

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 17 July 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, 17 July 2017 at 7.00 pm

Present

Members:

Karina Dostalova (Chairman)
Anne Fairweather (Deputy Chairman)
John Etheridge (South End Green Association)
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood)
Thomas Radice (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Ellen Solomons (Vale of Heath Society)
Richard Sumray (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Simon Taylor (Hampstead Rugby Club)

Representatives:

Carole Dukes representing Ray Booth (Barnet Mencap)

Attending:

Judy Hallgarten - Groundwork

Officers:

Bob Warnock	-	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	-	Operational Service Manager
Richard Gentry	-	Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager
Lucy Gannon	-	Hampstead Heath
Bose Kayode	-	Town Clerk's Department
Alistair MacLellan	-	Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ray Booth (Barnet Mencap), Nick Bradfield (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee), Dr Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society), David Walton (Representative of Clubs using facilities on the Heath), John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee) and Cindy Galvin.

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 19 June were approved and agreed by the committee as an accurate record, subject to the following amendment:

Page 6 – Drones

“In response to a question, the Constabulary and Queen’s Park Manager noted that the policing of drones under anti-nuisance byelaws had been considered to be unworkable in practice.”

Should read:

“In response to a question, the Constabulary and Queen’s Park Manager noted that the policing of drones under anti-nuisance byelaws had been judged unworkable in practice.”

RESOLVED – That the public minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017 be approved.

4. **HEATH COMMUNITY VISION**

Members received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath. The review and update of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan reached an important milestone with the conclusion of community engagement to create a community vision.

In addition, Members received a presentation from a representative of Groundwork regarding the Heath Community Vision consultation process, who outlined the extent of the consultation process and its parameters. The Groundwork representative noted that engagement had been conducted through focus groups, engagement stalls, internal consultation among City of London Corporation staff, and a questionnaire survey. In total over 1600 persons across 300 organisations, and 134 postcode areas had been engaged.

Also included within the presentation was a summary of the most common words used to describe the Heath. The overall themes for the draft community vision of the Heath included the place, people, inclusiveness, and caring for the Heath.

The next steps include a stakeholder meeting to feedback to workshop participants which is scheduled to take place in August 2018.

A Member of the Heath Vision Advisory Committee was heard next, who made the following points.

- Whilst the Advisory Committee had tried to engage as many groups as possible, there remained more work to do in terms of engaging young people, local schools and people who lived near the Heath but were not frequent users e.g. those to the south of the Heath. He also noted that the positive response to the vision survey and expressed confidence that the findings are a faithful reflection of the range of views and aspirations that were shared.

- The consultation findings represented a tension with the overarching aspiration to protect the fabric of the Heath and the high value placed on open access to the Heath for improved health and wellbeing.
- It was the opinion of the Member of the Heath Vision Advisory Committee that health and wellbeing was a key, overarching, theme for any future Heath Vision.

A general discussion was had by Members and the following points were made.

- The Deputy Chairman noted that the City should give consideration how to utilise the extensive data set that had been generated during the vision consultation process. Moreover, she was struck that formal sport did not feature more highly as a theme given the level of sports played on the Heath.
- It was also noted that the vision ought to reflect that the Heath is actively managed including the areas that are perceived as wild.
- A Member (South End Green Association) noted that the consultation appeared to reveal the 'silent majority' of Heath users, who predominantly used the Heath for walking and relaxation. He urged the City to not be distracted by using visitor numbers as a measure of success – outcomes should be judged in terms of how well the natural aspect of the Heath had been preserved.
- A Member (Friends of Kenwood) noted that the City should be prepared to justify the amount of spending and resources it dedicated to sports on the Heath given how little sport had featured in the consultation process. In response the Chairman noted that sport had led to excellent outcomes, not least the recent 'Give it a Go' event that featured a high number of young people enjoying the Heath. A Member (Hampstead Rugby Club (HRFC)) added that over 300 children benefited from sports on the Heath every Saturday. Moreover he had found it difficult to engage members of HRFC to complete the survey questionnaire.
- In response to a question from a Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association), the Superintendent replied that the Heath community vision would be used to inform the Divisional Plan and Annual Work Programme going forward, and agreed to provide an organogram to that effect to the Committee. He also noted that this sits within the legislative context set out in the Hampstead Heath Act (1871).
- The Projects and Management Support Officer clarified that the information collated during the Heath Vision consultation provides valuable insights and will inform 'how' the Heath is managed, taking a long term view.

- A Member (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) stated that she felt there were too many organised events, dogs and cyclists on the Heath and that this question of balance should be addressed in the vision. In response the Superintendent noted that this would be addressed in the 2018 Plan.
- A Member (London Council of Sport and Recreation) noted that the vision should be as inclusive as possible, and not exclusive.
- A Member (Heath and Hampstead Society) noted that the consultation report is thorough and good work and that the emerging themes were welcomed. He also noted that the phrase Heath Vision had been one used for his Society's 2004 publication – and then as now the key theme should be the preservation of the natural aspect of the Heath.
- In response to a suggestion from a Member (Highgate Society) the Chairman noted that the City was already engaging with relevant Parliamentary Select Committee enquiries and agreed that the data generated by the vision consultation had potential to inform future submissions.
- A Member (Vale of Health Society) noted that the vision should have more emphasis on children given it was an excellent venue for natural play.
- A representative of the Barnet Mencap Member noted that the vision should be aspirational, not just concerned with the 'here and now'.

The Chairman then invited comments on the draft Community Vision and the following points were made.

- The headline titles should be personalised e.g. 'Our' Hampstead Heath, Enhancing 'our' Quality of Life, 'Hampstead Heath as a place'.
- Suggested wording for an overarching statement to link the four themes included "Our Hampstead Heath enhances our quality of life. We are inclusive and welcoming. We care for our Heath."
- A majority of members welcomed the poetic language of the document as reflective of the aspirational tone.

Regarding the Place: - Hampstead Heath theme;

Mention should be made of the fact the Heath was famous.

Members considered that reference to 'being the heart of London' was odd, as was the reference to 'green arteries' and expressed a preference to avoid this language.

Wording such as 'protection' should be used rather than 'defended' in relation to the boundaries. In addition, wording should make reference to the history and heritage of the Heath, specifically, a reference to 'ancient'.

The representative of clubs using facilities on the Heath provided written comment and expressed the importance of the Heath not being viewed as an island.

Regarding People: – Enhancing Quality Life, reference should be made to learning and interpretative activity on the Heath. It was also noted that the value of play to children and young people ought to be included in this theme.

Reference could be made to the Heath being an area where children can play and a place where individuals can learn about the natural world.

Regarding Inclusive & Welcoming:-

Some emphasis should be made on the Heath (sports and swimming facilities excepted) being free of charge, linking to the phrase free access to roam. A suggestion that the role of volunteers that help to look after the Heath warranted inclusion.

A suggestion that the reference to City of London staff would sit better under the fourth theme and should be to separate from volunteers and visitors in this theme.

Regarding Caring for the Heath:-

Articulation of the different values of the different forums that cared about the Heath, there is collaborative working. Reference could also be made to the fact that the Heath belongs to those who use it whilst the City retains its confidence. The Deputy Chairman suggested that the sentence in reference to the City and its role could be reviewed to reflect this. Some discussion of the terminology for this theme which encapsulates the concepts of custodianship, stewardship and caring for the Heath.

The Chairman concluded discussion by thanking Groundwork for their efforts, and inviting Members to submit any further detailed comments prior to 2 August 2017 so that they could be incorporated into the proposed community vision submitted to the September meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

5. QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Give it a Go - Thanks

A Member (Hampstead Rugby Club) noted his thanks to the Heath Leisure and Events Manager for his organisation of the Give it a Go day on 16 July 2017.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman noted that Members were invited to a walk on the Heath on 27 September 2017 commencing at 4.00pm, with afternoon tea served at 3.30pm. The next meeting for the Committee would be on 9 October 2017.

The meeting ended at 8.35pm.

Chairman

Contact Officer: Bose Kayode
bose.kayode@cityoflondon.gov.uk