

# Minutes

## Friends of West Barnes Library Committee

Meeting 21st February 2017 at 7.15pm

### 1. Present

- Toby Ewin (Chair)
- Rachel Taylor (Vice-Chair)
- Penny Price (Treasurer)
- Dan Griffiths (Secretary)
- Karren McCarthy (Library Manager)
- Anthony Hopkins (Head of Library & Heritage Services)
- Theresa Clarke (Committee Member)
- Alison Honour (Committee Member)
- Mary-Jane Jeanes (West Barnes Ward Councillor)
- Brian Lewis-Lavender (West Barnes Ward Councillor)

### 2. Apologies

- Brenda Brevitt (Committee Member)
- Gilli Lewis-Lavender (West Barnes Ward Councillor)

### 3. Minutes of Meeting

Minutes of meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 were approved.

### 4. Matters Arising

TE has been in touch with the Friends of Worcester Park Library, with a view to exchanging ideas, but has yet to receive a response.

### 5. Library Manager's Report

Visitor number of 3,727 slightly down on previous month but up 1% year on year. Very quiet month, probably because most events didn't restart until mid-January. Sacred Heart and Blossom House school visits should boost February figures

Issues are now at zero decline on previous year, aiming to get positive in February. This is the best in Merton and a huge achievement. In comparison Morden library was at -14% and Wimbledon library at -10% for the same period.

Sacred Heart school has signed up all classes for visits this term and St John Fisher have signed up some classes with more to be scheduled. Blossom House school also attend once or twice a week for class visits.

TE suggested that, if Raynes Park folk were willing, we should consider expanding

the scope of the Friends group to cover both West Barnes and Raynes Park libraries.

The Committee were interested in exploring the possibility with AH of getting an outbuilding for WBL to use as storage space: e.g either the former public lavatory building (if it can be made rainproof) or a portakabin-type building in the present garden area.

## **6. Head of Libraries & Heritage Services Report**

AH explained that London Borough of Merton is in the final stages of a process to significantly reduce staff. It has been a challenging process and cost savings have had to be found but LBM is not reducing hours and not closing libraries. Changes affect WBL, Raynes Park, Colliers Wood and Pollards Hill libraries. There will be no changes to opening hours but reduced staffing in those hours. There is to be a consolidation of branch managers with one manager shared across two branches. KMcC will manage WBL and RPL commencing 2nd May 2017. Security personnel will be lone workers in some hours, plus of course volunteers. The Committee was pleased to hear Jogen will be staying at West Barnes.

Sadly Julie Willcox will be transferring to Wimbledon library at this time. The goal is to spread experienced staff across the libraries. Replacement will cover more hours than JW does. KMcC sad that JW is leaving, the pair of them work very well together. Committee registered their sincere thanks to Julie. She will be much missed and we wish her all the best at Wimbledon. Leaving drinks will be held in the Earl Beatty pub on Saturday 29 April (from 5pm) to celebrate the success Julie has contributed to at our library and to wish her farewell.

Coffee shop franchises are being opened in some local libraries. Space may be an issue preventing this happening at WBL unless the staff office area at the back of the building can somehow be reconfigured to release extra space.

## **7. Library re-development plan update**

Crossrail 2 has confirmed another round of consultation this year on options – possibly in April. In 2018 Crossrail will present preferred options, primarily around routes but may include infrastructure considerations. Any redevelopment on the library will be dependent on that decision so prospect of redevelopment is effectively on pause for foreseeable future. Hugely frustrating.

In the circumstances the Committee propose a shift of focus to how we can extend or otherwise improve the existing building in the short-term to promote and secure the long-term future of the library.

## **8. Officers' Reports**

Treasurer (PP) reported that total funds stand at £1,751.32. At 4<sup>th</sup> February we

have 45 new subscriptions to the Friends and the names added to the subscriber list. 512 people are now named on the membership list.

## **9. Update on Events**

- A spring flower arranging event is to be held 1<sup>st</sup> April by Alison Honor
- A craft session (card making) is to be held by Sarah McAlister
- A Spring Fair will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> April. The proposed time of 2-4pm will be reviewed as the Horticultural Society are also holding an event at that time.
- The Friends had also been approached by the Lighthouse Church in Seaforth Avenue who propose holding a community event in the park in the summer.

## **10. Any Other Business**

TE raised whether the Friends could purchase some small folding tables for use at events in the library (alleviating need to borrow tables from the Scout Group). However, storage space in the library is limited and storing off-site would not be ideal. The unused defunct public toilets next to the library were discussed and the Committee agreed to pursue this possibility with LB Merton (possibility of Merton conducting repairs to this building at the same time as repairing the library roof).

TE to provide prices for folding tables which will be reviewed at the next Committee meeting.

## **11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on 25th April 2017.

## Libraries Restructure Announcement

**From:** Karren McCarthy  
**Sent:** 21 February 2017 10:46  
**To:** FOWBL Committee  
**Cc:** Julie Willcox  
**Subject:** Libraries restructure  
**Importance:** High

Dear all,

I wanted to let you all know that there will soon be some changes taking place across the library service.

We are currently going through a staffing restructure in order to make savings for the Council. Unfortunately this has meant that some staff will be moving on to (hopefully) better things and come May 2 2017 we will have a smaller amount of staff across the borough. Also as from 2 May, Merton's 4 branch libraries (Raynes Park, Pollards Hill, Colliers Wood and Pollards Hill libraries) will have a reduced staffing presence at off peak times and the offer will be predominantly self-serve at these times. The new off peak times will be 9:30am – 10am; 12noon – 2pm; 5pm - 7pm Mondays to Fridays and 9:30am – 10am and 4pm – 5pm on Saturdays. For further information please visit: [www.merton.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.merton.gov.uk/libraries) '.

Julie, and I successfully made it through the interview process and secured our jobs. That being said, our senior management have decided to move staff around to different library branches in order to better distribute staff and their skills across the borough, so Julie will be leaving West Barnes at the end of April.

Paul, the lovely manager at Raynes Park, will be taking over responsibility for Wimbledon library and Julie will be working there full time too. I will become the manager at both West Barnes and Raynes Park and Tim will be joining me on my team at Raynes Park. Further staffing for WB and RP is yet to be confirmed and there is likely to be some completely new faces as there are currently some job vacancies, which if any of you are interested in applying for, can be found here under 'Customer Experience Officer': <https://recruitment.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/system-132/appcentre-MertonExternal/brand-1/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/7/adv/>.

Whilst this means some changes at West Barnes, we would love to see the hard work that we all have put in (including from yourselves!) continue to serve the WB community and keep the site running smoothly. I believe Jogen is planning to continue working as security guard so there will still be a friendly, familiar face.

We will all be very sad to see Julie leave West Barnes, her contribution here has been incredible and she will be sadly missed. I hope you will all wish her well. Our loss is certainly Wimbledon's gain and her skills will be welcomed there.

There will inevitably be a transition process which we will try to make as smooth as possible and we hope that you will continue to support us at West Barnes.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards

*Karren*

**Karren McCarthy**

Team Manager - West Barnes Library

## Income & Expenditure Report at 4<sup>th</sup> February 2017

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
	£	£	£
Membership Subscriptions	45.00		45.00
Donations			0.00
Autumn Fair 24.09.16	175.35	63.40	111.95
Xmas Quiz 02.12.16	98.00	75.70	22.30
Flower arranging	5.00		5.00
Craft Dec 16	10.00		10.00
Donations	40.10		40.10
Donations board game evening 03.02.2017	6.08		6.08
<b>Misc Expenses</b>			
Portable PA System		219.00	-219.00
Table covers		20.00	-20.00
	<u>379.53</u>	<u>378.10</u>	<u>1.43</u>
Cash at Bank @04.02.2017			1674.92
Cash in hand 04.02.2017			76.4
			<u>1,751.32</u>
Cash reserves b/fwd at 01.04.16			1749.89
Net expenditure 2016/17			1.43
Cash reserves c/fwd			<u>1751.32</u>