

QUEEN'S PARK JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP Wednesday, 12 June 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group held at The Salusbury Rooms, 103 Salusbury Road, London, NW6 6RG on Wednesday, 12 June 2013 at 12.00 pm

Present

Members:

Jeremy Simons (Chairman)
Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman)
Dennis Cotgrove
Barbara Newman CBE
Cllr James Denselow
Cllr Michael Adeyeye
John Blandy
Helen Durnford
Paul Stratton

Officers:

Simon Lee	- Superintendent of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park
Richard Gentry	- Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager
Alistair MacLellan	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mary Arnold and Annalisa Saba.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2012 were approved as an accurate record subject to 'November' being deleted on page one, item three.

Matters Arising

Queen's Park Café – the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath briefed Members that all four café leases in the North London Open Spaces Division had been approved by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee in May. The café operators had been written to and the Corporation's expectations made clear regarding the use of staff uniforms, customer comment cards and mystery shopping. In response to a question the Superintendent confirmed that the lease for Queen's Park Café

had not yet been formally signed and that the operator had been a tenant-at-will for the past six months.

At a Member's request, the Queen's Park Residents' Association's dissatisfaction with the lack of a tender exercise for the Queen's Park Café lease was noted in the minutes.

Tennis Courts – The Queen's Park Manager advised he had spoken to the Tennis Coach and that the Coach had been given access to four courts. An advance in-person booking system had been implemented in February 2013 and this new system would be reviewed over the summer. In response to a question the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath said that the introduction of online booking was an aspiration that was subject to existing resources and would be considered further as part of the review of the current system over the summer.

In response to a question, the Queen's Park Manager agreed to keep the current allocation of four courts for coaching/children and two courts for adults open to review given that this potentially restricted access for adults during the summer months.

Personal Trainers – In response to a question the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath confirmed that the latest legal advice was that the Corporation had no power to license personal trainers using the Park. He said that the Royal Parks were able to license personal trainers under a regulation that the Corporation of London did not possess. He agreed that it would be worthwhile for Members of the Committee to contact their local MP to raise their concerns. In the meantime the Queen's Park Manager confirmed that staff were regularly briefed on the potential to use byelaws to prevent the attachment of exercise props to trees and railings, and that there was potential to publicise this in park literature.

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE REPORT**

The Queen's Park Manager provided a verbal update to the Committee and covered the following points:-

Background

- The Park continues to be well used with over one million visits in 2012/13.

Ecology and the Environment

- The amount of seasonal bedding sourced from West Ham Park for use in the Quiet Garden has been reduced for budgetary reasons.
- A John Deere Gator electric vehicle has been obtained from elsewhere within the North London Open Spaces Division, the use of which will hopefully lead to a reduction in diesel usage this year.

- The Hampstead Heath Arboricultural Team were regularly surveying the Park for tree disease. In response to a question, the Queen's Park Manager confirmed that the ash trees in the Park were being monitored for Ash Dieback but that at present this was not present in the Park.

Sports and Recreation

- A contractor recently treated Tennis Courts 5 and 6 for moss growth.
- A report on the new advance booking system for the tennis courts would come to the Committee in November.
- Queen's Park Rangers have been asked to provide a soccer training school in the Park over the summer.
- The Park Manager has had discussions with the Brent Council Sports Officer over a programme of sport for 7-14 year olds.
- The City of London and Queen's Park are accepting Spice Time Credits for tennis and pitch and putt games on selected days of the week, and volunteers have been sought for the Park. In response to a question, the Queen's Park Manager stated that to date no-one had cashed in their credits.

Conservation and Heritage

- A draft leaflet has been produced, for which the Park Manager requested Members to provide feedback.

Landscape Management

- The Hampstead Heath Arboricultural Team and external contractor ACS Consulting have carried out safety works on 34 trees in the Park, including crown reduction and removal of dead wood. Works were carried out in three tranches during the winter to minimise the impact on the public.
- The desire line created by joggers and walkers adjacent to Kingswood Avenue has been slit and seeded.
- 130 metres of Common Hornbeam was installed in the area of the new play equipment in April 2013 and the edges softened with natural planting with the help of the local community.

Operational Management

- A new contract with Enterprise for general waste collection began in January 2013.

- Recyclables continue to be collected by Veolia on behalf of Brent Council.
- In response to a question, the Chairman noted two apparent issues with the use of compactor bins in the Park: that they were only available for lease, not purchase and their appearance would potentially not conform with the aesthetics of the Park.
- Budget reductions will see the loss of one full-time post in the Park in March 2014.
- Netting and spikes had been installed on the lychgate to deal with pigeon nuisance.
- Staff had repaired and maintained park benches during the winter.
- The Park hosted a 'Winter Gathering' in December 2012 for over 200 visitors.
- The Lord Mayor of London and the Worshipful the Mayor of Brent visited the Park in March 2013 to plant a Common Oak.
- Further events are planned for 2013, including an outdoor cinema.
- The Park Manager is advertising events through the Hampstead Heath Twitter feed. In response to a question, the Committee agreed that it was worthwhile considering the creation of a dedicated Queen's Park Twitter feed.
- New interpretative signage had been installed in the Children's Farm.

Representation on the Joint Consultative Group

- The Park Manager has contacted four local residents groups who potentially have an interest in the management of the Park. In response to a question, he agreed to contact the Kensal Rise Residents Group using contact details to be provided by Councillor James Denselow.
- The Chairman noted that two interested parties could attend the November Committee as observers ahead of a formal request for membership being made to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee.

5. DRAFT QUEEN'S PARK CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Park Manager introduced the draft Conservation Management Plan (CMP), noting the appointment of Chris Blandford Associates as consultants, the structure of the CMP and the establishment of focus group meetings in

November and December 2012. Some recommendations of the CMP are relatively simple and are already being progressed using the Risk Budget.

The Committee proceeded to discuss the CMP, and the following points were made:-

- The CMP should be subject to a further two to three rounds of consultation.
- Community consultation could follow the model established by Burnham Beeches and Hampstead Heath: the use of story boards, postcard feedback, stalls at established events such as Queen's Park Day. Analysis arising from this should then be subject to further communication activity.
- The revised CMP should come back to the November Committee, following consultation at the last major event in the Park in September.
- Consultation of the statutory consultees should not be overlooked.
- The CMP should have page numbers as well as/instead of paragraph numbers for ease of reference.
- The CMP should be highlighted on the Corporation of London website.
- The CMP should feature at the next Brent Connect event – Councillor James Denselow to contact the Park Manager to arrange.

6. **QUESTIONS**

Two questions were posed:-

- In response to a query, the Park Manager agreed to contact Annalisa Saba (who was not able to be present at the meeting), about the possibility of creating a dedicated area for parents with special needs children near the Queen's Park Café.
- In response to a request, the Chairman and the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath agreed to facilitate a tour of Hampstead Heath on the date of the next Committee meeting.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Subject to confirmation of venue the next Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group will be held on Wednesday 20 November at 11:30am on Hampstead Heath, and will involve a tour of the Heath.

The meeting ended at 12.50pm

Chairman

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