

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**AUTHORITY MEETING
28 APRIL 2016**

Members Present: Paul Osborn (Chairman) Derek Levy (Deputy for Christine Hamilton)
David Andrews Valerie Metcalfe
Derrick Ashley Gordon Nicholson
John Bevan Glynis Shiell (Deputy for Mary Sartin)
Stephen Carr Alan Searing
Malcolm Cowan Alan Smith
Linda Haysey Syd Stavrou
Ross Houston Simon Walsh
Christopher Kennedy Lyn White

Apologies Received From: Kathy Bee, Gwyneth Deakins, Ricki Gadsby, Christine Hamilton, Heather Johnson, Denise Jones, John Knapman, Gerry Lyons, Graham McAndrew, Sarah McDermott, Salim Patel, Mary Sartin

Also present Jade Appleton – Political Advisor to the Conservative Group
London Councils

Officers Present: Shaun Dawson - Chief Executive
Beryl Foster - Director of Corporate Services
Simon Sheldon - Director of Finance & Resources
Paul Roper - Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager
Cath Patrick - Senior Conservation Officer
Simon Clark - IT Manager (Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd) Part 1 only
Stephen Bromberg - Head of Communications
Dan Buck - Head of Sports & Leisure
Jon Carney - Head of Parklands
Claire Martin - Policy Officer
Sandra Bertschin - Committee & Members' Services Manager
Lindsey Johnson - Committee Services Officer

Part I

42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

43 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2016 be approved and signed.

44 PUBLIC SPEAKING

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

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45 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS WAIVERS 2015/16 Paper A/4224/15

The report was introduced by Simon Sheldon, Director of Finance & Resources.

(1) the report was noted.

46 WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE ARREARS 2015/16 Paper A/4226/16

The report was introduced by Simon Sheldon, Director of Finance & Resources.

(1) the delegated write offs for 2015/16 as detailed in paragraphs 3 to 7 of Paper A/4226/16 was approved.

47 I.T USAGE POLICY REVIEW Paper A/4225/16

The report was introduced by Simon Sheldon, Director of Finance & Resources.

In response to a Member's query the IT Manager outlined the process for upgrading Microsoft operating systems and compatibility with third party systems also operated by the Authority.

(1) the changes and additions to the I.T Usage Policy as set out in Appendix A to Paper E/445/16 attached as Annex A to Paper A/4225/16;

(2) delegation to the Director of Finance & Resources in conjunction with the Chief Executive to approve minor changes to the Policy from time to time to reflect system updates/changes was approved;

(3) that any further significant changes will be brought back to Members for approval; and

(4) officers will provide Members with a full update of any changes made to the I.T Usage Policy every three years was noted.

48 UPDATE ON WITHDRAWN PROPOSED AMENDMENT 89LA TO CLAUSE 135 OF THE HOUSING AND PLANNING BILL

The Chief Executive gave an update on the withdrawn proposed amendment 89LA to Clause 135 of the Housing and Planning Bill, key points included:

- the proposed amendment by Lord True sought to provide contributing authorities with the option of not paying the levy;
- the Authority had not been consulted about the proposed amendment;
- the Authority had sought support from a number of peers;
- House of Lords debate recognised that the Authority was operating more commercially than in previous years; and
- following withdrawal of the proposed amendment subsequent feedback from government officers was that this was seen as a local issue which should be resolved by engagement with London Councils.

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The Chairman advised that he and the Chief Executive would be meeting with London Councils' Chairman and Vice Chairman and also Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils to try to reach a consensus.

The Vice-Chairman acknowledged that there were concerns about the Authority's ongoing funding mechanism. However the Authority had adopted a number of initiatives to reduce costs to the taxpayer and it was hoped that in the short to medium term the ongoing review of land and property would raise capital which would deliver a benefit for all stakeholders.

A Member remarked that in respect of the continuing financial pressures faced by contributing authorities the view from across London was that the Authority should become self-sufficient as soon as possible.

Whilst other Members acknowledged the need for the Authority to become more commercial they commented that parks required some element of public subsidy to enable open access and that the Authority had worked over a number of years to reduce costs and to provide regional facilities. Engagement with London Councils, the London Assembly and counties was endorsed.

The Chairman advised that it was anticipated the land and property review would contribute to future budget discussions and level of levy required.

49 BIODIVERSITY

The Senior Conservation Officer gave a presentation on Biodiversity in the Regional Park.

In response to Member queries it was advised that:

- results of the City of London's invisible fencing trial would be considered;
- bee hives were operated by others across the Park and the Authority sought to promote habitat enhancements to increase pollinators and nectar rich species; and
- the Biodiversity Action Plan was to be revised and included as part of the Authority's 50th anniversary projects.

Members commended the biodiversity work undertaken.

50 VOLUNTEERS

TABLED inaugural Annual Report on Volunteering at Lee Valley Regional Park
(available on the website - <https://www.visitleevalley.org.uk/en/content/cms/corporate/volunteers/reports/>)

The Volunteers and Community Engagement Manager gave a presentation on Volunteering in Lee Valley Regional Park.

Members commended the volunteers programme which was not only of benefit to the Authority but also contributed to the volunteers' health and wellbeing which consequently was of benefit to the NHS.

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John Bevan advised he had participated in a volunteers project at Tottenham Marshes which had been well received by the volunteers. He encouraged other Members and senior management to participate in the volunteers programme.

51 DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY

The Chairman advised that an Additional Authority meeting would be held at 1.30pm on 16 June 2016 and encouraged everyone to attend.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Authority will be the Annual Authority Meeting and will be held on Thursday, 7 July 2016 at 2.00pm at Myddelton House.

52 5 STAR RATING FOR HEALTH & SAFETY

The Chief Executive advised that following a thorough assessment by the British Safety Council the Authority had retained its 5 Star rating and had increased its score from 94.53% to 94.81%. This was particularly pleasing against a back drop of considerable operational change with the establishment of Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd last year. In the last five years the Authority was one of only two leisure organisations who had achieved a 5 Star rating.

On behalf of Members the Chairman commended all staff on this excellent performance.

Derek Levy, Gordon Nicholson, Syd Stavrou and Glynis Shiell left the meeting at this point.

53 EXEMPT ITEMS

THAT based on the principles of Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the items of business below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information again on the principles as defined in those sections of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated:

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Section Number
12	Outcome of the legal challenge against the decision of Epping Forest District Council to grant planning permission for a major extension to existing glasshouse premises at Paynes Lane, Nazeing	5

Senior officers gave an oral update on the recent Court of Appeal Judgment.

- (1) **Delegation to Executive Committee of the final decision in relation to the Authority and Epping Forest District Council and Valley Grown Nurseries Ltd and whether the Authority should seek leave to appeal to the Supreme Court was approved.**

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Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 2.00pm and ended at 3.28pm.