



Mousehold Heath Conservators

14:05 to 15:05

21 September 2018

Present: Councillor Maxwell (chair), Price (vice chair), Bradford, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Kendrick, Lubbock and Peek; and Clare Cohen (Mousehold Heath Defenders) and John Trevelyan (The Norwich Society)

Apologies: Councillor Sands (M) and Matthew Davies (Norwich Fringe Project)

1. Public Questions/Petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2018.

4. Q1 2018-19 budget monitoring report

The finance business partner (LGSS) presented the report. He highlighted that the pension deficit was slightly lower than predicted; he said there were three years remaining to be paid. Any underspend after the deficit was paid would go into the reserves. The parks and open spaces manager stated that the aim was to build the budget reserves to 10% of the overall budget.

Members debated if any extra costs had been incurred due to the recent storms. The parks and open spaces manager said that in terms of felled trees, these were covered in the contract with Norse no matter how many trees were cleared. Any decision to do work which would go over the allocated budget would come to committee to be approved or be delegated by emergency powers. The vice chair said that the committee could consider asking for an increase in the precept paid to the conservators. A member said that as only four months of accounts were being considered it was premature to consider increasing the precept. The finance business partner stated that the precept was looked at in January every year.

The finance business partner highlighted the capital receipt from the sale of the ranger's house and said there was nothing scheduled to spend from the capital budget. He advised members that any spend would have to be approved by full council.

RESOLVED to note the current monitoring position and capital position.

5. Management plan 2018-2028 progress update

The parks and open spaces manager presented the report. He said the report noted the progress to date and the management specifications that were still outstanding. He highlighted that the specifications were dynamic and could be updated when necessary and used the example of benches on the heath as an illustration. He said that a final draft of the management plan would be provided to the committee in January 2019 in order to be finalised by March 2019.

A member raised a concern about the operation of Britannia café and the car parking associated with it. The parks and open spaces manager advised that the management subgroup would not be looking at the issue of Britannia café. The chair advised that an enforcement notice had been issued to Britannia café at planning applications committee.

RESOLVED to:

- 1) note the progress to date;
- 2) note the management prescriptions still outstanding;
- 3) approve the management prescriptions submitted subject to any amendments received from the Conservators being incorporated;
- 4) delegate the approval of the incomplete management prescriptions and first draft plan to the management subgroup; and
- 5) delegate development of the consultation content to the management subgroup.

6. Mousehold Heath quarterly management update

The parks and open spaces manager presented the report. He highlighted that following the recent storms a tree safety inspection had been completed by a Norwich City Council arboricultural officer. Twenty-one trees required safety works which had been completed by the wardens and volunteers over the summer. He said there had been 30 fires deliberately started on the heath over the quarter. The wardens had visited local schools to discuss the impact of fires on the environment and that this constituted arson which was a serious offence. He noted that due to the composition of the heath the heat from fires often smouldered under a top layer of humus and fires could then flare up elsewhere.

One of the wardens met with the local watch manager from Sprowston fire station to discuss the fires on the heath and the watch manager fully supported the objectives of the new management plan. The chair said that the press had visited the heath to report on the fires and she had given an interview to them.

The parks and open spaces manager advised there had been a total of 2,254 volunteer hours completed on the heath in the last quarter. He noted that volunteer hours could be used to match funding bids to the heritage lottery fund. As an example he said an unskilled worker's day would represent £50 towards match funding.

RESOLVED to note the Mousehold Heath quarterly management update.

7. Mousehold Heath Conservators annual report (verbal update)

The parks and open spaces manager provided members with a copy of the annual report summary. Members discussed how to consult with stakeholders. A member suggested a survey for volunteers asking them what they got out of volunteering on the heath. Clare Cohen said the defenders could forward on a survey to relevant national organisations and John Trevelyan agreed that the Norwich Society could email out to organisations working on the heath.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the annual report summary.

8. Management sub group dates

RESOLVED to note the following dates for future meetings of the management sub group:

Wednesday 15:30 17 October 2018

Tuesday 09:30 18 December 2018

CHAIR