



MINUTES OF THE BARHAM PARK TRUST COMMITTEE **Held on Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 9.30 am**

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Tatler (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Knight and Krupa Sheth

Also Present: Councillors

1. **Apologies for Absence and clarification of alternate members**

None received.

2. **Declarations of Interests**

No interests were declared at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 26 September 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

4. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None.

5. **Barham Park Trust Accounts 22/23 - Outputs from a high-level review commissioned by the Chief Executive of Brent Council**

Kim Wright, Chief Executive, was invited to introduce the report which provided a summary of a high-level consultancy based review relating to concerns and issues that had been raised in relation to the Barham Park Trust Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023.

In considering the report, the Trust Committee noted that the consultancy based review had been established to meet the following objectives (a) To independently and objectively review concerns raised by Councillor Lorber in respect of the accuracy of the Barham Park Trust accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023, to determine whether any errors or misstatements had been presented within the accounts; and (b) To review the responses provided by officers in respect of the concerns raised by Councillor Lorber regarding the accounts, to determine whether these provided accurate and sufficient information/detail.

The scope of the review established had been detailed within section 3.6 of the report, with the Trust Committee specifically advised that it had not been undertaken with the intention of providing a full audit or opinion on the Trust accounts and the concerns raised being considered from a high-level accountancy perspective in order to clarify any operational issues. As a result, the Chief

Executive confirmed her satisfaction that the objectives and scope for the review undertaken had been met and that as an outcome no material issues relating to the accuracy of the accounts had been identified. The review had, however, identified areas where it was felt the accounts (moving forward) could be presented in a more clear and transparent way. In addition, the review had identified some areas for focus in terms of operational practices regarding the running of the Trust, which had been outlined in section 3.9 of the report. Members were advised that the actions identified as a result (whilst not impacting on the accuracy of the accounts) would also be implemented as a means of addressing management of the Council's ongoing relationship with the Trust.

In terms of stakeholder engagement on the high-level review, clarification was provided that whilst Councillor Lorber, as both a ward councillor and Trustee of the Friends of Barham Library, had raised the initial concerns regarding accuracy of the accounts he had not been involved in the detailed review process or preparation of the report presented to the Trust as a result.

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Chair of the Trust) thanked Kim Wright for having commissioned and undertaken the high-level review with the Trust members welcoming the outcome along with the wider actions identified in relation to the operational arrangements for the management and running of the Trust, including the link between rent reviews and management of assets within the property portfolio including the ongoing work on the feasibility study commissioned in relation to the Barham Park Strategic Property review.

Having considered the report, the Trust Committee **RESOLVED** to note and endorse the outcome of the high-level review commissioned by the Chief Executive in relation to the Barham Park Trust Accounts 2022-23.

6. **Reference back of Call-In: Barham Park Trust Committee decision on Barham Park Trust Annual Report & Accounts 2022 - 23**

Councillor Muhammed Butt then moved on to present a report which detailed the outcome of a call-in considered by the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on Thursday 26 October 2023 relating to the decision taken by the Barham Park Trust Committee on Tuesday 26 September 2023 to approve the Annual Report and Barham Park Trust Accounts for 2022 – 23.

The Trust Committee noted that the Vice-Chair had been in attendance at the call-in meeting to respond to the issues raised. Whilst the Scrutiny Committee had agreed to refer the original decision to approve the accounts back to the Trust Committee for reconsideration, it was pointed out this had been on the basis of enabling the Trust to consider the outcome of the high-level consultancy based review commissioned by the Chief Executive in relation to the accounts rather than concerns in relation to the work undertaken on their preparation or rationale for use of the revised template.

In recognising the thorough nature of the review undertaken by the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in considering the call-in along with reasons for the reference back and outcome of the high-level consultancy based review which had been commissioned in relation to the accounts the Trust Committee **RESOLVED** that having considered the reference back of the called-in decision on

Barham Park Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2022 – 23 by the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, to confirm their original decision to approve the Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23 enabling the decision to take immediate effect.

7. Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

8. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

It was noted that further meetings of the Trust Committee would be arranged as required during the year.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.41 am

COUNCILLOR MARGARET MCLENNAN
Chair