



MEDIA RELEASE

February 2018 Board Update

FINANCES: Maintaining stable finances has been a key Board objective. The Board reviewed the standing monthly financial report for 2017/18 year to December, noting that spend remained within budget and that a small operating surplus was forecast for the year end in March.

BUSINESS PLAN: The Board reviewed and approved a detailed three-year Business Plan and 2018/19 budget. In commending the Business Plan to the incoming Board following the triennial elections, the Board noted that the plan flowed from the Strategy and showed a sustainable on-going annual surplus over the next three years with positive cash flow. The Board noted the substantial progress made in this, another of its key objectives.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS AND ACCOUNTANTS: Having considered a detailed report from the Appointment Panel, the Board confirmed the appointment of new auditors and accountants Kreston Reeves LLP for the next three years based on a fixed fee price. The Board noted this completed its long-standing objective of re-tendering these services.

STATUTORY ENQUIRY AND INTERIM MANAGER: The Board received a short report from the Chairman, noting the Media Statement from the Charity Commission dated 22nd December 2017.

MEETING WITH CHARITY COMMISSION: On behalf of the Board, the Chairman met with officers of the Charity Commission in December 2017. The Interim Manager is undertaking further valuation investigation. The aim of the Commission is for the charity to be able to operate effectively without the distraction of an ongoing dispute over the valuation. The Commission confirmed that the scope of the Statutory Inquiry is not wider than the valuation matter.

APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD BY THE HOME SECRETARY: Having considered a detailed report from the Appointment Panel, the Board endorsed two appointable people to be put to the Home Secretary and supported the Panel's recommendation of the preferred candidate.

The Board also noted the timetable agreed with the Home Secretary to fulfil her requirement for future Home Office appointments. In doing so the Board considered and updated the Terms of Reference for the Constitution Working Group commending these to the incoming Board.

TRIENNIAL ELECTION: The Board received a report on progress from the Returning Officer.

TOP RISKS: The Board received and discussed the standing report from the Chief Operations Manager on the top risks facing the Commons.

WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION FORUM: The Board considered the Notes of the Forum's January Meeting. The programme of future and upcoming events was supported, including the extended series of bird walks and new events for the summer 'BioBlitz' Weekend. The 2017 Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath Annual Bird Report will be available from the Office from next week. This year, for the first time, the report also includes records of the butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies observed on the Commons. Monitoring work from all the main habitats; heathland, grassland, woodland, mires, ponds and associated water courses, is currently being collated. This will feed into the Land Management Plan which is under

development for the Commons as part of the Commons' Strategy and which, as such, feeds into the Business Plan.

Progress on the Wildlife Garden was noted, as was the drive underway to improve Sustainability on the Commons particularly the elimination of plastic (bottles and straw) and non-reusable cups at WPCC events.

GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATION: The Board received the notes of its two Workshops held in January. In doing so it noted the standing process for the co-option of non-Trustees to work with the Commons. The Board has found the Workshop format particularly helpful and commends this approach to the incoming Board.

LONDON AND SCOTTISH GOLF CLUB: Having considered a report from the Wimbledon Golf Working Group the Board approved in principle proposals by the LSGC to modify its existing internal Clubhouse space to facilitate the establishment of a Ladies Section. The Board noted the collaboration with the LSGC – the second oldest Golf Club in the country – including the positive engagement in reviewing these proposals.

FINAL MEETING: Noting this was the last meeting of the Board's current term, progress against the Board's longer-term objectives was noted including arrangements to transfer to the incoming Board.

ENDS

NOTES for Editors - Wimbledon and Putney Commons is a charity managed by the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators. It was established under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act of 1871. The Commons comprise some 1,140 acres across Wimbledon Common, Putney Heath and Putney Lower Common.

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