



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

# **Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee Minutes**

**Wednesday 19 December 2018**

## **PRESENT**

**Committee members:** Councillors Wesley Harcourt, Alexandra Sanderson, and Belinda Donovan

**Officers:** Christina Cato (Director for Finance and Resources), Mahmood Siddiqi (Bi-Borough Director Transport Highways), Richard Gill (Wormwood Scrubs Development Manager), Ian Ross (Leisure Services Manager), David Burns (Assistant Director Growth, Finance, and Resources), and Amrita Gill (Governance)

## **1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

### **RESOLVED:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Farrah Rossi (Principle Planning Projects Officer)

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **4. MANAGERS REPORT**

### **Wormwood Scrubs Development Manager Update**

Richard Gill provided an overview and noted that the procurement of consultants to manage the design of the Alternative Ecological Mitigation (AEM) works had been launched. Questionnaire's from prospective tenders were due to be received on 20 December.

Japanese Knotweed needed to be removed before any AEM proposal could be implemented on the embankment - the first treatment had now been completed.

Richard Gill said that works relating to the flooding at the Pony Centre had commenced. An overflow would be connected with the surface water drains of the Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA) site to prevent future issues.

Stephen Waley-Cohen asked what action had been taken following an enquiry made to the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs relating to works carried out by UKPN adjacent Mitre Bridge. Vegetation within the Local Nature Reserve had been damaged. This was of concern as the area was known to be a valuable habitat for invertebrates. In response, Richard Gill said that a management plan and mitigation had been proposed by UKPN. A response was also sent to the individual encouraging their involvement around the management of the Scrubs.

The Chair asked for further clarification around how the treatment for the Japanese knotweed was progressing. Richard Gill explained that the very dry summer may have an impact on how effective the treatment would be. It was too early to establish the results of the current treatment. However, an assessment would be made in spring once it started growing again to ascertain if any changes needed to be made to the proposed treatment.

### **Forest Schools**

Mahmood Siddiqi noted that forest schools were an innovative approach to outdoor play and education, where children used local woodlands on a regular basis to learn about the natural environment. The Council were keen on exploring this initiative and asked whether the Committee supported this in principle.

The Chair welcomed the idea and the Committee agreed. The Chair said that this linked in well with the Biodiversity Commission report and the aspiration for an Ecology Centre. The Chair said that he was keen to meet with Joe Brown, Head of The Old Oak Primary School to discuss the potential of an improved access route to the woodland area.

Miriam Shea asked for clarification around what works would be carried out to open a route through the woodland planting in relation to the activity planned by Idverde. Richard Gill explained that this would mainly involve cutting off lower branches of trees for accessibility purposes.

### **Re-Routing Stamford Brook Sewer Legal Agreement**

Richard Gill provided an update and explained that there was a possibility that they may revert to their original plan, however details were to be finalised.

### **Parks Manager Update**

Ian Ross explained that litter remained an ongoing issue at the site and the onsite team were working hard to keep on top of this.

The Chair asked what action had been taken against the sports teams to minimise some of the concerns caused by litter. Ian Ross explained that the worst offenders were not actually making bookings. Idverde were monitoring the situation and had staff working on weekends to follow this up. The Chair suggested that a higher duty presence was required and penalty notices needed to be issued to resolve

this matter. Ian Ross added that discussions would be held with Parks Police to proceed with this.

**Action: Ian Ross**

Ian Ross explained that the concrete barriers that separated the Scrubs Lane car park and access road at Wormwood Mews had been replaced with lockable bollards.

### **Options post March 2021**

Ian Ross outlined the 5-possible options worth considering when the Ideverde contract ended.

Stephen Waley-Cohen asked how far forward would we need to start planning to ensure a plan was in place when the existing contract ended. In response Ian Ross explained that planning needed to commence immediately. Mahmood Siddiqi said that a specification of the current arrangements would be prepared and brought to the next Committee for review.

Stephen Waley-Cohen said that due to the complex nature of the Scrubs a stand-alone more specific contract may need to be considered. The Chair said that a detailed discussion needed to be held around the future options and asked if this could be added as an agenda item at the next Committee

**Action: Mahmood Siddiqi**

### **Community Safety Update**

Ian Ross provided an overview and noted that the Scrubs had been remarkably quiet during the last three months. Two dog related incidents had been investigated and appropriate measures were put into place.

Rereferring to the table included on page 14 of the agenda pack, Councillor Alexandra Sanderson asked for clarification around the types of incidents that occurred. In response Mahmood Siddiqi explained that the incidents varied however a detailed breakdown would be circulated outside of the meeting.

**Action: Mahmood Siddiqi**

Stephen Waley-Cohen explained that he had noticed dog walkers participating in organised exercise classes at the Scrubs for financial benefits. He asked whether the Council wanted to monitor this activity and take appropriate action. The Chair said that this would be a policy decision and further planning would be required to identify if this would be cost effective to the Council.

**Action: Ian Ross**

### **UK Power Networks Lease Update**

The Committee noted this item

## **Financial Forecast 2018/19**

Christina Cato provided an overview and noted that the budget for 2018/19 was set with an anticipated surplus of £19,354 to be added to the Trust's reserves. The current forecast was for a surplus of £206,032 which was £187,028 better than budget. There had been a 16% increase in the pay and display parking income due to the introduction of cashless parking. This had proven to be an efficient method of collection.

She highlighted that the KAA lease extension to July 2019 generated income of £294,3552. Annual rental from UKPN for occupation was £3,446 and from electrical vehicle charging points was £9,000. Profit sharing although contractual had not been included due to uncertainty.

Referring to page 16 of the agenda pack, the Chair asked for further clarification around the the legal costs and what they related to. Christina Cato said that this was due to the ongoing discussions with UKPN – there had been some delays in receiving comments back despite regular requests for a response.

The Chair said that a member of the local community approached him, proposing plans to renovate and re-instate the sheltered picnic area on Wormwood Scrubs. The Chair requested that proposals be brought to a future Committee to review some potential options. Furthermore, he asked for the restoration of this area to feed into the plans for the Stamford Brook Sewer works.

**Action: Richard Gill**

## **Linford Christie Update – Appendix 1**

David Burns introduced the report and noted the current considerations around the Linford Christie Outdoor Stadium. A proposal had been made to complete a joint public consultation on the options available to the Council and the Trust for the site. He explained that once the consultation had been completed the Council and the Trust would analyse the responses. Council Officers would prepare a further report for Cabinet setting out the results of the consultation and a preferred option. In addition, officers working with the Trust would prepare a separate report for the Trust setting out the results of the consultation. The consultation was not a statutory requirement; however, it was good practice for the Council to consult the public when it was considering making a decision.

He outlined the key areas of the report, highlighting the income and expenditure on the stadium and provided a summary of the Trust's financial position, including the reasons for exploring the options of the Stadium Site. He explained the legal implications, highlighting the governance and decision-making arrangements. The Trust were advised to seek independent legal and valuation advice and be able to demonstrate to the Commission how conflicts of interest had been managed. The Chair thanked David Burns for the report and the contributions made in gathering all the research. However, noted that the report needed to be reformatted and updated with the most recent information.

A resident asked who would be responsible for drafting the questions as part of the consultation. In response David Burns said that the Council's Communications

Officers would draft the questions and these would be circulated to Committee members for input.

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted that the report was flawed on a number of grounds and further work needed to be carried out in relation to some of the modest options in more detail. Community led proposals also needed to be factored in. In addition, he felt that the report didn't capture the potential ecological and environmental impact to the Scrubs as a result of the proposed options.

The Chair mirrored Stephen Waley-Cohen's comments and noted that certain key elements were not included in the report, highlighting the following points for consideration:

- The future of the Pony Centre and Hammersmith Hospital.
- The option of a Community and Engagement Hub – sporting activities
- The option of an Ecology Centre proposed by Imperial College.
- The loss of green space and the detrimental effect of footfall.
- Further clarification needed to be provided around the independent trustees and governance arrangements.
- Aspects of the Scrubs Act needed to be explored and factored into the report.

The Chair requested that the above comments be incorporated into the report and circulated to Committee members for review. In addition, he asked whether there was a possibility for this report to be considered at the Cabinet meeting in March rather than February - to allow time for the necessary amendments to take place.

### **Kensington Dragons Proposal**

The Chair explained that he had received a proposal from Kensington Dragons to install a new grass hybrid football pitch and repair and upgrade the remaining all weather pitches at Linford Christie Stadium in the interim to any option chosen by public consultation. The Chair asked the Committee if they were in favour of this proposal.

David Burns confirmed that it would take at least 24 months before work would commence at the site to deliver the chosen option.

The Committee welcomed the proposal and was keen to proceed with this option provided a meeting between Kensington Dragons and the facilities managers resolved outstanding issues of concern. Meeting to be arranged.

Action: Mahmood Siddiqi

### **Stadium facilities**

The Chair noted that the stadium facilities were currently unusable due to legionella bacteria that was discovered in the water supply. He explained that the showers and toilet facilities needed to be brought up to standard to ensure the continuity of sports bookings. This would cost approximately £60,000. The Chair asked the Committee if they approved these costs being funded by the Trust.

The Committee agreed the recommendation in principle. The Chair would make the final decision outside of the meeting in collaboration with officers. Amrita Gill

advised that a written report, including details of the decision, needed to be submitted to the next meeting for information purposes.

**Action: Mahmood Siddiqi**

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee noted all matters in the report
2. That the Committee noted Appendix 1 (a report on options for the Linford Christie Stadium Site)
3. That the Committee agreed to complete a joint public consultation with the Council on the options for the Linford Christie outdoors sports stadium for a period of 12 weeks, as set out in Appendix 1
4. That the Committee noted that the showers and toilet facilities at the stadium needed to be brought up to standard and agreed this recommendation in principle.

**5. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC PRESS**

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they contain the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the said Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption currently outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**6. EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

**7. MANAGERS REPORT - EXEMPT APPENDIX 2**

Appendix 2 of the Manager's Report was noted.

Meeting started: 7:00pm  
Meeting ended: 8:50pm

Chair .....

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