



Forum Partnership Meeting No. 13

Minutes of the meeting

Thursday 18th October 2018 – 10am – High Elms Country Park -

Larry Herbert (LH)

John Ince (JI)

James Hilsden (JH)

Keith Rodwell (KR)

Patrick Phillips (PP)

John Pemberton (JP)

Nicola Musto (NM)

Frank Kleinhans(FK)

Andy Hodgson (AH)

Kari Sylvester (KS)

Vivien Smith (VS)

Helen Ashton (notes)

MINUTES

1 Welcome & introductions

2 Apologies for absence – John Cutting. (JH & NM due at 11am)

3 Minutes of last meeting – 21st June 2018 – agreed and will be published on the Forum website.

Matters arising

- i. Commemorative bench policy template – AH is speaking to JH as this needs to be agreed with LBB, AH to meet with JH to discuss [Carried forward] **AH/JH**
- ii. Direction for volunteer task force – to be discussed at next stakeholder meeting in February [Carried forward] **LH**
- iii. Dog waste bag dispensers – FK has investigated, & idverde apologise that some Community Managers didn't carry out a full consultation. Bags & an allen key are needed for Keston, JP will provide these.

4 idverde update

- i. Business continues as usual, idverde have completed the tender submission.
- ii. There are some staff changes, Martin Walker has left the business, a new contract manager has been recruited and starts on 12th November, so will be introduced at the next meeting. idverde have a new Supervisor, Paul Stubberfield, at Beaverwood Depot. Angela Wood goes on maternity leave on 23rd November, idverde are recruiting for a cover position. An updated contact list will be sent out.

- iii. The Countryside team have started the winter works involving habitat management. Woodland works are due to start in January, groups at the sites where this is taking place will be notified. The biomass project is ongoing, there have been some logistical challenges with access. Some standing timber has been sold from High Elms, and idverde are looking at access for Padmall Wood. Groups will be consulted as it progresses.
- iv. AH is now spending more time at Beaverwood Depot, the area has recovered from the dip in service. AH is still looking after projects, infrastructure & playgrounds, Tom Annand is working on a project for Kings Meadow. The events season is coming to an end for the year with Apple Day and the Fireworks events.
- v. PP is working on management plans for all sites, which are required as part of the new contract. The countryside sites already have management plans, and JP is working on the rural sites. VS asked if these will be shared by the Community Managers, PP advised that once basic plans are completed they will be given to the Community Managers and Friends Groups to develop further and review going forward.
- vi. KS asked about staffing at Palace Park, AH advised the site is now being looked after by Terry Hollidge's team, rather than one individual.
- vii. Grounds Maintenance – winter bedding is being planted & grass is still being cut. Hedges were cut in August, rural grass cutting has been completed & the last rural hedge cut is due in Nov/Dec.
- viii. LH asked about the TFL verges, FK advised that Councillor Huntington-Thresher is talking to TFL.

5 LBB Update

- i. JH – the tender evaluations & negotiation meetings have been completed, a report will go out at the end of November with details of the bidders and who is successful. Key stakeholders will be informed, including the Friends Groups.
- ii. Depot changes will happen in the new contract, LBB will make sure suitable facilities remain. Depots will be consolidated but LBB can't say where at the moment as this is still being decided with consideration of feedback received. LH said concerns have been raised that the consultation only looked at the cost, and there is confusion over the names of some sites. The maintenance cost of High Elms was listed as £415,000, LH asked for a breakdown of this. JH will look into this and respond to LH. **JH**
- iii. LH asked about regulation of unlicensed dog walkers & fitness trainers who have no insurance and cause damage to SSSIs. FK advised that they should have a permit from idverde, but this is difficult to enforce. Information about specific examples is passed on to enforcement. There should be no media in parks without permission from LBB. Byelaws regarding dogs say that they should not disturb other park users, and there is further information in the dangerous dogs act. NM advised that dog walkers should not have more than 4 dogs at a time. LH asked if notices can be put up in parks regarding dogs in ponds. JH advised dogs are not allowed in ornamental ponds, but can swim in natural ponds if they do not disturb water fowl JH will send over information & look at signage. **JH**

- iv. VS said that Friends of Scadbury have asked about road signage to advertise that the park is there, JH will take details & discuss with Highways. JH
- v. LH asked about reinstatement of derelict drinking fountains, e.g. at Keston. The Friends could consider funding the repairs, but not the water. JH will look into this and NM has info that will be shared. JH/NM

6 Forum Constitution

- i. The constitution was approved at the meeting in September and the document is on the Friends Forum website. The constitution includes items discussed in previous meetings.
- ii. The Forum have received money from Churchill Theatre which is reflected in the accounts.

7 Training needs

- i. LH has organised first aid training for the 3rd November at BEECHE.
- ii. Friends of Cator Park & Alexandra Rec have asked about a catering certification course, which could be funded by the Friends Forum. VS is looking into the courses available.
- iii. The Friends Forum are looking at running an IT course next year.
- iv. JP has reviewed the training requests provided by the Friends Forum and is looking at what *idverde* are able to deliver that will benefit the parks and they have the expertise to deliver. Fundraising and health and safety/risk assessment training will be provided. Practical survey courses would need to be carried out earlier in the year, *idverde* can look at combining 2 years of courses and providing more next year during the relevant seasons. Dead hedge laying can be done in Jan/Feb. Further clarification is needed on biodiversity courses, e.g. reptile surveying can be done, but flora/butterflies would require a lot of time to get to a competent level. VS advised that groups are looking for basic education on flora/fauna/trees identification, e.g. what they are most likely to see in the parks in order to encourage interest and increase general enthusiasm. KR suggested trialling a course to see how many people are interested.
- v. **Actions – Forum to refine the training requirements, JP will pencil in agreed courses, then we can look at the schedule for next year.**

8 Friends Forum AGM – 21st November 2018

- i. A short formal meeting is being planned from 6.30 – 8pm in the council chamber, followed by drinks and networking. *idverde* will have a 10 minute slot, and JH/LBB will be invited to speak.
- ii. Election of the committee will take place, all current volunteers plan to stand again and others will be asked if they want to join. The current committee has 7 members but there is no limit on the size.

9 Any Other Business

- i. There have been comments from South Hill Wood and Kingswood Glen about reduced activity from *idverde* and confusing communication, being told different things by different people. FK will pick this up with the Community Managers and make sure the chain of command is clear. There are issues with a new path at South Hill Wood, and area of grass near the electric substation not being cut, & a knee rail in need of repair. These can be reported on Fix My Street. FK will speak to Community Managers about escalation of issues they are unsure of, issues outside of *idverde*'s remit should be passed on to LBB. **FK**
- ii. KR advised that Winsford Gardens has been nominated by The Conservation Volunteers for the Queens Award, they are expecting a site visit. There are 38 nominations in London.

10 Date of Next Meeting

- i. 17th January, 10am, High Elms.