

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 9 March 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at
Parliament Hill Conference Room, Parliament Hill Staff Yard, Parliament Hill Fields,
Hampstead Heath, NW5 1QR on Monday, 9 March 2015 at 7.00 pm

Present

Members:

Jeremy Simons (Chairman)
Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman)
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Nigel Ley (Open Spaces Society)
Joanne Mould (London Wildlife Trust)
Susan Nettleton (Heath Hands)
Mary Port (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Stewart Purvis (Vale of Health Society)
Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Ellin Stein (Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Richard Sumray (London Council of Sport and Recreation)
Simon Taylor (Hampstead Rugby Club)
John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Jeremy Wright (Heath and Hampstead Society)

Officers:

Alistair MacLellan	Town Clerk's Department
Nigel Lefton	Director of Remembrancer's Affairs
Sam Cook	Parliamentary Assistant, Remembrancer's Department
Bob Warnock	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Richard Gentry	Queen's Park and Constabulary Manager
Declan Gallagher	Operational Services Manager
Meg Game	Hampstead Heath Ecologist
Paul Maskell	Leisure and Event's Manager
Jonathan Meares	Highgate Wood and Conservation Manager
Alison Hurley	Assistant Director, City Surveyor's Department
Sunil Singh	Senior Building Surveyor, City Surveyor's Department
Paul Monaghan	Assistant Director, Department of the Built Environment

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Xohan Duran (Representative of Disabled Users on the Heath) Dr Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society) John Hunt

(South End Green Association) and David Walton (Representative of Clubs using the Heath). The Town Clerk noted that John Hunt would be represented at the meeting by John Etheridge. The Chairman welcomed Joanne Mould (London Wildlife Trust) to her first meeting.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3 November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Hampstead Rugby Club Request for a Third Rugby Pitch

The Chairman reported that the request for a third pitch had been approved by the Hampstead Heath Management Committee at its meeting on 24 November 2014. Simon Taylor updated the committee that the opening date of the new pitch was planned for 19 September 2015, around the time of the Rugby World Cup.

4. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS ADVISORY FORUM MINUTES**

Richard Sumray updated members on issues discussed at the February 2015 Sports Advisory Forum. He highlighted three issues in particular, namely the forum's concern at the water loss at the Lido, potential habitat issues posed by the Mid-Summer Trail Run, and the support of the Forum for the establishment of a Green Gym on the Heath.

The Chairman noted that the Green Gym proposal was outlined in greater detail within the agenda pack. The Superintendent went on to explain that the proposal had been raised by the London Borough of Camden's Head of Sport and Physical Activity, and the views of the Consultative Committee were now sought. He noted that the eventual location of the gym would be dependent on demographic work to be undertaken by Camden, and moreover the gym would not be aimed at serious gym users but instead persons to whom greater health and wellbeing had been recommended by their local doctors.

Jeremy Wright noted that he was supportive of the proposal in principle but concerned over where the gym would be located. It should not be located in Duke's Field or the space around the pentanque area where it would likely affect the recently planted orchard and create an area vulnerable to erosion. He understood that the gym equipment would require hard paving, therefore he recommended the gym be sited near the Trim-Trail, the Lido, or in the corner of the cricket field behind the old garage.

Richard Sumray noted his support for the proposal due to its health and wellbeing benefits. He suggested that the gym would need to be located somewhere where it could be seen and readily accessible. He added that he would like to see similar proposals for Golders Hill Park and the Heath Extension. The Chairman noted that this was more a matter for the new Barnet Park Champion.

Simon Taylor noted that a Trim-Trail location made sense given that it would complement both the playground and the athletics track.

Susan Rose noted that she considered the proposal potentially unsightly, and that it would detract from the natural aspect of the Heath. Mary Port agreed, noting that siting the gym would be crucial – it should not be near a main entrance but instead on the Trim-Trail or near the Lido.

Colin Gregory added his support for the health and wellbeing benefit of a gym, and for its potential location on the Trim-Trail. He queried whether it would be sensible to look at other locations of outdoor gyms so a judgment on best-practice and ideal items of equipment could be made.

In response to a question from Colin Gregory, Richard Sumray replied that no view had yet been taken on a Cross-Country event on the Heath Extension.

John Weston added that he would welcome a look to be taken at other gyms to establish what kit would be best. Richard Sumray noted that the company that operated the equipment was experienced and able to make a judgment on what equipment to operate on the Heath.

In response to a question from Mary Port, the Chairman replied that the London Borough of Camden would be responsible for ensuring the maintenance of the equipment for the first three years. The Superintendent undertook to convey the views of the Consultative Committee to the London Borough of Camden.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent provided an update on recent activity and issues affecting the Heath.

Savings

By the 2017/18 Financial Year, the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces Department would be required to find £2.2m of savings. A more detailed paper on proposed savings would be submitted to the Consultative Committee at its July 2015 meeting. To inform the decision to be made on savings, seven themes were being developed to help prioritise the work undertaken by the Open Spaces Department. These included a *Learning Programme* that would review the education 'offer' of the Open Spaces, looking at outcomes around education and play activities. This programme would include an application to The City Bridge Trust. The review would affect several activities and services across North London Open Spaces, such as the One O'Clock Club, Golders Hill Park Zoo and Queen's Park Children's Farm, and the Heath Education Centre.

A *Sports Programme* would be a similar piece of work that sought to evaluate the 'offer' provided across North London Open Spaces, inherent in which was an exercise to gather baseline information on current services and performance, including customer service surveys.

A *Various Powers Bill* would be submitted to Parliament seeking changes to legislation governing Open Spaces to give clarity and flexibility to management of Open Spaces, enabling more efficient and effective services. The Superintendent noted the proposed Bill was a substantive item on the agenda.

Greater effort would be made across City Corporation Open Spaces to *promote services*, to raise awareness of the range of services provided, their cost, and any opportunities for income generation.

Savings would be sought through greater *energy efficiency* in departmental business and management plans, in order to reduce utility consumption, promote renewable energy and, through a linked theme reduce fuel consumption.

Linked to the energy efficiency savings theme was a *fleet and equipment review* to establish how the existing fleet resources of the Open Spaces Department could be better utilised.

Lastly, work was being done on *wayleaves*, to introduce a more regular and structured approach to the review and management of wayleave agreements, to ensure the cost of managing wayleaves was reflected fairly in the charges levied for their introduction. The proposed approach would first focus on motorgates, then handgates, and would conclude with a review of service agreements.

In response to a question from Michael Hammerson, the Superintendent confirmed that the required savings were £2.2m by 2017/18, which equated to 14% of the Open Spaces Department's budget.

Property – Lido Café and Boundary Wall

The Additional Works Programme works to the Lido Café were scheduled for completion during the first week of May. The bricks for the parapet wall were in poor condition and would therefore be replaced using salvaged bricks taken from the collapsed boundary wall. This in turn would affect the completion date for the boundary wall. Appropriate replacement bricks for the boundary wall would be discussed with Heritage Officers from the London Borough of Camden.

Property – Lido Pool

Divers would be employed to examine the lining of the Lido pool.

Property – Golders Hill Park Toilets

The Golders Hill Park toilets had been operating effectively since July 2014 thanks to new macerators and a revised maintenance programme.

Property – Parliament Hill Café Planters

Work on replacement planters had commenced in early March 2015 and was due to be completed by 13 March.

Property – Upcoming Works

The Golders Hill Park Stumpery recirculating pump would be installed during drier weather. Reed clearing and cleaning of granite paving was due to commence on Whitestone Pond. Ha-Ha railings and damaged railings near Whitestone Pond were due for repair in late March 2015. Remedial works to new tarmacking on the Parliament Hill tennis courts that had been laid in September 2014 would be undertaken during March, with a final surface coat applied in April. The Parliament Hill vehicle entrance barrier was due for replacement. The Parliament Hill Athletics Track floodlight control gear and lumieres would be replaced. The drinking fountains at Parliament Hill Playground and Staff Yard would be re-commissioned once the risk of freezing had passed, around late March or early April 2015.

Planning – Athlone House

The appeal inquiry had concluded on 27 February 2015, with a decision expected on 12 June. The City Corporation had instructed Counsel and engaged an expert witness to give evidence at the inquiry.

Planning – The Water House

The report of a City Corporation consultant on the applicant's Construction Management Plan (CMP) had been submitted to the London Borough of Camden on 13 February 2015, and the Camden Planning Officer had submitted the application for review by Camden Highways colleagues. The Superintendent added that he now understood the applicant had submitted a revised CMP. In response to a query from Michael Hammerson the Chairman agreed that the report on the CMP could be circulated to wider members of the Consultative Committee.

Planning – Parliament Hill School

The City Corporation had submitted a representation to the London Borough of Camden. The Superintendent reported that the application would be considered by Camden's Planning Committee on 12 March.

Weddings

Five weddings had been held at the Hill Garden and Pergola during 2014/15, with good feedback received. Deposits had been paid for a further sixteen weddings during 2015/16. A new handrail had been installed on the approach to the Hill Garden in February 2015. The Superintendent would be reporting on the impact of weddings on the site to the September 2015 meeting of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee.

In response to a suggestion from John Weston, the Superintendent agreed to investigate whether couples getting married at the Pergola wished to sponsor replacement beams which could either be engraved or given a commemorative plaque.

Staff

Recruitment to one of two current vacancies in the Hampstead Heath Constabulary had been completed. The Heath Assistant Operational Services Manager had been successful in her application to become West Ham Park

Manager. The Ponds Project and Management Support Officer had been successful in her application to become the Open Spaces Departmental Business Manager.

Team – Conservation and Ecology

Heath Ecologists had installed 9 bat boxes with a further 8 due for installation. The Conservation Team had been gorse coppicing on both Sandy Heath and West Heath, as well as having laid a hedge parallel to the path leading to the Lido. The Team had also been assisting Ponds Project Contractors in tree felling work by clearing chippings and moving timber from around the Stock Pond.

Team – Golders Hill Park

The Team had completed the redesign and landscaping of the Eagle Owl enclosure.

Team – Parliament Hill

The metal vehicle barrier posts at the Highgate Road entrance had been replaced with wooden posts to soften the appearance of the area.

Team – Tree Team

The Tree Team had installed Christmas trees and lights at Parliament Hill, Golders Hill Park, and Queen's Park. The Team had also carried out partnership working with colleagues at Burnham Beeches to manage veteran beech pollards.

Swimming

The Lido hosted the Parliament Hill Icy Swim Hootenanny (PHISH) event on 17 January 2015, which with 200 participants had been a success. At the Men's Pond, the annual Christmas Day Swim had also been a success, with 150 persons taking part in four races, and with 200 spectators attending. A divers' inspection of the Men's Pond and Mixed Pond jetty had taken place on 6 March 2015, with a report on the structure's integrity due shortly.

Hampstead Heath Constabulary

The Superintendent noted two reports from the Constabulary featured on the agenda. He added that the Constabulary had responded to 145 incidents up until the end of February 2015, 22 of which related to cycling and 12 to dog control. First aid had been provided on 4 occasions. Sadly there had been an incident of suicide on the Heath, near the Mixed Pond, in early January, with Constabulary officers attending the scene to work with Metropolitan Police colleagues to cordon off the area. The Constabulary had taken delivery of new Airwave radios in February 2015 and had started using them as of early March 2015.

On the conclusion of the Superintendent's update, members discussed matters arising. In response to a question from Colin Gregory concerning the future of Golders Hill Park Zoo, the Superintendent replied that a Senior Zoo Keeper and Engagement Officer had been employed to improve the operation of the zoo. Work to date included improved presentation and interpretative boards. Further

work was being undertaken to develop the zoo 'offer' further to make it sustainable.

In response to a question from Susan Rose regarding the removal of a tree from Lime Avenue, the Conservation and Trees Manager replied that the tree in question had been subject to structural issues that required it to be removed. He added that the resulting gap would be replanted. In response to a comment by Michael Hammerson the Conservation and Trees Manager agreed to consider whether the replacement would be a lime or ok tree.

The Consultative Committee agreed to order business so that the reports of the City Surveyor were considered at that stage of the agenda.

6. **PROVISIONAL ADDITIONAL WORKS PROGRAMME 2016/17**

The Chairman introduced a report of the City Surveyor on the Additional Works Programme (AWP), noting that the works for 2015/16 had been fully funded. He added that whilst AWP projects had been fully funded for the past few years, this would not necessarily always be the case in future years. The Assistant Director added that the 2016/17 AWP proposals featured 99 projects on the Heath totalling £1.4m. These proposals would require the approval of the City Corporation's Corporate Asset Sub (Finance) Committee at its meeting in July 2015 before final approval granted by the City Corporation's Resource Allocation Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee at the end of 2015. The 2016/17 tranche of works were planned for a three-year cycle, with 60% of the projects taking place in the first year.

The Chairman noted that he had received notice of a question from Dr Gaye Henson, who had submitted her apologies for the meeting. Dr Henson queried why £50,000 had been allocated to the paddling pool. This amount seemed unnecessarily high, more so given doubts over its long term future. The Assistant Director replied that the costs were indicative only, and the provision for the paddling pool was made in the absence of any firm decision on its future simply to ensure the capacity existed to ensure it could be brought up to standard if need be. Should a decision be made that meant the £50,000 was not needed, this could be reinvested in other AWP projects.

Colin Gregory noted that it was difficult for the Consultative Committee to give guidance over how to prioritise the proposed projects given there was little context with which to judge the relative importance of each project.

Jeremy Wright noted the proposed £250,000 budget for the resurfacing of the Parliament Hill Athletics Track, and queried when the track had been last resurfaced and at what cost. Richard Sumray further queried to what standard the track would be resurfaced. The Operational Services Manager replied that the track had been last resurfaced a decade ago at a similar cost, and that a track specialist would be employed to bring the track up to the required AAA standard.

7. **HILL GARDEN PERGOLA**

The Senior Building Surveyor introduced a report of the City Surveyor on the Hill Garden Pergola. He noted that the proposed work was mainly to address issues of damp and water damage. He added that the proposed budget of £200,000 would require an increase, likely to be achieved through the Additional Works Programme.

Michael Hammerson noted that the previous repair works to the Pergola had not weathered well. The Operational Services Manager agreed that the render had not been properly sealed and this issue was being addressed with the contractor. In response to a further question from Michael Hammerson, the Operational Services Manager agreed to investigate how long the original Hill Garden timbers had lasted. Colin Gregory added that it would be worthwhile establishing the opinion of relevant societies such as the Victorian Society, English Heritage and the Twentieth Century Society on how best to replace the pergola timbers giving consideration to conserving a number of the original timbers.

In response to a query from Ellin Stein, the Chairman replied that English Heritage was unlikely to co-fund repairs to the Pergola.

8. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT UPDATE**

The Superintendent updated the committee on recent activity undertaken as part of the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project. He noted that site clearance work had started during February 2015 and that felled timber had predominantly been removed from the site, but some had been kept *in situ* to prevent tractor damage to the ground surface. The timber was being used to create deadwood habitats, or was being milled.

He went on to note that he had met with the Ponds Project Stakeholder Group (PPSG) at the Stock Pond to hear their concerns at the felling of a group of trees on its south west corner. The PPSG had requested the decision be reviewed in favour of a box culvert which, whilst allowing five trees to be retained, would entail the construction of a visible concrete structure which would not be in keeping with the character of the pond or the Heath. The request had been submitted to the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project Board which reviewed the pros and cons of each option and decided to continue with the original proposal of felling the trees to create a grass lined spillway to the west of the dam, and a decision letter had been issued to that effect.

The Superintendent went on to add that the Community Working Group (CWG), a forum established by the section 106 agreement, had met for the first time on 23 February, and that a member of the Highgate Society was now a CWG member. The CWG would meet monthly, with the next meeting being held on 23 March. Going forward it was likely Monday evening meetings would be avoided as this clashed with Camden Council meetings that local ward Councillors were obliged to attend.

The Superintendent noted that the aim was to keep two ponds open at any one time during the project, which would entail intensive use of the Mixed pond

during the winter. The swimming opening times of the ponds had been consolidated from 24 separate times down to 7, which had increased swimming time available by five hours.

The Superintendent added that the construction contractor BAM Nuttall had begun constructing its work base within the Kenwood Nursery Yard. He concluded by noting that a female swan on the Highgate chain of ponds had injured its leg and was being treated at an animal hospital for around a month. In the meantime the male swan was being monitored by staff for aggressive behaviour.

Jeremy Wright expressed surprise that the update report did not reference and summarise the judicial review that had taken place since the Consultative Committee last met.

In response to a query from Ellin Stein regarding the increase in vehicle traffic on the Heath during the construction phase, the Superintendent replied that there had been no change to the agreed CMP, and that stakeholders would be consulted on any changes when appropriate. In response to a suggestion from Mary Port that a banksman be employed, the Superintendent replied that vehicle movements would be subject to risk assessments and method statements. With the aim of restricting vehicle movements to between 1000-1500 during the day so as not to conflict with school times.

Ellin Stein commented that the felling of mature trees around the Stock Pond appeared to more than was planned, and had been the subject of a letter to the Ham & High last week. She asked whether there were any similar surprises in store during the course of the project. The Superintendent noted that the Chairman had replied to the Ham & High letter that Ellin Stein had referenced, and that the felling of the Stock Pond trees had been the subject of a discussion with the PPSG, and that there had been no subsequent change of plan. The PPSG had asked for a review of the decision to fell the trees. This review had taken place, and the Project Board had decided to proceed with the original plan to fell the trees to make way for a spillway.

Susan Rose commented that the level of brush clearance around the ponds was disconcerting. Their appearance now was too municipal and tidy. The Superintendent replied that this was a consequence of the preparation works and would help prevent any nesting birds from coming to harm when the construction phase began. Susan Rose added that she felt there had been too much clearance of brush around the Ladies' Pond, to which the Superintendent replied that the clearance work was necessary prelude to construction of the spillway.

9. **OPEN SPACES LEGISLATION**

The Director of the Remembrancer's Affairs introduced a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on Open Spaces Legislation. He explained that the City Corporation proposed to submit a private Bill to Parliament in order to update the legislation that governed the City Corporation's Open Spaces. He noted that the varying characteristics of each

of the City's Open Spaces meant that some of the proposed amendments were more relevant to Open Spaces such as Epping Forest, than they were to Hampstead Heath.

He went on to add that the proposed changes focused on three main areas, namely the general management powers governing the Open Spaces; the ability to raise revenue, for example from persons using the Open Spaces for profit; and enhanced enforcement which, he noted already existed on the Heath, except for the ability to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). He concluded by noting that ideas and feedback from those present would be welcome so that this could be incorporated into the private Bill ahead of its November 2015 submission date.

Colin Gregory commented that the devil would be in the detail, and that the paper before the committee provided an outline of the proposals only. He queried to what extent the private Bill offered a single package of powers, and whether the three themes could be taken forward separately of one another. He felt that the theme of enhanced enforcement was the least controversial of the three, followed by revenue raising powers and powers of general management. He queried whether it would be more sensible to pursue greater enforcement powers by other means. The Director of Remembrancer's Affairs replied that the passage of a private Bill was a complex process, and that if some aspects proved too controversial they would be removed to allow passage of the Bill. He emphasized that none of the powers sought would conflict with the current obligation for the City of London Corporation to maintain the natural aspect of the Heath.

Richard Sumray commented that a key issue was how policy would develop out of each of the three proposals. He felt that the ability to raise revenue would prove problematic, and therefore the City Corporation should outline each area of revenue it was seeking to develop. He went on to note that the Metropolitan Police had long had the ability to issue FPNs and he personally was uncertain as to the efficacy of their impact. He concluded by noting that Dog Control Orders were not mentioned within the report, only dog walking.

Jeremy Wright felt that this was a significant paper, and that the Heath and Hampstead Society would be keen to comment on it in detail at the earliest opportunity. He felt that the public paper before the committee only hinted at the powers the City Corporation was seeking for itself, and that there must exist a more detailed rationale behind the move to seek amended powers. He concluded by noting that he would welcome the Consultative Committee being afforded the ability to comment further before the proposal was submitted to the City Corporation's decision-making committees. The Director of Remembrancer's Affairs emphasized that this was an informal consultation exercise to seek comments.

In response to a question from Jeremy Wright regarding the proposal to increase the leases offered on buildings within the Open Spaces, the Superintendent replied that no decision had yet been taken regarding a preferred period of time.

Michael Hammerson felt that the terminology within the report was too vague. Moreover he noted that infrastructure was often below ground thus not affecting the natural aspect of the Open Spaces – however he queried whether this actually affected local water tables and associated habitats.

Susan Nettleton expressed concern that the ability to raise revenue would lead to the ‘financialisation’ of the Open Spaces, and even if the intent was to make minimal use of revenue raising powers in the short term, this could change over the next decade or so if budget pressures remained. In contrast to Michael Hammerson, she also suggested that the City Corporation was at risk of boxing itself in with the language it was using in seeking amended powers.

The Parliamentary Assistant commented that the City Corporation had inherited the powers of the Greater London Council when it had taken over the management of the Heath in 1989. Powers relating to FPNs had arisen subsequently, and Dog Control Orders (DCOs) featured in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act (2014). Hence the current desire to update existing legislation.

The Chairman concluded discussion by noting the issue of Open Spaces legislation would return to the Consultative Committee in July 2015. Richard Sumray requested that more detail on intended policies arising from amended powers be provided at that stage.

10. **ANNUAL REPORT ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSTABULARY FOR 2014**

The Constabulary and Queen’s Park Manager introduced an annual report on the Hampstead Heath Constabulary for 2014. Richard Sumray commented that it was an excellent report and queried the reason why the byelaw offences had seen a significant increase in public nuisance, particularly dog control. The Constabulary Manager replied that this was largely due to improved reporting processes and the Dog Control Action Plan being introduced in March 2014.

On the issue of dog control, Mary Port commented that there were too many dogs and commercial dog walkers on the Heath and queried whether numbers could be restricted. The Constabulary Manager replied that he did not have any powers to restrict, but guidelines did exist for the management of dogs on the Heath. He added that the Constabulary would continue with the Dog Control Action Plan in order to educate persons walking dogs on the issues involved.

Jeremy Wright referred to a paragraph within the report which he felt had been phrased poorly. It read as if poor dog control on the Heath was being associated with commercial dog walkers. He felt the two issues were distinct: instead the two issues were persons exercising poor dog control with one or two dogs, as well as persons walking large groups of dogs. Susan Nettleton added that, in her experience, persons walking large groups of dogs were exercising more control of their dogs of late.

11. **UPDATE REPORT ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH - PUBLIC SEX ENVIRONMENT OUTREACH WORK**

The Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager introduced an update report on public sex environment outreach work and noted that he was seeking the Consultative Committee's endorsement of continued partnership working with the Terrence Higgins Trust and associated stakeholders.

Colin Gregory commented that the report showed that the current arrangements and relationships between various parties were working well. Jeremy Wright noted that the report focused on the area of West Heath, but that public sex activity took place on other areas of the Heath as well.

The Constabulary Manager agreed that outreach work focused on West Heath, and that the Constabulary worked with their colleagues in the Keeper/Ranger Teams to identify other areas where public sex took place so that appropriate education could take place.

Jeremy Wright referred to a paragraph within the report which referred to 'users' and 'stakeholders' – he suggested that greater effort should be made to engage with wider users of the Heath to establish their views on the use of areas of the Heath for public sex.

In response to a question from Ellin Stein, the Constabulary Manager replied that a rough analysis of social media suggested that the number of persons using West Heath was on a downward trend. In response to Jeremy Wright's earlier observation, he emphasized that the Constabulary sought to engage with all users of the Heath.

RESOLVED, that the Consultative Committee support the continuation of partnership work on Hampstead Heath during 2015 by the Hampstead Heath Constabulary, Terrence Higgins Trust, and other stakeholders and partners.

12. **LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT THE NORTH END ROAD ENTRANCE INTO GOLDERS HILL PARK**

The Consultative Committee considered and agreed the proposals outlined within a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding landscape improvement works at the North End Road Entrance into Golders Hill Park. The Chairman noted that members had visited the area in question during their recent walk across the Heath and Golders Hill Park.

13. **LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT WORKS AT PARLIAMENT HILL (KITE HILL), HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

The Operational Services Manager introduced a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on landscape improvement works at Parliament Hill (Kite Hill). He noted that the summit of the hill was a popular venue for views over London and was therefore heavily compacted. He noted that the proposed response was not to use hard surfaces in order to cope with the areas heavy use, but instead seek to manage the wear of the site in such a way that was sensitive to the natural aspect of the Heath – this would be done using seven principles outlined within the report. He concluded by outlining proposed works,

including relocation of bins (and the provision of additional temporary bins at busy periods such as New Year Eve and Bonfire Night); decompaction of soil on a rolling basis; and updating and resiting of interpretation boards.

John Etheridge commented that he did not wish for the trees on the southern slope of Kite Hill to be cut back. Mary Port replied that, instead, she agreed with the views expressed on the Saturday Walk that the trees in question should be cut back and restricted in order to open up the vista across London. Jeremy Wright agreed, and suggested that the view opened up should be wider than that set out within the Strategic View adopted by the Greater London Authority.

In response to a question from Susan Nettleton regarding a new sign, the Superintendent replied that the current sign would be updated using a modern photograph accompanied with a QR code to be used by persons with smart phones. He added that the Heath and Hampstead Society had kindly agreed to fund the new signage.

Richard Sumray commented that he would not welcome additional benches on Kite Hill. The Operational Services Manager replied that no additional benches were proposed, simply relocation of the existing number.

In response to an observation from Mary Port regarding the installation of cobbles around the interpretative signage, the Operational Services Manager commented that this would be an improvement to the existing unsightly concrete base.

14. UPDATE ON TREE SAFETY MANAGEMENT AT THE NORTH LONDON OPEN SPACES DIVISION

The Highgate Wood and Conservation Manager introduced an update report on tree safety management at the North London Open Spaces Division. In response to a question from Colin Gregory, he replied that there were limited access implications arising from any outbreak of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) given that areas of current outbreaks tended to be municipal parks where the OPM could be easily monitored. However, he noted that if OPM were to appear within heavily wooded areas such as Highgate Wood it would be necessary to impose some access restrictions for public safety. He added that central government funding for the treatment and management of the outbreak was continuing but was becoming increasingly prioritised as the problem grew.

15. ELEVEN YEARS OF PLANT MONITORING ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH

The Hampstead Heath Ecologist introduced a report on monitoring activity undertaken primarily on native species which, although invaluable to wildlife, had the potential to spread to an unwanted degree. She noted that invasive species such as creeping thistle, ragwort, hogweed and bramble were all spreading on the Heath. She noted that whilst there was no legal requirement to manage the spread of such plants, a balance had to be struck between encouraging biodiversity and enabling public access. In response to a question from Colin Gregory on the potential use of herbicide, the Heath Ecologist replied that she was reluctant to utilize it too soon.

16. **QUESTIONS**

Restoration Work (Public and Sporting Events)

John Etheridge commented that he would welcome a restoration plan on the agenda each year detailing how the City Corporation restored the Heath to its natural aspect following major sporting and public events, such as Cross Country races. The Superintendent replied that he was happy to consider the request, and noted in the meantime that cross country routes were carefully selected in conjunction with the Conservation Team, and that restoration work was put in place immediately after each race and event. He noted that some restoration work was dependent on the ground conditions.

Planning Brief for Ivy House

Michael Hammerson queried whether a planning brief existed for Ivy House overlooking Golders Hill Park – the Superintendent agreed to contact the London Borough of Barnet.

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

Park Champions

The Chairman noted that the Hampstead Heath Management Committee had considered a recent report of the Heritage Lottery Fund on public open spaces, one recommendation of which was the adoption of Park Champions, typically local politicians who were in a position to act as advocates of their local open spaces. He added that the management committee felt it best the local ward Councillors among its membership were best places to fulfill such a role for the Heath, with similar appointments for Queen's Park and Highgate Wood from among their consultative committees.

Chairman's Last Meeting

The Chairman noted that this would be the last Consultative Committee meeting he would Chair - before he stood down as Chairman at the end of his three year term in April 2015. He thanked members of the consultative committee for their role as an essential source of advice and guidance.

Jeremy Wright

The Chairman then noted that it was also the last meeting of Jeremy Wright, who had represented the Heath and Hampstead Society on the Consultative Committee for many years. He thanked Mr Wright for his comments and guidance during that time and called on him to accept, on behalf of the Committee, a framed print of the nineteenth century Heath as a small token of the Committee's thanks.

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting on Monday 6 July at 7.00pm in the Parliament Hill Conference Room was noted.

The meeting ended at 9.06 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer:

Alistair MacLellan / alistair.maclellan@cityoflondon.gov.uk / 0207 332 1416

DRAFT