

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 13 November 2019

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
Wednesday, 13 November 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

Karina Dostalova (Chairman)
Anne Fairweather (Deputy Chair)
Deputy David Bradshaw
Alderman Prem Goyal
Michael Hudson
Alderman Gregory Jones QC
Wendy Mead
Ruby Sayed
Deputy John Tomlinson
John Beyer (Heath & Hampstead Society)
Councillor Richard Cornelius (London Borough of Barnet)
Sam Cooper (English Heritage)
Councillor Thomas Gardiner (London Borough of Camden)
Adeline Siew Yin Au (Ramblers' Association)

Officers:

Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces
Bob Warnock	- Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Katherine Radusin	- PA to Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Richard Gentry	- Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager
Declan Gallagher	- Operational Services Manager
Yvette Hughes	- Business Manager Hampstead Heath
Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Sufina Ahmad	- Corporate Strategy Manager, Town Clerk's Department
Carl Locsin	- Media Team, Town Clerk's Department
Leanne Murphy	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mark Bostock, Rachel Evans, Graeme Doshi-Smith, Oliver Sells QC and William Upton QC.

There were no declarations from Members under the code of conduct in respect of items on the agenda.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the public minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2019 were approved as a correct record.

3. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members noted the various outstanding actions and the updates provided thereon.

With regards to Actions 2 and 4, the Chairman advised that a priority list of items had been agreed to go into the capital bidding process which included the public toilets at Queen's Park.

4. **OTHER MINUTES**

4.1 **Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee**

The draft public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting held on 14 October 2019 were received.

A Member noted the discussion concerning swimming facilities at the Heath and felt that it needed to be highlighted to the local community that it cost the City Corporation to provide these facilities and keep them safe.

4.2 **Highgate Wood Consultative Group**

The draft public minutes of the Highgate Wood Consultative Group meeting held on 9 October 2019 were received.

4.3 **Queen's Park Consultative Group**

The draft public minutes of the Queen's Park Consultative Group meeting held on 9 October 2019 were received.

5. **KENWOOD EVENTS 2019/20**

Members received a verbal update from the Kenwood House General Manager regarding events at Kenwood House and the following comments were made:

- The Kenwood House General Manager advised that Kenwood House had again hosted two public engagement meetings to receive advice and feedback from the public concerning its outdoor events and inform the 2020 Events Programme. A summary of the feedback was provided in the agenda pack.
- Members were advised that the visitor count for outdoor events in 2019 was 44,900 people and that capturing these figures was good for funding bids.
- It was noted that Kenwood House remains open all year and that its access routes were important to the local community. Accessibility was a key issue raised by residents at the 2018 engagement sessions.
- The community were supportive of outdoor events but were keen that the building/breakdown of structures had a limited impact on the site. Dust was identified as an impact to Kenwood House itself and solutions

were being identified to protect the building. There were also issues with the use of South Terrace.

- The House Festival generated £75k in donations.
- The 2020 Events Programme would be updated in February incorporating all feedback.
- Members found the process useful and it was noted that the Heath had similar commitments to the local community regarding pathways and access.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members considered a report of the Superintendent providing an update on matters concerning Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park. The Superintendent drew Members' attention to the three recommendations proposed in the report.

Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park

- Members were advised that there had been constructive engagement with users and the next steps were to appoint a Consultant to develop options to facilitate weekend and bank holiday access. Members would be consulted on the proposals in due course.
- Members agreed with the proposed next steps.

Dog walking consultation exercise

- Members were advised that the outcomes of the dog walking consultation exercise were presented to HHCC Members and their feedback was incorporated into the process. A Code of Conduct would be developed using the feedback and would be brought to the Committee for decision.
- A Member noted that a similar process was being rolled out by London Borough of Barnet which could cause potential displacement of dog walkers towards the Heath and agreed to liaise with colleagues.
- Members were advised that the Heath was working with English Heritage to ensure the Kenwood Estate was not adversely impacted.

Forest Schools

- Members were advised that there had been increasing interest from Forest Schools of all sizes. This had led to a need to review the carrying capacity of the Heath in order to inform and develop long-term licencing arrangements.

- It was noted that compaction was being experienced as an impact of Forest Schools at Highgate Wood.
- The Superintendent advised that two significant applications for Hampstead Heath had been received along with an application to expand a school already operating.
- It was noted that there was one Forest School operating on the Kenwood Estate.
- Members were supportive of Forest Schools in principle, as they encouraged education and natural play for children, but were mindful that they had a clear impact on the Heath and its other users.
- Members were advised that the City of London Corporation Open Spaces Act 2018 included powers and procedures to introduce licensing schemes. It was agreed the events process was not suitable to review big applications and that a specific licencing scheme to properly manage and control Forest Schools was necessary.
- In response to queries regarding charging, Members were informed that the charges would be developed in line with the licensing scheme. Forest Schools would also be charged for inspections and maintenance would be covered under the license fee.
- A Member highlighted the difference between local schools bringing schoolchildren to the City Corporation's open spaces and Forest Schools which were commercial operations.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- Agree the proposed next steps in relation to the Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park as detailed in para 20;
- Provide feedback and views in relation to the outcomes of the recent dog walking consultation exercise (appendix 3);
- Agree the proposals in relation to Forest Schools as set out in paras 27-28.

7. FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21 & 2021/22

Members considered and approved a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath setting out the proposed fees and charges for sports facilities and services provided at Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park for 2020/21 and the proposed fees and charges for Weddings and Civil Ceremonies for 2021/22.

Members were advised that the report had been to the Hampstead Heath Swim Forum, Sports Advisory Forum and Consultative Committee for input.

With regards to paragraph 14, it was noted that the swimming charges would be kept under review.

A Member queried what the position was regarding providing contactless and online payments for swimmers and what the timeline would be following the delay. It was highlighted that the Chairman and Deputy Chair were passionate about facilitating the use of technology, which would improve the visitor experience.

The Superintendent advised that the availability of contactless payments was being actively progressed across the City Corporation's open spaces. However, ongoing issues concerning connectivity, technical implementation and security issues had caused significant delays. It was hoped this would be in place by April 2020. Online booking and payment collection is already for tennis. Members agreed that offering contactless and online payments were "spend to save" projects that needed to be implemented.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- Agree the proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 and 2021/22, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report;
- Agree for the new Bandstand and Meeting Room charges to be introduced from 14 November 2019 as set out in paras 16 & 17.

8. **QUEEN'S PARK CAFÉ - ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION EXERCISE**
Members considered and approved a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath providing Members with an update concerning the Queen's Park Café Engagement and Consultation Exercise.

The Chairman voiced gratitude to Hoxton Beach who were currently operating on a Tenancy at Will basis at the Queen's Park Café, following the Urban Leisure Group's notice to terminate their lease.

Members were advised that the feedback received during the engagement had been beneficial and a revised timeline for the delivery of the project and the tendering of the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café and the Queen's Park Café had been approved. Consultation with the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Consultative Groups would follow.

A Member recommended that as part of the negotiations, it was preferable to offer a reduced rent during the establishment phase rather than a rent-free period.

RESOLVED – That:-

- Members note the outcomes of the public engagement and consultation undertaken by Groundwork London (Appendix 1);

- Members agree the revised timeline for the tendering of the Queen's Park Café and the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café (Para 12);
- Members agree that further consultation is carried out with the Queen's Park Consultative Group and the Highgate Wood Consultative Group regarding the development of tender documentation supporting the tender process of both cafés (Para 13).

9. MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK UPDATE

Members considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath providing Members with an update on the development of the Measurement Framework, along with second quarter updates on the Divisional Plan and Annual Work Programme.

An Annual Update had been prepared to demonstrate what had been achieved over the last year and to set out our priorities for the coming year. The Measurement Framework was being developed which would enable the Team to assess progress towards achieving the Outcomes and Priorities contained in the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028.

It was noted that there were two corrections within the Annual Work Programme update: Tree Team should list paragraphs 6-12 instead of 11-15 and Constabulary should list paragraphs 28-32 instead of 44-49.

RESOLVED – That:

- Members receive the 2nd Quarter updates for the Hampstead Heath Divisional Plan 2019-2022 and the Annual Work Programme.

10. THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION'S DRAFT SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY FOR 2020-25

Members received a report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Performance concerning the City of London Corporation's Draft Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for 2020-25. The following comments were made:

- The Chairman noted that the Strategy had been considerably revised since Members first saw it and was undergoing a new round of engagement with relevant Committees for feedback before it was finalised.
- The Chairman noted that the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum was listed as a contributor but were not listed to receive the updated Strategy again to provide input. It was agreed that the Strategy would be shared with the Sports Advisory Forum, and that Members would be asked to provide feedback which would be fed into the HHCC meeting in January 2020.
- The Chairman queried the governance of the proposed Sport and Physical Activity Working Party, who it would report to and which budgets would be used. Members were advised that many Departments

had been approached and this would be reviewed following the Fundamental Review and Governance Review.

- Members agreed that clarity was needed on alignment in terms of where the Strategy would report into and how it will be funded to ensure that the responsibility of funding would not fall solely on Open Spaces. It was agreed it would be helpful for the Working Party to report to the Policy & Resources Committee.
- The Deputy Chair explained that some of the work included things Open Spaces already did but was pleased to see that the Strategy acknowledged Open Spaces and the work it does.
- The Chairman stated that following a request at Public Relations and Economic Development Sub Committee work was being carried out to work out the current spend on sport and physical activity. Members were advised that information was being sought from colleagues in various Departments and information would be circulated ahead of the next PRED meeting and included in the final draft of the Strategy.
- Members felt that the sport engagement costings should be included, and a clear rationale provided for why the Director of Communications was not including an uplift on sport engagement. Members were advised that in terms of uplifts, the figures included within the Strategy would be static. It was suggested that a line could be added stating that consideration be given to the fact that these figures might need to increase over the course of the Strategy.
- The Chairman felt that the Director of Communications should already be planning for an uplift as the motion at Court illustrated that this was now a fully supported priority for the organisation. A Member added that this should come out of the Director of Communication's own Local Risk Budget.
- A Member recommended ensuring the Strategy was fully aligned with Sport England's criteria for drafting strategies as this could assist with funding opportunities in the future. It was noted that a Member of HHCC offered to assist due to his expertise developing sports strategies. Officers agreed to follow up with the Member.

RECEIVED.

11. **BREXIT PLANNING**

Members received a verbal update from the Director of Open Spaces concerning Brexit planning.

Members were advised that negotiations had been halted pending the results of the General Election in December. It was noted that the City Corporation would continue to plan for all outcomes and that protecting grant aid was a particular focus for Open Spaces.

12. **FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW UPDATE**

Members received a verbal update from the Director of Open Spaces concerning the Fundamental Review.

Members were advised that there was no report on the agenda providing the draft 2020/21 Budget or Business Plan, which normally came to the year-end meeting for review, as this was on hold due to the Fundamental Review. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the Open Spaces Department was working on figures with a 2% efficiency and that the Town Clerk was looking at dates for an extraordinary Committee meeting in January for Members to discuss and approve the budget and Business Plan for the next year.

A Member queried whether the 2% efficiency included inflation. Members were advised that this was a continuation of efficiency but that the Department would receive a 2% uplift from inflation which would neutralise the budget.

In response to a query regarding Departments not providing the requested data targets for 2020/21, Members were informed that the Open Spaces Department had provided all estimates and reviewed 400+ projects.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were no urgent items.

15. **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 of business on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

16. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2019 were approved as a correct record.

17. **NON-PUBLIC SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members received a non-public verbal update from the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath on matters concerning Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

18. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

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

There were two urgent items.

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm

Chairman

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