

BURNHAM BEECHES AND STOKE COMMON CONSULTATION GROUP
Tuesday, 18 August 2020

**Minutes of the meeting of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common
Consultation Group held remotely at 7.00 pm**

Chairman Graham Doshi-Smith

Officers: Andy Barnard, Helen Read, Deborah Harris, Richard Holt,
James Gibson,

Attendees: Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney, Deputy Chairman Philip Woodhouse,
Andy Booth, Les Davies, Caroline Spicer, Katie Ayers, David Banks,
Jenny Jebson, Lisa Pope, Annie Arscot, Keith Greenhough, Mary Kolhase

1. **Apologies**

Apologies from were received from Andy McVeigh, Joy Winyard, Mark Bradshaw, Sylvia Moys and Adrian Sutton

2. **Minutes**

The Group considered the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group held on 14th of January 2020. A Group member noted a correction on the spelling of their name.

RESOLVED- That, subject to the correct specified, the minutes of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common consultation Group on the 14th of January 2020 be confirmed as an accurate record.

3. **Public Spaces Protection Orders**

The Director of Open Spaces provided a presentation to the Group on the Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) for Burnham Beeches. It was explained that the PSPO were last extended on December 1st 2017 and that, further to the requirement to extend the PSPO every three years, the PSPO at Burnham Beeches must now be extended if they are to remain in place after November 30th 2020. The Superintendent explained the public consultations process, including the outcomes of this consultation, noting the high percentage of support received for the PSPOs.

A member of the Group commented that the Burnham Parish Council supported the extension of the current PSPO at Burnham Beeches for a further three years. It was noted by a Group member that education would be key to the success of the PSPO. In response it was confirmed that a full-time ranger position concentrating on educational matters was due to be appointed.

Responding to a query from a Group member the Superintendent explained that were some legal limitations which had affected the format of the public consultation.

A Member commented that as a regular using of Burnham Beeches they supported the requirement for PSPOs to support the open space and noted that some space where dogs can be off their lead would be very much appreciated. The Superintendent explained that it had been a long process to achieve balance in this matter but noted that the culture on responsible dog walking is beginning to change.

The Superintendent confirmed that the views of this Consultative Group and outcome of the public consultation will be reported to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in September 2020.

RESOLVED- That the outcome of the public consultation supporting the extension of the PSPOs at Burnham Beeches for a further three years be noted. Approval on that outcome to be sought at the September 2020 meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee

4. **Car Parking infrastructure and Charges**

The Superintendent provided the Group with an update on Burnham Beeches Car Parking infrastructure and Charges. Superintendent explained the three tariff options. The Superintendent confirmed and demonstrated that bench marking of costs had taken place against other local open spaces. The Superintendent confirmed that increased visitor numbers since the easing of lockdown has meant that income 2020/21 income targets for car parking remain on track.

In addition the Superintendent explained that the City was working with Buckinghamshire Council to look at options for introducing clearway roads in the areas near Burnham Beeches to resolve illegal parking on roads and verges which had been exacerbated by the large visitor increase in the COVID19 effected period. The Superintendent confirmed that the City is considering providing some financial support to the Council to facilitate this project.

It was commented by a Group member that while they were in support of these proposed measures, they had some concerns on the displacement affect to other nearby roads. Replying to this the Superintendent explained that the proposed clearway roads had been extended to considerable distance from Burnham Beeches to deter visits from parking on other roads and walking to the site.

Following a query from a Group member the Superintendent confirmed that the details of who at Buckinghamshire Council had been contacted would be provided.

Replying to concerns expressed by members of the Group Superintendent explained that he would investigate how residents might avoid having to pay for parking on the highway but noted that this may be outside of the City's purview. Further to this Group members suggested that consideration also be given to the impact on local business.

In response to a comment made by a Group member the Superintendent agreed that parking discounts for volunteers at Burnham Beeches would be an appropriate measure.

The Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group commented that they were in support of Burnham Beeches Car Park Tariff option 1.

RESOLVED- That the Burnham Beeches Car Park Tariff options be noted.

5. **Planning and development issues**

The Conservation Officer provided a presentation on planning and development issues in relation to Burnham Beeches after a short update on progress with the Burnham Beeches Management Plan. It was explained that the mitigation strategy

for the impact of recreation pressure, drawn up by the Local Authority, consisted of a zone of 500m around the Beeches where no additional houses can be built and a zone between 500m and 5.6km where developers have to pay a contribution to fund projects including an additional ranger, budget for the ranger to hold events, bespoke electronic interpretation and monitoring of visitor numbers and impacts. In addition, an update regarding the situation regarding development in the Slough Borough Council area was provided.

A Group member commented that, while the employment of a specialist educational ranger was a positive result, all rangers on the site should consider education as a key component of their roles. The Conservation Officer agreed and explained that the educational ranger is additional to the existing rangers and not a replacement for them.

Replying to a question from the Deputy Chairman the Conservation Officer confirmed that, while the exclusion zones for development at various open spaces may be different, they are calculated in the same way. Officers from the different open spaces management teams were in regular contact to exchange experience.

In response to comments from Group members the Superintendent confirmed that while he was sympathetic with the view that the more affordable dwellings in the local area was preferable this was a matter for the local authorities.

RESOLVED- That the update on planning issues be noted.

6. **Any other business**

There were no items of urgent business considered.

7. **Date of Next Meeting**

The Town Clerk explained that an appropriate meeting date for early next year would be established and the relevant checks made as to whether a remote meeting was still required.