

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

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Murad Qureshi AM

Chair of the Environment Committee
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
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London SE1 2AA

21 DEC 2011

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Date:

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Dear Murad

Thank you for your letter of 29 November following the recent Environment Committee meeting to discuss the future of the Royal Parks. I trust that the meeting on 12 October clarified the new governance arrangements for the Royal Parks and has reassured you of the important role the new Royal Parks Board will have in safeguarding the Parks for current and future generations.

As you are aware, I am in the process of appointing new members to the Board. Apurv Bagri has been appointed the Chair of the new Royal Parks Board, following approval by John Penrose. Under Apurv's stewardship the previous Royal Parks board helped guide the Chief Executive of TRP to manage the parks in an efficient manner, maintaining high standards of management during difficult economic times and cuts to the public purse. His skills and experience will be important in providing continuity to the Board during times of change as well as a significant period for the parks, given their important role in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and London 2012.

In line with the majority of other Mayoral board appointments I do not consider it necessary for the position of Chair to be subject to a confirmation hearing. All vacancies to the Board, including chair are being filled through an open and transparent selection process.

Regarding local representation on the Board, London Councils have nominated the Leaders of Camden, Greenwich and Westminster to the Board, to provide a voice for local interests. John Penrose has agreed these appointments too.

I have also recently advertised for up to three new Board members. Applications from representatives of the Friends Groups and other local stakeholders were welcomed and will be considered during the selection process.

It is important for local stakeholders have a voice in how their parks are managed. Once fully established, and the major events of 2012 are complete, I will be expecting the Board to explore the most appropriate way for local communities and frequent users of the parks to become involved in issues affecting the management of the Royal Parks.

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I expect the first meeting of the new Board to be held in February 2012. Minutes for this and all future Board meetings will be publicly accessible. The meetings themselves will not be public to reflect the public accountability arrangements Parliament has put in place for the GLA, that is the Mayor is answerable to the Assembly through MQT, through the publication of Mayoral Decisions and through the Assembly's scrutiny work. We also wish to reflect the primary purpose for establishing the Board and its Groups; that is to allow for a full and frank discussion of issues before the Mayor, where appropriate, is asked to take a formal view

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London