

MONTPELIER SQUARE GARDEN

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Date and Time: 25 February 2014, 6:30pm

Venue: 26 Montpelier Square

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr Christopher Didizian

Mr Daniel Quirici

Mr Neil Carthy

Mrs Avril Cox

Lady Janet Marshall

Mr Ali Malek

Mrs Jane Bradbury

APOLOGIES

Mrs Anica Nishio

Mr Nicholas Davie-Thornhill

1. Mr Quirici was appointed meeting chairman.
2. The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 5th February 2013 were formally proposed, seconded and approved. Under items arising it was noted that i) no further action would be taken on the Code of Conduct as the Committee deemed it unnecessary and ii) The precept issue with the American Embassy had been resolved satisfactorily upon their payment of the monies owed.
3. Lady Marshall presented the Committee with a report on the state of the garden:
 - a. The garden experienced a wet spring and a hot, dry summer
 - b. In the annual Garden Squares competition we were awarded the bronze medal position, an improvement of one place over last year's result. We have now been placed among the top 4 gardens for the last 4 years in a row in an extremely competitive and hard-fought category. For this our thanks must go to the gardeners who always dedicate so much extra effort to ensure our garden looks its very best for judging at the end of June.
 - c. We have displayed the awards we have received on the front of the garden shed.
 - d. Trees
 - i. We lost 2 or 3 trees last year including an attractive cherry tree on the West side.
 - ii. We have all our major trees inspected on an annual basis
 - iii. The trees are healthy as evidenced by the dropping of twigs only during the storms of Winter 2013
 - e. The irrigation system failed during the month of August and repairs are not yet complete. Lady Marshall has met with an alternative firm of irrigation engineers and is seeking quotes to improve the coverage and reliability of the existing system.
 - f. The Committee APPROVED a supplementary budget of £1000 to cover any ad-hoc gardening work required during the year that is required but exceeds the contractor's agreed terms of reference.

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- g. We have an excellent working relationship with Robert Player and his team at Garden Associates and feel confident that he will respond positively to our request that more management and direction be given to the team of gardeners.
 - h. We have contracted to spend an additional £1000 for extra lawn and plant fertiliser.
4. The chairman and committee thanked Lady Marshall for all her efforts in the past year.
5. A financial report and draft accounts for the year to 31st March 2014 were presented by Mr Carthy. The income and expenditure for the month of March was a projection.
 - a. Income is projected to exceed expenditure by about £4,500, in part owing to a reduced level of tree surgery requirements in 2013.
 - b. The Committee now has reserves in excess of one year's expenditure and no increase in the precept will be sought.
6. It was AGREED that there will be no Summer Party this year. Summer parties will now occur every second year.
7. Mrs Bradbury reported on the Christmas Carol Party. All agreed it was a great success with more than 50 people attending and almost £1500 raised for charity. It was AGREED that invitations for next year's carol party will automatically be sent to Montpelier Square, Sterling Street and Montpelier Terrace only. However Committee members are encouraged to distribute additional invitations to friends or neighbours in the surrounding area.
8. The chairman reported that he had received a request from an owner of one of the houses on the square to retain his garden key after he had sold his property. The committee unanimously REJECTED this request.
9. A draft agenda for the upcoming AGM was presented to the committee by Mr Carthy. It was APPROVED for distribution. We will be inviting residents to put their names forward to join the committee at the same time as we distribute the agenda.
10. The matter of the planning application for the garden lights was discussed and the decision of the Westminster City Council planning committee was expected imminently. Mr Carthy confirmed that pressure of other commitments means that he can accept no further role in relation to the lighting issue.
11. The meeting closed at 8pm.