

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING 6 JULY 2023

Members Present:

Paul Osborn (Chairman)	Ross Houston
James Asser	Rick Jewell
Ken Ayling	Heather Johnson
Susan Barker	Christopher Kennedy
Richard Bassett	Barry Lewis
Nicholas Bennett	Graham McAndrew
John Bevan	Gordon Nicholson
Janet Burgess	Clive Souter
Mike Garnett	Richard Thrake (Deputy for David Andrews)
David Gardner	Marshall Vance
Lesley Greensmyth	Terry Wheeler
Steven Heather	John Wyllie
Calvin Horner	Ben Radbone (Environment Agency)

Apologies Received From: David Andrews, Rezina Chowdhury

Officers Present:

Shaun Dawson	- Chief Executive
Beryl Foster	- Deputy Chief Executive
Dan Buck	- Corporate Director
Jon Carney	- Corporate Director
Stephen Bromberg	- Head of Communications
Simon Clark	- Head of IT
Sandra Bertschin	- Committee & Members' Services Manager
Lindsey Johnson	- Committee Services Officer

Also Present:

Kevin Bartle	- Section 151 Officer, London Borough of Enfield
Ruth Buckmaster	- Deputy, East Herts District Council
Jean Lea	- Deputy, Epping Forest District Council

Part I

40 To note the Membership of the Authority:

Constituent Council	Member
Essex County Council	Susan Barker Mike Garnett Clive Souter Marshall Vance
Hertfordshire County Council	David Andrews Lesley Greensmyth Calvin Horner Graham McAndrew

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Broxbourne Borough Council	Ken Ayling
East Hertfordshire District Council	Gordon Nicholson
	John Wyllie
Epping Forest District Council	Vacancy
	Richard Bassett
	Steven Heather
London Borough of Barnet	Ross Houston
London Borough of Bromley	Nicholas Bennett
London Borough of Camden	Heather Johnson
London Borough of Enfield	Rick Jewell
Royal Borough of Greenwich	David Gardner
London Borough of Hackney	Chris Kennedy
London Borough of Haringey	John Bevan
London Borough of Harrow	Paul Osborn
London Borough of Islington	Janet Burgess MBE
London Borough of Lambeth	Rezina Chowdhury
London Borough of Newham	James Asser
London Borough of Sutton	Barry Lewis
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	Vacancy
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Terry Wheeler
Co-opted Members:	
Environment Agency	Ben Radbone
Canal & River Trust	Mark Pearson

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

A Member suggested that the language of Chairman and Vice Chairman was old fashioned and suggested just saying 'Chair' instead. The Chairman responded stating that Section 9 of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966 states that terminology should be Chairman or Vice Chairman, therefore we are legally obligated to continue with that terminology.

Graham McAndrew took the Chair.

1 (a) APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE AUTHORITY

The Chairman proposed Paul Osborn, seconded by Gordon Nicholson.

(1) Paul Osborn was appointed Chairman of the Authority.

Paul Osborn retook the Chair.

1 (b) APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE AUTHORITY

Lesley Greensmyth proposed David Andrews, seconded by Graham McAndrew.

David Gardner proposed Heather Johnson, seconded by Ross Houston.

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Vote: 14 for David Andrews and 11 for Heather Johnson.

A Member commented that the Authority Membership is politically fairly evenly balanced, it would be good to have both a woman and a Member of the opposition party as Vice Chairman. The Labour Group had approached the Chairman prior to the meeting with this proposition and was disappointed not to have been accepted. The Chairman responded stating that perhaps we could look at the legislation later in the year to see if there could be the provision of two Vice Chairmen.

(1) David Andrews was appointed Chairman of the Authority.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 2022 be approved and signed.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING

No requests from the public to speak or present petitions had been received for this meeting.

4 PROPOSED COMMITTEES AND GROUPS FOR 2023/24 - Paper A/4337/23
APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMEN AND
UPDATE ON INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

An updated copy of the Membership of Committees was tabled following Group Meetings. Members noted that Barry Lewis's name had been misspelt on the Audit Committee and Paul Osborn had been omitted as Chairman of the Executive Committee.

The Chairman also informed Members that an additional Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Committee had been updated to agree a work programme annually.

(1) membership of Committees and Groups for 2023/24 as agreed at the meeting and set out at Addendum A to these minutes was approved;

(2) any appointments unfilled at this meeting will be agreed through Group Leaders and reported to the next Authority meeting or Executive Committee; and

(3) the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Committee be updated to agree a work programme annually was noted.

5 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES FOR 2023/24 Paper A/4338/23

The Chairman had been made aware that the Six Authorities Liaison Group had not met up for a long time and suggested that those Members appointed to that group may wish to look in to this.

(1) the proposals for appointments to outside bodies for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A to Paper A/4338/23 was approved.

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6 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023/24 Paper A/4339/23

- (1) the calendar of meetings for 2023/24 as shown in Appendix A to Paper A/4339/23 was approved.**

7 PROPOSED CAPITAL INVESTMENT AT LEE VALLEY VELOPARK Paper A/4340/23

The report was introduced by the Corporate Director who informed Members that the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) have proposed a height barrier of at least 140cm high around the cycling track to ensure the safety of spectators. In order to continue holding UCI accredited competitions we will need to have carried out this work by 2027.

- (1) the inclusion within the capital programme of £300,000 for the refurbishment of the track wall and safety barrier at Lee Valley Velopark; and**
- (2) to waive Financial Regulation 571 to allow the appointment of track specialist VeloTrack as the contractors for this work was approved.**

John Wyllie, Barry Lewis and Kevin Bartle left during the next item.

8 2023-26 BUSINESS PLAN PRESENTATION

The Chief Executive gave a presentation on the 2023-26 Business Plan, key points included:

- Looking back over the last three years we have achieved a lot despite many challenges, these have included:
 - The Wildlife Discovery Centre, which was built during the pandemic.
 - Open space investments - the Oxbow lake at the Lee Valley Ice Centre; Stanstead Innings; and Three Mills Green.
 - Facilities investments – the Lee Valley White Water Centre conference rooms; Lee Valley White Water Centre ramp; LED lighting; Lee Valley Riding Centre mechanical horse; Lee Valley Athletics Centre new indoor track; Lee Valley Athletics Centre Ron Pickering room refurbishment; and Lee Valley Athletics Centre upgraded fitness gym.
 - Campsite investments – six new peaky pods at Sewardstone and Dobbs Weir; Airbnb at the Gate Lodge at Sewardstone; refurbishment of Riverside Cottage; and five new holiday homes at Dobbs Weir.
 - Investment at Springfield Marina – new laundry equipment; and electrical upgrade.
 - Investment at Stanstead Marina – new access ramp; new pump out machine; resurfaced quayside; extension to the crane; and new path created to customer toilet and shower block.
 - Major events and open space events – Pro-League; Commonwealth Games and charity runs.
 - Volunteers.
 - Community programmes – Community Access Fund; Life Learning; initiatives at venues; the Muslim Women Cycling Group.
 - 2012 anniversary of the Olympic Games.

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- Environmental Policy recently adopted by the Authority – LED lighting; electric chargers for cars; solar panels; and electric vehicles.
- Holyfield Hall Farm – a move from dairy to beef cattle.
- Sale of Mile and Langley Nursery – total receipt of £7.5million; £2.5million will go into capital investment; £5million will be a contribution towards the Lee Valley Ice Centre.
- Leisure Services Contract – started in April 2022, a good first year with few issues.
- Draft Business Plan for 2023-26 will face economic pressures and political uncertainty. A copy of the Business Plan will be sent to Members in the next month to comment on and the Proposed Business Plan will go to Members in October to approve.
- Medium Term Financial Forecast – We like to have between £3-4million in reserves, they are currently just over £2million. This business plan will gradually build them back up. By October we will know what our energy costs will be and from 2025/26 significant projects will help to continue to grow our reserves.
- Values – we are community centred; commercially driven; environmentally focussed; innovative and learn from others; empowering of our staff; and collaborative working with others.
- Strategic objectives – increase visitors; work with communities to support and facilitate their use of the Park; ecology; environment; workforce; and financial resilience.
- Investment projects – there are a number of projects the Authority will be seeking to deliver, these include:
 - Spitalbrook – understand in more detail the condition of the land; masterplan with Broxbourne Borough Council and others; will need Authority investment; soft marketing has shown some leisure developer interest.
 - River Lee Country Park - £750k Section 106 money from the Cheshunt Lakeside development; £500k will be spent on visitor infrastructure and £250k on habitat improvements.
 - Lee Valley White Water Centre Area 4 – considering a leisure investment such as a hotel; area has been marketed and received 20 interested parties; a viewing of the site will take place 12-13 July with final bids in September and a conclusion by the end of autumn; this will enhance the site and provide a direct income via a lease.
 - Rammey Marsh – we have been working closely with London Borough of Enfield who are proposing in their Local Plan to re-designate the land from Green Belt to Employment; if this land is adopted the Authority will need to decide whether the land is required for Park purposes; we will be commissioning transport studies and site condition studies to assist London Borough of Enfield in providing information for their Local Plan.
 - The Wave – we met with them last month; they have a timeline for the planning process; we are already outside of the exclusivity agreement and by spring 2024 we can go out to market again if the Wave are not progressing.
 - Lea Bridge Road – Middlesex Filter Beds is closer to finding a solution for bringing water back to the site; we are still considering a youth hostel type development for the Waterworks site.
 - Investment for Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (QEOP) venues and open space – still looking at a hotel for Eton Manor. Need to look at the Authority's bigger 100 acre estate in the north of QEOP. We are looking at opening up Northwall Road

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as a cycle way and public open space. Also need to consider options for the Velopark as it is a one sport venue at present.

- East India Dock Basin – the first stage of the HLF funding of £250k has been paid, this will go towards detailed master planning for the gate and de-silting costs; the remaining funding will be next year.
- Delivering Success – we will continue to make a success of the GLL contract; community programmes including the Community Access Fund, Waltham Forest funding and wider community programmes to ensure we reach out to a regional audience; continue to invest in the campsites; increase capacity at the Marinas with dry docks and expanding the chandlery; further biodiversity action planning; undertaking environmental policies; and park activation to further our ambitions to do more.

A Member commented on the LED lighting and advised that whilst it might be cost effective, we should also consider light pollution and ensure that the direction of light was concentrated inwards rather than outwards. The Chief Executive and Corporate Director responded stating that they are conscious of that.

Members agreed that it is important for the Authority to be in talks with TfL and other local authorities in order to ensure that cross borough cycling routes are created. The Chairman suggested that Members might like to discuss informally what developments in their areas might be worth trying to link up, this could be taken up more formally in due course if necessary.

A Member queried how big the Rammey Marsh site was and if London Borough of Enfield could hold us to ransom over access to the site. The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive responded stating that the site is 14 acres, do have a small access point to the site without the need to go through Enfield's land and that we have a Memorandum of Understanding with London Borough of Enfield so are reliant upon each other. A Member informed new Members that whilst Rammey Marsh sounds like an idyllic piece of countryside, it is in reality scrub land bounded by the M25.

Members agreed that it is remarkable what the Authority has achieved, especially during the pandemic and were impressed by the ambition and breadth of the new business plan.

A Member voiced concerns over the limited reserves and the breadth of the business plan and wondered if the Authority has the capacity to deliver it. The Chief Executive responded stating that we would be looking at additional staffing in key areas as the resources are available.

Members commented that they liked the Lee Valley White Water Centre venue for the meeting as it was more spacious than Myddelton House, however they suggested that microphones might help with acoustics for such a large space. Other Members suggested that perhaps we could look at other venues for meetings such as the Lee Valley Ice Centre or venues around Stratford. The Chairman suggested a Member report detailing meeting venue choices, the cost implications for various venues, costings for microphones and the costs involved in printing and posting Member papers.

A Member asked about how the Section 106 money for River Lee Country Park was being released. The Corporate Director responded stating that as houses are sold the Section 106 money is released, sales have slowed due to the economic climate. The money will be spent in creating more undergrowth in order to keep people out of areas we don't want them in and upgrading the paths to make them more resilient to greater footfall.

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A Member asked how we are reaching out regionally, especially getting schools in to use our venues as they will create an audience for the future. The Chief Executive responded stating that the Community Access Fund is available to schools and local groups to fund travel and facility hire. Currently 63% of the Community Access Fund goes to non-riparian boroughs. The Chairman added that it might be useful to have a briefing on the Community Access Fund to illustrate what packages and support is available and how it can be accessed; it would be helpful for Members to assist in providing the Authority with contacts from their boroughs for those who might be able to benefit from the fund.

A Member asked how we are looking at providing facilities for the disabled. The Chairman responded stating that the new Wildlife Discovery Centre was built with this in mind and has lift access to reach the top floor. The Chief Executive added that the presentation in October will detail how we are considering the disabled and how we might improve on this.

9 NEXT MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY

It was noted that the next meeting of the Authority will be held on Thursday, 19 October 2023 at 2.00pm at Myddelton House, Bulls Cross, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 9HG.

Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 3.45pm

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ADDENDUM A

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND GROUPS 2023/24

COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 8 Members (at least 50% to be London Members), 1 Member nominated jointly by the non-majority groups preferably from one of the London Olympic Boroughs. MEETINGS: 12 per year or as required		
Labour (3)	Conservative (5)	Lib Dem (0)
Ross Houston	David Andrews	
Heather Johnson	Susan Barker	
Chris Kennedy	Graham McAndrew	
	Paul Osborn	
	Gordon Nicholson	
Chairman: Paul Osborn		Vice Chairman: David Andrews

AUDIT COMMITTEE – 7 Members MEETINGS: 3 per year		
Labour (3)	Conservative (3)	Lib Dem (1)
John Bevan	Mike Garnett	Barry Lewis
David Gardner	Lesley Greensmyth	
Terry Wheeler	Clive Souter	
Chairman: David Gardner		Vice Chairman: Lesley Greensmyth

REGENERATION & PLANNING COMMITTEE – 11 Members MEETINGS: 6 weekly or as required		
Labour (4)	Conservative (6)	Lib Dem (1)
John Bevan	David Andrews	Calvin Horner
David Gardner	Graham McAndrew	
Heather Johnson	Gordon Nicholson	
Chris Kennedy	Paul Osborn	
	John Wyllie	
	Ken Ayling	
Chairman: David Andrews		Vice Chairman: Chris Kennedy

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9 Members MEETINGS: 3 per year		
Labour (3)	Conservative (5)	Lib Dem (1)
John Bevan	Ken Ayling	Calvin Horner
Janet Burgess	Mike Garnett	
Terry Wheeler	Marshall Vance	
	John Wyllie	
	Steven Heather	
Chairman: John Bevan		Vice Chairman: John Wyllie

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TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

LAND & PROPERTY REVIEW WORKING GROUP – 7 Members		
MEETINGS: As required		
Labour (3)	Conservative (4)	Lib Dem (0)
Ross Houston	David Andrews	
Heather Johnson	Graham McAndrew	
Chris Kennedy	Paul Osborn	
	Susan Barker	
Chairman: Paul Osborn		

LEVY STRATEGY WORKING GROUP – 8 Members		
MEETINGS: As required		
Labour (3)	Conservative (5)	Lib Dem (0)
Heather Johnson	David Andrews	
Chris Kennedy	Ken Ayling	
John Bevan	Susan Barker	
	Graham McAndrew	
	Paul Osborn	
Chairman: Paul Osborn		

APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Waltham Abbey Town Partnership	Steven Heather
Six Authorities Liaison Group (Formerly Enfield, Essex & Herts Border Liaison Group)	David Andrews Ken Ayling Rick Jewell Gordon Nicholson