



Forum Partnership Meeting No. 14

Minutes of the meeting

17th January 2019 – 10am – High Elms Country Park

Larry Herbert (LH)
John Cutting (JC)
John Ince (JI)
Viv Smith (VS)
Keith Rodwell (KR)

Kari Silvester (KS)
Richard Gibbons (RG)
Frank Kleinhans (FK)
Patrick Phillips (PP)
Andy Hodgson (AH)

Amy Rogers (AR)
John Bosley (JB)
James Hilsden (JH)
Helen Ashton (Minutes)

MINUTES

- 1 Welcome & introductions**
- 2 Apologies for absence** – John Pemberton, Sandy Goddard, Jack Thompson, Cllr Huntington-Thresher
- 3 Minutes of last meeting** – 18th October 2018 – agreed and will be published on the Forum website.

Matters arising

- i. Commemorative bench policy template – AH/JH will meet in the next few weeks to review. JB advised this should be a procedure as policy is set by members and would have to go to committee. AH advised that input from Friends will be considered.
[Carried forward] AH/JH
- ii. Direction for volunteer task force – to be discussed at next stakeholder meeting in February. [Carried forward] LH
- iii. High Elms maintenance cost – JB advised this came from the property strategy review which is part of a wider commissioning programme. The figure is not concrete & should not be a concern, the review was looking at potential risk from all LBB assets going forward. KS asked about Church House Gardens and the Civic Centre, JB advised that info he has may be commercially sensitive.
- iv. Use of parks by unlicensed dog walkers and fitness trainers – JH advised that specific examples are needed as this is hard to enforce. Friends should make their Community Managers aware of issues which will be reported to Ward Security. KS said that Ward Security aren't in the parks until later in the mornings, problems with dogs often happen earlier in the day.
- v. Scadbury signage – JH advised that signage has been looked at for 2 locations, we are now waiting for costs.
- vi. Drinking fountains – JH is looking into this with Amey. [Carried forward] JH
- vii. South Hill Wood – AH advised that issues with the paths have been passed on to Amey, and the knee rail is being worked on. AH will clear up confusion over the area near the substation with the group.
- viii. Winsford Gardens has been visited for the Queens Award, we won't hear any more until May.

4 LBB update

- i. JB confirmed that *idverde* have been successful with the contract tender and made a good submission in terms of quality and price. *idverde* have built a good relationship with stakeholders. Gristwood & Toms were unsuccessful with the arboriculture contract for trees in local authority areas, this will now be done by Glendale. Waste/Recycling will stay with Veolia, who will also take on street cleansing. The service for all will be like for like, efficiency savings have already been made.
- ii. LH asked about changes to the specification, JB advised the specification is less prescriptive but the outcome is the same, sites will be maintained to the same quality standard. The specification allows *idverde* to make the best use of resources. RG asked if the specification will be available to the public, JB advised there are commercial sensitivities. This will be looked at with LBB legal and a redacted version will be published explaining how the service is governed by LBB.
- iii. JH advised that Cllr Huntington-Thresher is talking to TfL about the verges they maintain. Neighbourhood managers have been given contingency plans for this year.
- iv. JH/JP/AH are looking at introducing some wild flower areas in parks to promote biodiversity, and are looking at planting schemes around the borough.
- v. Tarmac repairs are being carried out in priority areas in parks (long sections not just potholes), and work has started on the unmade road at Croydon Road Rec.
- vi. RG asked how plants are reflecting local parks characteristics, e.g. grade II listed areas. AH advised that work at Priory Gardens is focussing on the entrance, not in the listed area. Any work in the listed area would be like for like.

5 *idverde* update

- i. FK advised that Angela Wood is now on maternity leave, and Edward Burgin has joined us from the Forestry Commission to cover while Angela is on leave. Jack Thompson is the new manager for Beckenham and Penge. Nick Barclay left in December, Jack Thompson and AH are managing events for the time being. Benn Louis left in November *idverde* are recruiting for a new fundraising apprentice. FK will send LH a copy of the current structure. FK
- ii. Woodland works are starting, groups have been notified of works in their parks. Habitat work was carried out in December, the pond at Brook Lane was relined and clearance work carried out at Darrick Wood. Woodland works have been carried out at Cheyne Wood and Langley Nature Reserve.
- iii. RG asked if modifications can be made to Fix My Street, the reports can be quite vague, JB advised this is a council system which *idverde* input into, improvements have been made but functions are not specific to Bromley so can't be easily changed, this would be something for My Society to look at. Codes are used for many things so can't be too specific, and putting bespoke messages on all enquiries would have resource implications, so a balance is needed. JB advised that LBB monitor the system, and it is not the goal to close enquiries early, customers should be kept informed either that work has been completed, or communicated to on what will be done. Appropriate action can take significant time in some cases.

- iv. Fundraising – the Chislehurst Pavilion has been launched, this was a £360k build including a community café.
- v. A second application has been made to HLF for the bandstand restoration at Croydon Road Rec. LBB have committed £85k to match £71k funding raised by the Friends. We should hear at the end of Feb
- vi. *idverde* are working with LBB procurement to tender for a conservation professional, who will help draw up a specification to tender for work needed at Scadbury moated manor.
- vii. A crowdfunding campaign has been launched for increased play provision at Kings Meadow.
- viii. Fundraising training was carried out in November, groups are reminded that proposal forms should be submitted to the *idverde* Fundraising team so they can be made aware of grant applications, as it can cause problems down the line if groups get funding without LBB/*idverde* knowledge and involvement.
- ix. VS said there is confusion over the fundraising figures/statistics being requested, groups don't understand why this is needed and what it is used for. JB advised that LBB require a quarterly report from *idverde* on all Friends activities. VS said that clarity is needed on what is needed and when. JH/AR will meet to discuss this in more detail in the next few weeks. JH/AR
- x. LH asked about depot closures, JB advised that the depot strategy was needed to accommodate different scenarios, now that LBB have decided the contract award they will look at how they will be accommodated. No changes are expected in April, no services will be stopped and nothing has been agreed yet. RG asked if Friends can input into the process, JB advised there are some decisions at strategic level which groups can't be consulted on, but there will be a consultation later when any outcomes are applied.

6 Forum Business

- i. The Forum would like to look at how they can work together with *idverde* on things like signage and bins, and asked if a list can be put together for them to pick from predefined options. JB advised this is part of the LBB Parks corporate image, different locations will need standards agreed. VS said it is not clear who is responsible for signs, some groups raise their own funds. Clarity is also needed on vandalism and if insurance applies. JB advised LBB will look at all assets, there are a lot of signs and definition is required on information boards/interpretation panels etc. KR said there have been applications from groups for signs. *idverde* will speak to JH on a case by case basis until a procedure is in place. RG asked if groups can do some of the work, e.g recording signs in parks. JB agreed in principle, but this will be looked at. JH/FK
- ii. LH asked about involvement in national campaigns such as the Great British Clean Up, and Bromley in Bloom. PP advised we have started with Green Flag applications and can look at resources for future campaigns. JB said that cost will need to be considered, there should be value in signing up for any accreditation if LBB systems already meet/exceed requirements.

7 Training

- i. LH was disappointed to report that several conflicting emails had been received regarding the hedge laying courses when Forum thought these had all been agreed. Indeed idverde were now asking for a coppicing course to be included on the same day as the dead hedge laying course when Forum had advised that this was too much for our volunteers to manage. idverde had hoped to use the coppiced material as input to the dead hedge laying course. As an alternative approach Forum suggested that the Friends of Scadbury could organise the coppicing as part of their work session. FK apologised for any miscommunication.
- ii. The dead hedge laying course was agreed for 29th January and the live hedge course on 5th February. There was concern raised about handing over private contact details due to GDPR constraints and as a consequence LH would handle all communication to attendees following receipt of content details from idverde.
- iii. It was noted that some of the training courses at BEECHE (with a £12-£25 fee) overlapped with courses the Forum had asked for and LH wondered why these weren't being offered to members free of charge. LH added Forum would be happy to fund active volunteers to help ensure the programme of adult BEECHE courses were viable
- iv. VS said that not much progress has been made on further courses planned for later in the year, and there have been requests for evening/weekend courses. FK advised that evenings/weekends won't be an option, as resources will be stretched with the countryside team not meeting their core obligations.
- v. FK will speak to JP and further clarification on future courses agreed. FK

8 Any other business

- i. RG asked about idverde input or comment on the LBB transport strategy, FK advised idverde are not part of this. RG said that the Go Parks London initiative could be picked up to help promote parks. JH will speak to the Leisure department and pass on information. JH
- ii. PP advised that management plans are being worked on, this will be a foundation to be built on by Friends Groups and Community Managers.
- iii. Penge parks enhancement project is looking to employ someone to lead volunteer groups on horticultural projects in the area, this would not replace maintenance by idverde but would be to make enhancements and improve skills.
- iv. Friends are concerned about the Churchill Quarter planning application, JH advised this is an LBB property issue.

9 Date of next meeting

- i. Tuesday 26th March