

Montpelier Square Garden

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Date 16 Dec 2008
Held at 8 Montpelier Square

Meeting brought forward 2 months for urgent agreement of a new precept

Committee members present Lady Marshall, Garden Chairman
Mr Daniel Quirici, Chairman
Mr David Eckhardt
Mrs Avril Cox
Mr Yoshi Nishio
Mr Nicholas Davie-Thornhill
Mrs Jean Fletcher, Secretary

Apologies for absence: Mr Steve Kordas

1. To Consider the Minutes and Matters Arising

Mr Quirici asked members of the Committee to approve the Minutes of the Committee Meeting of 17 June. Mr Quirici proposed they be accepted and the Committee unanimously accepted them.

2. Garden Report

Lady Marshall was congratulated on the result of the garden's radical overhaul: A First Prize in the Westminster in Bloom Competition (a 97 % score against 47 others) and a Third Prize in the London Gardens Competition. The new team of gardeners sub-contacted by Spike Jackson is to be congratulated also. A decrepit and inappropriate Cedar was removed and the preparations for illumination of our more beautiful trees will soon go ahead. There have been complaints that the hut is dilapidated, so Mrs Fletcher will get an estimate for its renovation. Birds have given much pleasure after food and water were supplied for them. Nesting boxes will be installed ready for the Spring.

3. The Precept

Mr Quirici put forward the case for a substantial increase of the Precept. In comparison with the expense of other local squares, ours has been run

very cheaply. Our reserves almost ran out this year, partly because of the extremely late repayment of the precept to us by Westminster Council. Mr Quirici has met with the Financial Controller of the Council, who has promised prompt repayment in future. To ensure that prompt repayment is indeed made, Mr Quirici proposed that we ask Mr Roger Hayward, our Accountant for many years, to join the Committee as our own Financial Controller. This was agreed unanimously, as was the new Precept, set at **625**.

4. The Treasurer

Mr Kordas has sent his regrets that he must resign as Treasurer, due to business commitments abroad. Mr Nishio was proposed as Treasurer and his appointment was unanimously accepted. Mr Eckhardt will assist him. Mr Eckhardt will find out if garden is listed and whether we might benefit from VAT exemption.

5. Embassy Property

It has emerged that the new tenants of No.14 have a key to the garden. Since the house is owned by the U.S.Embassy which is exempt from paying council tax, the committee agreed that the tenants should be asked to relinquish their key or pay to use the garden. Mr Quirici will write to them.

6. Keys to the Garden

Mrs Cox asked whether the price of new garden keys might be pegged to the Precept. It was agreed unanimously that the cost of a new key should in future be equal to the Precept (£625 in 2009). It was also agreed that the price of a replacement key would be increased to £100.

7. The Archives

These are temporarily being held by Mrs Fletcher, who has extracted legal references for Mr Quirici to study and is editing the voluminous 1988-93 files (60% of all the archives) for ease of reference and economy of eventual commercial storage.

Signed


