

## **Bromley Friends Forum**

Minutes of the Members' Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
At Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley 7pm - 9pm

### **Attendance:**

#### **Forum Committee:**

*Please refer to secretary*

#### **Friends Group Representatives:**

*Please refer to secretary*

#### **Guests:**

*Please refer to secretary*

#### **Apologies:**

*Please refer to secretary*

### **1. Chairman's Welcome**

LH opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. In particular our guests from LBB and idverde were welcomed. Members introduced themselves and their Friends Group association.

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> May were accepted with the following alterations:

Section 4.3 covered information from both Chislehurst Commons and Chislehurst Rec and needs to be sub-divided into two parts.

Section 4.11 Should refer to Willett Recreation Ground not Willett Green.

The minutes would be corrected and full names removed prior to publication on the Forum website.

Matters Arising:

**2 & 3.2. Quarterly Stats:** LH had discussed members' concerns with *idverde* and as a consequence LBB had drafted a letter explaining the background to the requests for data. This would be sent to Friends in the next day or so. Further discussion ensued within the meeting with PP taking the lead and expanding further on the detail. BS suggested a vote be taken as to who was in favour of annual stats collection versus a quarterly collection. An indicative vote showed a 65-35 split in favour of annual collections. LH recommended that the quarterly collection for April-June proceeds and a review of the outcome taken in Sept. Data input would be required by 9<sup>th</sup> August.

**2 Preferred contractor list:** No progress to date. Forum awaiting information from members. Action continues. **Action: Forum/members**

**3.1 Apologies to DR:** LH had written to DR expressing the meetings view. However, after careful consideration DR had decided to resign from his position on the Forum Committee.

**3.1 Invite to *idverde*:** LH asked *idverde* management to tonight's meeting and after a change of circumstance they had agreed.

**3.4 Event Fees:** AH explained the reasons behind the event fees and that the event in question involved a firework display and hence came at a premium price. Changes in statutory requirements had meant a fire inspector had to oversee the event proposals and this incurred a cost of £500 + VAT.

**4.4 Wire Policy:** LH had discussed this with *idverde* and it was agreed there was no set policy as such. Some sites would continue to use wire on boardwalks/bridges etc. whilst others may not. The risks in either case would need to be assessed. Members requested that much stronger wire be used as it was felt to be a false economy if lower quality netting was used which had to be changed on a regular basis.

**4.12 Street Cleaning Grant:** LH understood that the £57k grant ear-marked for Bromley had not yet been claimed as LBB were yet to decide what their plans were. WH commented that this was the first he had heard of this and would look into it further. **Action: LBB**

**5.1 Animal Control Policy:** This came under the responsibility of the Council under environmental health, NS was the contact at LBB. JR agreed to follow this up and to better understand what measures were taken in order to safeguard biodiversity. **Action: JR**

MB referred to section 3.5 and raised concern that access to the small grant policy/forms on the Forum website was not working correctly. LH agreed to check this out. **Action: LH**

PP referred to section 4.1 regarding management plans. He stated that the new contract required that 160 management plans (plus the 6 Green Flag site plans) be in place for 1<sup>st</sup> April. To achieve this he proposed a two phase strategy. Phase one would produce a standard template plan with multiple choice sections and completed by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. Phase two would customise each plan and take into account Friends input and their specific requirements. This would aim to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The process of consultation with Friends has started and would be ramped up over the coming weeks.

### 3. LBB Environment & Community Services

#### 3.1. Policy Development & Scrutiny (PDS) Committee

WH explained his role as chair of the above committee and how his interaction with the portfolio holder for the environment worked. Discussion amongst members followed.

### **3.2. Carbon Neutrality**

WH referred to the Council's statement of intent to make those areas under its control be carbon neutral by 2029. It was felt that the large amount of green space within the borough would help this goal to be achievable and that potentially more tree planting etc. would be undertaken. Plans for the Civic Centre buildings would be looked at, along with staffing levels, vehicle fleets, street lighting, street verges and so on. It is hoped that residents would look at their own carbon footprint and make changes to their energy use with much more emphasis on renewables.

## **4. Forum News**

### **4.1. idverde update**

LH invited PP and AH to give members an update on their work and to answer questions about recent performance. AH outlined some of the recent problems with both thefts of equipment and disciplinary procedures against some members of staff. Also teething problems with the new technology had not helped meet the expected standards of delivery. It is hoped these issues have now been addressed and that going forward performance will be improved and back to that which is expected.

PP went on to say that the working conditions of the contract that started on 1<sup>st</sup> April is completely different from that which ran to 31<sup>st</sup> March and hence new policies and procedures were needed to complete its implementation. This had led to some failures but again it is hoped these have now been corrected.

Staffing losses had primarily occurred in the mower team, where very experienced staff had had to be let go. It had not been easy to replace these and the loss of knowledge of the borough had had an impact on performance.

### **4.2. Training update**

LH reported that a number of very successful training courses had taken place recently and these included topics on invasive non-native species (INNS), butterfly identification and emergency first aid.

LH planned to organise the next first aid course for a Saturday and would also look at developing some form of IT course.

Members expressed some concern that too many courses were taking place at BEECHE, which is not the easiest of locations to get to. LH offered to look at this for the future and try to even out the locations across the borough. For those courses led by idverde staff it is more efficient on their time if they are held at their normal place of work.

### **4.3. Biodiversity Report**

JJ reported to the meeting a quick overview of biodiversity matters that need to be considered in the next few weeks. She referred to the information on various posters to help members collect information of sightings of different species across the borough. More detailed information accompanies these minutes.

The partnership meets every three months to discuss a variety of pertinent topics. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The partnership can be contacted on [bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com](mailto:bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com).

#### **4.4. Forum Meetings**

LH reported a number dates of events coming up in the next month or so. On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July *idverde* are holding a showcase event in Queens Garden to advertise their presence within Bromley to the general public. The Friends Forum will be piggy-backing onto this event and aiming to attract new volunteers to the Friends cause. The event will run from 11.30am to 2.30pm, all welcome.

On Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July there will be a guided walk of Ruxley Lakes. The meeting place is the Bull Inn on the corner of Main Road/Sandy Lane from 11am onwards. The walk will start at 11.30am for around 2 hours duration.

#### **5. Friends Group Issues**

Item not discussed.

#### **6. AOB**

- 6.1.** JR reported that the fountains in Church House Gardens were not working and asked what was needed to address this. *idverde* reported that this issue came under the responsibility of AMEY but if JR reports this to CL she will help escalate a solution.
- 6.2.** AF re-iterated the need for emergency contact numbers to be prominently displayed on various notice boards. This followed an incident where a member of the public was locked in overnight in the Willett Rec toilets. It was noted that Friends of Chislehurst Rec in collaboration with others had produced a poster and it was recommended that sign-off of its content was added to the agenda for the next meeting **Action: Forum**
- 6.3.** VS reported concern about the road sign advertising the entrance to Scadbury Park. It was installed, then it was dented, then it disappeared completely. *idverde* offered to look into this.
- 6.4.** KR informed the meeting that Beckenham Place Park is have an opening day on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July following a re-launch of its facilities. The golf course has been transformed into one of London's largest parks with new gardens, a swimming lake and wildflower meadows.

#### **7. Date of Next Meeting**

The next Forum Members' Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at the Civic Centre, starting at 7pm.