

# Public Document Pack

## Chief Executive

**THE CIVIC MAYOR, CHAIR OF  
COUNCIL BUSINESS AND ALL  
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Steven Pleasant, Chief Executive  
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Our Ref	rl/Council
Ask for	Robert Landon
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Date	

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend an **ORDINARY MEETING** of the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council to be held on **Tuesday, 23rd July, 2019 at 5.00 pm** in the **Conference Room, Guardsman Tony Downes House, Droylsden** when the undermentioned business is to be transacted.

Yours faithfully,



**Steven Pleasant  
Chief Executive**

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From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Robert Landon, Head of Democratic Services, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
5.	<b>COUNCIL BIG CONVERSATION</b> To consider any questions submitted by Members of the public in accordance with Standing Orders 31.12 and 31.13.	1 - 4

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## ITEM 5 – COUNCIL BIG CONVERSATION

### Question 1

It is open knowledge that the Council received **£3,995,000.00 (nearly 4m) from the Lottery Heritage Fund**, which specifically stated the following, in its reasons for providing the funding.

**Quote:** The Investment **will repair and conserve key historical buildings and monuments**, improve park facilities with a new pavilion, with a café and meeting rooms, **restore historic planting**, create a new animal area for children and woodland areas will be opened up and restored. There will be additional volunteering opportunities as well as a programme of walks and talks aimed at the whole Community.

The **Grade II Listed Stamford Park**, has played an important community role for over **130 years**, providing a green Oasis for people to enjoy.

The lower part of the park, is largely formal in character and features a flower garden, bowling green, **1907 Conservatory** and a wooded area, known as the Dingle. **Unquote**

*The substantive structure of the current conservatory, the timber frame and the polycarbonate windows was built in the 1980's. At which point the structure lost all of its historical integrity.*

*In 2003 TMBC carried out a cosmetic refurbishment of the conservatory. This refurbishment is acknowledged not to be of the highest quality.*

*The Conservatory was not a priority for funding by HLF in 2007 as it was not the original glasshouse structure and had been substantially altered.*

### Question 2

Can the Council advise, exactly when and how, they carried out, the so called 'extensive discussions with the Community', as those of us, with an interest, cannot find any such records of anything taking place and in particular we would like to understand exactly who 'The Friends of Stamford Park' are, as there appears to be no formal records of their existence and how they are purported to have acted in the public's interests with regard not only to the Park in general, but more specifically with regard to the Conservatory, which has been closed for nearly 5 years.

*We have consulted:*

*In 2015 – the Heritage Lottery Fund.*

*In 2018 – Officers consulted with Ward Members on the following occasions:*

*5<sup>th</sup> February 2018, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and finally 1 November 2018*

*When the plans for the formal garden plan were presented for Member support.*

*A senior Council officer visited the Samuel Oldham Trust on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2018 to discuss this further.*

*The service has consulted a representative from Tameside Tourism.*

*There is not Stamford Park Friends Group – despite efforts to set one up during the Heritage Lottery Fund development.*

*Several significant features have been demolished and changed over the years, including the Paddling Pool and Apsley Villa.*

*When Apsley Villa was demolished this was due the Samuel Oldham Trust was engaged and the trust funded the replacement features.*

### **Question 3**

Can the Council advise why it applied for the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant, using the age and historical significance of the Conservatory, as a key element, but in recent correspondence to the public have tried to consistently claim that it has no historical significance whatsoever?

*The Heritage Lottery Fund Bid never included the refurbishment of the Conservatory.*

*The bid was for used to upgrade and maintain the integral historic feature, the flower beds, the stocks*

*It should be noted that Stamford Park has several features of historical significance:*

*Jethro Tinker Memorial*

*Flower bed designs*

*The Stocks*

*The Dingle*

*The Meteorites.*

*The original Ashton Market Cross.*

*The conservatory is not part of the historically significant features.*

### **Question 4**

Why wasn't the existing heating system maintained years ago to ensure the plants didn't die, including the main banana plant and why they didn't those responsible source our specific help maintaining them if they didn't feel capable?

*Access was prohibited on safety grounds. The conservatory is unsafe and this precluded the operation and maintenance of the building, including the heating system.*

### **Question 5**

If the council couldn't maintain the conservatory why didn't they rehouse the tropical plants?

*It is a misnomer that the Greenhouse was ever full of tropical plants in recent decades. It was not the home of rare tropical species. The plants in the conservatory were annuals and cacti commonly available in garden centres.*

### **Question 6**

Why has the date for demolition been brought forward?

*The date for final demolition has not been determined.*

### **Question 7**

Why have the leaders of Tameside council not communicated effectively enough with outside agencies regarding the future use of Stamford park conservatory. In particular the education authority and the agencies who support those with mental illness. Horticultural courses could offer valuable support, both educationally, emotionally and socially within these sectors.

*The Council is very keen to engage with all partners.*

*There is an extensive Wildlife Education Programme delivered through Cultural Services in our Parks and Countryside. Hundreds of Tameside School children visit our Parks and Countryside site throughout the year. We also engage with vulnerable adults and many specialist user groups.*

*We work with community allotment groups, we have a very successful Greenspace Volunteer programme for over 40 years.*

### **Question 8**

Can the Council provide factual evidence of the spending to date, since the receipt of the Funds was made, together with the amounts involved, in the repair and conservation of the **key buildings and historical planting** that were highlighted in the approval document statement, which clearly and unequivocally cited the **1907 Conservatory as one of the key items**, as based on the statement, this should all have been carried out and the people should now be enjoying the undeniable benefits of such a historic facility, that has brought joy to so many, for most of the 112 years of its existence.

*When a Heritage Lottery Fund is awarded, the fund set out spending limits on individual features*

*The HLF specified spending limits on individual features within the park, these excluded the Conservatory. The spend was based on public consultation that set out the priorities..*

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