

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 15 September 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held at Committee Room 2 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 15 September 2014 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Jeremy Simons (Chairman)
Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy John Barker
Karina Dostalova
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Ann Holmes
Clare James
Edward Lord
Professor John Lumley
Deputy John Owen-Ward
Tony Ghilchik (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Maija Roberts (Open Spaces Society/Ramblers' Association)
Philip Wright (English Heritage)

Officers:

David Arnold	Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	Chamberlain's Department
Edward Wood	Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Sue Ireland	Director of Open Spaces
Bob Warnock	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	Operational Services Manager, Hampstead Heath
Esther Sumner	Ponds Project & Management Support Officer
Paul Monaghan	Department of the Built Environment

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Alex Deane, Alderman Ian Luder, Councillor Melvin Cohen (London Borough of Barnet) and Councillor Sally Gimson (London Borough of Camden).

Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed Philip Wright as a new Co-Opted Member of the Committee, representing English Heritage as the new General Manager of Kenwood House.

2. **MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

Mr Tony Ghilchik declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 17, Hampstead Heath Ponds Project funding of the judicial review, by virtue of being a member of the Heath and Hampstead Society, and undertook to leave the room during the consideration of this item.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That:-

- a) the public minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee meeting held on Monday 9 June 2014 be agreed; and
- b) the draft public minutes of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group meeting held on Wednesday 4 June 2014 be noted.

4. **DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk that provided details of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee and the Projects Sub Committee, in accordance with Standing Order number 41(b), since the last Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

5. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2013/14 - HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK**

The Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Open Spaces that compared the revenue outturn for the services overseen by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee in 2013/14 with the final agreed budget for the year.

The Committee were advised that the proposal to carry forward £217,000 worth of underspend across the Open Spaces Department into the current year had been agreed. Of this, £30,000 had been allocated to activities overseen by this Committee, including £10,000 towards a Parliament Hill feasibility study to identify possible future savings and income increases and £20,000 towards the introduction of new signage at Hampstead Heath.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Hampstead Heath updated the Committee on the following matters relating to Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Hampstead Heath Ponds Project

The remaining Ground Investigations (GIs) at Hampstead No.1, Catch Pit and Stock Pond, which had been delayed due to nesting birds, were carried out successfully on 1st and 2nd September, completing all GIs.

Divers carried out a survey of the platform and columns at the Ladies' Pond during early September, which took three days instead of the anticipated four. Ladies' Pond users were invited to use the Mixed Pond facility during the three days the facility was closed during the day. Members were advised that a report would be presented to Atkins, the project designers, as the results of the survey were critical to inform the detailed design of the new facilities at the Ladies' Pond.

The Superintendent advised that emphasis had moved towards detailed design following the submission of the planning application on 4 July 2014. This had so far involved working with the design team on path surfacing details, the specification of fences, designs for cladding and planting proposals to reduce the impact of the sheet piling. A booklet of information would be sent to members of the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group for information and comment.

Property

Hampstead Garden Suburb Great Wall

Restoration work to the Great Wall had commenced after initial vegetation clearance and would last for 47 weeks.

Parking Consultation

The London Borough of Barnet was reviewing parking restrictions around the Heath Extension. The City had been consulted and supported the proposals for a parking break in the daytime.

Lido

Members were advised that replacement of the gates and posts at the entrance from Gordon House Road would commence in late September 2014. The rebuild of the boundary wall and café repairs would be undertaken between March and May 2015.

Parliament Hill

Six of the tennis courts were due to be resurfaced from the end of September for a period of about eight weeks. In response to a Member's question, the Operational Services Manager advised that they would remain as hard courts and no consideration was given to any other type of surface.

Golders Hill Park

The toilets near the children's playground reopened in July and had operated successfully through the school holidays. The Park Team would arrange more regular tank cleaning and the City Surveyor's Department was continuing to investigate a longer-term solution.

Members were advised that the render at the Hill Garden Shelter would be removed and replaced with ply-wood to allow for drying out, and tanking of the steps over the shelter. This would be undertaken between March and May 2015. Associated works would also be carried out at the Belvedere.

Planning Updates

The Water House

The Superintendent advised that the planning application was still current. Quotations would be obtained from Consultants for undertaking of a critical review of the applicant's documentation regarding the impact of construction traffic on Millfield Lane.

Athlone House

The applicant submitted an appeal for non-determination of this planning application on 20 June 2014. Three reasons for refusal were given, which related to the impact on Metropolitan Open Land, the lack of a Basement Impact Assessment and the lack of a legal agreement requiring sustainable construction. A planning enquiry would be scheduled to be held in February 2015.

Highgate Police Station

Members were advised that a planning application for the demolition of Highgate Police Station had been submitted to the London Borough of Haringey. It would need to be considered whether this application would have any negative impact on Highgate Wood.

Weddings & Civil Ceremonies at Hill Garden & Pergola

The Superintendent advised Members that five ceremonies had taken place during the summer, with a total income of £5,250. The feedback received from attendees had been very positive. There were six confirmed bookings scheduled for 2015 and a further two bookings for which deposits were expected shortly.

In response to a Members' questions, the Superintendent advised that a Friday and Saturday ceremony had occurred on the same weekend once and that a report regarding income generated from weddings and civil ceremonies would be presented at the next appropriate Committee meeting.

Sports

The Superintendent advised that a consultation with the Sports Forum was due to take place on 22 September 2014 about an additional rugby pitch at the Heath Extension. This proposal would then be presented to the next Committee meeting as well as the next Consultative Committee meeting.

Staff

The new Senior Zoo Keeper and Engagement Officer had been in post for four weeks at the time of the Committee meeting. Members were also advised that a City Business Trainee had been based at Heathfield House for seven weeks where she worked on the Weddings & Civil Ceremonies brochure as part of her internship, as well as undertaking 60-second surveys at Highgate Wood, Queen's Park and Parliament Hill.

Constabulary

There had been three recent successful prosecutions at Hampstead Heath: two related to dog control and the other related to cycling.

Service Based Review

The Superintendent advised that the Open Spaces Department was projected to save £2.189 million, with savings across North London Open Spaces of about 17% by 2017/18. He advised that a full report would be considered at the next Committee meeting, including proposals for delivering the savings.

Around the Sites

Highgate Wood

Members were advised that the City Surveyor's Project Team had arranged for a number of fencing repairs around the site, including an improvement to the existing layout of the Onslow Gate entrance, and that the Heritage Day in August had been a successful and well-attended event. The new tiger mulch surface installed in the play area has also been very successful and was saving a significant amount of staff time.

Queen's Park

The Open Gardens event in June and the Outdoor Cinema throughout August and September had received much positive feedback from attendees.

The Superintendent also advised that this year's annual Queen's Park Day on 14 September attracted 14,860 people to the Park. The Chairman added his thanks to all those involved in the organisation of such a successful Queen's Park Day.

Members were also advised that the Queen's Park team were working with the local community to raise funds for the third and final phase of the playground redevelopment.

Hampstead Heath & Kenwood

Members were advised that the Superintendent was working with the Head of Historic Properties from English Heritage to develop a new scheme of joint signage which would be installed at all major entry points to both the Heath and Kenwood Estate. These signs would comprise a large-scale map and information about facilities and activities across the sites.

In response to a Member's question, Philip Wright (English Heritage) advised that the new structure that had replaced the gazebo, which was deemed to be unsafe, would include more information for visitors. Mr Wright advised that concerns about the new structure would be raised with the Head of Historic Properties at Kenwood House.

Visits

The Superintendent advised that the Town Clerk's visit to Parliament Hill and Golders Hill Park on 1 September was a great way for him to see the site and meet with staff members.

Conservation Team Update

The Conservation Team had its usual busy summer, with the added pressure of dealing with the aftermath of the wet winter. Managing the meadows across the Heath had produced 160 large bales and strategic poppy seeding was undertaken at several locations as part of the First World War centenary. The Operational Services Manager advised that the poppies bloomed in June and July but the area might have benefited from some additional irrigation.

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

Members were advised that it was best to assume that OPM would arrive at one of the three North London Open Spaces in the near future as they had significant populations of mature oak trees, especially at Highgate Wood. 17 male OPMs had been caught in pheromone traps across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park but the Director of Open Spaces noted that this was not an immediate cause for concern as no females had yet been found. Good working links had been established with the Forestry Commission, who were responsible for co-ordinating the control of OPM in London.

The Tree Team

Members were advised of ongoing work for the Veteran Wild Service management programme, which involved reduction and bracing of some trees and reduction works to a veteran Oak on the Tumulus field.

Awards

Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park all received Green Flag and Green Heritage awards in 2014. In addition, Golders Hill Park was recently awarded a London in Bloom Gold Award for Large Parks over 25 acres and was also the category winner. The Committee noted that this was an excellent achievement.

7. HAMPSTEAD HEATH TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain that outlined the Hampstead Heath Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2014, presented in the format required by the Charity Commission.

The report covered both the operations of Hampstead Heath and the Hampstead Heath Trust Fund, which managed the investment of £15 million that was originally transferred from the London Residuary Body to help defray the management and maintenance costs of the Heath.

The Chairman noted that the fixed assets for Hampstead Heath for 2014 had doubled compared with the previous year. This was due to expenditure on the Ponds Project.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. **HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK KILBURN TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain that outlined the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2014, presented in the format required by the Charity Commission.

Members of the Committee noted that Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park could not be maintained without the generous grants awarded by the City of London Corporation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. **MITIGATION OF CR11 - HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT - RISK UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of the Built Environment that updated Members on the mitigation of Corporate Risk 11 in relation to the Ponds Project.

Members were advised that the Heath and Hampstead Society had applied for judicial review; the timetable was still to be confirmed but it was hoped that the hearing might be heard in November 2014. Members noted that the planning application to the London Borough of Camden was submitted on 4 July 2014 and that project work should commence on site at Hampstead Heath in early 2015, subject to the outcome of the judicial review and planning permission being obtained.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. **PONDS PROJECT STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding the way forward for the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group (PPSG).

The Committee began by paying tribute to the late Mr Ian Harrison's contribution to the PPSG and the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, on which he represented the Vale of Health Society for 25 years. The Chairman also added his thanks to all members and groups represented on the PPSG for their involvement with the Ponds Project.

Members were advised that there would be less opportunity for consultation with the PPSG as the project moves to construction as the detailed design would be concluded. Moving forward, the emphasis of the PPSG would focus on information giving and receiving of feedback.

Members were also informed that the summary table of PPSG feedback from Seminars in April, May and June would be updated and re-issued with a detailed design booklet.

RESOLVED – That:-

- a) the contribution made by Ian Harrison to both the PPSG and the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee be noted;
- b) the appointment of Karen Beare as Chairman of the PPSG be approved;
- c) the shift in emphasis of the PPSG towards information sharing, including introduction of hard hat tours, quarterly PPSG information meetings and increased use of the website and newsletters to engage in wider Heath issues, be approved.

11. HAMPSTEAD HEATH EDUCATION CHARGING REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that sought approval of the proposed new charging structure for the Hampstead Heath Schools Programme.

The Superintendent of Hampstead Heath advised Members that the current charging structure, in place since 2006, did not cover the associated teaching costs of the Programme. The Superintendent advised that a change in structure from per student to per session charging would also streamline administration and improve budgeting.

In response to a Member's question, the Superintendent explained that the minimum charge for a two hour session for 30 students was £90 but this price would increase with the number of students. Prices would be agreed at the next meeting of the Committee, once the proposals to change the structure had been approved. A Member suggested that the Education Board should be made aware of the extent of the educational work undertaken by the Open Spaces Department.

RESOLVED – That the 'per session' charging structure for the Hampstead Heath Schools Programme be approved.

12. HAMPSTEAD HEATH EVENTS PROGRAMME, JANUARY - AUGUST 2014

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that detailed the success of the Hampstead Heath Events Programme from January to September 2014.

Members were advised that the events programme consisted of 93 sports, wellbeing and cultural events which engaged with over 80,000 members of the public. The Superintendent then advised that 114 people had competed in the 16th Heath Duathlon on Sunday 31 August 2014.

The Committee requested that the Town Clerk look into ways of informing all Members of the Court of Common Council of events relating to the North London Open Spaces via the Member's Briefing.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

13. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

In response to a Member's question, the Chairman advised that Officers had tried to adjust Committee walk dates in March and September to avoid clashes with the Community and Children's Services Committee but it had not always been possible.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was none.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100a(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph No.</u>
16	3, 5, 7
17	3

16. OPEN SPACES SERVICE BASED REVIEW

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding the Open Spaces Department Service Based Review.

17. HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT - FUNDING OF THE JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Committee considered a report of the Director of the Built Environment.

18. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were none.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was none.

The meeting ended at 2.58 pm

Chairman

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