

WEST NORWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON

Wednesday 17 January 2018 at 5.45 pm

PRESENT: Jill Dudman, Dr Brent Elliott (Vice-Chair), Professor Robert Flanagan (Chair), Robert Holden, Councillor Fred Cowell (Substitute) and Jack Kelly

APOLOGIES: Councillor Max Deckers Dowber and Nicholas Long (Chair of the Scheme of Management Committee)

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and the following declarations of interest were raised:

- Robert Holden was about to become a grave owner over three graves; and,
- Jill Dudman was a cremation plot owner.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS WEST NORWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING (11.10.17)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 11 October 2017 be agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

3. MINUTES OF THE WEST NORWOOD CEMETERY SCHEME OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (01.11.17)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 01 November 2017 be noted.

4. HLF BID UPDATE

The Chair and Kevin Crook, Head of Neighbourhoods, introduced the report and responded to questions as below:

- Beth Cross had been appointed as the Activities Coordinator, with duties as in the agenda (page 9).
- Names and addresses of FoWNC volunteers for scrub clearance had been passed to Beth Cross with the permission of those concerned.
- The Activities Coordinator was also reviewing school engagement, based on Colin and Rose Fenn's previous work.
- Cavendish Bloor was the new Quantity Surveyor and was currently costing plans.
- The second progress report had been submitted in October and had HLF satisfaction, though it was stressed that the final Bid needed to be competitive and offer value for money.
- Paul Harrison, lead consultant, was now back in post.

- The Phase 1 consultation findings report had been published in December 2017.
- The Phase 2 engagement and consultation was underway, with the Chair giving Picturehouse personnel a cemetery tour. They had been pleased with developments and had ideas for an awareness programme and for cemetery-cinema coordination.
- There were four local groups in Norwood: Norwood Action Group (lobby group), Norwood Forum (overall), Norwood Feast (administration of Feast and community engagement – particularly for the forecourt grass area for use and wider engagement) and the Norwood Planning Assembly (strategic view, an important stakeholder for Work Package 1). Councillor Cowell noted that whilst all four covered different areas, they had overlapping memberships and points of interest, and it might be useful to funnel information through the Norwood Forum.
- The draft Conservation Plan was to be aired at next Tuesday's HLF Steering Group.
- Councillor Cowell attended a meeting with Robson Road residents on 14 January 2018 which had seen strong support for a pedestrian entrance, but issues remained around aesthetics, cost and security.
- The Chair noted other issues of a pedestrian entrance on Robson Road, including: removal of electrical equipment and facilities, cemetery operations, road crossing/safety and installing a hole in a listed wall. An entrance on Hubbard Road would serve a wider area, was further away from the main entrance, relatively simple to install and cost less. Both proposals might have issues around car parking, higher footfalls, increased anti-social behaviour and security issues.
- The CCTV required upgrading and would be sourced from revenue, with a potential pedestrian entrance also requiring CCTV to pass public consultation. Jacqueline Landy, Bereavement Services Manager, was reviewing the systems available.
- Work Package 2 was also to be presented to the Steering Group on Tuesday, with the agreement that the lodge would house Cemetery Management on the first and the Visitor Centre and some management functions on the ground floors. This would include a revised design, for out of hours access, to mirror railings on the Arch's north side and the railings on the south side of the lodge to have a symmetry and gated access, with installation of new railings with brick plinth at the back of the Arch, so that the view of the cemetery was enhanced whilst maintaining its historic design.
- Colin Fenn had emailed concerns about locating the visitor centre in the lodge as opposed to a new build on the original lodge. It was noted that the HLF and Lambeth Conservation had provided advice highlighting value for money and getting planning consent made a new build unfeasible, whilst space was now available on the lodge's first floor which was not available during preliminary bid.
- Colin Fenn had also complained that the Green Flag pole had been inserted in the forecourt. Government advice expressly omitted Green Flag poles from requiring planning consent, but Doug Black, Conservation & Urban Design, would provide further advice.
- The Greek Enclosure had seen good progress and engagement with the Greek community, but there were still issues around disabled access, water/electrical supplies, heating and a lack of space for exhibitions if the primary objective was to create a hireable venue. The Chair would ask the HLF Steering Group to obtain professional advice on these aspects.
- The monuments condition survey was largely complete and there was a budget for the cost of some renovations.
- The Project's social media platforms were now in place, agenda pack (page 11), and attendees were asked to feedback view to the Project Manager.
- Colin Fenn had emailed concerns that the proposed forecourt monoliths required conservation area consent, with the Chair noting that English Heritage and Doug Black, Conservation & Urban Design, had advised that it was a sensible location for installation.

- Another public consultation programme was currently underway.
- An automatic visitor counter had been installed and was being checked periodically.

5. CAPITAL PROJECT OFFICER UPDATE

The Chair and Kevin Crook, Head of Neighbourhoods, introduced the report and responded to questions:

- Faculty consent had been granted for the repairs of the Letts and Thomas memorials.
- The grave re-use pilot area and graves had been identified, and access cleared. The 12-month period to be allowed for objections to be registered meant that grave re-use needed to be advertised soon unless the project was to be further delayed.
- The road resurfacing outside the crematorium was completed before Christmas.
- The removal of some dangerous trees had been completed in August under the Capital Programme, though the tree growing in the Burges Memorial had been missed and needed removal.

6. OPERATIONS UPDATE

Kevin Crook, Head of Neighbourhoods, introduced the report, noting:

- Approval had been granted on the benches and base stones removal programme, starting 5 March 2018, with an annual removal target of 20 benches.
- Grass cutting had finished on 22 December 2017 and would recommence on 01 March 2018. It was noted that there had been no complaints received since the last meeting.
- The winter programme would focus on the ongoing scrub clearance, with the area to the east of the catacombs a priority area. There was also progress between Ship Path and Steep Hill, although there were more self-set trees than envisaged. Eco-plugs to kill the stumps had been purchased.
- There were still two vacancies in the Bereavement Services team which were to be advertised on the recruitment website.
- There had been many memorial trees sold by Lambeth in the consecrated areas without Faculty, in inappropriate locations and many without appropriate records. Officers had listed 127 such specimens, a few of which recorded 25-year tenures. It was proposed to put small metal plaques on bases of unrecorded trees for six months to advertise their potential removal and with instructions to contact the cemetery office if there was documentary evidence of tenure. A small number of mature trees were initially to be left subject to more substantial discussion. It was also noted that:
 - some trees had information next to them, but in most cases there was no record of addresses on the cemetery office's system; and,
 - trees should not have had cremation ashes scattered around them, but this was likely in some cases and was not possible to check.

The meeting ended at 6.43 pm

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 March 2018

Date of Despatch: Thursday 25 January 2018

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