

OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS
Wednesday, 2 December 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens held remotely on
Wednesday, 2 December 2020 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Oliver Sells QC (Chairman)
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)
Graeme Doshi-Smith
Alderman Ian Luder
Wendy Mead
Barbara Newman
Deputy John Tomlinson
Anne Fairweather (Ex-Officio Member)
Benjamin Murphy (Ex-Officio Member)

Officers:

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Kristina Drake	- Town Clerk's Department
Sarah Phillips	- Remembrancer's Department
Philip Saunders	- Remembrancer's Department
Tim Jones	- Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
James Gibson	- Chamberlain's Department
Edward Wood	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Patrick Hegarty	- Technical Manager, Open Spaces Department
Jake Tibbetts	- City Gardens Manager, Open Spaces Department
Martin Falder	- Open Spaces Department
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens
Colin BATTERY	- Director of Open Spaces & Heritage
Patrick Hegarty	- Open Spaces Department
Gerry Kiefer	- Open Spaces Business Manager
Alison Bunn	- City Surveyor's Department
Alexandra Vastano	- Public Health Apprentice, Department of Community and Children's Services
Clarisse Tavin	- Department of the Built Environment

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Karina Dostalova.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the public minutes of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee meeting held on the 13th of October 2020.

RESOLVED- That the public minutes of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee meeting held on the 13th of October 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN. CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMETABLE**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Biodiversity Action plan.

RESOLVED- That the timetable of actions for the Biodiversity Action Plan consultation process, as set out in Table 1 of the report, be approved.

5. **DRAFT OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2021/22**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Open Spaces Department Business Plan for 2021/22. The Director of Open Spaces highlighted the performance of the Department's KPIs and the new report template.

RESOLVED- That the high-level Departmental Business Plan for Open Spaces for 2021/22 be approved.

6. **OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENTAL RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Open Spaces Departmental Risk Management.

A Member requested further information on the reduction of the risk OSD 005 Pests and diseases to Amber from Red. The Director of Open Spaces explained that the work undertaken by the Department to reduce this risk and that the seasonal effect that had reduced this risk. In addition, it was confirmed that, despite OPM's exponential growth, the Open Spaces Department was confident that the risk to the public was manageable.

Responding to a query from a Member the Director of Open Spaces explained that the engineer's report for the Wanstead Park Reservoirs had demonstrated that the project would not be as expensive as first thought, however, the Risk remained red.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

7. **CITY OF LONDON JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY REFRESH - UPDATE AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the City of London Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Director of Community and Children's Services introduced the report and noted the Strategy's connection to the Open Spaces.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

8. **DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21 - SIX MONTH PERFORMANCE UPDATE: APRIL TO SEPT 2020**

The Committee received a report of Director of Open Spaces on the Departmental Business Plan 2020/21 Six-month performance update for April to Sept 2020.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

9. **CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the City Gardens update. The report provided an update to Members on the management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since October 2020.

The Chairman highlighted the contribution of the City Gardens team which had been particularly important in 2020. The Deputy Chairman commented that social media would be utilised to recognise this contribution and that she was happy to liaise with Members on this matter.

The Committee discussed opportunities for Member visits to the City Gardens noting the requirements of social distancing rules. The Director of Open Spaces noted that options for arranging these visits, in both the short term and after the easing of the COVID restrictions, would be explored.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

10. **CULTURE MILE**

The Committee heard an update from the Culture Mile Manager on Culture Mile activities. The Culture Mile Manager outlined the key details of Culture Mile's proposals for the 2021-3 period, in line with the Culture Mile and City of London Corporation Cultural Strategy, and highlighted the connection to the City of London Corporation managed open spaces.

A Member disputed on the designation of an installation as a bench which was located in the Beech Street garden and noted her belief that an insufficient degree of consultation had been undertaken on its implementation. The Culture Mile Manager responded by confirming that, as with all projects, lessons would be learnt from any mistakes made and factored into future work. In addition, it was confirmed that the signs highlighted by the Member were temporary.

The Deputy Chairman thanked Officers for their work developing the Culture Mile Learning plan and requested that consideration be given to incorporating open spaces into this learning plan in future.

RESOLVED- That the update be noted.

11. **RESETTING OF DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS 2020/21**

The Committee received the report of the Chamberlain on the Resetting of departmental Budgets 2020/21.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

12. **ST ALPHAGE GARDENS ENHANCEMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of the Built Environment on the St Alphage Gardens Enhancement project. The Chairman explained that the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee had previously agreed this report.

The Committee commented on the improved situation at the site and commended Officers for their work.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

13. **PLANNING WHITE PAPER**

The Committee received a report of the Remembrancer on the Planning White Paper.

A Member requested further information on how the City of London Corporation would be providing its views on the Planning White Paper. The Remembrancer explained that the City of London Corporation would be providing a formal response on the White Paper to the Government, appropriate select committee and that it would be discussed at the Policy & Resources Committee Chair's meeting with the Minister for London.

The Chairman commented that he would not allow one inch of development on open space while he was Chairman of the Committee.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

14. **CWP 21/22 UPDATED BID REPORT**

The Committee considered a report of the City Surveyor on the CWP 21/22 Updated Bid Report.

A Member of the Committee asked if the reduced funding would continue beyond the 2021/22 year. Responding to this the City Surveyor confirmed that the reduced funding would only be for the year specified and was due to the impact of COVID on the City of London Corporation's finances.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

15. **SUMMARY OF KEY OPEN SPACES MEDIA COVERAGE: OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER 2020**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk on the Summary of key Open Spaces media coverage: October to November 2020. The Chairman noted that the increased media coverage of the Open Spaces was reflective of a busy year.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions received in the public session.

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

The Committee thanked Officers for their contributions over 2020 which, it was noted, had been an extremely challenging year.

18. **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 Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

19. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee meeting held on the 13th of October 2020.

RESOLVED- That the non-public minutes of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee meeting held on the 13th of October 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

20. **DEBT ARREARS – INVOICED INCOME FOR PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Open Spaces on the Debt Arrears Invoiced Income for Period Ending 30th September 2020.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions considered in the non-public session.

22. **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 considered in the non-public session.

The meeting ended at 12.12 pm

Chairman

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