

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 20 January 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held at Committee Room 1 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 20 January 2015 at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:

Jeremy Simons (Chairman)
Deputy John Barker
Karina Dostalova
Ann Holmes
Edward Lord
Professor John Lumley
Martyn Foster (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)
Councillor Sally Gimson (London Borough of Camden)
Tony Ghilchik (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Philip Wright (English Heritage)

Officers:

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| David Arnold | Town Clerk's Department |
| John Park | Town Clerk's Department |
| Alison Elam | Chamberlain's Department |
| Edward Wood | Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department |
| Sue Ireland | Director of Open Spaces |
| Bob Warnock | Superintendent of Hampstead Heath |
| Declan Gallagher | Operational Services Manager |
| Philip Everett | Director of the Built Environment |
| Thomas Creed | Department of the Built Environment |
| Esther Sumner | Ponds Project & Management Support Officer |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman), Revd Dr Martin Dudley, Clare James, Barbara Newman, Deputy John Owen-Ward, Tom Sleigh, Deputy Alex Deane, Councillor Melvin Cohen (London Borough of Barnet), and Maija Roberts (Open Spaces Society/Ramblers' Association).

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

There were none.

3. MINUTES

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

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the last meeting held on 24 November 2014 be agreed, subject to the addition of Karina Dostalova having given her apologies for absence.

Matters Arising

Weddings and Civil Ceremonies at Hill Garden & Pergola

In response to a Member's question, the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath advised that the soft launch had been completed and 13 bookings had already been made for 2015. He added that a report would be submitted to this Committee in September 2015.

3.2 **Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee**

RESOLVED – That the draft minutes of the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 19 November 2014 be noted.

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

RESOLVED – That the draft minutes of the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group meeting held on 19 November 2014 be noted.

A Member noted that Committee lunches at Guildhall Club were not paid for through the City of London Corporation's operational budget and that this should be specified in the minutes.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Superintendent of Hampstead Heath verbally updated the Committee regarding the following matters relating to Hampstead Heath.

Property

Lido

The Superintendent advised that Contractors working for the City Surveyor had commenced works to repair the Lido café roof. The boundary wall would be rebuilt once these works had been completed.

The Superintendent added that a camera survey to investigate a leak at the lido was conducted on 14 January 2015, the results of which would be available soon.

East Heath Car Park

A topographic survey and further drain surveys had been carried out regarding storm water run-off. Findings were passed onto a consultant who was finalising plans to help mitigate the recent flash flooding issues. Additional drainage was planned for the car park, with separate measures for the hard standing area and the east to west path that would encourage water to drain into Highgate No 1 pond.

Hill Garden and Pergola

The Hill Garden steps above the Shelter were due to be tanked and the rendering replaced. These works were due to start on site in February 2015 and the City Surveyor would report to the March 2015 Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee to advise on the current condition of the structure.

Completed works

The Superintendent advised that refurbishment works at the Mixed Pond and the decoration of the Bandstand at Parliament Hill had been completed.

Fleet Update

New Vehicles

A new Trilo for waste collection had been ordered and was due to be delivered in March 2015. It was ordered in part-exchange to replace an older Trilo. A new Constabulary vehicle had also been ordered to replace the current oldest vehicle. The vehicle being replaced would be auctioned during spring 2015.

Equipment auctions

An equipment rationalisation project was started at the end of 2014. The project had so far involved the auction of 41 items from across all North London Open Spaces, raising a total of £21,000.

Planning Updates

The Water House

Members were advised that this planning application was still current. Milestone Transport Consultants were preparing a detailed report regarding the shortcomings within the applicants Construction Management Plan. Once finalised, this report would be submitted to the London Borough of Camden to further support previous objections made regarding the proposed scheme.

Athlone House

The Superintendent advised that the Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) had been circulated by the applicant followed by the London Borough of Camden's response to their appeal for non-determination of the planning application. The City of London Corporation had raised no further objections to the BIA.

Guy Williams, a Barrister at Landmark Chambers who worked on the previous inquiry, had been instructed to provide advice and guidance on the next steps in terms of the submission of further evidence to the Planning Inspector. Evidence regarding the landscape and visual impacts on the proposals had been prepared by Atkins, which was also reviewed by Guy Williams and submitted to the Planning Inspector in advance of the Inquiry. The Inquiry date was 10 February 2015 and was set to run for 12 days.

Highbury Police Station/Magistrates' Court

A planning application for Demolition of all existing buildings and construction of an apartment block and a mews block to provide 82 residential flats, including basement and undercroft car parking with 41 spaces, and comprehensive

landscaping of the site was approved by the London Borough of Haringey on 19 January 2015.

Local Schools

A planning application was submitted for “redevelopment and refurbishment including demolition of buildings along western and southern edge of site, and in between Parliament Hill & William Ellis School, and replacement with 3 storey building along southern boundary (Parliament Hill School); enclose inner courtyard and erect 2 storey extension towards northern boundary (William Ellis School); erection of single storey building located along Highgate Road (La Swap Sixth Form) along with associated alterations to boundary treatment, new multi-use games areas, hard and soft landscaping throughout sites”.

A detailed representation on behalf of the City of London Corporation was currently being prepared for submission on or by 31 January 2015.

Staff

The Superintendent advised of the following recruitment and staff changes:-

- The Hampstead Heath Education Officer was appointed to be Project Development Manager within the Open Spaces Department for a three month secondment. The Hampstead Heath Education Officer position would be covered on a short term basis from within the current Education Team.
- The Assistant Operational Services Manager was successful in her application for the West Ham Park Managers position. She would start her new role in February 2015.
- Two new Constables recruited in 2014 had started in the Constabulary Team and were currently completing their training.
- The new Arborist in the Tree Team had been in post for over a month.
- The City Business Trainee from summer 2014 returned for two weeks of work experience during the Christmas period.

Constabulary

Members were advised that the Constabulary recorded 2,145 incidents in 2014, an increase of 353 from 2013. There were 17,300 public liaisons; 46 criminal offences reported to the Metropolitan Police; and 11 arrests made by the Hampstead Heath Constabulary. The Superintendent added that new airwave radios had been ordered following successful negotiations with the Metropolitan Police and were due to be operational in March 2015.

Conservation Team

The Superintendent advised that new steps were constructed at Cohen’s field and hedge laying was carried out across the site.

Events

The Superintendent advised that the Affordable Art Fair and Grow London horticultural show were due to return to the Heath in 2015. Members were also advised of the following upcoming events:-

- English National Cross Country Championships on 21 February 2015;

- Highgate Harriers Night of 10,000 metres personal bests on 16 May 2015;
- Lord Mayor's City Dip on 10 – 11 July 2015; and
- Give it a Go Festival on 12 July 2015.

RESOLVED – That the Superintendent's update on Hampstead Heath matters be noted.

5. THE STATE OF UK PUBLIC PARKS 2014 - RENAISSANCE TO RISK?

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding the issues relevant to the Division in managing and supporting green spaces across London. The Committee considered whether or not to appoint the Park Champions from the Committee and consultative committees to help promote each open space locally.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Open Spaces advised that there was no legal or financial obligation to appoint Park Champions but it would improve communication locally at each open space and would not be administratively onerous. The Superintendent added that the Heath would benefit from a closer relationship with the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent and Haringey.

Members suggested that existing external members of this and the consultative committees who were also local Councillors were already well engaged so the Heath could benefit from their ability to approach their organisations with an official Park Champion title. Members noted that a decision to appoint Park Champions from existing members as local Councillors would be passed to the relevant consultative committee.

RESOLVED – That the option to seek to appoint those Members of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee, and the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group who are also local Councillors as Park Champions for the Heath, Golders Hill Park, the Heath Extension, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park, be approved.

6. GATEWAY 5 AUTHORITY TO START WORK: PONDS PROJECT

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of the Built Environment and the Director of Open Spaces that sought approval to additional budget allocation and authority to start work for the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project in accordance with the City of London Corporation's project procedure.

Members were provided with a written deputation against the Ponds Project on behalf of the Protect our Ponds campaign. The Ponds Project and Management Support Officer addressed the issues raised in the deputation to the Committee.

The Ponds Project and Management Support Officer advised that the dam safety aspect of the project was based on the following standards: if a dam

poses a risk to lives in a community, currently defined as ten or more people, then it must be able to pass the probable maximum flood. Therefore, the project was not designed to be a cost-benefit scheme. However, she noted that the Government valued each life at £1.5 million when considering road safety and, following the flooding in 2007, the value of life used was £1.2 million. This is significantly higher than the £670,000 figure included in the deputation.

The Ponds Project and Management Support Officer also advised that the Heath's own ecologists were involved in developing the scheme alongside ecologists from Atkins. The ecological measures at Viaduct and Bird sanctuary will enhance the ecology of the Heath and are part of the mitigation measures approved by the London Borough of Camden on 15 January 2015. She added that all alternatives for tree loss at Stock Pond had been looked into following stakeholder concerns but none were considered acceptable as a spillway over the dam would have resulted in more tree loss beneath the dam and culverts would have been a significant visual intrusion.

Members were advised that the island at the Model Boating Pond was introduced in response to stakeholder concerns regarding the possible loss of lime trees which the island would preserve. In response to a Member's question, the Superintendent advised that pipes under the causeway had been designed in a way to encourage water flow and reduce the risk of silting. He added that removal of silting would become part of the management work programme.

Members of the Committee were supportive of the proposals except for Tony Ghilchik (Heath and Hampstead Society), who was not in favour of the recommendations to grant authority to start work and to authorise the signing of the commencement agreement with BAM Nuttall, Atkins and Capita.

RESOLVED – That:-

- a) noting that the total outturn including various risk items and provisional sums is now £21,198,475 and so will exceed the £18.54M currently allocated (i.e. £15.2M +20% plus the £300,000 allocated for judicial review costs but not including inflation from 2010 prices), approval of the Resource Allocation Sub, Policy & Resources and the Court of Common Council be sought to allocate funds to meet the shortfall of £2.66m from the 2014/15 and 2015/16 City's Cash provisions for new schemes;
- b) subject to the additional budget allocation and planning consent being issued, Authority to Start Work for the Ponds Project in accordance with the City's project procedure be approved;
- c) authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment to make representations to Camden Council as to the form of the planning conditions, and to settle the terms of the section 106 agreement; and the Comptroller & City Solicitor be authorised to sign the section 106 agreement;
- d) authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment to submit all necessary applications and details to Camden Council to discharge planning conditions;

- e) authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment in consultation with the Chamberlain to agree the release of the specific risk provisions identified within the risk register and the provisional sum identified;
- f) the Director of the Built Environment and the Comptroller & City Solicitor be authorised to sign the commencement agreement with BAM Nuttall, Atkins and Capita;
- g) authority be delegated to the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath to appoint and manage specialist contractors to provide additional support in managing protestors if required; and
- h) authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment in consultation with the Chamberlain to authorise the transfer of the budget for some reinstatement activities to Hampstead Heath to enable some of the smaller scale reinstatement works such as planting and seeding to be undertaken in-house if this felt to be appropriate and cost effective as the project progresses.

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Hampstead Heath verbally updated the Committee regarding the following matters relating to Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Highgate Wood

Replacement of water main

Members were advised that the City Surveyor had organised works to replace the old lead water main from the Onslow gate entrance to the listed memorial fountain, which had been leaking for a number of years. The works were successfully completed on the 3 December 2014 and there was very little root damage caused.

Boundary Fence

Contractors employed by the City Surveyors Department would be carrying out repairs to the boundary fence of the Wood this spring.

Roman Kiln Project

The project was given approval to proceed to Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) application on the 7 November 2014 by the Project Sub Committee. Members were advised that work would start on putting together the HLF funding application over the next few months.

Storm Warning System

Members were advised that the Wood had been closed recently due to severe weather so a notice system was now being implemented. The MET Office messaging service was becoming increasingly accurate and the staff now put up signage 24 hours before a predicted high wind event of over 40mph, giving notice that the site may have to close due to tree damage. This system had already been put into action on two separate occasions during winter and would now be adopted as standard procedure at Highgate Wood, Golders Hill Park and Queen's Park.

Queen's Park

Members were advised that the Team had been concentrating on clearing leaves and maintaining ditches and drains. Winter bulb planting with local schools had taken place with daffodils expected to emerge in the spring. A review of the Park's signage had also been carried out by the Park Manager.

RESOLVED – That the Superintendent's update on matters relating to Highgate Wood and Queen's Park be noted.

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

There were none.

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

The Chairman informed Members of the Committee that this was Tony Ghilchick's last meeting as a Member of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee representing the Heath and Hampstead Society. The Committee thanked Mr Ghilchick for his contributions to the Heath for over eleven years and looked forward to welcoming John Beyer as the new representative for the Heath and Hampstead Society on the Committee. Mr Ghilchick thanked Members for their kind words and the City of London Corporation for their management of the Heath.

The Chairman also informed Members that a new Observer on the Open Spaces Committee would be appointed at the next Committee meeting.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item No.

11 – 12

Paragraph No.

3

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the last meeting held on 24 November 2014 be agreed.

12. **GATEWAY 5 AUTHORITY START WORK: PONDS PROJECT - APPENDICES 4 & 5**

RESOLVED – That the appendices be noted and approved in conjunction with item 6 of the public agenda.

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

There were none.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was none.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm

Chairman

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