

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MITCHAM COMMON CONSERVATORS
(A Statutory Corporation constituted by the Metropolitan Commons
(Mitcham) Supplemental Act 1891)
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2nd December 2020 AT 6.30 PM Via Zoom

Present:

Cllr. N. Draper (Chairman)

Mr. J. Cheetham

Cllr. N. Degrad

Ms A. Dines

Ms. A. Fairweather

Mr. M. Groves

Cllr. J. Henry

Cllr. S. King

Cllr R. Makin

Cllr. C. Williams

In Attendance:

Mr. M. Boyle – Manager of Mitcham Common

Mr. P. Moorhouse - Warden

Ms. L. Parry – Minute taker

Absent:

Cllr. N. Garratt

Cllr. A. Pelling

Mr. R. Auld

1. Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Apologies for absence had not been received.

2. Declarations of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Minutes (enclosed) of the last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23.09.20 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

Page 1: LB Sutton has now appointed a replacement for Mr Richard Bailey: Mr Norman Jones.

Page 3: Croydon Road Pedestrian Phase: This work will be undertaken early in the New Year.

Page 4: Item 9: Website: As instructed at the last meeting, the Manager had investigated options for setting up a mechanism for making donations via the website. The website adviser has recommended setting up a Pay Pal account which will require minimum administration.

RESOLVED: Manager to take forward the creation of Pay Pal account to enable donations to be received online.

5. Administration and Management Report

1). Acid Grassland Project: The final phase will take place in the new year.

2). Dog Control Orders: Currently there is a Public Space Protection Order (Dog Control) in place in Merton and Croydon, including Mitcham Common, meaning that people are liable to receive a fine if they are reported for walking with more than four dogs. The Warden said that since this order has been in place (from August 2020) the numbers of people regularly seen walking more than four dogs has dropped to two; both of whom have recently been warned about the consequences of breaking the order. If there is an enforcement issue Kingdom will be requested to deal with the matter.

The current PSPO will be reviewed in March. Prior to that there will be a public consultation focused on whether or not the PSPO should be renewed and whether a dog licence scheme, allowing one person to walk up to 6 dogs, should be introduced. This matter will be brought back for Conservators' consideration at the March 2021 meeting.

3). Beddington Lane: Replacement of Medium Pressure Gas Mains: The gas mains is being replaced. The section of mains located on the Common is subject to an existing wayleave agreement which allows for the maintenance and replacement of the mains. However, the agreement requires that the Mitcham Common Conservators are advised and consulted on the planned works. The Manager reported that he had attended a site visit with the contractor, Forefront Utilities, who will undertake the work.

The section of the Common where the work will take place is not ecologically sensitive. A short length of footpath on to the Common at the junction of Beddington Lane and Brookmead Road will have to be re-routed for the duration of the works.

The excavation on the Common will be deep and several metres wide. This will generate a large volume of soil. The contractor has requested permission to store on the Common and after the pipe has been installed it will be used to backfill. The Chair has agreed to this concession and a facility licence has been signed. There is also the possibility that the contractors may wish to take out another facility licence for storage of equipment.

Ground preparation for the work on the Common will take place this month and the phase of the project that impacts on the Common will begin in early January 2021 and take six weeks to complete. Thereafter the Common will be reinstated. The Manager said that he hoped and anticipated that the re-instatement will be to a high standard.

RESOLVED: The Manager to keep abreast of developments and respond should any further requests for facility licences be forthcoming from the contractors.

4) High Court Injunction: Persons Unknown Occupying Land or Depositing Waste The existing High Court Injunction has been appealed and the appeal is due to be heard in January 2021.

6. Income and Expenditure (Until end of November 2020)

The Manager asked Conservators to note that some areas of expenditure which were budgeted for this year have been deferred to next year due to changing in work patterns, but this will need to be factored in to next year's budget.

The current prediction is that the income next year will be in the region of £30,000 down. This has been unavoidable in the current situation

7. Investments: Portfolio Valuation (enclosed for Members)- Report from Mr. R. Auld

Conservators discussed the recommendation made by Mr Auld to sell some shares in BT because they are not paying a dividend.

Ms Fairweather said that she would like to propose that there is a renewed review of the shares portfolio with a view to looking at ecologically ethical investments. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to write a general brief for Mr Auld and then ask him to put forward recommendations.

RESOLVED: 1. Conservators requested the Manager to authorise Mr Auld to take the action recommended in selling of shares. 2. Ms Fairweather to write a general brief for Mr Auld outlining the request to recommend potential ethical investment

options. 3. Mr Auld to be asked to attend the next meeting.

8. **Friends of Mitcham Common** -To report on recent activities and to raise any relevant matters

There was no report to the current meeting.

9. **Appointment to Mitcham Common Environmental Trust –LB of Sutton**

It was agreed to defer appointment to the next meeting.

10. **Wandle Valley Regional Park Trust**

Mr Cheetham reported that there has been agreement that the Regional Park Trust will continue, but there will need to be more proactive work.

11. **Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 10 March 2021**

12. **Any Other Business**

Cllr Makin said he had received a query raised by residents in Carshalton Road who were concerned about the trees. He had looked at them with a fellow Councillor and did not consider that there was any particular issue. The Manager said that trees alongside the footpath had been cut back. He had not seen any issues with the trees in the area.

A query was raised about litter in the area of Carshalton Road. The Manager said that he was aware of the litter accumulation in the ditches. Veolia is instructed to litter pick the road side verges and ditches and will be reminded.

The Manager reported that SGN has requested permission to install a cathodic protection system, which is the industry preferred system for corrosion prevention, to the gas pipeline that runs from Galpins Road to Croydon Road. SGN has a statutory obligation to protect such pipelines.

RESOLVED: The Manager to liaise with SGN to determine the best option for the installation of the cathodic protection system.