**Friends of Marcus Garvey Meeting – Saturday May 12th, 2018 2 p.m.**

**Present**: Jacinth Thomas, Nelcia Finlay, Beth Thomas, Alexis Shepherd, Isidoros Diakides, Mary Yacoob, Martin Ball, Margaret Fowler, Sue Penny Luci Davin, Jasmin Taylor

**Apologies**: Juney de Aguilar, Winsome Vassall

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:** Agreed.

**Agenda Items**

1. **Letter to the Chief Executive Requesting the Reinstatement of the Youth Library**

A letter was sent to Zina Etheridge from the Friends asking for the reinstatement of the Youth Library at Marcus Garvey in response to the sad news of the deaths of Tanesha Melbourne-Blake in Tottenham and Amaan Shakoor in Walthamstow. The Friends had already raised their concerns with Council officers more than a year and a half ago about the removal of the Youth Library from the refurbished library. The original Youth Library had been set up and designed to be a haven for those who did not wish to get involved in the area’s gang culture. A year and a half ago the officers had said that they would reconfigure the space to recreate a Youth Zone, but so far there had been no movement on their part. The Chief Executive had passed the letter onto Andy Briggs, Assistant Director – Customer Services and Libraries who had responded on April 24th. The Friends said they were not particularly impressed with the contents of this letter. They pointed out that the highly successful chess club at Marcus Garvey had not been initiated by Council officers, but by residents and the Friends group, and that the coding club was being developed at Wood Green and not at Marcus Garvey. It made it appear that any available resources were always diverted to the other libraries and not Marcus Garvey. Our request for a Children’s desk was met with the idea of a mobile workforce with tablets.

Isidoros pointed out that the new Council was fully aware of the lack of youth facilities in the borough and that there would be activities such as summer schools being provided in the near future, but it would take time to get youth facilities up and running again.

At the end of his letter Andy Briggs had said that the head of libraries would get in touch for a meeting to talk through ideas for the new layout. It was agreed that Nelcia, Martin, Jasmin and anyone else who was available would attend that meeting.

1. **Draft Letter to New Council on Our Priorities for the Libraries**

A final version of the priorities discussed at our March 3rd meeting was agreed. Once we knew who the new Council and councillors were, a letter with the priorities would be addressed to the cabinet member responsible for libraries, to our ward councillors and also councillors in neighbouring wards. In the letter the cabinet member and other councillors would be asked to attend our next meeting to discuss the priorities to let us know how they were to be acted upon.

1. **Recently Submitted Freedom of Information Requests**
From the statistics we have obtained using the Freedom of Information process it is evident that the imposition of Customer Services has impacted negatively on Wood Green and Marcus Garvey.

It was agreed that Jasmin would pass the statistics onto the member of the Friends group, (the retired librarian) for analysis to ascertain their viability. He and another member had previously spotted discrepancies in the issuing and visitor statistics for 2017, which the Council have previously submitted to Friends of Reading and Education, so there may well be discrepancies in these statistics. After he had checked through the statistics, we would pass them onto our member who is good at graphs, so that we could send them out in an easy to understand format to the rest of the Friends.

**4**. **The Two Design Options for the Children’s Garden by the Architects Adams and Sutherland**

The two plans passed onto us by Stefan Krupski from the Regeneration Team were discussed. It was pointed out that there did not appear to be much green space left in either of the two plans, but that this could be due to the need for wheelchairs and buggies to be able to move around freely. We discussed the possibility of expanding the children’s garden out sideways, as Fusion did not make use good of the space.

It was finally agreed that it was difficult to comment on the viability and safety of the plans without Yeliz being there as she was the expert on this subject. Jasmin is to contact Yeliz and ask her and any other Friends if they were available, to meet with Stefan Krupski and/or the architects to discuss the plans in more detail.

**5. Progress Made on the Bernie Grant Exhibition**

This is progressing well. Sharon Foster from Alicia Dean Artworks has already created the mural and the picture donated by Sharon Grant, his widow has now been mounted. All that remained was the work created by the students at CONEL. Jasmin said she has been regularly to the college and spoken to the teachers and students and seen much of the work they had created. Jacinth and Isidoros have been interviewed. CONEL’s term does not end until mid July and they appear to be working to that deadline. The college is going to do their own printing and buy their frames. They have already been advised on this by Sharon Foster who also will advise them on mounting their work.

It was agreed that Jasmin would keep in touch with the teachers, Selda and Sharon Wallace from CONEL.

**AOB**

**Dates of Next Meetings**

July 14th

September 8th

November 10th