

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 19 February 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Room -
2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 19 February 2024 at 9.30 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Andrew McMurtrie (Deputy Chairman)
Eamonn Mullally
Wendy Mead OBE
Oliver Sells KC
Catherine Bickmore
Councillor Joy Laguda MBE
Councillor John Whitworth
Tim Hodgson

In Attendance:

Rafe Courage

Officers:

Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Anna Cowperthwaite	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's
Simon Glynn	- Environment Department
Clem Harcourt	- Chamberlain's Department
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Bob Roberts	- Environment Department
Joseph Smith	- Town Clerk's Department
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Foundation
Pauline Mouskis	- Chamberlain's Department
Sally Gadsdon	- Environment Department
Maria Trayner	- Environment Department
Fiona McKeith	- City Surveyor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received by James St John Davis, Benjamin Murphy and Deputy Alpa Raja.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the minutes of the last meeting held on 4 December 2023 be approved.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning a summary risk register for West Ham Park, showing the current and target scores, direction of travel, and risk owners for each identified risk.

The committee received a summary risk register for West Ham Park, showing the current and target scores, direction of travel, and risk owners for each identified risk. The committee agreed that the list of risks was comprehensive and that the processes for managing them were sufficient.

The committee noted that the main change since the previous report was the increased risk of adverse impacts of antisocial behaviour on staff and park users, which was being addressed by a new reporting system and increased collaboration with the police and other open spaces. Members asked questions about the decline in condition of assets, the effects of climate change and extreme weather, and the involvement of the Lord Mayor in the 150th anniversary celebrations.

RESOLVED – That Members, confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the West Ham Park Summary Risk Register (Appendix 1 of the report) satisfactorily identifies the key risks to the West Ham Park charity and that an appropriate risk management process is in place.

5. *** DRAFT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 - ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning the draft high level business plan for 2024/25.

The following points were noted.

- Officers outlined the vision, mission, and four strategic priorities for the division, which are nature conservation and resilience, community engagement, access and recreation, culture, heritage and learning.
- Officers explained how the business plan aligns with the corporate plan and the departmental business plan, and how the division will measure and report on its performance and impact.
- There were no questions or comments were raised by the committee Members.

6. *** ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on matters relating to West Ham Park since the last Committee meeting on 4 December 2023.

The following points were noted.

- The assistant director thanked the chair of the Friends of West Ham Park, for her presentation and praised the work of the Friends group.
- The assistant director reported on the planning for the 150th anniversary of the park, which will take place on 20th and 21st of July 2024, with a

cultural and civic event on the Saturday and a sporting festival on the Sunday.

- The assistant director thanked the steering group, the media team, and the philanthropist who is supporting the event, and asked for help from the committee members with funding sources, volunteering, and links with potential partners.
- The assistant director mentioned some of the activities and attractions that are planned for the anniversary, such as Bollywood music and dance, cricket, football, tennis, paddle, arts and crafts, and a passport for success scheme.
- The assistant director also said that the committee will award six freedoms of the city to local people who have contributed to the park, and that the chair of policy will attend the civic opening on the Saturday.
- The assistant director answered some questions from the committee Members about the cricket involvement, the history and heritage of the park, and the media coverage.

7. *** PLANNING FOR THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY FOR WEST HAM PARK**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on matters relating to West Ham Park since the last Committee meeting on 4 December 2023.

The following points were noted.

- The chair thanked the Friends of West Ham Park for their contribution and welcomed, the chair of the Friends, who gave a presentation about their activities and events.
- The chair and assistant director gave an update on the preparations for the 150th anniversary celebration, which will take place on 20th and 21st of July 2024.
- The celebration will include cultural, civic, and musical events on the Saturday and a sporting festival on the Sunday, with a focus on cricket, football, tennis, and other activities.
- The chair asked the committee Members to save the date, to help with fundraising and sponsorship, to volunteer to help, and to promote the event on social media.
- The chair also mentioned the idea of giving six freedoms of the city to local people who have contributed to the park, and the involvement of the Lord Mayor and the Chair of Policy and Resources.
- The committee Members expressed their support and enthusiasm for the celebration and offered their suggestions and assistance.
- The chair said that more information and updates will be provided by email and at the next meeting in May.

8. *** WEST HAM PARK FORMER NURSERY SITE**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on West Ham Park Charity's plans for community and stakeholder engagement in relation to the former nursery site.

The following points were noted.

- Members noted that the engagement would take place from March to July 2024 and will aim to reach a broad range of stakeholders and use their feedback to inform the charity's next steps.
- The engagement will be framed to reflect the context of the proposed redevelopment, which includes the need for a residential enabling development to fund the park extension and the new community facilities.
- Members were informed that the report also details the appointment of a planning and heritage consultant to advise the charity on the heritage value of the site and to liaise with statutory organisations such as London Borough of Newham and Historic England.
- Committee members asked some questions about the engagement objectives, the water leak costs, and the staffing numbers.

9. *** OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT (PERIOD 9 APRIL - DECEMBER 2023) 2023/24 - WEST HAM PARK**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on the operational finance position as of period 9 (April – December 2023) 2023/24 for West Ham Park's local risk revenue budget to date and projected year-end outturn position, current live capital projects and outstanding debt position.

The following points were noted.

- Members noted the report projected a small overspend of £19,000 at the end of the financial year, which was mainly due to increased costs of water, equipment and repairs.
- The committee noted that the park was fully staffed and that the income from tennis courts was lower than budgeted at the start of the year.
- The committee asked some questions about the employment costs, the water leak and the heritage assets of the park, which were answered by the officers.

10. *** WEST HAM PARK TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment concerning The Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 for West Ham Park.

The following points were noted.

- It was noted the report was approved by the Finance Committee on behalf of the trustees in November 2023 and was for information only.
- The report shows an increase in net assets of the charity from £188,000 to £954,000, mainly due to the capital expenditure on the playground refurbishment.
- The report also outlines the charitable objectives, activities, achievements, and risks of the charity, as well as the governance and management arrangements.

- The Deputy Chair asked a question about the change in net assets and the cost of the playground work, officers confirmed that it was due to the cost of the playground refurbishment.
- A Member asked a question about the progress of broadening the potential membership of the committee, which was deferred to the non-public part of the meeting.
- A Member asked a question about the heritage value of the park and the listed parks and gardens, which was not answered in the meeting and was taken away for clarification.

11. **VISION AND STRATEGIES**

The Committee received a verbal update of the Interim Executive Director, Environment.

The following points were noted.

- The Natural Environment Director gave a verbal update on the vision, mission, and strategies for the natural environment division, which were launched at the Natural Environment Board dinner on 29 January 2024.
- The vision is of open spaces that are rich in diversity, conserving nature, creating memories, and enhancing lives. The four strategic priority areas are nature conservation and resilience, community engagement, access and recreation, culture, heritage and learning.
- The Director explained how the vision, mission, and strategies will be delivered and reported through various mechanisms, such as a five-year business plan, a park management plan, a business plan/annual work plan, policies and procedures, and an annual report for the North London open spaces.
- The Director also mentioned that the vision, mission, and strategies are aligned with the new corporate plan and the Environment Department business plan, and that relevant stakeholder organisations, such as the Friends of West Ham Park, will be involved in the consultation and feedback process.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

14. **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.

15. *** CARBON REMOVALS (CLIMATE ACTION) PROJECT RESCOPING REAPPROVAL (JANUARY 2024)**

The Committee received a report of the Interim Executive Director, Environment.

16. * **CORPORATE CHARITIES REVIEW SCOPING EXERCISE TO SUPPORT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES REVIEW**

The Committee received a joint report of the Managing Director City Bridge Foundation and Interim Executive Director, Environment.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 10.53 am

Chairman

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