

OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS
Tuesday, 13 July 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the informal Open Spaces and City Gardens held at
remotely on Tuesday, 13 July 2021 at 10.30 am

Present

Members:

Oliver Sells QC (Chairman)
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)
Alderman Ian Luder
Wendy Mead
Deputy John Tomlinson
Benjamin Murphy (Ex-Officio Member)

In attendance:

Catherine Bickmore
Jeremy Simons

Officers:

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Kerry Nicholls	- Town Clerk's Department
Joanna Burnaby-Atkins	- Film Liaison Manager, Town Clerk's Department
Aqib Hussain	- Technology Support Partner, Chamberlain's Department
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens
Martin Falder	- Open Spaces Department
Gerry Kiefer	- Business Manager, Open Spaces
Abigail Tinkler	- Head of Learning, Open Spaces

Introductions

The Town Clerk highlighted that the meeting was being recorded as well as live streamed and would be made available on the City Corporation's YouTube page for a period of time after the meeting had concluded. With this in mind, it was confirmed that participants in the meeting had all individually agreed and given their consent to being recorded and that all personal data would be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The Town Clerk highlighted that, for further information on this, viewers could contact the City Corporation using the details provided on the public webpages.

The Town Clerk also reminded Members, and any members of the public observing the meeting on-line, that this was an informal meeting and that any views reached by the Committee today would therefore have to be considered by the Director of Open Spaces after the meeting in accordance with the Court of Common Council's COVID Approval Procedure and that they would make a

formal decision having considered all relevant matters. The Town Clerk highlighted that this process reflected the current position in respect of the holding of formal Local Authority meetings and the Court of Common Council's decision of 15th April 2021 to continue with virtual meetings and take formal decisions through a delegation to the Town Clerk and other officers nominated by him after the informal meeting has taken place and the will of the Committee was known in open session. Details of all decisions taken under the COVID Approval Procedure would be available online via the City Corporation's webpages.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Anne Fairweather and Graeme Doshi-Smith.

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 minutes of the previous meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 27th of April 2021.

Responding to a query from an observer appointed to the committee the Town Clerk confirmed that their attendance at the previous meeting would be added to the minutes.

RESOLVED- That the public minutes of the previous meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 27th of April 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **OPEN SPACES IN THE MEDIA**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk on the Open Spaces media coverage summary.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

5. **ESTABLISHMENT OF LONDON LOCATION LIBRARY TO PROMOTE FILMING**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Communications on the Establishment of London Location Library to Promote Filming.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

6. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2020/21 - OPEN SPACES & CITY GARDENS**

The Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces on the Revenue Outturn 2020/21 for Open Spaces and City Gardens.

In response to Member's query the Director of Open Spaces explained that the filming fees paid to film at each open space would contribute to the budget of the open space in question. Answering a question from observer appointed to

the Committee the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that West Ham Park was included in the open spaces which are available for filming.

The Deputy Chairman stated that the budgetary position for apprentices should be reconsidered as this was an important matter which needs to be fully funded.

Responding to a Member's question the Director of Open Spaces provided an update on the procurement and provision of ULEZ compliant vehicles across the open spaces.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

7. **BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN CONSULTATION RESPONSE AND ADOPTION REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Biodiversity Action Plan Consultation Response and Adoption report.

RESOLVED- That the text of the final draft document be approved for adoption

8. **OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Open Spaces and City Gardens Risk Management.

Replying to a Member's query on the ULEZ risk the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the risk remained amber because the Department was taking a cautious view on the procurement of compliant vehicles but confirmed there was current no reason to think this would not be completed by the end of autumn.

A Member noted that the risk on maintenance of buildings, memorials, play areas and equipment was listed as red and questioned if this was a reason for concern with regard to the child's play areas. The Director of Open Spaces explained that the risk was listed as red because of the condition of some heritage buildings within the portfolio, confirming that the child's play area was not the reason for this risk rating. A Member commented that there needed to be a rational included if there was material increase in risk of building maintenance. The Chairman observed that there was wide range of risks within the Committee purview including the management of heritage buildings, which if the mitigation actions were not properly funded, would have detrimental real world impact.

RESOLVED- That: -

- I. The Departmental risk register as outlined in this report and at Appendix 2 be approved; and
- II. That the removal of OSD 010 – Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) Fleet Purchase Risk, as outlined at paragraph 15 be approved; and
- III. That the reactivation of OSD 012 – Budget Reduction & Income Loss Summary Risk be approved; and

IV. The City Gardens elements of the City Gardens and West Ham Park risk register at Appendix 3 be approved.

9. **OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21 - YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Open Spaces Departmental Business Plan 2020/21 Year End Performance report.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

10. **TWO YEAR REVIEW OF THE OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT'S LEARNING PROGRAMME, 2019-21**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the two-year review of the Open Spaces Department's learning programme 2019-21.

The Committee commended Officers for their work on the Open Spaces learning programme noting the successes which had been achieved through the move to centralisation of the programme.

Responding to a query from Member of the Committee on the future of the funding the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that future core funding for the programme had been built into the budgets. It was added that sponsorship options for the programme would be explored appropriately.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

11. **CITY GARDENS MANAGER'S UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces which provided an update on management and operational activities across the City Gardens section since April 2021.

Responding to a Member's query the Director of Open Spaces explained that he was still content with the current tree maintenance provider but that procurement rules required that alternative provider need to be identified.

The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the policy to move to fixed term contracts has caused staffing issues for the City Gardens Team with clarity on the future of this policy would be vital for future planning for the Team. The Chairman commented that the City of London Corporation had benefited from long term staff previously therefore it was vital that this issue was clarified.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

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

There was no questions received in the public session.

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

There were no items of urgent business considered in the public session.

14. **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.

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the previous meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 27th of April 2021.

RESOLVED- That the considered the non-public minutes of the previous meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 27th of April 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

16. **FINSBURY SETTLEMENT DAMAGE CLAIM**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Finsbury Circus Settlement Damage Claim.

RESOLVED- That the report be approved.

17. **FINSBURY CIRCUS GARDEN REINSTATEMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Finsbury Circus Garden Reinstatement.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

18. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk on the action taken outside of the committee.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

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

One question was received in the non-public session.

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

There were no items of urgent business considered in the non-public session.

11:38

Chairman

Contact Officer: Richard Holt
Richard.Holt@cityoflondon.gov.uk / 020 7332 3113