

Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee Minutes

Tuesday 12 July 2022

PRESENT

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

Co-opted members: Stephen Waley-Cohen

Advisors to the Trust: Stephen Hollingworth (Trust Manager), Neil Morrison, Carmen Lomotey, Nicholas Falcone

Guests: Nyear Yaseen

Clerk: Rhea Gardener

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED

1. That Councillor Alex Sanderson be appointed as Chair of Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.
2. That Councillor Dominic Stanton be appointed as Vice Chair of Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee agreed the appointment of Miriam Shea and Stephen Waley-Cohen as non-voting Co-opted Members for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Miriam Shea.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Corrections

Steve Hollingworth noted a small inaccuracy regarding the car parking charging on weekends in which he had previously been advised it had started. However, due to the car parking signage not being in place it was not implemented. The issue was discussed later in the meeting.

Matters Arising

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted the single-story parks depot use needed to be addressed. Stephen Hollingworth stated officers were looking at the square footage, the likely cost, and the balance between what was being used by the Scrubs and the rest of the borough. A report would be produced in due course.

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted the adult sports day needed to be addressed. Steve Hollingworth stated the adult's sports day has been moved to another park in the borough as they were not prepared to pay additional costs.

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2022, with the correction noted above, were agreed as an accurate record.

6. MANAGERS REPORT

Steve Hollingworth, Advisor to the Trust, presented the report.

HS2 Update

Stamford Brook Sewer

Steve Hollingworth provided an update on Stamford Brook Sewer, an area of land north of the Scrubs, covering the meadow area which is where the Stamford Brook Sewer is being relined and relocated. It was previously proposed to be reinstated by August. However, there had been a delay and they have proposed a 6-month extension to February 2023. This will require planning permission for the access route which has been submitted. In addition to the planning permission, a licence extension needs to be granted for the access route occupied by HS2 for a further 6-month period.

The Committee unanimously agreed the recommendation to approve the licence extension for 6 months.

UTX site

Steve Hollingworth provided an update on the UTX site which is located on the Northwest corner of the scrubs.

Easement for the SBS

Following completion of the alteration to the SBS on Scrub's land, Thames Water require the granting of an easement in respect of the sewer. The agreement, included in Appendix 1 for approval, granted Thames Water the right to inspect,

reconstruct, replace, line, relay, alter, maintain, cleanse, repair and manage the sewer on the easement land.

The Committee unanimously agreed the recommendation to approve the easement.

Play equipment for Braybrook Street

Steve Hollingworth noted a grant had been awarded to upgrade the play area on Braybrook Street. As part of the grant conditions, it was required to have a monitoring and evaluation plan which had been agreed. This would include a survey of people and the children at Old Oak Primary School to assess how well it has been received. Tenders would be evaluated over the coming weeks. The plan was to make an award and be on site by the end of August and access the play area by autumn.

Stephen Waley-Cohen, Co-opted Member, enquired whether there would be fencing around the play area as had been discussed previously, and whether the picnic tables that had been burnt out would be replaced and if there would be general seating for the area. Steve Hollingworth stated fencing was not included within the scheme at this time but that could be a consideration going forward. The seating and tables were also not included in the spec for the play area. If members would like to replace the tables and seating, quotes could be explored and added to the scheme.

Stephen Waley-Cohen felt seating and tables for parents supervising their children at the play area would improve the scheme. The Chair stated she was happy to look at seating and felt it would be a nice addition.

Improvements to entrances

Steve Hollingworth provided an update and noted the ODPC secured funding from the London Mayors growth fund. Officers had put a bid in for three entrances onto the scrubs which had been successful. There could also be new signage and seating for each entrance, but proposals will be put together for the next committee meeting.

Stephen Waley-Cohen said the members welcomed funding for the entrances but there were concerns that the plans should highlight that it was a common area and not a park.

Hedge Laying

Steven Hollingworth noted the hedge laying by volunteers had been successful earlier in the year. Everyone involved was keen to continue the work in the autumn and the proposal was to do this through Idverde.

Grounds maintenance and site management update

Footpath surfacing

Steve Hollingworth noted there has been success with sandy loam in terms of retaining access during the winter and wet weather to stop it from hindering the access to the scrubs. The proposal was to continue this winter and to prepare for this, 180 tons of sandy loam at a cost of £10,500 will need to be ordered and this proposal has been put forward to the trustees for approval.

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted the members favoured maintaining improvements from last year.

The Committee approved the proposal.

Meadow signage

It was noted that members had requested stakes and ropes on the meadow to protect ground-resting birds during the nesting season. This had improved the situation, however people on the Scrubs had been removing the signage and the stakes and ropes on a continuous basis. Advisors suggested installing more permanent, robust signage next year to protect the nesting areas.

Stephen Waley-Cohen agreed with a policy of encouraging people to avoid the nesting areas and welcomed more robust signage.

The Committee agreed the proposal for more robust signage.

Dog Control

Steve Hollingworth noted the Council would be going out to consultation in August on a Public Space Protection Order in relation to responsible dog ownership. This would allow the Council to restrict dog walking in certain areas such as nesting areas and playgrounds, as well as control the number of dogs that walkers could walk at any one time. The proposals would also include provisions that dogs should be on leads in the forest school and outdoor gym areas as there had been some complaints.

Stephen Waley-Cohen said the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs discussed this topic and were not against the public space protection order, however they felt that what was being proposed was likely excessive and potentially unenforceable.

Councillor Bora Kwon agreed with the dogs on leads controls, specifically pertaining to the professional dog walkers. Although there were supposed to be restrictions, she had witnessed three dog walkers together at a time.

Traffic Management

Steve Hollingworth provided an update on the traffic management on Scrubs Lane and noted due the rising cost of steel the lowest tender was asking for an increase of 4.5%. There had been a useful suggestion to input curbing around the bollard areas to protect them from vehicles.

The Committee agreed the recommendation.

HS2 Bill alternative ecological mitigation - Master plan

Steve Hollingworth provided an update and noted there has been an additional consultation on the master plan which started last year due to the increased foot fall on the Scrubs during the pandemic and after. London Development Trust were appointed to complete this work – 317 surveys had been submitted at the time of the meeting. There was also a proposal to push the workshops for young people back to encourage to 28 and 30 July. The consultation period would be extended to 31 July.

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs did not know about the workshops. The Chair stated the consultation was designed for a group of people under 30 as there had been difficulties getting feedback from that demographic. Steve Hollingworth to provide information on the workshops to members.

ACTION: Steve Hollingworth

Weekend parking charges

Steve Hollingworth noted there was an error at the last meeting, a timetable has been set for work required in terms of signage. The date for the trial period has been set for 9 August 2022. Potential migration of parking to residential areas will be monitored.

Events

Steve Hollingworth provided an update and noted a company named Slammin' Events has approached officers expressing interest in putting on a music event on the Scrubs next year. They are keen to present their proposals on 7 September to the Committee and address any mitigations needed to hold such an event.

The Committee agreed the proposal.

It was noted there was a meeting with organiser of the dog show, and they were happy to progress on 31 July from 12pm - 5pm on the sports field. They had secured sponsorships and support for the event. Officers noted this would be a good opportunity to discuss the public space protection order, responsible dog ownership, and DNA chipping advice for dog theft which was on the rise. Stephen Waley-Cohen noted a thank you to the Chair and Steve Hollingworth for their work on this.

Recruitment

Trust Manager

Steve Hollingworth provided an update on recruitment and noted the approval of the appointment of a new Trust Manager. A start date would be confirmed shortly.

Wormwood Scrubs Development Manager (Responsible for the Master Plan)

It was noted the other appointment for the replacement of Heather Marsh, the development manager funded by HS2 to develop the master plan. A suitable candidate named Vicky Able has been successful and was due to start on 4 August 2022.

Law enforcement team update

Neil Morrison, Advisor to the Trust, provided an update works undertaken by the Law Enforcement Officers on Wormwood Scrubs. He noted there was an operation day on 23 May 2022 with a large number of officers in attendance on the Scrubs, allowing them to obtain intelligence including from the professional dog walkers, residents, and visitors – and inform them of the upcoming Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). Neil noted he also met with parks officers and two members of the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs and discussed the PSPO in more detail, including the level of fines they were able to administer. Dates for the consultation period on the PSPO would be shared once confirmed.

Neil noted recently there had been an unlicensed music event which occurred on the scrubs last weekend. Officers attended and discovered people having a party and BBQ which they stopped. The Law Enforcement Team will continue to carry out patrols. He advised anyone with intelligence or evidence of unauthorised activities on the scrubs to inform The Law Enforcement Team.

Stephen Waley-Cohen noted there had been numerous reports of an unidentified person placing poison in the woods near Braybrook Street which caused a substantial number of people to avoid that area, causing other areas of the Scrubs to become more saturated. Neil said the Law Enforcement Team had not received any evidence of that but that it should be a police matter given that the act of poisoning was a criminal offence.

Kensington Aldridge academy (KAA) lease

Steve Hollingworth provided an update on Kensington Aldridge Academy. The Academy's pupils had returned to their original school site in RBKC but the temporary classrooms may be required when demolition works begin on Grenfell Tower. The Academy had requested an extension of the lease.

The Committee agreed to approve the extension of the licence from 13th July 2022 for a further year and delegate negotiation of an uplift in rental value to the Chair and the Trust Manager.

Audit and accounts

Audit

Nicholas Falcone provided an update and noted the proposal for the auditors MHA Macintyre Hudson to be reappointed for 2022/23 financial year audits at the same cost as last year.

The Committee agreed the recommendation.

Accounts

Carmen Lomotey, Advisor to the Trust, noted the 2021/22 outturn with a surplus of £102,507 (subject to audit). One of the main reasons for this was due to a Trust manager not having been appointed. She also noted there would be monitoring of parking charges as they were down 10% across the borough. Though once weekend charges were implemented it will compensate for some of those losses. There were several outstanding items which related to national insurance, pensions, and legal fees. They were historical costs that required clarification once the HS2 agreement was signed off. Carmen Lomotey said a more detailed breakdown of the transactions would be included in the next report to the Committee.

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed to:

1. Approve the licence extension for HS2 to occupy the access route to the Stamford Brook Sewer for a further 6 months until February 2023.
2. Approve the easement agreement with Thames Water for the Stamford Brook Sewer.

3. To approve the ordering of 180 tonnes of sandy loam at a cost of £10,500 to maintain paths over the autumn and winter period.
4. Approve a further £4,700 for the traffic management scheme on Scrubs Lane.
5. Approve the licence extension for The Kensington Aldridge Academy from 13th July 2022 for another year.
6. To approve the re-appointment of MHA Macintyre Hudson as the Trust's external auditor for the financial year 2021-22 as set out in section 13.
7. Note all other matters in the report.

7. AMENDMENT TO ITEM 6 MANAGERS REPORT

The amendments were considered under item 6.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED

The Committee resolved, 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.

9. MANAGERS REPORT - EXEMPT ELEMENTS

The Committee discussed the exempt elements of the Managers Report.

RESOLVED

1. The Committee approved the compensation proposal in Item 1 of the exempt elements of the Managers Report.
2. The Committee supported the proposal in Item 2 of the exempt elements of the Managers Report in principle but requested more information before making a decision.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 8.07 pm

Chair

Clerk: Rhea Gardener
E-mail: Rhea.Gardener@lbhf.gov.uk