

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Thursday, 6 October 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Room -
2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 6 October 2022 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Andrew McMurtrie (Deputy Chairman)
Wendy Mead
Benjamin Murphy
Oliver Sells KC
Catherine Bickmore
Rafe Courage
Richard Gurney
Councillor Joy Laguda MBE

Officers:

Sally Agass	- Director of Natural Environment
Chloe Ainsworth	- Town Clerk's Department
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
Stefania Horne	- Environment Department
Edward Martin	- City Surveyors
Julia Pridham	- Town Clerk's Department
Edward Wood	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Catherine McGuinness and John Whitworth.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 7 July 2022 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- The correction of the spelling of the Deputy Chair's name on page 1 of the minutes.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk which presented the Committee's terms of reference for review. Members were also asked to consider whether the current meeting frequency was appropriate.

In response to a query from a Member, the Committee was informed that the report was an annual review to ensure that the terms of reference are periodically considered. It was noted that there were likely to be amendments to the terms of reference through the TOM process and that these would be brought before the Committee in the future.

RESOLVED, that –

- the terms of reference of the West Ham Park Committee be approved without amendment for submission to the Court in April 2023;
- no change be required to the frequency of the West Ham Park Committee's meetings.

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment detailing the risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department and its Natural Environment Division, and the processes for effectively managing risk.

In response to a query from the Deputy Chair, Members were informed that the risk presented by electric scooters would be considered in the Natural Environment Division's review of the byelaws across its open spaces. The Committee was informed that it would receive a report on the review of West Ham Park's byelaws at a future meeting.

In response to a query from a Member, the Committee was informed that the lodges in West Ham Park had not received a red R.A.G. rating, unlike lodges in other spaces. Members were informed that Officers were in ongoing discussions with the City Surveyor to ensure that West Ham Park would be allocated a sufficient portion of the cyclical maintenance programme funding.

A Member noted that some of the risks had been open since 2015 and that no mitigation, such as an escalation or a funding request, had taken place. Members were informed that new applications for capital funding are not currently permitted unless there is a strong risk to health and safety. As such, there will be a joint funding bid for the lodges across the open spaces as they have a collective red R.A.G. rating on the Corporate Risk Register.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. **SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AWAY DAY**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment presenting the second drafts of four of the five strategies agreed at the Open Spaces away day on 20 June 2022.

The Chair clarified that the draft strategies were not currently being presented for decision, only for information.

Members were informed that only four out of the five strategies had been further developed as the lead for the strategy 'Conservation and Nature Resilience Strategy' was no longer employed at the City Corporation. A report containing an updated version of this fifth strategy will be available for the Committee at the next meeting.

Members were also informed that work had been done to identify all of the cultural and heritage assets contained within the open spaces charities and that a Natural Environment Heritage and Culture Strategy was proposed to manage these.

Members were asked to contact the Town Clerk with any queries or suggestions they might have in relation to the strategies.

RESOLVED, that –

- The updated Natural Environment Division strategies be noted;
- The development of a Natural Environment Heritage and Culture Strategy be approved.

7. CHARITY REVIEW FINANCES

The Executive Director Environment informed Members that this report was not available for this meeting as it remained under review.

8. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment providing an update on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since the previous Committee meeting on 7 July 2022.

The Chair extended the Committee's thanks to the staff and volunteers at West Ham Park for their continued assistance throughout the drought and the Covid-19 pandemic.

A Member raised a concern about the woodchips used on the Park's playground spreading onto the pathways and resulting in an overall untidy appearance. Members were informed that the woodchips are used to reduce heat retention. Officers advised Members that they would explore solutions and circulate an update by email.

In response to a query by the Deputy Chair regarding the Park's use of leaf blowers and the associated energy cost and environmental impact, the Committee was informed that leaf blowers are more effective in large spaces than raking. Furthermore, it was noted that modern leaf blowers use less fuel and emit less noise.

Members noted the success of the funfair at West Ham Park from 15 to 17 July. However, Members also noted that the increase in visitor numbers could be detrimental to the Park.

The Committee discussed charges for attendees of events in the Park and the Chair noted that the Natural Environment Division’s visitor strategy would assist with this.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. **LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION BILL**

Members received a report of the Remembrancer providing an overview of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, as it relates to heritage and open spaces.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. **POLLINATING LONDON TOGETHER**

The Committee received a presentation from the Vice Chair of Pollinating London Together providing background to the initiative and their ongoing work to address climate change and biodiversity loss.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be noted.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no other business.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item	Paragraph
15&16	3
17	3&5

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

15. **CHARITY REVIEW UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Managing Director Bridge House Estates setting out the Corporate Charities Review outcomes concerning the open spaces charities and how the review will continue to support Officers with their work implementing recommendations.

16. **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITY REVIEW**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment detailing the actions to be taken to ensure that the open spaces charities are fit for purpose to meet the changing environment.

This item was initially listed on the agenda as item 7; however, the item was moved the non-public section of the agenda as it was anticipated that the discussion would relate to paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

17. **NURSERY SITE UPDATE**

The Committee received a joint report of the Executive Director Environment and City Surveyor providing an update on West Ham Park's nursery site redevelopment.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no other business.

19.1 **Procedural Update on TOM Phase 2**

Members received a verbal procedural update on TOM phase 2 from the Executive Director Environment.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

The meeting ended at 1.17 pm

Chairman

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