

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING (by remote access) 23 APRIL 2020

Members in remote attendance	Paul Osborn (Chairman)	Heather Johnson
	David Andrews	Denise Jones
	Derrick Ashley	Christopher Kennedy
	Ken Ayling	Graham McAndrew
	John Bevan	Valerie Metcalfe
	Frances Button	Gordon Nicholson
	Rowena Champion	Nigel Quinton
	Ricki Gadsby	Mary Sartin
	Mike Garnett	Simon Walsh
	David Gardner	Steven Heather (Deputy Member)
	Ross Houston	Ian Kemp (Deputy Member)

Apologies Received From: Christine Hamilton, John Wyllie

Officers in remote attendance	Shaun Dawson	- Chief Executive
	Beryl Foster	- Deputy Chief Executive
	Simon Sheldon	- Director of Finance & Resources
	Dan Buck	- Corporate Director
	Jon Carney	- Corporate Director
	Simon Clarke	- Head of IT (part time)
	Sandra Bertschin	- Committee & Members' Services Manager

Also in remote attendance: Laurie Elks
Celia Coram, Caroline Day, Vicky Sholund, Abigail Woodman,
Paul Charman, Peter Mudge (Save Lea Marshes)

Part I

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Authority's first meeting to be held by remote access. He advised that Syd Stavrou had resigned from the Authority due to ill-health and expressed thanks on behalf of the Authority for her contribution to the Authority's work. He advised amendment of the order of the agenda.

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Agenda Item No.	Nature of Interest	
Ken Ayling	7	Member of Broxbourne Borough Council	<i>Non-Pecuniary</i>
Chris Kennedy	4	Knows the public speaker as one of his constituents	<i>Non-Pecuniary</i>

31 AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOLLOWING EMERGENCY LEGISLATION RELATING TO CORONAVIRUS

Paper A/4279/20

The report was introduced by the Deputy Chief Executive, including:

- emergency legislation had come into force on 4 April 2020 to enable public bodies to hold remote meetings, although this legislation does not apply to the Authority it was considered to be best practice in light of the current Covid-19 situation;
- this was for a time limited period until 7 May 2021;
- the Authority has previously adopted provisions that apply to other public bodies which do not flow directly from the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966;
- under the new Regulations Members are considered to be attending a meeting if they can hear, and where practicable see, and be heard and, where practicable, be seen by other Members and the public. If these conditions were satisfied then access to meetings and absence rules would be fulfilled; and
- proposed changes to Financial Regulations were interim and a full review would be undertaken ahead of the Annual General Meeting.

In response to questions from Members it was advised that:

- in normal circumstances and ideally the Authority would have met physically to approve amendment of Standing Orders but in accordance with public health guidance (i.e. social distancing) this was not practicable. The Regulations, made under section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020, apply notwithstanding any other legislation of current pre-existing standing orders or any other rules of local authorities governing meetings;
- there was provision in Standing Orders which allows the Chairman to decide a process of voting other than by a show of hands and this was something which would be tested via the remote access platform;
- officers were reviewing available platforms to allow the Authority to consider webcasting some of its meetings in the future.

- (1) **the proposed changes to Standing Orders as detailed in Appendix A of Paper A/4279/20;**
- (2) **the proposed changes to Financial Regulations as detailed in Appendix B of Paper A/4279/20;**
- (3) **delegation to the Deputy Chief Executive to make any minor changes to Standing Orders to assist in interpretation or clarification or to correct any administrative errors or omissions that have been overlooked; and**
- (4) **delegation to the Head of Finance to make any minor changes to Financial Regulations to assist in interpretation or clarification or to correct any administrative errors or omissions that have been overlooked was approved.**

32 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Chairman requested amendment of Minute No 24 by deletion of remarks attributed to him in response to a Member's comment about contaminated land. His remarks had related to the unattractiveness of the current Ice Centre and that in his opinion the proposed new Ice Centre would significantly improve the surrounding open spaces and links to them from Lea Bridge Road.

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2020 be approved and signed subject to amendment as above.

33 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Laurie Elks addressed the meeting, including:

- acknowledgement of amendment of Minute No 24 of the Authority meeting of 23 January 2020;
- that Waltham Forest Council's environmental assessment of Metropolitan Open Land in the borough referred to the Ice Centre site as representing an important strategic open space;
- this, supported by the reference to the area in the Authority's Landscape Strategy, part of the Park Plan, highlighted that the land was an important and valuable part of the Park;
- the Authority appeared to have an entrenched problem recognising and supporting the value of landscape and ecology in this part of the Park;
- request for an update on compilation of a list of priority landscape projects.

The Chairman reiterated his view that the current Ice Centre was a particularly poor building, not the land area around it.

In response the Chief Executive remarked:

- the Authority had always taken its statutory role as guardian of land across the Park seriously which had been recognised externally with awards such as Green Flags;
- compilation of landscape projects had been delayed due to differing pressures but a detailed list of projects across the Park had now been developed and would be consulted upon with key stakeholders following the lifting of lockdown.

34 WRITE-OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE ARREARS 2019/20 Paper A/4280/20

The report was introduced by the Director of Finance & Resources.

- (1) that no debts were written-off under delegated authority during 2019/20 was noted.**

35 COVID-19 RESPONSE AND WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE Paper A/4281/20

The report was introduced by the Chief Executive, including:

- excellent collaboration work had been undertaken with Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd to close the sports venues;
- staff were providing practical support to 'resident' static caravan owners who have remained at the campsites;
- marinas remained open with reduced services;
- day-to-day focus has been on open spaces to keep them safely activated;
- commencing with the Easter weekend open spaces car parks will be closed at weekends and Bank Holidays in support of the social distancing policy;
- comprehensive process undertaken to support staff changed working practices;
- an emergency budget 2020/21 was being prepared to reflect impact of the Covid-19 emergency on cash-flow;
- 67 staff had been furloughed to date and it was anticipated that by June approximately 80% of staff would be furloughed;

- furloughed staff would continue to receive their full salary as the Authority was meeting the 20% difference in the Government's furlough scheme;
- officers had begun to develop modelling to reopen venues following lifting of lockdown restrictions;
- the Authority continued to work with partner bodies to support the Covid-19 emergency;
- outcome of the new Ice Centre planning application was expected in the autumn;
- works were progressing on the new Wildlife Discovery Centre to replace the Bittern Information Point;
- officers were working with the London Borough of Enfield to simplify land ownership at Rammey Marsh.

The Chairman advised that the Authority was reviewing potential to safely open some outside facilities at venues, such as the cycle track at Lee Valley VeloPark and running track at Lee Valley Athletics Centre, to support local residents physical wellbeing.

In response to a question from a Member, it was advised there was a long history of complex land ownerships at Rammey Marsh and it was hoped that negotiations with the London Borough of Enfield would simplify this and enable the Authority to go out to the market to identify potential future uses for this currently inaccessible area of land.

(1) the report was noted.

36 ORAL UPDATE ON EMERGENCY BUDGET 2020/21

The Director of Finance & Resources advised:

- the Authority's cash flow had been greatly reduced, however cash reserves and the levy put the Authority in a reasonably strong financial position to manage the next 9 to 12 months;
- it was not proposed to raise a supplementary levy for the 2020/21 financial year as permitted under S48 of the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966; and
- future budgets would require far more critical decision making.

In response to Member questions it was advised:

- presently it was not necessary to redeploy staff to open spaces activities but this would be kept under review;
- the cleaning regime for the milk vending machine had been elevated and most car parking machines were contactless but more frequent cleaning of other car parking machines was being undertaken;
- medium term financial planning was in progress and would be reported later in the year. However, the funding basis for future schemes would probably need to change.

The Chairman advised that a review of maintenance work was being undertaken to assess if any works could safely be undertaken during the current lockdown and so avoid future closures.

37 NEXT MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY

It was noted that the next meeting of the Authority will be held on Thursday, 2 July 2020 at 2.00pm.

38 **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
9	Oral update on conclusion of the Leisure Services Contract with Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd	3

39 **ORAL UPDATE ON CONCLUSION OF THE LEISURE SERVICES CONTRACT WITH LEE VALLEY LEISURE TRUST LTD**

Senior officers highlighted issues regarding conclusion of the Leisure Services Contract with Lee Valley Leisure Trust Ltd.

Chairman

Date

The meeting started at 10.05am and ended at 11.28am