

Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC)

Minutes of meeting on Thursday 4 April 2024, 1900 - 2100 The Depot, Clapham Common

Attendees:

Adrian Darley (AD) (*Chair*)

Cllr Linda Bray (LB)

Cllr Ben Curtis (BC)

Cllr Alison Inglis-Jones (AIJ)

Member organisations:

Ed Alnutt (EA) (Friends of Clapham Common, FCC)

Michael Barry (MB) (Clapham Society)

Gareth James (GJ) (Wild Clapham)

Lambeth Council:

Kevin Crook, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods (KC)

Lara Mifsud-Bonici (LMB)

Community Representatives:

Phil Carey (PC) (*and Secretary*)

Petr Kaiser (PK) (*from Item 2, Communications Officer*)

Michael Mooney (MM)

Joanna Reynolds (JR) (*and Vice Chair*)

Krishna Siva (KS) (*and Treasurer*)

Kim Wiper

Apologies received from Andrew Summers (community representative); also on the Committee Charlee Boston and Jeremy Keates

1: Matters arising from last meeting

Following up two AOB items:

- *Litter from sports groups:* LMB updated the meeting on Lambeth's reminders to all teams making bookings, but this could not address abuse by unauthorised users of facilities
- *Mud Club:* KC summarised the context, starting with the original lease of the Spinney site to Clapham Manor School. Property Services continue to manage it as an education asset, not a revenue raiser; a Decision Report proposing David Beldon be granted the permanent right to run his Mud Club there is now in preparation. JR reiterated her concern about his ability to charge for access, and LB has just tabled a formal Council question about this. EA highlighted the precedent of (and the Chair subsequently circulated a summary of) a 2018 legal case ruling against Wandsworth allowing a nursery to limit access to common land. Ahead of further information, CCMAC challenged the planned Decision Report recommendation.

Action 1: KC to seek CCMAC view on the draft Report, informing an item on May meeting agenda; invitation to David Beldon to remain on hold at present.

2: Appointment of Communications Officer

Following his proposal last month, the Chair had agreed a specification for the role with PK, AIJ nominated, and GJ seconded, him, thus confirming his appointment. PK will take on the social media accounts from Simon Millson.

Action 2: AD to circulate job specification

3: Ongoing Clapham Common works update:

KC is putting into place the new organisation structure for Clapham Common management, with an experienced outsider about to be appointed to the key role of Head of Parks, Trees and Lambeth Landscapes (PTLL); this person would be based at the Common for two days a week.

KC also reported good progress with the Enforcement Team, with the obstacles to the Met Police Officer joining the team now overcome.

Action 3A: KC to confirm identity of the two appointments when possible

On *Events*, he advised that plans for Lightopia this winter are yet to be firmed up, but he understands that the Heras fencing required would be opened up each day so as not to constrain public access during daylight. There is now the prospect of a major new event next Spring, with the Royal Agricultural Society sounding out Lambeth on whether the Common could host its planned new 'Farm and Food Expo'. This would probably entail fencing off both the Events and fairground sites, with an entry charge, for at least a four week period; it would in effect replace the Secret Cinema event. CCMAC will want to give a view on the Expo proposal once more detail is available, but noted the advantage of using the event site early in the year rather than in summer, if concerns around impact on wetter ground were addressed.

Action 3B: KC to respond by next meeting on other questions re Lightopia raised by CCMAC, on dates, charges, and impact on wildlife; and to update on negotiations re the Expo.

KC also reported that staffing is now in place for weekend litter picking to resume; and is imminent for the Kiosk café at the central playground; CCMAC supported the plan for this also to operate an 'ice cream tricycle' touring the Common, but advised Lambeth should publicise the café better.

LMB followed up with updates on:

- *Benches*: the team has had some absences so installation has been slower than hoped, but it will be able to deal itself with the problem of standing water at some bench locations
- *Bollards*: installation is progressing well, with remaining gaps on Windmill Drive and Broomwood Road to be filled in the next few weeks
- *Signing*: signs alerting the public to bylaw restrictions preventing unlicensed music events are now being designed. More action is needed to keep bikes to designated cycle paths around the Local Nature Reserve, backed up by fencing and tree trunks, although ground conditions are currently making this difficult.

CCMAC also raised:

- its concern about increased dumping on the *Green Waste Site*, and wanted to see an effective management plan. KC identified this as an early priority for the new Head of PTLL, and flagged up whether future PIL funding could be used to transform the site.
- continuing anxiety about what material might be used for new pitches on the *Redgra* site, and the need to assess the pros and cons of any development plan from both an

environmental and access to sport perspective. The Chair confirmed that CCMAC should only focus on this issue when a specific proposal is up for consideration.

4: Parks Investment Levy (PIL)

KC will have a forecast for 2024/5 receipts by mid-month, along with an indication of expectations for 2025/6. He confirmed that, whilst the intention is that PIL money is not to be used for any 'business as usual' activities, the Council sets no formal restrictions on how it should be spent. It can fund 'revenue' spending as well as capital investment.

Action 4: AD to convene meeting of Masterplan Delivery Working Group for later this month to identify CCMAC priorities for PIL on receipt of the forecast, and Group to advise full Committee deliberation at May meeting

5: Progress reports from Working Groups

- 1) *Access, Paths & Signage*: JR explained that action for 2024 depends on the position on the PIL; Group to resume after May discussion
- 2) *Bandstand Concerts*: AD reported the new Group has got under way, and is keen to extend the programme into August. Current funding from Lambeth covers some 14 concerts, but an additional £1,100 could fund three more concerts in August. He gained CCMAC support to use up to 25% of the c£6k pa revenues from film company parking for this. Members also suggested reviving effort to collect donations from attendees, and lining up youth bands. PK offered to use his Best of Clapham website to find new performers. LMB will want to remind bands to bring their own PA system, and check the power supply is fully in place.
- 3) *Bowling Greens & Pavilion*: interviews with the preferred bidders have been delayed but will now be prioritized

Action 5A: KC to schedule for this month, and invite WG members

- 4) *Ecology & Biodiversity*: the new WG has not met yet; but KC reports Lambeth has progressed the landscape and biodiversity plan, lining up the London Wildlife Trust to complete a report by early summer (requiring £6k from PIL funding).
 - 5) *Events*: action is awaited from Lambeth on its planned Events Strategy
- Action 5B: MM to chase Lucy Zaman**
- 6) *Governance*: PC will report to the July meeting on position with the policy statements, and on the case for restarting the WG.
 - 7) *Masterplan Delivery*: see Action 4 above
 - 8) *Sports*: awaiting, amongst other things, clarification of plans for the Redgra site.

6: Member Group updates

Clapham Society: MB reported that the new programme of walks and talks is detailed on the website. He sought advice on two separate cases where he has been asked to explain the CCMAC position, on the legitimacy of hiring out the fairground site for film company parking, and on a proposal for the Bowling Greens which Lambeth have now rejected. He

will draft responses, sharing with CCMAC before issue. He will also follow up in due course on his suggestion from the last meeting to install signs explaining the history of the Common.

Friends of Clapham Common: EA reported on the successful Easter Egg Hunt, and intensive volunteer effort focused on tree mulching.

Wild Clapham: The meeting congratulated GJ and his team for delivering the two new wildflower meadows: the Battersea Rise site is about to be seeded, and West Side is already complete. WC has organised the planting of 95 trees on the Common this season.

7: Any other business

- AIJ reported dissatisfaction from Eaton House School about the alternative site on North Side that Lambeth is requiring it to use for children's recreation.
Action 7: LMB to check if an email response to the School is overdue
- Flag football: LMB is unclear if teams have started to use the new site on West Side, and asked members to let her know of any sighting.
- Windmill Drive: having noted that the reconfiguration works will start on 22 April, GJ and others expressed concern about the need to ensure compliance with the temporary diversion routes for bikes. The Chair advised Lambeth of CCMAC's dissatisfaction that it had not been consulted about this aspect of the implementation plan, despite repeated requests to be kept informed.

8: Date of next meeting: Thursday 2 May 1900, at The Depot

Minutes drafted by Phil Carey, Secretary