

WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE

Thursday, 06 February 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 06 February 2025 at 9.30am.

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Eamonn Mullally (Deputy Chairman)
Andrew McMurtrie
James St John Davis
Wendy Mead OBE

In attendance:

Rebecca Adlington
Catherine Bickmore
Benjamin Murphy
Councillor Joy Laguda MBE

Officers:

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| Jack Joslin | - City Bridge Foundation |
| Anna Cowperthwaite | - Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department |
| Alexander Anrude | - City Surveyor's Department |
| Katie Stewart | - Environment Department |
| Emily Brennan | - Environment Department |
| Andrew Impey | - Environment Department |
| Bill LoSasso | - Environment Department |
| Maria Traynor | - Environment Department |
| Charlotte Williams | - Environment Department |
| Ben Dunleavy | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Zoe Williams | - Town Clerk's Department |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Rafe Courage, Tim Hodgson, Councillor John Whitworth, and Justin Meath-Baker.

The Town Clerk acknowledged the appointment of Rebecca Adlington to the West Ham Park Committee as a representative of the incumbent, or priest, of the present benefice of West Ham.

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

A declaration of interest was made by Councillor Joy Laguda MBE in connection with item 15, noting that they are a Councillor at the London Borough of Newham.

The Chair noted that, following previous decisions of the Committee, while the Member could be present for the item and engage in the discussion, they would not be able to participate in the decision-making process.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 10 December 2024 were approved as a correct record.

4. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment which provided members with an update on matters relating to West Ham Park since the last Committee meeting on 10 December 2024.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member queried whether there are CCTV cameras in West Ham Park, and whether there is emergency protocol for violent incidents in the park. This was responded to under the Risk Management Update Report.
- b) Another Member noted they had received feedback from an attendee of the Park in the Dark event that they were unable to leave the event early as there was no staff at the gate for the entire duration of the event. Officers thanked the member for the feedback and noted they will ensure staff are at the gates for the entirety of the event in the future.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the report and noted its contents.

5. TENNIS PROVISION AT WEST HAM PARK

The Committee received a presentation from the Environment Department on Tennis provision at West Ham Park.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Chair requested that Members refrain from making definite statements about Padel courts being installed in the park as this process is still under consideration.
- b) A Member queried how the Environment Department was inclusive of people with disabilities at its tennis events. The Chair noted that all the sports facilities and events run over the 150th Anniversary weekend were fully accessible. Officers responded that there are also events held for those with restricted mobility, and they are looking at a new events programme that targets in the involvement of underrepresented groups in sport.
- c) Another Member asked about whether there would need to be floodlights if Padel courts were to be installed. The Officer responded that there would need to be flood lighting as Padel is played in the evening, they responded that this is a significant issue to be considered in this process as the light pollution could affect nearby residents and park wildlife.

- d) A Member was interested in what data is available about the users of the tennis facility. The Committee heard that club members use the Club Spark platform to book courts, and there is a utilisation tool where the department can track monthly usage.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the report and noted its contents.

6. FIVE-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN (WEST HAM PARK)

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment that provided a working draft of the first five-year business plan for West Ham Park.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the report and noted its contents.

7. WEST HAM PARK FEES AND CHARGES FY'2025-26 (1 APRIL 2025 - 31 MARCH 2026)

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment that proposed a procedure to guide the annual review of fees and charges in West Ham Park, and fees and charges for the 2025/26 financial year.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Chair noted that these fees are now being set to be consistent with other North London open spaces, taking into account the specific circumstances of West Ham Park, rather than in isolation.
- b) A Member noted that there was no proposed fee for event charges in the report. The officer responded that they have increased the application fees for events by 2.7% which is in line with inflation. The officer noted that because most events are priced on application, the increases for event charges were not depicted in the report.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Received the report, and noted its contents
- Approved the update to the existing fees and charges for the 2025/26 financial year, as set out in appendix 1 and 2.

8. WEST HAM PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN (2025 - 2035)

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment which provided Members with a final version of the West Ham Park Management Plan for approval.

A Member noted that in previous discussions, the committee had indicated a preference to improve the map that is in the plan. The Chair responded that an improved map would have taken more pages and there was not time to include it in this plan. However, next time this plan is produced there should be the capacity to include a map which is more interactive and consistent across the North London open spaces.

RESOLVED – That, Members approved the West Ham Park Management Plan (2025-2035) as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, subject to final layout.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment which sought to provide assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department and its Natural Environment Division, which included West Ham Park, were satisfactory and met the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

In response to a Member's question about CCTV and emergency protocols during the Assistant Director's report, Officers responded that recent incidents have encouraged the department to review its emergency response and the provision of CCTV. Officers noted that in the past they have used the CCTV in West Ham Park to assist emergency responders after incidents and it is an important preventative and reactive measure.

RESOLVED – That, Members confirmed, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the Risk Register appended to the report satisfactorily set out the key risks to the charity and that appropriate systems were in place to identify and mitigate risk.

10. BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025/26 - WEST HAM PARK CHARITY

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain and Executive Director of Environment which presented the 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets for West Ham Park Charity for approval to be submitted to the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the latest revenue budget for West Ham Park Charity for 2024/25
- Reviewed and approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for West Ham Park for submission for approval by the Finance Committee.
- Reviewed and approved West Ham Park's capital and supplementary revenue project budgets for 2025/26 for submission for approval by the Finance Committee.
- Agreed that amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising from changes to recharges and support services or for any further implications arising from corporate contracts, energy price increases, changes to the Cyclical Works Programme, and capital charges during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain in consultation with the Executive Director Environment.

11. OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT 2024/25 (QUARTER 3 APRIL - DECEMBER) - WEST HAM PARK CHARITY

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain that updated members on the operational finance position as at Period 9 (April – December) 2024/25 for the West Ham Park charity (charity registration number: 206948) and set out the charity's revenue operating budget position to date and projected year-end outturn, current live capital projects, and outstanding debt position.

A Member noted that the number associated with central recharges in the 2025/26 Budget is as large as West Ham Park's local risk budget, and that there is that there is an ongoing review of the central recharges from the Executive Director's team.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the report and noted its contents.

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

There were no questions.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Chair thanked all those involved with the Committee for their support during her three years in the Chair.

RESOLVED – That, Members thanked the Chair for her leadership of the Committee.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That, the following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

15. WEST HAM PARK FORMER NURSERY SITE

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

16. TRANSFORMATION FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES - OUTCOMES OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES REVIEW

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

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

There were no questions.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There were three items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 11.00am.

Chairman

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