

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Friday, 29 April 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Room -
2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 29 April 2022 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Andrew McMurtrie (Deputy Chairman)
Alderman Ian Luder
Catherine McGuinness
Benjamin Murphy
Wendy Mead
Oliver Sells QC
Catherine Bickmore
Justin Meath-Baker
Councillor Joy Laguda MBE
Richard Gurney

Officers:

Ben Dunleavy	- Town Clerk's Department
Sally Agass	- Director of Natural Environment
Kristina Drake	- Town Clerk's Department
Polly Dunn	- Town Clerk's Department
Richard Gentry	- Environment Department
Stefania Horne	- Environment Department
Ricky O'Garro	- Environment Department
Juliemma McLoughlin	- Environment Department
Kehinde Olagunju	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Rafe Courage and Rev Simon Nicholls.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were none.

3. ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

The Committee received the Order of the Court of Common Council dated 20 April 2022 for the West Ham Park Committee.

Caroline Haines made a statement to the Committee hoping that the Committee would support her, if elected as Chair in the next item, in organising an awayday for Committee members to discuss the strategic direction for Open Spaces including West Ham Park.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. Caroline Haines, as the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected as Chairman for the ensuing year and took the Chair.

RESOLVED – That Caroline Haines be elected Chairman of the West Ham Park Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30.

Andrew McMurtrie, as the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected as Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

Wendy Mead moved a vote of thanks to Oliver Sells, the immediate past Chairman.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: that the Members of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee express their sincere thanks to:

OLIVER SELLS, Q.C.

for his most exceptional dedication to the work of both these committees.

Oliver, as Chairman has demonstrated great leadership, dedication and tenacity through a most challenging period. His role in overseeing improvements to key areas across the Open Spaces Portfolio cannot be overestimated, reinforcing his commitment and obvious understanding of the need for outdoor space for all members of the community with benefits for health and wellbeing.

Specific mention should be made of his work on West Ham Park Committee, an outstanding park, much loved and used by the local communities. The new play area, the implementation which Oliver oversaw will be officially opened by him and he will so enjoy seeing the new playground in use.

His forward thinking has seen many other notable achievements that are testament to his passion for creating living and leisure areas benefitting city residents, workers and visitors for years to come.

Finsbury Circus, an area much prized in the City, was disrupted by Crossrail activity for almost a decade and in urgent need of regeneration. Under Oliver's leadership, the reinstated gardens and restoration of the Central Pavilion are now once more a much needed and welcoming green space for all to enjoy. A compassionate and caring Chairman, Oliver has proposed a permanent commemoration in Postman's Park, between Aldersgate Street and Kind Edward Street who have lost their lives helping others through the recent Covid

pandemic, a fitting tribute to his sympathetic understanding of the cost of human life.

In taking leave of him as their Chairman, his colleagues wish to thank Oliver for all the accomplishments under his leadership and wish him much success in his continued service in the City of London Corporation and in other bodies.

6. **MINUTES**

The public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 15 February 2022 were approved as a correct record.

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE***

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment providing the Superintendent's update for West Ham Park.

Members discussed the staffing of the department in relation to West Ham Park. Officers undertook to send a clarification email following the meeting.

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

A Member asked what the response to the public consultation had been. The Chair said that only certain elements of this could be discussed in the public section of the meeting. An officer replied that FAQs would be posted in the public domain shortly.

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

The Chair informed Members that an away day for the Committee, and the West Ham Park Committee, would be arranged to take place on 20 June 2022.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

11. **MINUTES**

A Member said that they had tried to make a statement on the West Ham Park nursery development at the previous meeting but had been prevented by the previous Chairman.

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

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

There were no questions.

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

A Member read out the statement on the on the West Ham Park nursery development that they had wanted to make at the previous meeting. They added that they felt if they had been able to make this statement, the Committee might have reached a different decision on an item at the previous meeting.

Members heard that staff had received offensive emails after turning down an application for a large gathering with amplification in the park. The Chair said that it was important that staff were protected from the tendency towards unpleasantness in social media. A Member suggested that it might be helpful to review the by-laws governing gatherings. In reply, an officer said that these were currently being reviewed.

14. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

15. **CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONS**

The Executive Director Environment provided Members with an update on the TOM.

The meeting ended at 11.50

Chairman

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