**Friends of Marcus Garvey Meeting – Saturday March 3rd 2018**

**Present**: Jasmin Taylor, Martin Ball (Minutes), Margaret Fowler, Nelcia Findlay, Beth Thomas, Sue Penny, Winsome Vassall, Luci Davin

**Apologies**: Juney de Aguilar

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:** It was clarified that FORE is the borough-wide umbrella Friends group for all the libraries. The minutes were agreed after this clarification.

**Agenda Items**

1. **Priorities to be Presented to the new Council on the Marcus Garvey Library and the Library Service as a whole**

Feedback at the meeting revealed that the Labour Party is putting together their election manifesto and that library services are featured. There followed a discussion on what the Friends felt should be the priorities of the next Council after the May elections. It was decided that we would consider short, medium and long term measures and also things that would involve little or no cost for the Council but would have a significant and beneficial impact on the library service. The no and low cost items on the list to be emphasised.

1. Relocation of the Customer Services Centre
2. Abandonment by the Council of the idea to make the door at the back of the library the main entrance and abandonment of the regeneration plan if its main function is to make the back door a viable public entrance. In fact, money could be saved by the new Council by not spending on other changes associated with that plan - No cost
3. The establishment of a children’s librarian in the Marcus Garvey library (in line with other libraries) along with the establishment of a children’s desk as a focal point for children coming into the library without a carer. The Marcus Garvey Library is the only main branch library without a staff member there specifically to “meet and greet” young children – Low cost. People with years of experience of working with children are still employed by the library service and could easily be transferred from Customer Services, back to Children’s Librarian duties.
4. Creation of a library steering group so that users and community representatives can have a more strategic input into the running of the library – No cost
5. To present again to the Councillors, the 33 problems identified with the refurbished library during the community audit carried out by the Friends when the library reopened, as most of the tasks on that list have not been carried out by council officers – Low cost
6. To re-establish the link between the library and the college next door. In the past librarians would contact lecturers at the college to find out what books were on their curriculum and order a few for the library – Low cost.
7. Relocation of the library service to a different directorate, such as Education as it was felt that the ethos of the library service differed from that of Customer Services
8. It was stressed that senior officers making decisions about the library should, as a minimum, have some previous library experience and/or qualifications, such as a degree in librarianship or information management, accredited by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals when taken on by the Council. If existing officers do not have the necessary qualifications, then the Council should encourage them to take the qualifications, and bearing in mind the impact their decisions have on the library service, might even decide to fund them – Low cost
9. Suggestion box to be made available to make it easy for residents to ask for new books or DVD’s – Low cost - The cost of the box!
10. Hard copies of complaints forms should be made available to residents again, again as the online complaints system is too complex – Low cost
11. Proposal to have a meeting with the local ward Councillors after the election in May to discuss the library services in Tottenham – No cost
12. Improvement of the signage to the library and inside the library, e.g. size – Low cost
13. Council to instigate survey of library users to provide evidence of what users want and their experience of the Customer Service Centre operating alongside the library. Low cost
14. **Library Statistics**

Analysis of usage of Haringey libraries has been completed for the Friends by a retired librarian. The statistics confirms that MG Library is slipping down the table of libraries and this is because of the impact of customer services.

It was discussed whether the figures for MG include the numbers actually using the customer service centre? The entry gate counts those passing through. Not why they have come to the building.

It was agreed to make a Freedom of Information request to get the information on the library usage into the public domain.

3. **Bernie Grant Exhibition**

Work on the Bernie Grant image is nearly complete.

Various people have been interviewed by the college students

Launch date has been postponed, but no new date yet agreed.

4. **AOB**

Mention of the consultation on the Future of the Tottenham High Road and the opportunity for the Friends to comment on their demand to improve signage to the library. Jasmin agreed to submit the views from the workshop on the Children’s Garden which took place at the Community Consultation Event on the library to the consultation.

**Date of Next Meeting** : Saturday 12th May 2018