

QUEEN'S PARK CONSULTATIVE GROUP
Tuesday, 24 April 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Queen's Park Consultative Group held at Queen's Park Office, Kingswood Avenue, London NW6 6SG on Tuesday, 24 April 2018 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

Karina Dostalova (Chairman)
Ruby Sayed
Virginia Bonham Carter (Ark Franklin Primary School)
John Blandy (Queen's Park Area Residents' Association)
Vicky Zentner (Kensal Rise Residents' Association)

Officers:

Leanne Murphy	-	Town Clerk's Department
Alistair MacLellan	-	Town Clerk's Department
Bob Warnock	-	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Richard Gentry	-	Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager
Colin Buttery	-	Director of Open Spaces & Heritage

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Anne Fairweather, Helen Durnford and Giovanna Torrico.

2. **DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2017 be approved.

Matters Arising

Grant funding opportunities

In response to a query regarding potential funding opportunities from the London Borough of Brent and the Wembley Stadium Trust (WST), the Director of Open Spaces advised that the general approach of the Department was to work with a broad range of funding partners to secure funding for new projects.

It was noted that currently no bid has been made to the WST. Officers have reviewed the WST funding criteria and will seek to identify future projects from the Management Plan and Divisional Plan. Officers are currently working in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association to promote the City of London's Tennis Officers.

The Chairman noted that the four Open Spaces Chairmen recently met and requested a list of potential external grant funding opportunities. In addition, the Open Spaces Chairmen have recently met to discuss and prioritise a list of improvement projects applicable to a new source of internal funding

The Chairman noted that the timing of the meeting, two weeks before the local elections, has likely impacted on Local Councillor's availability to attend. A Member noted that they had a contact at the London Borough of Brent and agreed to share their contact details with the Director. The Director noted that the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee would be meeting with the new Council leaders after the May 2018 elections.

4. **ACTIONS SHEET**

The Group noted the various outstanding actions and the updates provided thereon.

The Town Clerk agreed to add a numbers column for actions on all actions sheets going forward.

Grant funding for toilet block

The Chairman advised that a specific disability access application had been funded elsewhere by the City Bridge Trust (CBT). Officers will consider whether a CBT application would be applicable to funding the Queen's Park toilets.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent and the following points were made:

Projects and Programmes

Play Area Toilets and Sandpit Redevelopment

- The Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager drew Member's attention to the timeline provided for work to the play area toilets and sandpit project. It was noted that as the planned work for the play area alone exceeded £50K, it was suggested that these projects would become one larger capital project.
- In response to a query regarding the high cost of the sandpit project, Members were advised that this was inclusive of installation and equipment including a water feature, natural rocks and wooden structure.
- The Superintendent advised that the Park Manager had met with a colleague from the City Surveyors Department again regarding the play area toilet block to discuss the refurbishment and development of the existing structure in an attempt to improve the facility. He noted that there was suspected subsidence and, following CCTV exploration and advice from a Loss Adjustor, a horse chestnut tree had been removed

which would reduce movement in the structure's foundations. Asbestos checks would take place in the roof lining which was flaking before any remedial works were undertaken.

- Photographs of Hampstead Heath, Kenwood Ladies' Pond and Great Yarmouth toilet facilities were shown to Members as an example of how the play area toilets could be styled in the future.
- The Chairman queried whether it would be more cost-effective to knock down the current toilet block and create a new build that was fit for purpose. The Group were advised that the City Surveyors Department had ruled this out as the building structure was considered fit for purpose. Members disagreed that it was fit for purpose and requested a full explanation from the City Surveyor as to why this was not an option as Members felt that a facility with longevity would be the most cost-effective solution.
- It was noted that the public community view was that the toilets were not of a standard expected in a public park managed by the City of London.
- Members were concerned that little progress had been made in the last six months and did not want to hold up progress. However, to ensure the Group were fully involved in setting the scope of the project, it was agreed that the full cost breakdown should be provided to the Group as soon as possible so that Members could be consulted on the various options.
- Members made the following comments regarding what the facility should include:
 - Baby changing facilities should be separate to the disabled toilet.
 - Access to the toilets would be required from the sandpit and the main Park where sport is played. This must also be fully accessible for disabled people.
 - Parent and baby toilets should be gender neutral.
 - It was noted that toilets at Burnham Beeches were a good example of a gender-neutral provision.
 - Consideration should be given to making the toilets gender neutral.
- With regards to timescale, Members were advised that it would take a few weeks to work out what was needed with architects and produce a summary for both options. It was suggested that a competition could be offered to architects locally for ideas as there were many in the area. The Superintendent highlighted that work needed to take place quickly for the feasibility study, but that work could be open for tender later.
- Members were keen that a thorough investigation for asbestos, etc, take place immediately before works start and not after the work had begun.

- The Chairman stated that if more debate was required once the reports were received, then the Group would be consulted prior to the next meeting. However, if the two reports showed a clear front-runner, then the Superintendent would proceed as necessary as to not hold up progress on the work.

Tennis Courts

- The Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager noted that works to the tennis courts would start in September 2018.

Sustainability

- Members were advised that the London Borough of Brent no longer collected green waste from the Park; they were collecting recycled material but charged for this service. The Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager advised that the removal of waste (green, general and recycling) cost the Park £32K annually. Within the Divisional Plan a project to develop a Waste Strategy has been identified with the aim to increase recycling, streamline collection and reducing costs.
- A Member queried if resources could be pooled with the London Borough of Brent to reduce costs. The Park Manager agreed to look into this option and confirm if the costs of removal by the City of London's corporate provider were still cheaper than the London Borough of Brent.
- A Member suggested including signage across the Park, café, tennis courts, etc, regarding removal of waste and recycling in an attempt to encourage visitors to dispose of their waste properly.
- A Member suggested that use of reusable bottles and straws could be promoted by the café and through festival type events, e.g. Queen's Park Day.
- Members were advised that the café offers free water. It was highlighted that the two water fountains in the Park are not currently shown on the map.
- The Park Manager agreed to investigate adding a short message onto the tennis booking confirmation email asking members of the public to take their litter home with them.

Ecology and Environment

- Members were advised that Oak Processionary Moth warning notices would be displayed in the Park. A Forestry Commission contractor recently surveyed the trees which previously had nests and found no evidence of infestation.

Café

- The Urban Leisure Group (ULG) commenced trading at the café on 3 February 2018 and continue to receive positive feedback from the public. Members were advised that ULG were keen to get involved in Queen's Park projects and community events.

Pedestrian Counters

- It was noted that the City of London Corporation's move to Windows 10 had made it difficult to transfer data from the device to technology and the Department were working to resolve this.

Events

NOMAD – Variation to Licence

- Members were advised that a variation to the NOMAD Cinema's premises licence regarding screenings on Friday evenings was currently out to consultation with the London Borough of Brent and no negative feedback had been received. The premises licence variation also included an addition for performances on the bandstand on Saturday afternoons.

Mayhew Winter Fayre

- A request from the Mayhew charity was received regarding the Park hosting their annual Christmas Fayre animal rehoming event.
- A Member was generally supportive of charitable endeavours but highlighted the importance of the Open Spaces Act 2018 and the powers this provided the City of London Corporation to host its own Christmas and/or summer fayres to raise funds for the Park. Members agreed this was a good opportunity and that the Park Manager prioritise City of London Corporation events at prime times in the year.
- It was noted that the draft Events Policy (Part 2) would be brought to the October 2018 meeting for the Group's feedback.

Pines & Needles Proposal

- Members were advised that there was appetite for Pines & Needles to hold a commercial event at the Park during the Christmas period selling Christmas trees.
- The Director recommended consideration of a local tender on limited events, e.g. a Christmas fayre, with the money to be received into the Park's Local Risk Budget. The Director suggested carrying out a one-year pilot to determine how commercial opportunities could be agreed.

- A Member raised concerns over a commercial company trading within the Park for three weeks and Members felt that they should not be situated on both sides of the pathway. A Member suggested moving the area that Pines & Needles would be based to a more discrete and less prominent area which was not on the grass. The Park Manager advised the Group that the location of the operation needed to be adjacent to a power source and accessible for deliveries.
- The Town Clerk agreed to circulate Part 1 of the Events Policy to Members for information.

Queen's Park, The Opera

- Members were advised that a provisional request had been made for the Park to host a performance of "Queen's Park, The Opera" for three days in June 2019. Members were not supportive of this proposed event.

Income and Expenditure

- The Superintendent advised that the proximity of this meeting to year end meant that there currently was no update. The Superintendent noted that a balanced budget had been achieved.

Children's Farm

- Members were shown a mock-up of the new signs showing the transformation of the Queen's Park Farm which would set out the plan to visitors. It was noted that the farm would close shortly in September when the majority of works would take place and social media would be used to notify the public.

5.1 Appendix 1 - Draft Queen's Park Woodland Walk Management Plan

Members noted the draft Queen's Park Woodland Walk Management Plan and the following points were made:

- Members were advised that the plan was in very early draft form based on existing information with the aim of formalising a clear plan on how to maintain and enhance this area of the Park.
- Members were advised that the Queen's Park Team were working with the Hampstead Heath Ecologist to develop the plan and had liaised with local community groups for assistance. A further draft would be presented at the October QPCG meeting for comment prior to sign off next year.
- The Superintendent advised Members that any additional written comments or ideas could be sent to the Park Manager.

- The Director of Open Spaces clarified that, once completed, the Woodland Walk Management Plan would sit beneath the Queen's Park Conservation Management Plan and wanted Members to recognise the importance of the different plans as they would reference each other.
- A Member noted the importance for people, particularly the elderly or disabled visitors, to have places to rest along the walk, e.g. logs to sit on.
- A Member felt that the draft Woodland Walk plan was too long, and that brevity was important.
- It was questioned whether the site history explanation could be removed or cut down to contextualise at the beginning of the plan.
- It was recommended that acronyms not be used at all and that the language be changed to make the plan more cohesive.
- With regards to the sentence "apply the principles of the City of London's sustainability framework to all we do on our sites", a Member recommended adding a weblink to the framework.
- A Member felt that Park's assets which make it different to other places, e.g. special trees (redwood, elm trees) and habitat, were not highlighted enough in the plan.

5.2 **Appendix 2 - Queen's Park Proposed 2018 Schedule of Events**

Members considered a report regarding the proposed Queen's Park 2018 Schedule of Events.

5.3 **Appendix 3 - 2018/19 Divisional Plan (Including 4th Quarter Status & Update for 2017/18 Divisional Plan)**

Members considered a report regarding the 2018/19 Divisional Plan.

5.4 **Appendix 4 - 2018/19 Annual Work Programme**

Members noted the Queen's Park 2018/19 Annual Work Programme for Cyclical Works and Projects.

The Chairman noted that written comments on Appendix 3 and 4 were welcome.

6. **QUESTIONS**

Members were advised that Queen's Park would be hosting its first wedding on the bandstand on Saturday 28 April 2018. Members were pleased and suggested capturing this occasion on social media as a first for the Park. In response to a question, Members were advised that weddings and civil ceremonies are being promoted via the City of London Corporation website.

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

There was no other business.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting on 31 October 2018 was noted.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Leanne Murphy
leanne.murphy@cityoflondon.gov.uk