



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee Minutes

Tuesday 19 June 2018

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Wesley Harcourt (Chair) and Alexandra Sanderson

Co-opted members: Miriam Shea

Officers: Mark Jones (Director of Finance and Resources), Richard Gill (Wormwood Scrubs Development Manager), Ian Ross (Leisure Services Manager), Mahmood Siddiqi (Bi-Borough Director Transport, Highways, Parks & Leisure) and Amrita Gill (Governance).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillor Wesley Harcourt be appointed as the Chair of the Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust for municipal year 2018-19.
2. That Councillor Alexandra Sanderson be appointed as the Vice-Chair of the Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust for municipal year 2018-19.

The chair thanked previous Councillors Elaine Chumnerly and Joe Carlebach for their service to this committee

2. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

RESOLVED:

That the Committee agreed the appointments of the following non-voting co-opted members:

- Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen
- Miriam Shea

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Belinda Donovan, Farrah Rossi (Principal Planning Projects Officer) and Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen (co-opted member).

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6. ALTERNATIVE ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION PROCUREMENT

Richard Gill presented the reported and the following correction to the Executive Summary was noted:

This report is seeking Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee permission for the council to approach the market and procure contracts on behalf of the Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust for the design of Alternative Ecological Mitigation (AEM) and conservation management plan (CMP) proposals for Wormwood Scrubs Park. (the Scrubs).

The timeline in section 12 of Appendix 1 of the report will also have to be corrected to allow time for Cabinet approval.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt gave a brief update on the history and noted that HS2 would provide the Council with the funding to carry out works associated with ecological damage at the Scrubs. Richard Gill explained that the detailed draft proposal and specification for the conservation management plan (CMP) and AEM works would be approved by the Promotor, or nominated undertaker (HS2), and would then be used to procure a works contractor to implement the AEM proposals. The appointed consultant would also prepare a 10-year management plan for the works and update this throughout the 10-year period. HS2 would reimburse the Council for the costs to design, implement and maintain the AEM proposals and management plans together with any reasonable costs properly incurred by the Council.

Richard Gill referring to Appendix 1 provided an overview on the business case, procurement strategy, project management and governance plans for the AEM proposals. He noted that the report would go to the September Cabinet meeting and the plan was to award the contract in December 2018. Referring to page 26 of the agenda pack, Councillor Harcourt requested that an updated version of the indicative timetable be circulated to the Committee.

Action: Richard Gill

Miriam Shea noted that, following her meeting with Friends of the Scrubs she felt that the overall budget appeared to be quite high for project management (Consultants). Richard Gill explained that this was a lengthy process from start to finish and there was a great deal of work that needed to be completed. Consultants would produce all technical documents as well as work on site with the contractor for 18 months. They would be fully involved in the project for 24 months on and off

site. Furthermore, the budget proposals for hiring consultants were in line with the industry standards.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee agreed for the Council to approach the market and procure contracts on behalf of the Scrubs for the design of Alternative Ecological Mitigation (AEM) and conservation management plan (CMP) proposals for Wormwood Scrubs Park. (the Scrubs)

7. MANAGERS REPORT

HS2 Bill – Proposed Wetland Mitigation Legal Agreement

Mark Jones provided an update and noted works to control knotweed had commenced. Paths had been cut in bramble to allow access to the knotweed stands. These works were carried out in late March. This was early in the bird nesting season so great care was taken to explore the bramble and ensure there were no nests in the vicinity. The next task would be to treat the knotweed once it had grown to a suitable height and weather conditions were favourable. Arrangements had been made to meet the London Wildlife Trust who were acting as our ecologists and the knotweed contractor to agree a suitable methodology of carrying out works during this period.

Councillor Harcourt asked for clarification around what method was used for the removal of the knotweed. Richard Gill explained that the knotweed would be sprayed rather than injected. The treatment was most effective when carried out in two applications, early and late summer. This meant that it must be carried out while birds were still nesting so the operation has been postponed until July when bird nesting will be minimal.

Councillor Alexandra Sanderson asked if drift was a concern due to the potential damage it would cause to the surrounding areas. Richard Gill said that some of the surrounding bramble needed to be killed off, however consultants would avoid spraying the knotweed on a windy day. Councillor Sanderson asked that extra signs be posted, explaining that the knotweed would be sprayed during the summer.

Action: Richard Gill

HS2 Bill – Re-Routing Stamford Brook Sewer Legal Agreement

Richard Gill provided an update and noted that the HS2 contractor had been granted access to carry out ground investigation works. The position of the boreholes had been discussed on site and would be well away from the embankment or any vegetation. HS2 would also ensure an ecologist had a watching brief during the works in case nesting birds or other fauna required works to be adapted. Works were planned to start on Thursday 7 June with some enabling works for the access point commencing on Monday 4 June. The contractor postponed the start date for two weeks enabling works started Monday 18th June.

OPDC Draft Local Plan

Mark Jones noted that Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) were amending their draft local plan to reflect the masterplan work their consultants AECOM had been developing since they were appointed in January. The consultation would be on the proposed changes only and not on the whole document. It would begin on 14 June and run for a 6-week period until 31 July. Councillor Harcourt said that this was our opportunity to respond to OPDC and suggested that the documentation be circulated to the relevant officers for feedback and comments.

Action: Mark Jones

Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA)

Mark Jones provided an update and noted that the department for education (DfE) had contacted the Council to raise the possibility of KAA needing to remain at the Scrubs for a further year. The planning application to allow the school to remain on the site for a further year was progressing well and due to be considered at the 11 July Planning Committee.

The department remained undecided about whether the school would return to their original site. The school was aiming for a decision by 3 July which would be just two weeks from the end of term.

Councillors asked if there was an opportunity to use some of the portable cabins to open a visitor ecological centre after the school had closed. Mark Jones noted that the portable cabins were not permanent structures and this option could be explored further.

Community Safety Update

Mark Jones provided an overview and noted that between 01/03/18 and 01/06/18 parks police dealt with 22 incidents on the Scrubs and carried out 64 high visibility patrols. Incidents included the abandonment of horses on two separate occasions. Both horses were in a neglected and emaciated condition and were taken to secure locations. Pressure was being kept up in respect of 'professional' dog walkers and a fixed penalty notice was issued to one walker who was in possession of five dogs.

Councillor Harcourt highlighted that there were some ongoing concerns relating to drug dealers near Braybrook Street and requested that officers and parks police continued to monitor this specific part of the Scrubs.

Grounds Maintenance and Site Management Update

Ian Ross noted that that further areas of Japanese knotweed had been found in the pony centre. Idverde had been asked to treat this when the weather conditions were conducive. Furthermore, there was the discovery of giant hogweed on the site. Idverde arranged to spray this as a matter of urgency to try and eradicate the issue. Officers and Idverde staff would monitor the area and treatment would be carried out as quickly as possible.

Litter continued to be a challenge. There was further notification of litter being left on site after the bank holiday weekend, after searching the sports booking records, it turned out on the day the litter had been left, no bookings had been made.

Officers and idverde were following this up with Parks Police and would provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

Action: Ian Ross

It was noted that over the Easter bank holiday the pony centre suffered flooding. Officers were working with the centre to look at short and long-term flood alleviation solutions. Councillor Harcourt asked whether the changes made during the construction of KAA had diverted the flow to the pony centre and requested for this to be investigated further. Mark Jones noted that he would raise this with the Department for Education (DfE) at their next meeting in July 2018.

Action: Mark Jones

Relating to the sports booking figures on page 31 of the agenda pack, Councillor Sanderson noted that the figures for Hockey had reduced significantly since 2015/16. She requested that a further analysis be provided on the reasons why the figures had decreased across a range of activities and circulated to the Committee. In addition, Ian Ross explained that legionella bacteria were discovered in the water supply of the Linford Christie stadium and works were carried out to try and remove the issue but unfortunately it reappeared in January of this year. Councillor Harcourt noted his concerns and requested that this issue be resolved as a matter of urgency.

Action: Ian Ross

Events

Mark Jones explained that the Council had been approached by an organisation that was interested in organising a music event on the Scrubs to raise funds for victims of the Grenfell fire. He noted that this event didn't go ahead as the organisation didn't follow up as anticipated. Additionally, the cinema company would not be using the Scrubs this summer. Negotiations had revealed they were prepared to offer in kind benefits (e.g. work experience) but even our offer of a reduced fee per head was not attractive.

Lease with UK Power Networks

Mark Jones provided an update and noted that there had been further correspondence with UKPN's agents and lawyers. The recent correspondence had narrowed down the remaining issues. Council property officers considered that progress was being made and that none of the issues being debated were significant. He noted that a further update would be provided once a response from the UKPN's agents was received.

Financial Outturn 2017/18

Mark Jones provided an overview and noted that the budget for 2017/18 was set with an anticipated £57,189 deficit to be drawn down from the Trust's reserves. The outturn for 2017/18 was a surplus of £297,964 which was £355,153 better than budget.

It was noted that the transfer to a new cash collection service for parking income didn't go as smoothly as anticipated. This resulted in lower than expected income in September and October of approximately £25,000. He noted that the cashless service was now operating correctly and this helped income levels between November 2017 and March 2018 to exceed predicted levels by £12,516.

Furthermore, filming and events income had also been affected, by reducing the number of events since July 2017 due to the temporary relocation of the Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA) to the Scrubs.

Financial Forecast 2018/19

Mark Jones provided an overview of the financial forecast for Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust for 2018/19. He noted that income from pay and display and cashless parking was expected to exceed the 2017/18 outturn and return to 2016/17 levels as new systems had been fully implemented and fluctuations seen in 2017/18 were not expected to reoccur.

The budget included £93,333 income for rent payable by KAA for the period April to July 2018. If the school stayed for an extra year then the forecast for 18/19 would improve by £186,000 as a result of additional rent. It also included rental income payable by UKPN for occupation of the land which had been agreed for the next 7 years. It also included rental income payable for the new electrical vehicle charging points on the Scrubs.

Councillor Harcourt explained that there was an issue with coaches taking passengers to the Linford Christie Stadium by way of the narrow roadway to the east and north of the Pony Centre. This roadway should only be used by pedestrians and cyclist, however to facilitate deliveries to the KAA the vehicle barrier had been removed leaving access to vehicles open. He asked if officers could look into alternative options to mitigate some of the concerns raised.

Mark Jones noted that this would be his last Committee meeting as he was leaving for retirement. The Chair thanked him for all his hard work and wished him luck in his future endeavours

Legal Comments

There were no legal implications to be noted.

RESOLVED

That the Committee noted all matters in this report.

Meeting started: 7:00pm
Meeting ended: 8:30pm

Chair

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