**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held virtually,**

**of The Friends of Finsbury Park**

**on October 29 2020**

**Present:** Beth Anderson Carrie Anker Barbara Baughan (Minutes) Konrad Borowski

Diane Burridge Clive Carter (co-Chair) Kasper de Graaf Kevin Duffy Tom Graham (co-Chair)

Annie Hall Bob Hare Simon Hunt Bruce Kent Jono Kenyon Margaret Ling Peter Lorimer

Nigel Lupton Dorothy Newton Douglas Palin (Company Secretary and Treasurer)

Quentin Pickard Lawrence Singha Geri Tomlin Hugh Whyte

**1. Apologies:** Sally Billot Katie Dawson Sarah Potter

**2. Minutes of the AGM 2019** (previously circulated): These were agreed.

**3. Matters arising:** There were none.

**4. co-Chairs’ Report** (previously circulated); presented by Clive Carter.

Much of the discussion that followed Clive’s presentation centred on the effects the pandemic has had on Finsbury Park. The park has been open and very well used throughout, and there was general agreement in the meeting that it has hugely benefited the local population: absence of large scale events has allowed the park to recover from the yearly damage to grass, paths and planting, and there was much praise for the work of Tony Healy and his team who have used the ‘fallow year’ for overall regeneration and improvements. Some further benefits have been the ban on motor vehicles and the suspension of discussion on TfL’s plans for using park land for a cycle track.

Our Chairs have attended various meetings, and have written letters to the Council, with varying degrees of success. It was pointed out that the results of the public consultation on the use of the park have still not been published. Meetings with the Police were more productive, and we can expect improvements in lighting and installation CCTV in the near future. In this connection concern was expressed about effects on wild life, and there was strong agreement that Friends should stay on message to promote biodiversity in the park. The Council is already planning for 2021 and this includes a period of large events concerts and this was felt to be an area of concern.

Tom Graham led the discussion into funding for the park, and reported some improvement in transparency on the part of the Council, but there is still concern about the future. The point was made that the park raises money through means other than the Events; for instance – what happens to the money earned by leasing the sports area and the tennis courts? Tom was aware of how restricted local authority funding is now, and the matter of contributions form Islington and Hackney was again raised. It was felt that, although the Council has not conceded that management should be shared, we should continue to press for tri-borough involvement. Tom informed the meeting that we are in the process of applying for a government grant of £40,000.

There was agreement that our focus for 2021 should be: to lobby for funds to keep the whole of Finsbury Park as a public open space; improvement of safety and reduction of crime; improvement of the appearance and the ‘feel’ of the park; a renewed drive to engage with our community and increase membership of the FFP.

**5. Treasurer’s Report** (formal account – Small Company – previously circulated)

Douglas Palin took us through the Balance Sheet. Our funds are currently reduced after the expenditure in 2019 for the 150th celebrations – including the publication of a new edition of A Park for Finsbury, which is selling through the 2NQ website. The Accounts were accepted.

**6. Election of Trustees/Directors/Management Committee**

Tom explained the procedure: 7 vacancies were open for election at this meeting; officers to be elected by the committee at a later at a management meeting.

The new committee is as follows:

Proposed Seconded

Jono Kenyon Tom Graham Douglas Palin

Clive Carter Tom Graham Kevin Duffy

Sally Billot Tom Graham Kevin Duffy

Eldridge Culverwell Tom Graham Clive Carter

Katie Dawson Tom Graham Diane Burridge

Beth Anderson Tom Graham Clive Carter

Lawrence Singha Tom Graham Kasper de Graaf

Tom Graham and Douglas Palin remain from the 2020 committee

Barbara Baughan and Simon Hunt will now leave the committee. Tom thanked them warmly for their contribution over the last 6 years.

**7. AOB**

Tom thanked 2NQ for their support, their contribution to the 150th celebrations and their current exhibition in the park.

Bob Hare told the meeting about the areas of wild flowers in Alexandra Park and suggested FFP could do something similar.

Diane Burridge suggested that the park staff should be formally thanked for their work that has been very much appreciated this year.

She also suggested that there should be signs discouraging large groups from holding barbecues and playing loud music in the park.

Geri Tomlin wondered whether the drum club performances could sometimes take place in different parts of the park.