

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday, 9 January 2017

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 January 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present

Members:

Virginia Rounding (Chairman)
Karina Dostalova (Deputy Chairman)
Nick Bradfield (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Dan Braverman(Heath Hands)
John Etheridge (South End Green Association)
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Residents' Association)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Dr Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society)
Nigel Ley(Open Spaces Society)
Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood)
Thomas Radice (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Ellin Stein (Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee & Neighbourhood Association Committee)
Richard Sumray (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Simon Taylor (Hampstead Rugby Club)
David Walton (Representative of Clubs using Facilities on the Heath)
John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)

Officers:

Fern Aldous	-	Town Clerk's Department
Carl Locsin	-	Town Clerk's Department
Bob Warnock	-	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Sue Ireland	-	Director of Open Spaces
Jonathan Meares	-	Open Spaces Department
Declan Gallagher	-	Open Spaces Department
Lucy Gannon	-	Open Spaces Department
Richard Gentry	-	Open Spaces Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ray Booth (Barnet Mencap), Joanne Mould (London Wildlife Trust) and Stewart Purvis (Vale of Health Society).

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2016 be approved as an accurate record, subject to the following changes:

“It was confirmed that the Freedom of Information request submitted by the Kennel Club was in relation to the reporting of enforcement action against dog owners.”

To become

“It was confirmed that the Kennel Club were seeking a change to the legislation to allow for data in relation to enforcement action against dog owners to be the subject of Freedom of Information requests.”

Matters Arising

Heath Hands Age Profile

The Chairman of Heath Hands provided a detailed response to a question posed at the previous meeting. Of the 170 active Members, those under the age of 25 made up 14%, those 26-40 made up 24%, those 41-55 made up 23%, 54-65 made up 28% and 65+ 11%. This represented a significant shift towards younger volunteers from previous years; since April 2015 those under the age of 55 had risen from 39% to 44%. It was felt this was in part due to the age profile of those involved in the successful “Wild about Hampstead Heath” Project.

Drones

A Member (Highgate Society) queried whether the City of London Corporation would need to be granted permission to fly drones on the Heath. It was confirmed that the City or an appointed contractor would need to apply for Civil Aviation Authority permission to carryout commercial drone activities such as aerial survey, aerial photography or facilities inspections.

Walks

The Superintendent confirmed that the Heath and Hampstead Society had been contacted about expanding and collaborating on the 2017/18 walks programme. It was proposed that the City’s walks would be complimentary to the Society’s programme. The potential for joint walks was also being considered, however administrative issues such as the Society’s charging policy would first need to be resolved.

3.2 Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Minutes

The Committee received the minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee held on 21 November 2016.

RECEIVED

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Superintendent provided an update on recent operational and management activities that had taken place across the Heath since November 2016.

The Superintendent reported the sad news that Glyn Roberts, a Duty Lifeguard who had worked on the Heath for almost 25 years, had passed away. The Committee wished to express their sincere condolences to his family.

Restructure of Culture, Heritage and Libraries Department

An organisational change within the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Department had resulted in Keats House coming under the responsibility of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath. However, Keats will continue to report to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee. Responsibility for Tower Bridge and the Monument would also be brought into the Open Spaces Department.

Business Plan

Following a presentation from the Open Spaces Department Business Manager the Committee discussed the business planning process as it related to the 2017/2018 plan. The Committee's views were sought on their ambitions and outcomes they felt were most important both for Open Spaces generally and Hampstead Heath specifically, and submissions by email were welcomed.

It was noted that the business planning process and the budget planning process were not currently well aligned, with the budget being set before the business plan was determined. The timescales of the process would be amended to allow for the plan to inform the budget in future. Members were supportive of this.

The Committee discussed the "People, Place, Prosperity" themes which were likely to inform the City's Corporate Plan. A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Resident's Association) felt that "wellbeing" would be a more suitable term than prosperity to describe the principle behind the management of the Heath. It was agreed that synergy was needed between the management plan and the business plan, and a policy needed to be in place where conflict, particularly conflict relating to the need or desire for the Heath to be "prosperous", occurred between the plans. There was agreement that the plan for the Heath needed to reflect the needs of users and nature together. The Superintendent felt that such a mission statement needed to be strategically placed in the Divisional Plan.

A Member (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) felt that the outcomes based approach to business planning should avoid the mantra that "more is better", and that quality of services and preservation of environment were just as important.

Cafés

The Café lease options appraisal report to this Committee has been delayed to allow the Café Working Party more time to evaluate the findings from the Café engagement and consultation exercise.

Members discussed the options for the Lido Café lease. It was proposed that a tendering exercise would be undertaken for a short term lease up until January 2018 to bring it in line with the other Cafés. There was a long term ambition for the café to be able to open year round, but the short term lease arrangement would be flexible to cater for the 2017 season. Members were supportive of this approach.

A Member (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee) outlined a proposal for the improvement of the Parliament Hill Café. It was noted that the nature of the short term leases impacts on the ability of the leaseholders to make significant capital investments in the facilities.

Eruv Proposals

The Superintendent led a discussion on the proposals to construct an Eruv at two locations on Hampstead Heath. Members felt that although they did not disagree in principle to the installation, it should not have an impact of the natural landscape and should not increase the visible built environment. The Superintendent would provide feedback and request further proposals that are less visually intrusive.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Superintendent introduced three projects which have been put forward to apply for funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy. These include improvements to the Peggy Jay Centre, the full conversion of the Hive and the installation of an outdoor gym. The Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum had also received proposals for funding which would affect the Heath, including playground upgrades, additional lighting, an enhanced village green and a public art installation. These proposals would need first to be evaluated by the Superintendent and discussed with this Committee and the Management Committee before they could be put forward for wider consultation.

A Member (Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee) suggested that the bridge approach to the Heath could be considered for funding.

Planning

A date has yet been confirmed for the Water House appeal hearing. The City Corporation would present technical evidence in opposition to the scheme. The Superintendent was also in the process of submitting a letter of representation in relation to a planning application at 114 – 120 West Heath Road.

Public Art

The Dinosaur sculptures “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly” currently on display in Golders Hill Park will be moved to a new location at the CASS Sculpture Foundation in Sussex in February. It was confirmed the cost of deinstallation was approximately £7000.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted and that the views of the Committee are conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

5. **GATEWAY PROJECTS - EAST HEATH CAR PARK, PEGGY JAY CENTRE AND ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND OUTDOOR PLAY FACILITIES AND THE HIVE**

The Committee discussed a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath informing them of three proposed capital projects, that subject to funding would be implemented 2017/18.

East Heath Car Park

The Superintendent reported that the loose material on the East Heath Car Park presented a potential Health and Safety risk particularly during heavy rainfall. Temporary mitigation measures were in place; however a permanent solution was now sought. An initial quote of £330,000 had been obtained; it was hoped that a competitive tendering exercise would reduce the cost. In response to a query from a Member it was confirmed that the asphalt would be a natural colour.

The Hive

The Hive had been partially converted as part of the Wild about Hampstead Heath Project. The space was currently used by the bike outreach programme and the Learning Team. It was proposed that the unused football changing rooms be converted to create two indoor learning spaces along with creating an outdoor learning space. It was confirmed that sustainability would be the key aspect of the design.

Peggy Jay Centre and Adventure Playground

The playground equipment needed replacing and it was proposed that the new equipment focused on natural play to better align with the Learning Team's objectives for integrating play and learning as well as enhancing links with community groups. A Member commented that the playground at Kew Gardens was reported as a good example of play based learning.

Members were supportive of the three proposed projects.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and that the views of the Committee are conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

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6. **KENWOOD YARD - DESIGN FOR HARD STANDING AND SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath updating Members on the proposals to replace the surfacing of Kenwood Yard. The Committee recognised the need for the works to take place and were supportive of the proposed scheme.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and that the views of the Committee are conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

7. REVIEW OF 2016 EVENTS PROGRAMME AND THE PROVISIONAL 2017 EVENTS PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report detailing the success and learning from the 2016 events programme and the proposals for the 2017 programme.

The 2016 season had been highly successful and had focused on community, health and wellbeing. Two highlights of the season were felt to be the Night of the 10,000 meters (a letter had been received from Sebastian Coe in support), and the 'Give it a Go' event which had seen high attendance and delivered a range of good outcomes that promoted sport and physical activity. There had also been challenges during the season, such as the protest against Zippo's Circus which led to a petition being received.

The Committee discussed the programme of Fairs held annually on the Heath, and whether their current format was viable in the long term. It was felt the Fairs could be adaptable and the Showman's Guild could be innovative if a change of format was desirable. It would be beneficial for a representative from the Guild to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

In response to a query from a Member in regards to publicity for the walks programme, it was confirmed that different methods of publicity were being explored, and the Heath Diary was being well utilised.

A Member noted that the Heath calendar had not been produced for 2017. The Leisure and Events Manager explained that the future production of a Heath calendar was being considered.

The Committee wished for their thanks to the team for their hard work over the season to be noted.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and that the views of the Committee are conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

8. PONDS PROJECT LANDSCAPE PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath updating them on the progress of the landscaping works undertaken at the conclusion of the Ponds Project. A small list of outstanding issues was to be discussed at the final meeting with the Contractor in April, and the Conservation Team and Ecologists were now keeping the ecological works under close scrutiny. Feedback on the works from Heath users would be crucial over the coming months.

The Committee discussed the petition that was in progress regarding the killings of swans by dogs and people at the Hampstead Heath Ponds and included the desire for the island on the model boating pond to be secured as a

bird sanctuary. The lead petitioner was hoping to gather more signatures before submitting the petition.

A report outlining a range of options for the island would be submitted to the Committee in March. The Senior Ecologist had stressed the need for consistency in managing the island to avoid wildlife being disturbed once allowed to thrive. It was recognised that the model boating pond was seen as “The People’s Pond”, and was well used by fisherman and model boaters.

The Committee further discussed both the constructed paths and the desire lines around the works. The Superintendent confirmed the situation would be monitored, and it was hoped that the reinforced turf would be effective at preventing the creation of desire lines.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and that the views of the Committee are conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee.

9. **QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

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

There was no other business.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meetings were noted to be:

Hampstead Heath Management Committee:

Meeting – Mon 30 January 2017

Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee:

Walk – Sat 11 March 2017

Meeting – Mon 13 March 2017

Hampstead Heath Management Committee:

Walk – Fri 5 May 2017

Meeting – Mon 15 May 2017

Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee:

Walk – Sat 17 June 2017

Meeting – Mon 19 June 2017

The meeting ended at 21:05

Chairman

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