



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust Committee Minutes

Wednesday 3 September 2014

PRESENT

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

Officers: Mark Jones (Director for Finance and Resources) , David Page (Director for Safer Neighbourhoods), Tom Cardis (Principal Planning Officer), Sam Maloney (KPMG), Maria Campagna, Craig Bowdery (Committee Coordinator), Fern Aldous (Assistant Committee Coordinator)

Apologies: Ian Ross (Parks Manager)

7. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd September be approved as an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chair

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Ian Ross (Parks Manager)

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest

10. WORMWOOD SCRUBS CHARITABLE TRUST STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013/14

The Committee received a report and an 'In Errata' amendment from the Director for Finance & Resources (ELRS) detailing the Annual Accounts for 2013/14.

The Committee was asked to note that the auditors had given the Trust a clean report on the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2014.

Concern was expressed over the “In Errata” addition to the report, which was felt to be unnecessarily pessimistic. The representative from the auditor explained it gave a true representation of the affairs and sat within a report which balanced it with positive messages. It was felt however that some of the additional wording could be damaging to the Trust’s dealings with outside bodies. It was agreed that the Trustees report would be amended to remove the potentially damaging part of the “in errata” additional wording, and that this would not impact on the auditors’ certification of the accounts.

Members asked which areas of the Scrubs the report related to, specifically if it included the area known as “Little Wormwood Scrubs” as no mention was made to it in the report. There was debate as to whose had responsibility for this area. It was suggested that the area was managed by Kensington and Chelsea, hence its omission from the report, however it was asked that the ownership be confirmed.

Action: David Page

Members asked about the current distribution of the report and whether this could be extended to other avenues such as the council website, a press release or via hard copies being sent to the statutory bodies with a covering letter from the chair. This was agreed to be worthwhile as the report gave a good overview of the work of the Trust.

Action: Mark Jones

RESOLVED –

i) That the following passage be removed from the report:

“ The Trust therefore still has some way to go in order to reach a breakeven point in its finances.”

ii) That it be noted that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the charity’s financial affairs as at 31 March 2014

iii) That it be noted that the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with UK GAAP

iv) That it be noted that the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011

v) That the management representation letter be approved and signed

vi) That the Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust’s 2013/14 audited Statement of Accounts and Trustee’s Report be approved and signed

vii) That the delegation of authority to the Director for Finance and Resources, Environment, Leisure and Residents Services for the approval of the audited 2013/14 Statement of Accounts and Trustee’s report in the event of auditor changes subsequent to this committee meeting be approved and signed

viii) That the contents of the annual risk assessment be noted

11. MANAGER'S REPORT

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

The report covered the following areas:

Negotiations with HS2 over Wetland Habitat

Officers reported that a meeting had taken place with HS2 to discuss the proposal that monies that would have been invested into the wetland habitat project be instead paid to the Trust to undertake works in agreement with HS2. The amount of money that the Trust would receive would be discussed at a further upcoming meeting. It was agreed that the Trust should give an optimistic estimate as to the amount of money the Scrubs needed as this would give them room for negotiation at the meeting, although it was reminded that HS2 would need assurances that the money was spent in a manner that fulfilled their duty to offset the negative impacts of the scheme. The Committee asked for a debrief of the upcoming meeting.

Action: Tom Cardis

TFL Overground Options Update

Officers provided an update on the ongoing consultation on the three TFL overground options. The Trust and Council's position was still firmly for Option C. Although not official, it was known that TFL's preference at this stage was for Option A. On other Local Authorities, it was known that Brent supported Option A, but that Ealing were known to be less keen on this option. Members asked why the position of the other Local Authorities was still not known and asked that officers clarify Ealing's position to the options. It was noted that the views of other boroughs had been changing and were not yet settled. The Chair asked that officers remain mindful of the tight timescale of these proposals. It was asked that a formal response be drafted from the Trust in response to TFL consultation on the options in good time and that this response should not be delayed whilst information is sought from other Local Authorities.

Action: Tom Cardis

The Committee discussed TFL's proposals in relation to the 1879 Act protecting the Scrubs. It was seen as a useful tool in the opposition to Option A as it provided a legal reason for the opposition. Members agreed that there would likely be cross party support to strengthen the Act in the face of TFL's attempting to overcome it in their bill.

It was reported by the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs that they had arranged a walk around the Scrubs with TFL representatives and the bird-watcher David Lindo. The Committee were invited to join the walk, and the representative of the Friends agreed to circulate the dates to members.

Action: Friends of Wormwood Scrubs

Mayoral Development Corporation

The Committee discussed the impact the MDC would have on the Scrubs. The Trust felt that the Scrubs should not be included within the boundary of the MDC. It was felt that the Scrubs did not need the complete regeneration the scheme was offering and that it should keep its natural beauty. It was felt that the Scrubs would be able to gain benefits of being adjacent to the scheme without being included in the boundary. The Committee agreed to Trust approve the draft response letter laying out the Trust's objections to being included within the MDC be approved.

The Friends of Wormwood Scrubs reported that a meeting had been arranged between them and Sir Edward Lister, Deputy Mayor of Planning and Policy for London. The Committee asked that they be kept updated as to the outcome of this meeting.

Action: Friends of Wormwood Scrubs

QPR Football Club

Officers reported that they had been approached by QPR Football Club with an invitation for the members to attend a preview of the public exhibition of their plans for the redevelopment of Old Oak, including a new stadium. The chair expressed his concern that this could be seen as a private meeting between a Member and a Developer. Officers assured the members that the meeting would be a formal opportunity to ask questions about the proposals and could not be construed as the football club influencing members. It was agreed that if they should attend it should be as representatives of the Trust and not as the Local Authority, which would open the invitation up to the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs. Members requested that officers liaise with Executive Support to coordinate members' attendance.

Action: Tom Cardis

In relation to the TFL options discussed previously in the meeting it was noted that QPR Football Club also supported Option C. It was asked whether they were planning on making a formal representation of their preference. This would be clarified at an upcoming meeting.

Action: Tom Cardis

Events

The committee discussed the use of the Scrubs by Olympia Exhibition Centre. No feedback on the arrangement had been received from residents and the use was generally seen as positive. It was discussed whether an alternative access route could be viable for the large vehicles.

The cancellation of the "Good Times in the Park" event was reported as being due to the MPS and IPN being unable to reach an agreement over the SSPA. The cancellation was seen to have both positive and negative consequences for the Scrubs. The Committee agreed that the principle behind the event was good and that they were keen for similar events to take place in the future on the Scrubs, although more organisation and forethought than was present in the planning of the Good Times event was needed. It was agreed that systems should be in place to support organisers looking to hold such events on the Scrubs.

The position of the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs was sought and it was reported that they recognised the need for the Scrubs to raise revenue and that they had had no major objection to such an event in principle, however they had many issues with the way this particular event was organised and the impact it would have had on the Scrubs and the surrounding area.

It was reported that the Good Times organisers were keen to hold the event next year. The committee agreed to receive proposals from Officers about possible future music events at the next meeting. *BMX Track*

The BMX track was now open and in good use. There had only been one complaint received which had come from a local school who reported that they had not been made aware of the opening, despite a consultation event being held in the school. The Friends had no objections to the BMX track.

Linford Christie Stadium

It was reported that the works on the stadium had now been completed. The committee agreed that it would create positive publicity if the stadium could be reopened by a high profile sports person, possibly someone from QPR football club. Officers agreed to take the proposal to the upcoming meeting with the club.

Action: Tom Cardis

The potential revenue from sports clubs using the refurbished facilities at the stadium was discussed and it was reported by officers that this was not expected to be a significant sum. Members thought that the stadium had a greater potential for revenue than it was currently getting. Members expressed their desire for a tour of the stadium.

Action: David Page

School Bus Routes

There was a discussion on the current route school buses were taking to get to sports lessons at the Linford Christie Stadium as there had been reports that this was causing disruption to the residents of Woodman's Mews. Other routes were discussed, including the option of using Artillery Way. This was only seen to be a viable option once the Artillery Wall had been removed and a review had been done on the work needed.

Action: David Page

Improvements to car park and increased revenue

It was reported that the license on the hospital car park had been agreed in principle to be increased. This would result in a one off benefit of £300,000 as it would be backdated. It was noted that this would increase to £93,000 a year. However a condition of the increase was that £200,000 out of the £300,000 windfall must be spent on necessary repairs to the car park, which would make up half the cost of the overall bill for the repairs. The hospital would match that from its own resources. Members asked that it be clearly stated in negotiations that there was a definite cap of £200,000 placed on their contribution to the repairs. Due to

the increase in revenue, it was reported that the Trust had a good prospect of breaking even for the current financial year.

Friends of Wormwood Scrubs

It was with sadness that it was reported that Stephanie Gray, a dedicated member of the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs had recently passed away. Approval was given for the erection of a memorial bench.

Members expressed their sadness at hearing the news and asked that their condolences be recorded.

Potential Committee Members

The opinion was expressed that the list of potential committee members was too orientated towards sport and did not contain enough candidates for environmental causes. It was felt that as anyone was allowed to attend and speak at the meeting that this was not a pressing issue.

Grass Cutting

A number of users of the Scrubs had raised the issue that they felt the grass had been allowed to grow too long in some areas. It was agreed that cutting the grass short in certain areas would be beneficial to the Scrubs use by residents. Officers would consult with the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs to identify potential areas to be cut and would arrange a walk of the area to aid there decision.

Action: David Page

Other Issues

Members enquired as to the expiry of the Quadron contract. Officers agreed to check it's length..

Action: David Page

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of the next meetings are set for:

9th December 2014

4th March 2015

Meeting started: 7.00 pm

Meeting ended: 8.20 am

Chair

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