

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 3 December 2008
at Fellowship House at 8.00pm

Present: Richard Wakefield followed by David Lewis in the Chair
Simon Abbott, Douglas Blausten, Carol Boulter, John Boulter, Terry Brooks,
Dave Brown, Alan Brudney, Janet Elliott, Rosemary Goldstein (Secretary to
the Council) Colin Gregory, Eva Jacobs, Rosalind Josephs, David Littaur,
Richard Kemp Steve Morris, Judith Samson, Gary Shaw , Leonie Stephen,
Alan Walker

Visitors: Joyce Littaur, Derek Epstein.

| | | |
|---|---|-----|
| 1 | <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Tony Brand, Gary Shaw, David B Lewis, Nicole Gerber, .Selwyn Nakan</p> | |
| 2 | <p><u>Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting 2nd November</u></p> | |
| 3 | <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>Public Notice Boards</u></p> <p>Although he had been authorised by the RA to use these notice boards, Simon Abbott would like to see the correspondence relating to the agreements over their use. He thought that some issues need to be clarified including the ownership of Meadway Gate. It was hoped that the Chairman may have this correspondence.</p> <p><u>New Year's Eve</u></p> <p>Dave Brown said that there will be a 10 minute firework display with drinks from 10.45 onwards in St Jude's. He would like more volunteers to help on the evening.</p> <p><u>Henrietta Barnett School</u></p> <p>Derek Epstein reported that the meeting with the school and the architects will take place on 17th December.</p> <p>Simon Abbott said that the Constitution of the HGS Trust provides for the Trust to 'maintain the character of the Suburb'</p> <p>In his opinion the new buildings as presented, do not do this. They are second rate and this is the most important building to be built in 100 years on the Suburb after the Soutar buildings, in this architecturally renowned square. The constitution should be adhered to.</p> <p><u>Street Clutter</u></p> <p>Derek Epstein reported that Transport for London have agreed to remove all of the new posts that have recently been erected</p> | DBL |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | <p>to carry the bus stop notice boards, previously attached to lamp posts and have agreed to stop erecting new ones.</p> <p><u>Grant to Horticultural Society</u></p> <p>John Boulter is arranging for the application form to be completed. Work on digging up the site has started. Richard Wakefield pointed out that the Horticultural Society do have £10,000 of reserves.</p> <p><u>Proms at St Jude's</u></p> <p>Simon Abbott had spoken to John Wheeler who said that he had sent some 16 pages of information. John Boulter said that an application form had been received which provided useful information. In future Simon Abbott would like this to be circulated to Council before it is discussed by them.</p> <p><u>Benefactors Board</u></p> <p>This is being progressed.</p> <p><u>Report by Consam/Roads and Traffic</u></p> <p>Alan Brudney asked what had been done pursuant to the RA Council resolution deploring the lack of cooperation by senior Highways officers and the lack of support from Councillor Harper. Derek Epstein reported that he had been invited to attend an EC meeting at which possible actions were discussed. In preference to writing protest letters or seeking adverse press publicity the EC had authorised him in the first instance to ask Kirsty Elderton, LBB Assistant Director of Resources (responsible for customer service standards and maintaining the Council's public face), with whom he had been in discussions, to negotiate with Cllr Harper and the senior officers to seek to persuade them to behave more cooperatively towards the RA on conservation and R&T matters.</p> <p>Carol Boulter told Council that the next edition of Suburb News will contain an interview with Cllr Andrew Harper.</p> <p>Carol Boulter circulated an article in Private Eye about LB Barnet.</p> | |
| 4 | <p><u>Question Time</u></p> <p>Joyce Littaur asked whether it would be possible to have lids for the blue boxes instead of the mesh. David Lewis thought that red lids were being supplied by LB Barnet.</p> | |
| 5 | <p><u>Discussion and Consideration of a Motion regarding the loss of £27 million in Icelandic Banks by LB Barnet in contrast to its withdrawal of funding for street trees on the Suburb</u></p> | |

Gary Shaw said that scale of the loss is something the RA should comment about. He considered LB Barnet's attitude is complacent for public officials in charge of public money. It was staggering that the local authority should invest in unsafe banks. Leo Bolland had now had left LBB, having been appointed Chief Executive of the GLA.

Cllr Freer had a background in the banking system and could be standing as a member of parliament. He thought that it was incompetence bordering on negligence

Terry Brooks said that the Chelsea Building Society had also invested in Icelandic Banks but they had publically apologised on their web site. He thought that it was a good idea to complain individually.

Council members were against linking the loss of £27million with the funding for street trees

Douglas Blausten thought that this loss was not relevant to the RA but we could ask LB Barnet to give an explanation. The Icelandic Bank was included in a number of other approved banks by the Association of Local Authorities.

Gary Shaw said that the RA represents two thousand plus households on the Suburb and the RA has a right to complain. Officials are paid a great deal of public money to have the ability and knowledge to make financial decisions.

Carol Boulter agreed and said that many local authorities had taken the decision not to invest with Icelandic banks.

Alan Brudney asked whether all the money had been lost. Gary Shaw did not know. LB Barnet has said that they hope to recover some of the money.

Colin Gregory wanted to know more about the implications and suggested a letter should be written to LB B Barnet asking:

why they did not act on the knowledge that was circulating that investing in this Icelandic bank may be risky,;

how much money are they likely to recover:

what is the likely impact on the Council

Colin Gregory will speak to Gary Shaw and prepare a draft letter to be sent to LB Barnet.

Janet Elliott urged caution as it could be argued that we would be making a party political point.

Alan Walker said that we should ask what is the likely impact of this loss on life in the Borough

Gary Shaw said that the amount invested with the Icelandic

| | | |
|----------|--|------------------|
| | <p>bank is approx 8% of LB Barnet's total investments. It was anticipated, written about and forecast that the Icelandic Bank would fail.</p> <p>John Boulter pointed out that the Icelandic bank was given the lowest rating of any bank in the world in February 2008.</p> | <p>CG GS</p> |
| <p>6</p> | <p><u>Report by Trees and Open Spaces Committee on Hampstead Heath proposals</u></p> <p>Colin Gregory explained that the Heath is run by the City of London Corporation. Council Tax money is not used and the funding is from the City's investment income. They forecast the 2009/10 budget to be £6 million. There are 132 equivalent full time staff and ways have had to be found to save money</p> <p>When the Heath was given to the City a Consultative Committee was set up with representatives from organisations and Heath users. It meets three time a year proceeded by a walk on the heath. It is chaired by Bob Hall and it is an extremely well run and efficient organisation.</p> <p>The City adopted a management plan which established the way that the Heath is run in 1995 and there is now a further detailed plan.</p> <p>The lido needed a great deal of money spent on it. £1 million has already been spent and a further £2 million is needed.</p> <p>A Heritage Lottery bid had been put in to revamp the area around Parliament Hill. The bid is to improve the area by moving the café and modernising the information centre and making it more attractive and changing the sports facilities.</p> <p>Sally Lewis had attended the latest meeting where it was agreed to lay hedges, plant daffodils and do work to the ponds on the Heath extension which will be opened up to encourage dragon flies and to remove invasive species.</p> <p>Dog control is an ongoing issue and the Corporation is considering issuing guidance. Local authorities can issue penalty notices and Camden have authorised the City to act on their behalf under these powers.</p> <p>The City is microchipping veteran trees to help preserve them</p> <p>Work is taking place to restock the zoo in Golders Hill Park</p> <p>There are proposals to improve Whitestone Pond. Camden and the City will proceed with changes to the shape of the pavement and introduce grass and re-open vistas to Central London.</p> <p>Richard Wakefield wanted the City to do something about the proliferation of phone masts. Colin Gregory said that this is being looked at.</p> | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | <p>David Littaur raised the question of cyclists. Colin Gregory said that a further study on cycling will be undertaken and there will be consultation. Improvement work is being considered to replace the paths with a surface which will slow down cyclists and make a noise to give a warning to walkers. Speed tables are also being look into.</p> | |
| 7 | <p><u>Authorisation of Street Tree Grant for 2008-2009 of up to £3000 conditional on LB Barnet providing matching funding.</u></p> <p>In November 2007 the RA authorised £3000 to be spent on Street trees. Georgina Malcolm had dealt with this and emailed LB Barnet with a detailed list of trees which they had lost. The cost of the trees to be planted by LB Barnet was £3300 but this did not include the planting costs.</p> <p>After many requests the invoice had been received by the HGS Trust for £2700 which is one half of the total cost. LB Barnet had not paid for the trees. Eva Jacobs expressed her concern that the suppliers of the trees have not been paid.</p> <p>It was proposed that £3000 was made available for tree planting in 2008/9 and it was assumed that this would be given to LB Barnet on the same basis. Colin Gregory suggested that we allocate the money and await the invoice.</p> <p>A Resolution was proposed by Terry Brooks and seconded by Colin Gregory that the sum of £3000 is made available for tree planting in 2009/10 conditional on matching funds from LB Barnet.</p> <p>This was passed unanimously</p> <p>.</p> | |
| 8 | <p><u>Roads and Traffic Committee new issues.</u></p> <p>Gary Shaw reported that there have been further tickets issued in Willifield Way for parking on the pavements</p> <p>Alan Brudney reported that he had received a letter from Mike Freestone to say that the CPZ will not be reviewed until 2009/10.</p> | |
| 9 | <p><u>Consam -New Issues</u></p> <p><u>Yellow Lines</u></p> <p>LB Barnet had proposed the painting of double yellow lines at some street corners but they withdrew in one case after residents made strong objections at Thornton Way.</p> <p><u>Telephone Boxes</u></p> <p>BT wishes to discard the K6 telephone boxes, unless LB</p> | |

| | | |
|----|--|---------------------|
| | <p>Barnet will maintain them at a cost of £500 per annum each. There are 6 boxes on the Suburb and they are Listed.</p> <p>Alan Walker thought that it would be nice to keep the boxes even if they were not functioning. Traditional boxes enhance the environment.</p> <p>Colin Gregory suggested that it may be worth trying to keep one functioning box out side the Tea House and perhaps the HB School, the RA and HGS Trust could maintain this.</p> <p>Rosalind Josephs is liaising with BT and will ascertain how often these boxes are used</p> <p>Derek Epstein will raise this with LB Barnet.</p> | <p>RJ</p> <p>DE</p> |
| 10 | <p><u>Annual Report and AGM</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that the AGM will take place on Monday 30 March 2009.</p> <p>Rosemary Goldstein will book the HB School Hall</p> <p>It was proposed that the Annual Report and Accounts should follow the same format as last year. The Accounts should be sent out with Membership renewals in March or with the Yellow Directory</p> <p>Committee reports and notice of AGM will be published in Suburb News at the end of January</p> <p>Steve Morris pointed out that the Annual Report and Accounts must be sent out before the AGM and the Yellow Directory is not sent out until after the AGM.</p> <p>Committee reports should also be sent to Richard Wakefield by 21 December as well as to the Chairman..</p> | |
| 11 | <p><u>Matters Arising form the Executive Committee Minutes not on the Agenda</u></p> <p><u>Photocopier</u></p> <p>All Committee chairmen who have not responded to the Chairman's email about their committee's use of the photocopier were asked to do so, in order that a decision can be made.</p> <p><u>Possible virus affecting HGS Discussion Group</u></p> <p>Steve Morris has written to the Chairman about this.</p> | |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 12 | <p><u>Any Other Urgent Business</u></p> <p><u>Sale of Tea House</u></p> <p>It was reported that the Tea house had been sold for £750,000 by the Institute to a private individual. It was subject to the two protected tenancies and there has been no application for a change of use. The Trust is the Freeholder under a 999 year lease but their consent was not required to this transaction.</p> <p>Council member were concerned that local organisations were not consulted about this and the proposed sale was not widely advertised.</p> <p><u>Ballot for IPod</u></p> <p>A ballot took place and Mr. and Mrs. Teacher of Gurney Drive were the winners.</p> | |
| 13 | <p><u>To confirm the Date of the Next Meeting Tuesday 6 January 2009 at Fellowship House at 8.00pm</u></p> <p>This will be a short meeting followed by wine and mince pies.</p> | |