

**Minutes of the Meeting of the NONSUCH PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE held on 19 October 2015**

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**PRESENT -**

Councillor Mike Teasdale (Chairman); Councillors Alexander Clarke, Richard Broadbent, Mary Burstow and David Hicks

Absent: Councillor Graham Dudley

In Attendance: Paul Airey (Nonsuch VOLES), Gerald Smith (Friends of Nonsuch) and Frances Wright (Nonsuch Watch)

Officers present: Frances Rutter (Clerk), Chris Stone (Property & Estate Manager, EEBC), Tony Foxwell (Senior Surveyor, EEBC), Michael Smith (Chief Accountant, EEBC), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager, EEBC), Peter Steel (Senior Gardner, EEBC), Dominic Aslangul (Parks Manager, LBS) and Eddie Nowak (Democratic Services Officer, EEBC)

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**12 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The Committee received a representation from a member of the public.

Rob Pinckbeck of Parkrun advised that 2015 commemorated the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Parkrun event which has been successful with good participation numbers. A pilot event would be held on Sunday 29 October for Junior Park Run and it was hoped to start regular events starting Sunday 6 December. He also advised that volunteers were keen to help out with the Meadow Project. The public now had access to the defibrillator which had been installed with the assistance of the London Ambulance Service and training for the user groups had been undertaken.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr Pinchbeck for the update and for arranging for the installation of a defibrillator.

**13 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee held on 20 April and 22 June 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Arising therefrom, and with reference to paragraph 2 of the Minutes of meeting dated 22 June 2015, it was noted that although there was a bus stop near the park main gate, drivers did not always announce that this was the stop for the park. The Chairman had written to the bus company regarding this and was awaiting a reply. It was also noted that Sam Whitehead, Streetcare Manager was consulting the Adult Social Care Team regarding providing advice and assistance for persons with Alzheimer disorder visiting the park.

#### **14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made on items on the agenda.

#### **15 MID-YEAR BUDGET MONITORING**

The Committee received a report on the mid-year financial position for 2015/16 and the forecast budget position for 2016/17 and provided an update of the Risk Register. The monitoring statement set out income and expenditure at 5 months (1 April 2015 to 30 August 2015) compared to the 2015/16 budget. Certain costs had been recharged at the year end, however the statement provided a forecast of the year end position taking this into account. It was noted that the external auditors had now advised that there were no major recommendations arising from the auditing of the 2014/15 accounts and that the letter received from the external auditors would be circulated to the Members of the Committee in due course. It was noted that the latest forecast suggested that net expenditure for the year would be less than budget by £12,000. This was principally due to the works on the Tractor Shed being £15,000 less than originally expected.

The Property Officer had identified some urgent repairs that were required to be undertaken in this financial year, and it was requested that £12,000 surplus available from the Tractor shed be used to fund these repairs.

Members discussed the Risk Register and noted that the main risks as previously identified were:

- Budget shortfall due to rent income loss/risk to working balance.
- Funding needed for major repairs and maintenance.
- Vacant properties/loss of rent.
- Lack of resource to fund Management Plan.

A new risk recognising the need to maintain the infrastructure had also been incorporated within the risk register. Members further noted progress against managing the risks in light of the current financial constraints.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) That the mid-year financial position be noted.
- (2) That £12,000 originally set aside for the repairs to the Tractor Shed are reallocated to finance other repairs.
- (3) That comments on the preparation of the budget for 2016/17 be noted.
- (4) That the risk register as at October 2015 be approved.

## 16 MAINTENANCE PLAN UPDATE

The Committee received and noted a report that provided an update on priority works addressed at the last meeting and noted that the surplus of £12,000 originally set aside for repairs to the Tractor Shed would be used to finance other repairs on a priority basis. The Committee discussed the condition of one of the external building walls that had recently been fenced off for health and safety reasons, and although necessary works to the Mansion House would take priority, it was agreed to include reference to the repair to the wall in the risk register.

## 17 PROGRESS REPORT - OCTOBER 2015

The Committee received and noted a report that set out an update on the following issues:

- Farmer Memorial – The reinstatement project had been submitted to the Planning Authority and was approved on 30 September 2015. Clearance work had been undertaken by volunteers with the holly tree being lowered. The gates had been painted black and gold which complimented the entrance and additional posts had been installed.
- Asset Management Working Party – At the last meeting of the Working Party, it was agreed that a better understanding of the rental potential for the upper floor of the Mansion House should be sought from the appropriate letting agents, before any further decisions were made with regard to Heritage Lottery Funding and options were currently being considered.
- Walnut Grove – A quote in the sum of £3,000 had now been received and an application for a grant would be submitted to the Surrey County Council representative for Epsom & Ewell. It was noted that Nonsuch VOLES had offered to plant the trees.
- Green Flag – Nonsuch Park had once again been awarded Green Flag status for the fourth consecutive year and this year the park won the

award based on a “mystery shop” by Green Flag judges. The flag and feedback were awaited.

- Update from the Voluntary Groups – The Voluntary Groups provided an update on recent activities. In recognition of the excellent work carried out by the volunteers, the Committee asked that representatives of the Groups be invited to an appropriate civic event.

## **18 STORAGE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE FOR NONSUCH VOLES**

The Committee received a report concerning a request for permission for the storage of an electric vehicle for use in the park by the Nonsuch VOLES. It was noted that a formal licence between Nonsuch VOLES and the Joint Management Committee would be required to be put in place to protect all parties should the request be approved.

The Committee approved the request for the storage of an electric vehicle belonging to Nonsuch VOLES.

## **19 EVENTS IN THE PARK**

The Committee received a report that set out a number of events that had previously been approved, and a new application for permission to host the Nonsuch Park leg of the annual Marsden March on 13 March 2016.

With regard to this year’s Awareness Day, the Committee noted with interest that the event had ran smoothly with approximately 1000 attending including the Mayor and Mayoress of Epsom, stopping to visit the wide variety of activities the park had to offer. It was noted that at the event, the Chairman proudly presented a giant canvas replica of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Joris Hoefnagel watercolour of Nonsuch Palace that went on sale at Christie’s auction house in 2010. Hoefnagel executed the work in situ at Nonsuch and used it to create a later, less detailed depiction that was used for the engraving. This later version was now in the British Museum whilst the canvas replica was on loan to the Joint Management Committee courtesy of the owner, Dr Tim Carter, Lord of the Manor of Nonsuch. The Chairman advised that he was investigating appropriate locations for the replica to go on public display and that he identified the Town Hall atrium as a possible location. The Chairman hoped to promote an opening event for its viewing.

The Committee noted the success of Nonsuch Awareness Day 2015 and upcoming events, and approved the annual Marsden March event.

## **20 COMMERCIAL DOG WALKING**

The Committee received and considered a report that detailed the issue of commercial dog walking in Nonsuch Park.

Encouraging responsible dog walking had been high on the Joint Management Agenda for a number of years. Safe and courteous cycling and responsible dog walking were, and still are, key drivers for the Park's annual Awareness Day. In the 2014 Nonsuch Park Survey, 65% of respondents expressed concerns about multiple dog walking, 57% were concerned with dog fouling whilst responsible dog control was the third most popular choice when respondents were asked what would make them use the park more often or stay for longer. Direct complaints about dog walking issues in the park were sporadic and only five complaints had been received via Epsom & Ewell's Contact Centre since August 2014. None of these complaints related to Commercial Dog walking. At recent meetings, members of the Joint Management Committee had particularly requested information on initiatives to help control commercial/multiple dog walking activity in the park.

The report advised that Councils in all parts of the United Kingdom were now faced with difficult decisions regarding the best way to tackle the impact of increasing dog ownership. Based on extensive research into this issue, two enforcement initiatives had been adopted for similar open spaces around the country – Option 1 – Public Space Protection Orders and Option 2 – Commercial Dog Walking Licences. In view of the options available and the current resource level, it was recommended that a non-enforcement and positive approach be taken to tackle commercial dog walking in Nonsuch Park. Members discussed the issue and in light of the current resource level, were of the view that a non-enforcement approach was preferable at this time, although an enforcement approach should not be dismissed for the future. Members asked that the officers investigate the setting up of a Register of Commercial Dog Walkers to assist with the management of a non-enforcement approach.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) That a non-enforcement and positive engagement approach be taken to tackle commercial dog walking in Nonsuch Park.
- (2) That commercial dog walking activity be continually monitored and reviewed as necessary to respond to any changes in the current situation.
- (3) That licensing and/or Public Space Protection Orders to control commercial dog walking as a Borough wide policy be discussed with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Chairman of the Leisure Committee and that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Management Committee.

**21 FUTURE REPORTS/INFORMATION FOR THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - OCTOBER 2015**

The Committee received and noted a report that set out issues which had previously been raised with the Joint Management Committee and which there was an intention to report to future meetings namely Commercial Dog Walking, Review of Byelaws, Pond Maintenance, Haymaking and Habitat Management

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Plan - Progress. It was noted that the Habitat Management Plan would be circulated to the Members of the Committee.

**22 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Committee resolved to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)" and "information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings" as defined in paragraphs 3 and 10 of Part 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and pursuant to paragraph 10 of the said Schedule 12A the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

**23 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The Confidential Minutes of the Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee held on 20 April and 22 June 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**24 PROGRESS REPORT ON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS - OCTOBER 2015**

The Committee received confidential updates (considered to be exempt from publication at this time) on the current position regarding various property matters. The update is set out in a separate minute (considered exempt from publication).

*The meeting began at 10.00am ended at 12.30pm*

COUNCILLOR MIKE TEASDALE  
(CHAIRMAN)