

Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee Minutes

Wednesday 21 June 2023

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Alex Sanderson (Chair), and Dominic Stanton

Co-opted members: Stephen Waley-Cohen and Faye Thomas

Advisors to the Trust: Steve Hollingworth, Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager), Vicki Abel, Simon Ingyon, Nicholas Falcone, Alfie Kerrigan, Carmen Lomotey, Raul Islas and Ahmad Rafique

Clerk: Amrita White

1. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed the appointment of Stephen Waley-Cohen and Faye Thomas as non-voting Co-opted Members for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bora Kwon.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Matters Arising

Stephen Waley-Cohen (Co-opted Member) asked if there was any progress on the vehicular access route to the Scrubs.

Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) noted the findings of the feasibility report and highlighted that the substation route for the Scrub Lane would be the preferred access for emergency vehicles in the future. As this project would involve a considerable cost, Council Officers were exploring cheaper cost options for alternative surface types and an updated set of quotations would be provided at the September meeting.

Action: Osama El-Amin

The Chair asked for an update to be provided on the depot usage and parking income.

Osama El-Amin explained that the depot at the Scrubs was used for all three Lots for the purpose of grounds maintenance by the Council. He noted that a report would be completed to understand the orientation of the depot and the percentage of usage for each contract Lot before a market rent on non-scrub use could be ascertained. An update on this would be brought to the December Committee.

Action: Osama El-Amin

Osama El-Amin also provided a breakdown of the pay and display, and Ringo parking income generated between 2022-2023. Councillor Dominic Stanton asked for a copy of the breakdown to be sent to the Committee.

Action: Osama El-Amin

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. MANAGER'S REPORT

At the start, the Committee the Chair agreed to amend the running order of the Manager's report to consider the decision-making items first on the agenda.

HS2 (High Speed 2) update on SBS site

Vicki Abel (Advisor to the Trust) noted that at the site visit on 25th May with BBVS (HS2's contractors) it was agreed that the Stamford Brook Sewer (SBS) site had been reinstated to an acceptable standard and therefore could be handed back to the Trust. In order not to damage the reinstated area, it was proposed to grant a licence to HS2's contractors to use the main path running east-west to the north of the meadow to transport the Heras fencing off the Scrubs. This would be done under the supervision of Council Officers and the method of removal would be agreed with BBVS. The licence would be granted for a period of 4-5 weeks. The site entrance area was part of the UTX site so the boundary along Old Oak Common (OOC) had also been fenced off.

Stephen Waley-Cohen (Co-opted Member) enquired when the work to remove the Haras fencing would commence. Vickie Abel noted that once the licence was in place the earliest the works would start was on 17th July.

Faye Thomas (Co-opted Member) asked if the size of the UTX site had been increased on a permanent basis. In response Vicki Abel noted that the boundary of the UTX site had increased along OOC lane (within the HS2's act limits) to take in the entrance area of what had been the SBS site to allow utility services to be moved into this area.

The Committee unanimously agreed this recommendation.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR) qualification update

Vicki Abel (Advisor to the Trust) provided an update and noted that a draft management plan and fact sheet for the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) had been submitted as part of this item for approval at this meeting.

Subject to approval the next step would be to run a month-long consultation process which involved putting a notice in a local newspaper, notices displayed on site referring people to a page on the Council's website for more information. If there were no firm objections following the consultation phase, the documents would be sent to Natural England to consider the site for LNR status.

The Trust was also asked to select a name for the proposed LNR from the following:

- Wormwood Scrubs Western Meadow
- Wormwood Scrubs Western Meadow Nature Reserve
- Wormwood Scrubs Western Meadow Local Nature Reserve

The Committee unanimously agreed the recommendation and selected Wormwood Scrubs Meadow as a name for the proposed LNR

Safety improvements on the Scrubs

Referring to the map on page 14 of the agenda pack, Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) noted that vehicle incursions continued to pose a challenge on the Scrubs. In consultation with the Law Enforcement Team and the London Metropolitan Police, Council Officers proposed the installation of several security installations, aimed at restricting vehicular access across the site.

This Committee was asked to approve £30,000 to achieve the 6 security improvements, included in the report. Finally, Council Officers were working to strategically place wooden logs at site entrances to further restrict vehicle incursions.

Councillor Dominic Stanton queried how quickly would the bollards be removed to allow emergency services to gain access should there be a requirement. In response Osama El-Amin explained that with the current booking system, Council Officers were able to ascertain the possibility of emergency services needing to access the Scrubs during planned events. Therefore, they would ensure that at least one access route was available with the bollards released for emergency services. He noted that the Scrubs could also be accessed via Scrubs Lane and the carpark in the event of an incident.

Faye Thomas (Co-opted member) asked if the height restrictions would prevent fire engines from accessing the Scrubs. Osama El-Amin noted that the barriers were not restricted and all quotes that had been generated included removeable height restriction barriers which would allow the top of the barrier to be taken off should there be a need.

Raul Islas (Advisor to the Trust) referring to the entrance via Scrubs Lane, noted that many vehicles, including double decker buses used the Scrubs Lane as an entrance point to reach the Linford Christie Stadium. They often accessed this point at a rapid speed. He asked if there were any preventative measures in place to direct these vehicles. Osama El-Amin noted that a traffic management system was currently being implemented to manage access of vehicles. He explained that

discussions were also being held with local schools and coach companies requesting them to park on Woodman's Mews to mitigate any potential risks.

Ahmad Rafique (Advisor to the Trust) noted that during sports bookings, it appeared that some vehicles were being driven on the green for loading and unloading purposes which should not be permitted. He asked how the facilitation of sports booking would be managed going forward to prevent this from occurring. In response Osama El-Amin said it was important to manage any risks when sports events took place. In line with the introduction of the traffic management system a fob would be required for access onto the Scrubs and an alert would be sent to the staff member on site. He would also liaise with the facilities manager of Linford Christie stadium to ensure that a clear set of instructions and limitations were provided to anyone accessing the site.

The Committee unanimously agreed this recommendation.

Councillor Dominic Stanton had lost connection, therefore the Chair agreed to continue the meeting to note the non-decision-making items until he was able to re-join.

HS2 AEM Masterplan update

Vicki Abel (Advisor to the Trust) noted that OPDC had confirmed that Planning permission would be required for all the works in the Masterplan. Council Officers were working to submit a Planning application as soon as possible. This would not impact too much on the overall programme for delivering the Masterplan as the Planning application could be submitted to coincide with the tender period for the works. It was noted that Procurement documents and drawings were currently being drafted with a view to the open tender commencing in mid to late July 2023. An updated programme would be brought to the next Committee.

Action: Vicki Abel

The Masterplan had been revised (Rev J) to include for the rotation of the Model Aircraft Runways following discussion with the pilots. The pilots had requested the runways to be cut and marked out with white lining as a trial.

Kensington Dragon's pitch re-surfacing/extension project update

Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) noted that upon submission of a new Planning application, this scheme had been granted permitted development for the amended layout.

In consultation with surfacing standards and the Council's sports booking team, it was advised that these works were best to take place in the late autumn/winter months. It was anticipated that these works would take approximately 6 months to complete and would be undertaken from November 2023 – March 2024, weather permitting.

Finally, Kensington Dragons FC continued to engage with other stakeholders to the Linford Christie Stadium site, including the Thames Valley Harriers who sought reassurance on any potential interference with their schedule of athletics events.

Installation of low-level wooden fencing around equipment on Braybrook St.

Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) noted that in March, the Committee requested that Council Officers investigate the cost of installing low-level timber fencing around the perimeter of 3 areas at the Braybrook side of the Scrubs, these were: the new playground area, the old playground area, and the outdoor gym area. Quotes had been generated with specification relating to fencing, with gates at either end.

Phase 2 of these works involved co-producing the preferred version of fencing with equipment users. Therefore, children and parents of Old Oak Primary school and users of the outdoor gym area were being consulted on their preferences. This process would run until the end of the school summer term. Based on consultation responses, a proposal would be brought back to the Committee in September.

The Chair was pleased to note that a consultation was being carried out with the equipment users.

Faye Thomas, (Co-opted Member) asked who was being consulted and if there were any signage in place regarding the consultation. In response Osama El-Amin noted that users of the primary school and gym were currently being consulted. He also welcomed any feedback from community members who intended to use that area of the Scrubs. In relation to the signage, Osama El-Amin said that laminated signage, already in place would be reviewed and updated.

Action: Osama El-Amin

Traffic Management System on Woodman's Mews

Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) provided an update and noted that the selected contractor had successfully installed the agreed system, as commissioned by this Committee. Completion of these works was restricted by difficulties accessing the necessary 100Amp power supply. Council Officers were working with UK Power networks to deliver this power supply, as a priority. The work would be scheduled in the next fortnight, with a 4–6-week lead time on completion. The Committee would be kept informed via monthly updates on progress towards becoming fully operational. In addition, a consequent update would be provided at the September Committee. Finally, the Trust Manager was in contact with the Woodman's Mews resident's association and would stay connected as this operation developed.

Councillor Dominic Stanton re-joined the meeting.

Permanent position of the Trust Manager post

Steve Hollingworth (Advisor to the Trust) noted that the Trust Manager post was established as a temporary position of 2-years, to enable trustees to consider the added value a dedicated post for the Trust would provide in terms of community engagement, coordination, and project delivery. Given the amount of work the Trust had managed over the last 12 months, and would need to deliver going

forward, the loss of this post could be detrimental to the Trust and therefore a permanent post may now be considered more appropriate. The Committee was asked to approve a permanent post of Trust Manager.

Members said that they were supportive of this and were pleased to note that the position of an independent Trust Manager had proven to be highly beneficial to the Trust to date.

The Committee unanimously agreed this recommendation.

Grounds Maintenance Contract

Steve Hollingworth (Advisor to the Trust) noted that the grounds maintenance contract was established as a “no inflation” contract for the first 5 years, to provide certainty to the Council’s parks service, the housing revenue account, and the Trust’s revenue budgets. However, due to the unforeseen financial challenge of inflationary increases faced by the ground's maintenance contractor, then Council held discussions aimed to ensure that minimum standards attached to each contract specification continued to be met across all 3 contract LOT’s. As a result, it was agreed at a corporate level to allow a one-off, annual uplift at 3.51% for 23/24 financial year. The Committee was asked to approve an increase at the same level for Lot 3.

The Committee unanimously agreed this recommendation.

Appointment of external auditor for the financial year 2022/23

Nick Falcone (Advisor to the Trust) noted that the Trust was required to appoint an auditor for its 2022/23 accounts. The Trust had used the services of the auditors MHA Macintyre Hudson (MHA) since the audit of its 2019/20 accounts. Subject to approval by the Committee, MHA had provisionally agreed to undertake the audit of the 2022/23 Trust accounts and had provided a quote of £10,900 (+VAT) for this work.

The Committee unanimously agreed this recommendation.

Community Safety – Law Enforcement Team (LET) Report

Ahmad Rafique (Advisor to the Trust) provided an overview of the report and outlined the role and work undertaken by the LET in Wormwood Scrubs from 27th February to 12th June. During this period, the LET had reported 508 various interactions.

LET Officers had also engaged with residents, illegal encampments, visitors, dog walkers, hospital workers, event organisers, public gym users, stakeholders, and facility users.

The Chair thanked Ahmad for the comprehensive report and for all work and various activities undertaken by the LET.

Stephen Waley-Cohen (Co-opted Member) noted there needed to be an updated set of clear guidelines in relation to the Public Space Protection Order on all the websites and included in the signage across the Scrubs.

Action: Ahmad Rafique

Faye Thomas (Co-opted Member) explained that there was an increase in antisocial behaviour around Braybrook Street since the installation of the new picnic benches. It was noted that residents of Braybrook Street were subjected to considerable noise disturbances most weekends as a result of this and were keen to get this resolved as soon as possible. In response Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) explained that cost options for the relocation of the benches and how this would affect the accessibility for the users of the Scrubs were being explored. The relocation of the benches would involve a considerable cost. Therefore, the situation would initially be closely monitored. Enforcement would be carried out to deter any antisocial behaviour which would include issuing penalty notices to repeat offenders. Officers would also engage with the Metropolitan Police as well as the LET to manage and mitigate any antisocial behaviour.

Faye Thomas explained that she was not reassured by this response and expressed concerns around the current location of the benches. She felt that these would be better suited closer to the hospital for people using the hospital to have their lunches. She noted that this issue was causing a significant impact on the wellbeing of the residents of Braybrook Street. Osama El-Amin said that he would have a discussion with Senior Management regarding this matter and an updated response would be provided to Faye this week.

Action: Osama El-Amin

The Trust latest financial position

Carmen Lomotey (Advisor to the Trust) provided an overview of the financial forecast for the Trust for 2023/24. The budget for 2023/24 was agreed with an anticipated net income outturn of £329,465. The current forecast (Q1) was a net income outturn of £291,464; a movement of net £38,001.

Any other business

Stephen Waley-Cohen (Co-opted Member) asked if there had been any progress on the HS2 application for financial support relating to the playground fencing on Braybrook Street. Osama El-Amin (Trust Manager) noted that this had been rejected for this financial year due to a different project already being funded by HS2 for the Council. He noted that the Trust would need to reapply for the HS2 Community Environment fund in 2024. He also advised that the Trust open its own bank account to receive funding from HS2 independently of the Council.

Stephen Waley-Cohen asked for an update to be provided on the funding allocated to Thames Valley Harriers clubhouse and works undertaken at Linford Christie Stadium. Steve Hollingworth (Advisor to the Trust) explained that capital funding for the Linford Christie Stadium was being identified from the Council to resolve

issues with the track and an update would be provided at the next Committee. He noted that Thames Valley Harriers were still considering their position on the development of their Clubhouse.

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted that the second annual dog show would take place on 30th July 23 and welcomed everyone to join.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed to:

1. Approved HS2`s contractors' access on the Scrubs to remove the Haras fencing from reinstated SBS site.
2. Noted HS2 AEM Masterplan implementation update.
3. Approved documents to be submitted to Natural England for the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Status of the NW Meadow area.
4. Approved the allocation of £30,000 to install security apparatus aimed at prohibiting vehicular access onto the Scrubs.
5. Noted Kensington Dragon`s pitch re-surfacing/extension update.
6. Approved the post of Trust Manager on a permanent basis.
7. Approved the Grounds Maintenance contract inflationary uplift.
8. Noted progress towards fencing off recreational equipment at the Braybrook side of the Scrubs.
9. Noted an update on the Traffic Management System on Woodman`s Mews.
10. Noted the Community Safety update by the LET.
11. Approved appointment of Macintyre Hudson (MHA) as the Trust`s external auditor for the financial year 2022/23 and their associated fee.
12. Note Trust`s latest financial position.

6. DATES OF FUTURE MEETING

The Chair noted the dates of the future meetings:

- 6 September 2023
- 12 December 2023
- 6 March 2024

Meeting started: 18:30pm
Meeting ended: 19:55pm

Chair

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