty	- City Surveyor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Karina Dostalova and Anne Fairweather.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

In relation to Fann Street Members noted that the project was progressing well and the Committee would receive an update via email.

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

4. PRESENTATION - PUBLIC REALM AROUND ONE LONDON WALL PLACE

Members received a presentation from Officers regarding the public realm area around One London Wall Place. Officers informed the Committee that there was an improvement of access to the garden in St Alphage churchyard. To consolidate the maintenance around the area, small pockets of green spaces

would be maintained by the developer in accordance with an agreement between them and the City Corporation.

Some Members had further queries regarding some aspects of the development which fell under the remit of Streets and Walkways Sub Committee; Officers agreed to answer any such queries outside of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee.

5. CITY ARTS INITIATIVE

Members were made aware that due to the promoter withdrawing, the Open Spaces Committee was no longer required to consider the Great Sherlock Gnome Hunt. The paper was therefore withdrawn from the agenda.

Members were pleased that Committees were being consulted regarding such initiatives early on in the process. The Committee agreed that should the project include a City Gardens aspect in the future Members should be consulted along with the Superintendent.

Resolved – that the report be withdrawn.

6. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The report provided an update to Members of the Committee on management and operational activities at the City's open spaces and City gardens since December 2017.

The Committee were pleased to note the increased income from filming taking place in open spaces in the City. In relation to Cleary Garden it was noted that urgent repair works by Transport for London (TfL) to a wall surrounding the London Underground vent shaft have delayed the start of improvement works at this site. However, it is hoped that work can begin shortly.

In relation to Seething Lane it was noted that the new stone paths are being deep cleaned and a sealant applied to add further protection to the surfaces and engravings. The turf that was supplied was found to have been infected with a fungal disease; this is being replaced by the supplier at no cost to the City.

Members noted that the Survey of Private Trees was completed. The results have been analysed and a total of 1070 privately owned and managed trees were recorded; an increase of 72 since the last survey in 2004. Of these, Plane trees are the most common species making up 15% of all trees. It was agreed that a report regarding the health of these trees would be submitted to the Committee for their information later in the year.

In response to a query regarding the Stonecutter Street Goldman Sachs development it was noted that the project has been delayed by 12 months (planting now anticipated January to March 2019), but will eventually include 13 street trees and 17 multi-stemmed trees, as well as several raised planters. Some of this planting is on TfL land which the City Gardens team will implement and maintain for one year, after which time this area will be handed

back to the developer to maintain at their request. A good proportion of the project is on City Highway and maintenance responsibility will remain with the City team. The project will come with automatic irrigation and maintenance paid for by Goldman Sachs, in perpetuity. Members agreed that the term 'in perpetuity' needed more clarification and a timeframe should be included. Officers stated that the City had not wished to enter into a tripartite maintenance agreement; the City would maintain certain areas for one year after which they would be handed over the developer.

In response to a query regarding Inner Temple Gardens, Members noted that a provisional planning application had been rejected as the proposal was considered by Officers and deemed inappropriate.

Members agreed that information regarding planning applications should include a brief summary of what the project entailed within the table including the dates of current applications.

Resolved – that Members received the report.

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

A Member raised a question regarding the maintenance of the gardens around St Paul's churchyard. Members noted that using low fences to discourage the public from stepping on the grass would not be favourable as people would step over the fences. Lawns in the City are used by members of the public, by city workers during lunch times and are good for natural drainage; therefore, part of the Open Spaces budget would be set aside to maintain lawns in the city. In response to a query regarding the ramp due to be implemented at St Paul's, Members noted that a small area of land would be lost to make way for the ramp in the current proposal.

A further question was raised regarding the policy around promoting trees in city streets. Officers stated that they worked well with colleagues in the City Realm team to encourage the planting of trees. The Committee agreed that the Area Enhancement Strategy provided opportunities for additional tree planting and Officers would continue to work with Officers to encourage this.

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

There was no urgent business.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: 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 Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

The meeting ended at 12:20pm

Chairman

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