

**OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS**  
**Tuesday, 15 February 2022**

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 15 February 2022 at 10.30 am

**Present**

**Members:**

Oliver Sells QC (Chairman)  
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)  
Wendy Mead  
Deputy Barbara Newman  
Deputy John Tomlinson  
Andrew McMurtrie

**Observer:**

Catherine Bickmore

**In attendance:**

Sean McGovern, Heritage Services London Borough of Islington Council

**Officers:**

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Kristina Drake	- Town Clerk's Department
Juliemma McLoughlin	- Executive Director Environment
Mark Jarvis	- Head of Finance Citizen Services, Chamberlains
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens, Environment Department
Gerry Kiefer	- Open Spaces Business Manager, Environment Department
Jake Tibbetts	- City Gardens Manager, Environment Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Anne Fairweather.

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

There were no declarations made.

**3. MINUTES**

The Committee considered the inqorate meeting public note and non-public summary of the last meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2021.

Responding to a matter raised by a Member the Chairman provided the Committee with an update on his recent meeting regarding Postman's Park

with the Arch Deacon of the City of London and the Chairman of the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches. The Chairman explained that the meeting had been useful and constructive but added that further information would need to be provided in the non-public session.

Responding to a Member's request for further information on the planning permission of the reinstatement of Finsbury Circus the City Surveyor confirmed that this was expected by the end of the week. It was added that tenders had been received and that the delay to the planning permission had not resulted in a delay to the project.

**RESOLVED-** That the inquorate meeting public note and non-public summary of the last meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 7th of December 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

#### 4. **QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Queen's Green Canopy.

The Executive Director commented that this was a very exciting opportunity and highlighted that the events referenced in the report were only a flavour of what was planned. It was added that the proposal was to utilise existing local risk funds to fund these proposals.

Responding to a question the Executive Director confirmed that West Ham Park would be included in the tree-planting campaign.

A Member highlighted opposition from the Epping Forest Consultative Committee relating to some of the proposed planting in Wanstead flats and voiced concern about the lack of clarity with regard to some of the details of the tree-planting campaign. The Executive Director Environment explained that this would be confirmed with the Superintendent of Epping Forest accordingly.

The Chairman added that he was surprised not to see detailed in the report the dates for this campaign and commented that all the open spaces should be included in this as an important historic event which needed to be recognised appropriately. In addition, the Chairman instructed that the confirmation of these dates needed to be expedited promptly.

Responding to a Member's query the Chairman confirmed that the visits schedule for visits to all the open spaces needed to be completed without delay.

It was clarified that the budget and the principle of engaging with the Queen's Green Canopy was to be agreed by the Committee but that the authority to approve the individual planting schemes was held by the committees responsible for each specific open space.

**RESOLVED-** That: -

- I. The planning of an extensive tree-planting campaign to support the QGC with activities across the City Corporation estate, drawing together many previously planned activities into the QGC campaign and adding new activities where appropriate and cost effective be agreed; and
- II. That the following initiatives be approved:
  - Mayoral tree planting in Whittington Gardens at a ceremony to be held in March at a date and time to be agreed.
  - Dedicate the Ancient Black Mulberry tree at Keats House as one of the 70 dedicated ancient trees.
  - Dedicate the three ancient woodlands (Ashtead Common, Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest) that have been nominated, if selected.
- III. The Committee agreed that officers engage with the QGC team to establish the City of London as a Champion City in the campaign; and
- IV. That the budget for a level D project officer for 14<sup>th</sup> months to manage the QCG activities be approved.

5. **OPEN SPACES COVERAGE 2022**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk on the Open Spaces Media Coverage for December 2021 to February 2022.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

6. **CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment which updated Members on activities across the City Gardens section since December 2021.

Andrew McMurtrie made a declaration of interest as MACE were electors in Coleman Street his Ward.

A Member noted that he was pleased to hear about the corporate volunteering days which MACE had completed and suggested that opportunities for further corporate volunteering be explored.

The Chairman commended the City Gardens Staff for their work maintaining the Gardens, particularly over the last eighteen months. A Member responded by seconding these thanks and highlighted the work at Bunhill Fields as a specific example of successful work.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

7. **BUNHILL FIELDS COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Bunhill Fields Community Arts Project.

The report was introduced by the Executive Director Environment and a member of the Islington Heritage Service who highlighted the context of the site

and the proposal for a community art project at Bunhill Fields in partnership with the St Luke's Community centre. A Member highlighted the City of London Corporation's existing relationship with the St Luke's Community Centre.

The Deputy Chairman commented on her support for the project and noted that projects of this nature were of vital importance to the Committee.

Responding to a Member's question the Executive Director confirmed that there was no budgetary impact on the City of London Corporation.

It was confirmed, answering a query from Member, that the works of art were not planned to be perinate.

**RESOLVED-** That: -

- I. Members agreed in principle for Bunhill Fields to be used to exhibit appropriate art installations; and
- II. The City Gardens Manager be nominated to represent the City of London on the steering group; and
- III. That officers report back for approval once details of the specific artworks are available.

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

There were no questions received in the public session.

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

No urgent business was considered in the public session.

**10. 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.

**11. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public note of the inquorate meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 7th of December 2021.

**RESOVLED-** That the non-public note of the inquorate meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee held on the 7th of December 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

**12. FINSBURY CIRCUS GARDENS REINSTATEMENT**

The Committee considered a joint report of the City Surveyor and Executive Director Environment on Finsbury Circus Gardens Reinstatement.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be approved.

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

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

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

There was one item of urgent business discussed in the non-public session.

**15. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS COMMITTEE**

The Committee received a confidential report of the Town Clerk on the action taken under urgency in accordance with Standing Order 41.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

**The meeting ended at 12.08 pm**

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Chairman

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