

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 20 July 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 20 July 2015 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Virginia Rounding (Chairman)
Jeremy Simons (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy John Barker
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Ann Holmes
Clare James
Edward Lord
Professor John Lumley
Barbara Newman
Graeme Smith (Ex-Officio Member)
Councillor Melvin Cohen
Martyn Foster (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)
John Beyer (Heath & Hampstead Society)
Maija Roberts (Ramblers Association/Open Spaces Society)
Philip Wright (English Heritage)

In Attendance:

Billy Dove (Chief Commoner)

Officers:

Alistair MacLellan	Town Clerk's Department
Susan Attard	Deputy Town Clerk
John Park	Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	Chamberlain's Department
Edward Wood	Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Nigel Lefton	Office of the City Remembrancer
Alison Hurley	Assistant Director, City Surveyor's Department
Paul Monaghan	Department of the Built Environment
Sue Ireland	Director of Open Spaces
Bob Warnock	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	Operational Services Manager, Hampstead Heath

The Chairman welcomed Graeme Smith to his first committee meeting, and welcomed the Chief Commoner who was in attendance.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Karina Dostalova, Alderman Ian Luder and Councillor Sally Gimson.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 **Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2015 be approved as a correct record.

**Matters Arising
Events**

The Chairman noted that a review of how well events on the Heath were being advertised to all members of the Court would take place by January 2016.

Conservation and Ecology

The Chairman noted that the wildflower meadows at Dukes Field, the Heath Extension and the Old Hockey Pitch were now in bloom.

3.2 **Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015 were received.

The Chairman noted that whilst the Group was not supportive of an outdoor gym, it was supportive of the proposal to stage marriage and civil ceremonies within the Park.

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3.3 **Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2015 were received.

A member noted that whilst the Heath & Hampstead Society was not opposed to the proposed City of London Open Spaces Bill, it was keen to be involved in its formulation. The Director of Open Spaces noted that the convening of an additional Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting was being considered to consider the draft Bill.

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4. **GRANT GIVING: REPORT OF CROSS-CUTTING SERVICE BASED REVIEW**

Members considered a report of the Town Clerk regarding the City of London Corporation's grant making activities and noted a resolution of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee dated 8 June 2015.

RESOLVED, that

- Members agree to adopt a more structured approach to grant giving which is jointly governed by all Open Spaces Committees and which is publicised and managed as part of the City Corporation's suite of grant programmes;
- That the resolution of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee dated 8 June 2015 be agreed, and that the Chairman/Deputy Chairman, Martyn Foster (RSPB) and Deputy John Barker be appointed as the Hampstead Heath Committee representatives on the Open Spaces Grants Working Party.

5. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2014/15**

Members considered a joint report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces on revenue outturn for 2014/15.

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6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath. The Superintendent provided some additional comments.

Property

The final roof works on the Parliament Hill Lido Café would take place towards autumn 2015.

Planning

The planning application for the Water House had yet to be determined.

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

The number of nests detected had increased to 12. A contractor started work on 13 July to remove identified nests. It was likely that more nests had yet to be identified given areas such as West Heath and Sandy Heath had not yet been checked, as the current focus was on popular running routes. Additional resources were being provided to the Tree Team and follow-on spraying of nest sites would take place in spring 2016. The Chairman noted that OPM had long term resource implications for the City Corporation Open Spaces.

Events

Recent events had been successful and had seen good examples of partnership working with the Metropolitan Police and the London Borough of Camden. The Chairman thanked a member for representing the committee at the GROW London event and noted that she wanted all Committee members to feel they were free to be proactive in representing the Committee at events.

Operations

Swimming - The heatwave on 13 June had seen 2,800 swimmers at the Lido, requiring 15 rescues. A further 10 rescues had been made at the Mixed Pond. Heath staff had made additional efforts to monitor swimming in unauthorised areas of the Ponds.

Lavatories –Both public lavatories at Golders Hill Park had to be closed due to blockages on Sunday 19th June. Temporary toilets have been hired.

Golders Hill Park Zoo

In response to a question, the Superintendent confirmed that a Senior Zoo Keeper and Engagement Officer had been recruited on an 18 month contract. The Officer had made improvements to interpretative boards and increased volunteer engagement with the zoo. The zoo was subject to wider City of London Corporation service based reviews and would be the subject of a full Committee report in due course.

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7. HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT - UPDATE REPORT

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on the Ponds Project. The Superintendent noted that the temporary coffer dam installed at the Model Boating Pond had a leak where two sections of the piling were not correctly aligned. This requires the piling rig to return to site, but the project timetable was flexible enough that the delay did not present a high level of project risk.

The Superintendent added that the meetings of the Community Working Group were proving useful, and that an external auditor had judged the majority of complaints to be common issues associated with major projects.

The Superintendent then noted that there would be a meeting with the Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association in August to discuss works to the slab supporting the Ladies' Bathing facility, and a proposed new bathing facility.

The City Surveyor added that the project was on-budget and on-programme and that the next report to the Committee would examine project risks in greater detail.

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8. HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT EDUCATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on the Ponds Project Education Programme. In response to a question he confirmed that the programme was funded from the Policy and Resources Committee's *Policy Initiatives Fund*.

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9. REPTILES ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH

Members considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding reptiles on the Heath. The Operational Services Manager noted that the information gathered assisted works to manage habitats on the Heath.

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10. **PARLIAMENT HILL VIEWPOINT INTERPRETATION**

Members considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding the viewpoint from Parliament Hill. The Superintendent noted that long term proposals were being considered in conjunction with the Heath & Hampstead Society and a report would be submitted to the next Consultative Committee meeting.

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11. **LOCATION OF AN OUTDOOR GYM AT PARLIAMENT HILL**

Members considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on the proposed location of an outdoor gym at Parliament Hill, and noted the views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and the resolution of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee that any proposal should be fully funded for the lifetime of the equipment.

RESOLVED, that

- The outdoor gym be located on the Trim Trail.
- Authority be delegated to the City Surveyor in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces and the Comptroller & City Solicitor to settle all other necessary items to protect the City's interests and that the Comptroller & City Solicitor be instructed to settle any necessary documentation.

12. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE REPORT - QUEEN'S PARK**

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on Highgate Wood and Queen's Park matters. He noted that squirrel damage in Highgate Wood necessitated extensive coppicing that had tree cover implications within the Wood.

He concluded by noting that two OPM nests had been removed from Queen's Park.

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13. **APPLICATION TO OPERATE MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES AT THE QUEEN'S PARK BANDSTAND**

Members considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on an application to operate marriage and civil partnership ceremonies at the Queen's Park Bandstand. The Chairman noted that the comments of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group had been incorporated into the proposal.

RESOLVED, that

- The Queen's Park Bandstand be approved for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies for the initial licence period of 36 months.

14. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

Location of Committee Meetings

In response to a suggestion from a member that the Committee meet 'in the community' at venues at or near Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park, the Town Clerk agreed to prepare a paper outlining options and implications of such an approach. The report would reflect comments of members, which included the implications on staff and officer time of 'on-site' meetings away from the dedicated committee meeting facilities at Guildhall.

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

Forthcoming Dates

The Chairman noted that the Committee Walk scheduled for 11 September 2015 clashed with a meeting of the Community and Children's Services Committee. The Town Clerk undertook to look into resolving the clash.

The Chairman noted that the Hampstead Heath Committee Dinner was scheduled for 12 October 2015.

15.1 **Additional Works Programme 2016/17**

Members considered a report of the City Surveyor on the Additional Works Programme 2015/16. The Chairman noted that the running track replacement was no longer on the programme due to its £250k cost, which meant it was now a capital project rather than an item of additional work.

In response to a query, the Assistant Director replied that the running track capital item would need to be considered for funding in line with the City Corporation's capital project process.

In response to a further query, the Director of Open Spaces replied that there were no implications arising from replacement of oak beams at the Pergola whilst OPM was present in the City's Open Spaces.

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The meeting ended at 12.35 pm

Chairman

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