



MINUTES OF THE BARHAM PARK TRUST COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday 3 September 2019 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors McLennan (Chair), Farah, M Patel and Tatler (substituting for Councillor Krupa Sheth).

Also Present: Councillor Colwill

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

RESOLVED:

- i) that Councillor McLennan be appointed Chair for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.
- ii) that Councillor Krupa Sheth be appointed Vice Chair for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Agha and Sheth. Councillor Tatler was present as a substitute member on behalf of Councillor Sheth.

3. Declarations of interests

None declared.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 January 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

5. Matters arising (if any)

None.

6. Tenant Organisations (Verbal Update)

At the invitation of the Chair, representatives of the tenant organisations for the Barham Park buildings complex provided the following updates on the activities of their respective organisations:

Friends of Barham Library

Members heard that Friends of Barham Library (FoBL) currently operated as a lending library and study space for four days a week, with a solely second hand book stock drawn from donations and damaged books restored by their expert, in-house restorer. The activities they hosted for the community included a monthly reading club, weekly art sessions, under five sessions, a chess club, ESOL classes,

a stitching club, knitting club and a quilting club. A Memory Lounge had been established and provided activities including Tai Chi and Arm Chair Yoga, as well as acting as a space for social gatherings. It was emphasised that FoBL relied upon volunteers and welcomed any support that the committee could provide.

ACAVA

It was explained that ACAA provided space at affordable rates for artists to rent. The community of artists had been really stable and the occupation rates were high. It was commented that the communication with the Trust had been really good but concerns were raised about three recent break-ins to the building. The Chair explained that an update regarding the buildings would be provided in the General Update Report.

Nepalese Community Centre

Founded in 2007 for ex-Gurkhas and residents, the organisation now had 480 members and aimed to help people in the Nepalese Community to improve their wellbeing, integrate into British Society and undertake charity work. The organisation had invested approximately £27k to refurbish Unit 1 (Card Room) of the Barham Park buildings complex. Activities provided included English classes, dancing and exercises classes. At the weekend the unit was hired out to a Church Group for Sunday Prayers and a Hindu group. The venue was also hired out for small parties, allowing the organisation to cover the overhead costs of maintaining the unit. Other communities were invited to participate in these activities to help support community cohesion.

The Chair thanked the presenters and acknowledged a written summary of activities had been provided by the Barham Park Veterans Club prior to the meeting and had been circulated to members of the Trust for their information.

7. Annual Report 2018-2019

Olufunke Adediran (Head of Finance) presented the Annual Report and Annual Accounts for 2018-2019 to the committee, noting that during 2018/19 the Trust incurred expenditure of £76,845 on maintenance of the building complex and the park, and generated £101,334 receipts from rental income and interest earned, which has led to the cash balance of the Trust increasing by £24,489 to £488,297. It was explained that out of this total sum of £488,297, the sum of £416,364 consists of restricted funds and the sum of £71,933 consists of unrestricted funds. There was no expenditure from the Trust's restricted funds in the 2018/19 financial year up to 31 March 2019. General expenditure on the running and maintenance of the park and buildings decreased by £22,240 compared to 2017/18 and income increased by £1,417. The committee's attention was also drawn to the Independent Examiner's report, attached at Appendix C to the report which confirms that there were no issues regarding the accounts to be brought to the Committee's attention.

The committee subsequently RESOLVED:

- i) That the annual report (Appendix A) and the Barham Park Trust's accounts (Appendix B) for 2018/19 be approved;
- ii) That the Independent Examiner's Review of the Barham Park Trust's accounts for 2018/19 (Appendix C) be noted.

iii) That officers be authorised to update the Charity Commission with the annual report and the accounts for 2018/19 of the Barham Park Trust.

8. Approval to apply to Charity Commission for permission to incur expenditure

Arnold Meagher (Head of Litigation and Dispute Resolution) introduced a report seeking the Trust's approval to apply to the Charity Commission to increase an item of proposed expenditure on and for the benefit of Barham Park from the restricted funds of the Trust in relation to the events field drainage survey and design. Members were reminded that at its meeting on 14th January 2019, the Trust authorised officers to submit an application for permission to the Charity Commission to incur expenditure from the restricted funds of the Trust. The Charity Commission subsequently agreed to this request. The items of agreed expenditure were set out in the report. It was explained that the drainage design and works requires a topographic survey of ground levels to inform the drainage design, which together with quotes for the drainage design works and consent for drainage discharge, totalled about £10,795. This exceeded the earlier estimate and request of £5,000 for the survey and design. To enable the design stages to proceed, it is proposed that the ceiling be raised for the survey and design stages to £15,000 – therefore requiring approval for an additional £10,000 to be spent from the restricted funds of the Trust. The additional £10,000 is sought from the restricted funds of the Trust as part of the same overall project; and so that the changing balance of the unrestricted funds remains available for operational use during the financial year.

Leslie Williams (Project Officer) highlighted that the report also requested that authority be delegated to officers to co-ordinate and submit a planning permission application to Brent Council's Planning Committee for the renovation works for exterior and appearance of the Barham Park building. It was explained that RLB, a surveying consultancy had undertaken a windows schedule of all of the windows and external features of the Barham Park buildings and had provided estimates of the priorities and costs of the works. As the Barham Park buildings are Locally Listed, Planning Permission would be required for any works that may affect the external appearance of the building. The proposed Planning Application would be for the whole of the building and the works can then be undertaken either as one or in phases.

In the subsequent discussion, the committee questioned how ward members and stakeholders would be engaged regarding the proposals and was informed that they were kept abreast of the developments affecting the park and buildings complex. A query was subsequently raised regarding other sources of funding which could be applied for. Leslie Williams reiterated that following market testing with regard to costings for the full schedule of renovation works, a decision could be taken about whether to proceed with the full programme or undertake work in phases. Chris Whyte (Operational Director of Environmental Services) acknowledged that it was incumbent on the Trust to explore all available opportunities external funding. Members acknowledged that the Trust's permission to undertake the required works would be sought at a later date once officers had identified appropriate solutions and options for the Trust.

RESOLVED:

- i) that the proposed additional expenditure of £10,000 (from £5,000 to £15,000) on the events field drainage survey and design to be paid from the Trust's restricted funds and permanent endowment arising from the sale proceeds of 776 and 778 Harrow Road, Wembley HA0 2HE, be approved and that officers be authorised to seek permission of the Charity Commission to spend the additional aforementioned sum from the Trust's restricted funds using the procedure set out in section 282 of the Charities Act 2011.
- ii) that officers be authorised to submit the necessary application for permission to the Charity Commission and delegate authority to the Operational Director Environmental Services to progress the application and deal with any issues, requirements and queries arising that are raised by the Charity Commission.
- iii) that officers be authorised to give public notice of this resolution if it is directed to do so by the Charity Commission pursuant to section 283 of the Charities Act 2011.
- iv) that officers be authorised to co-ordinate and submit a planning permission application to Brent Council's Planning Committee for the renovation works for exterior and appearance of the Barham Park building.
- v) that progress on other matters as set out in the report to the committee be noted.

9. General Update Report

Leslie Williams introduced the report updating the Trust on operational issues at Barham Park. With reference to the concerns raised earlier in the meeting by a representative of ACAVA, attention was drawn to the summary of recent security and anti-social behaviour issues at the park. Chris Whyte (Operational Director, Environmental Services) advised that officers had liaised with the Metropolitan Police's Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) to secure additional regular patrols of the area. It was also suggested that ACAVA may wish to engage directly with the SNT.

Speaking on the other matters detailed in the report, Leslie Williams highlighted a number of improvement works including the addition of meadow areas, projects to restore the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Garden and the pond within the Walled Garden, and urgent repairs to the Barham Park buildings.

Amin Soorma (Estate Surveyor) advised of the conclusion of the lettings process for the buildings complex, explaining that Unit 7 had been let to the Friends of Barham Library and their partner the Memory Lounge, who were working to establish a Dementia Centre and had applied for further Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Level funding to support the project. The council was currently negotiating with the organisations regarding required works that needed to be undertaken to the property and would provide a further update to the Trust at a future meeting.

Concluding the introduction to the report, Chris Whyte advised that the Charity Commission had written to the Trust regarding concerns raised with them about the management of the Trust, specifically relating to the historic letting of Unit 7 and the

number and frequency of Trust meetings. Arnold Meagher (Head of Litigation and Dispute Resolution) advised that in the absence of further information from the Charity Commission, there was no further action required by the Trust. Members were reminded that the Trust met at least once a year and ad-hoc as required. In response to a query from the Trust, Arnold Meagher confirmed that the Charity Commission had confirmed that there were no further plans to write to the Trust regarding these matters.

RESOLVED:

- i) that the issues detailed in the report be noted
- ii) that the proposal to provide a replacement Oak tree for the one felled towards the west of Barham Park be approved.

10. **Any other urgent business**

The Trust acknowledged the wish of the Sudbury and Wembley Central Ward Councillors to be formally recognised as champions of Barham Park.

The meeting was declared closed at 6.49 pm

COUNCILLOR MARGARET MCLENNAN
Chair