



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee Minutes

Wednesday 4 March 2015

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Joe Carlebach, Elaine Chumnerly and Wesley Harcourt (Chair)

Officers: Mark Jones (Director of Finance and Resources, ELRS), Jem Kale (Events Manager), Ian Ross (Leisure Services Manager), Jackie Simkins (Principle Planning Policy Officer)

In attendance: David Jeffreys and Miriam Shey from the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs

18. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

RESOLVED -

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th December be approved as an accurate record subject to the following changes:

The chair requested that the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs attendance at the previous meeting be recognised in the attendance list of the previous minutes.

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“The Friends notified Members that they had encountered many people”

to become:

“The Friends notified Members that they had encountered some people”

Matters Arising

In response to the action to seek legal advice on the HS2 mitigation proposals officers reported that the only route open to the trust as influence was petitioning.

Councillor Harcourt confirmed he had sent information regarding the meeting with Victoria Mills to the group.

Officers updated the trust that the open space that was being sought for the MDC north of the canal did not include the existing nature reserve, and that a new area was being proposed.

Officers reported that the price for the installation of the barrier had been quoted as £27,300, which would not include maintenance. Members reported that more quotes needed to be sought for the decision to be signed off by a Cabinet Member.

The Friends of Wormwood Scrubs notified members that the memorial bench had been installed and was due for inauguration on the 7th March at 10am. This was to be followed by the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs AGM at 11am, to which all members were invited.

In response to the request in the previous meeting the director of finance explained that as the £200,000 was being treated as a reduction on the arrears it would not be possible to split the £200,000 payment from the car park to allow the trust to report a budgetary surplus. Members asked that enquires were made to the hospital to see if they would be willing to release any amount of the money, even just the small amount needed to make the trust break even.

Action: Mark Jones

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Dave Page, Director for Safer Neighbourhoods.

Apologies for lateness had been received from Cllr Carlebach and Ian Ross.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21. MANAGER'S REPORT

The committee received a report from the Director for Finance and Resources updating the trust on management activity carried out since the last meeting.

The report covered the following areas:

Opposition to the Wetland Mitigation Area Proposed in HS2 Bill

Officers updated the trust on a meeting that had taken place between Cllr Harcourt, the Friends and HS2 on the 4th February, in which the removal of the artillery wall had been highlighted as the desired mitigation. HS2 had given more detail to what the mitigation had to entail, explaining that 21 hectares of railway siding would need replacing and the mitigation area had to be equivalent to what was being removed. The wall's removal would not meet these requirements; with the additional factor cited of there already being a habitat against the wall. The

mound had also been proposed to HS2 as a mitigation option, but this had been rejected as a proposal for being too isolated.

Officers reported however that the wall had been officially designated as a “dangerous structure” by the council. This would guarantee its removal using council funds. A contamination study had also been carried out on the scrubs and it was reported that a small amount of asbestos had been found in the mound. This meant that the best means of containing the contamination may be for the mound to remain in place.

Councillor Chumnerly questioned the timings of the report into the Artillery Wall removal. It was reported that Mark Cosgrave would be handling the project and that the money would not be coming out of trust funds.

Members queried whether the trust could ask HS2 to seek mitigation for their scheme elsewhere. Officers reported that HS2 were willing to work with the trust to find mitigation that would enhance the scrubs and its ecology. A meeting had taken place between ecology experts on both sides and potential areas for improvement were being identified, for example the removal of some Japanese knotweed or the extension of hedgerows. Both experts would draw up a map of what was acceptable to them and these would then be compared. They had accepted that the trust did not want the Wetland proposal to be progressed.

The friends questioned whether it was likely that the issue would be resolved prior to the select committee hearing. Officers updated the committee on the plans of the select committee to visit the scrubs and meet those connected to it. Cllr Harcourt reported that he had not received an invite to this event and Cllr Carlebach raised it as a serious breach of etiquette by the committee. Officers noted that the invitation for the meeting was unexpected as the select committee were considering the scrubs earlier than expected. Both Jackie Simkins and Chris Bainbridge had been invited and would be taking forward ten petitioning points to the meeting. It was felt that a letter from the chair expressing his disappointment should be delivered to the select committee, raising the lack of invitation as a serious concern.

TfL’s proposed Overground Station at Old Oak Common

Officers reported that TfL had now publically announced they were supporting Option C for the new Overground station. The trust expressed their happiness at hearing the news.

Old Oak Mayoral Development Corporation

It was confirmed that assembly had not voted against the creation of the MDC on the 17th December. The MDC would now be in place by the 1st April. It was noted that the inclusion of the Scrubs had formed a major part of the conversation; this was thought to be in part down to the chair’s letter that had been sent as well as the leader of the council’s efforts contacting all assembly members. The MDC had been clear that they would work with the trust and within the Act. The friends were concerned about the discussion in the meeting, in particular the speech made by

Eddie Lister who had described the scrubs as an amenity space for the development.

The make-up of the MDC board was discussed. The friends had applied to take one of the 6 community representative's seats but had not been successful. Interviews were currently taking place. Although no names had been confirmed the breakdown of the positions on the board was available and officers agreed to circulate to the trust members.

Action: Jackie Simkins

The potential of updating the Act to strengthen it against some of the perceived threats to the scrubs was discussed. Officers agreed to look into the costs of getting legal advice on the issue.

Action: Mark Jones

A draft response was being prepared for the Old Oak and Park Royal planning consultation. It was confirmed that a small section in the scrubs was included in the consultation.

Filming and Events Update

It was reported that LiveNation had backed away from holding an event on the Scrubs in the near future, but that they would be reassessing the possibility once the tubes ran 24 hours, as this would increase accessibility.

Another reason behind LiveNation pulling out were reported to be infrastructure; it was questioned whether this could have been avoided if the scrubs had had better permanent infrastructure in place. Officer reported that the main issues had been around access and emergency exits, whether they would be temporary or permanent. It was asked whether Hyde Park had installed any permanent infrastructure that had enabled it to host the large events it did. It was reported that permanent installation of wiring or structures was not permitted in Hyde Park. It was asked that the Royal Parks team be contacted for advice on making their venue attractive to potential events.

Action: Jem Kale

There had been no issues with the continuing use of the Red Gra area by Olympia, apart from an incident where support staff were staying in the area, and the rain had caused a quantity of mud. A discount had been offered to them as a result and work was being done on the feasibility of improvements to the area that would make it more useable in future. Water and electric would be installed to reduce noise and increase resident satisfaction.

Councillor Carlebach notified the committee on the potential of a horse parade at the time of the Olympia horse show. The trust agreed this would be positive.

It was confirmed that plans for the next Race for Life event were underway following the previous year's successful event.

It was noted that rent increase would be coming into effect for the MPS' use of the scrubs for the Carnival.

Officers updated the trust on the position of AEG, a large events company, who had shown interest in using the scrubs for an event. The chair asked that the events team proceed with caution, as events the size AEG were hoping for would begin to have a major impact on local residents. It was confirmed that nothing would be signed in the near future. In response to a query by members it was confirmed the earliest a large event would be taking place on the scrubs was 2017, although it was hoped there would be a smaller event prior to that date. It was reported that a private show jump event were already making enquiries.

Sports Facilities

Officers reported that there was around £30,000 of Section 106 funding left from the Du Cane Housing development. A bid was being submitted for the creation of a children's gym, although it was thought there may be competition from the adult's outdoor gym close to the Linford Christie stadium. Officers explained that as the adult gym contained only fixed, non-moving equipment it would be cheaper to refurbish. Members felt however that the lack of moving equipment could be discouraging women from using the gym and asked that the installation of different equipment be investigated. Correspondence had been received in support of both gyms. It was thought that the children's gym may be difficult to realise as there was currently no British standard for gym equipment for children. Members recommended looking at American standards. It was thought public health funding could also be sought for the children's gym.

It was confirmed that the improvements made to the Linford Christie stadium for the Kensington Dragons Football Club would be available for use by all when games were not on.

Property Issues

It was confirmed Little Wormwood Scrubs was not within the control of Hammersmith and Fulham; a nominal fee of £20,000 was paid annually to RBKC for its upkeep.

It was thought that the works being undertaken by London Power Network would affect Pavilion Terrace. Cllr Harcourt expressed concern about the volume of work that had affected the residents of that road. Rent would be taken from the company for use of the roads.

Community Safety Update

There had been no crimes between September and January, although there had been a number of incidents. Officers updated the trust on an incident that had occurred subsequent to the report, involving a family that were almost hit by a model aircraft. Measures to prevent such occurrences were discussed, including repainting the poles, updating the signage and renegotiation with the flying club. It was felt this would become an increasingly important issue with the increased use of drones on the scrubs.

Ground Maintenance Update

An update was given on the walk-about that had occurred on the 10th January. Issues had been identified that would become part of the ten year management plan. This plan would hopefully also include any work done by HS2 to enhance the habitat.

It was reported that Hammersmith Community Gardens were helping some of the grounds maintenance of the scrubs. Members asked if the potential for people on community service orders to help clear rubbish on the scrubs be investigated.

Action: Ian Ross

Officers confirmed that the short term issues that had been identified from the walk about were being actioned and agreed to investigate if the picnic bench had indeed been installed.

Action: Ian Ross

It was reported that the green flag award could be applied for once the 10 year plan had been completed.

Fundraising Possibilities

The director of Finance updated the trust on the possibility of obtaining Section 106 funding. It was felt that there would be competition from other bids especially around the White City Estate infrastructure. Officers asked the trust for suggestions on what works they should bid for. Ideas included improvements on the mound if it were to be kept, improvements to the slip road, and fencing off the Red-Gra area. It was thought that the money may also be spent on taking out the road humps on Woodman's Mews, which were noisy for residents. It was raised however that an increased use or widening of the road would not be beneficial to residents. It was agreed that taking out the Artillery Wall would free up parking spaces, and it was thought that work on this area to make it attractive to users would be beneficial.

The best route for school buses was discussed and it was felt that Artillery Way had many advantages, including the increased use of the Stadium. Officer agreed to look into the possibility of a feasibility study to be undertaken by Highways.

Action: Jackie Simkins

It was confirmed that a meeting had been arranged with SOBUS to identify grant making trusts, as per the recommendation of Sue Spiller.

Financial Forecast

The forecast predicted a £21,500 deficit for the following financial year. This was seen to be due to the lack of a large one-off payment, similar to those that had been received in recent years from the hospital car park. It was hoped that a substantial event in the future would help to improve the trust's budget. Officers agreed to check the amount of inflation on the Quadrant contract in response to a query by members.

Action: Mark Jones

It was also discussed whether Quadrant could be asked to consider the trust's charitable status in the cost of their service. Officers agreed to make enquiries.

Action: Mark Jones

At the current rate of loss it was reported that the reserve of £230,000 would be spent by 2018/19. It was noted that the Linford Christie stadium was contributing to the loss making and there was a discussion over what could be done to make better use and earn extra money from the facility. It was asked that officers be creative in their approach to potential revenue for the stadium and it was suggested that Olympia Events Company could be contacted for advice. Officers were asked to report back with ideas.

Action: Jackie Simkins, Ian Ross

It was hoped the success of the Red Gra area could be replicated in the stadium.

Members suggested it may be beneficial for the trust to hire a part time bid-writer to encourage the use of the scrubs as a venue and to seek potential investment.

Resolved:

That the 2015/16 budget be approved unanimously

Any Other Business

The process for co-opting members on to the trust was discussed, as there was a desire to formalise the contribution of the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs to the trust and its meetings. Officers agreed to investigate the process.

Action: Mark Jones

22. DATES OF THE NEXT MEETING

29th June 2015
21st September 2015
8th December 2015

Meeting started: 19:00
Meeting ended: 20:20

Chair

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