

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 1 November 2021

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held virtually and in Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Guildhall on Monday, 1 November 2021 at 5.30 pm

Present

Members:

Anne Fairweather (Chair)
William Upton QC (Deputy Chairman)
Ray Booth (Barnet Mencap)
Nick Bradfield (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Matthew Frith (London Wildlife Trust)
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Steve Ripley (Ramblers' Association)
Richard Sumray (London Council for Recreation and Sport)
Simon Taylor (Hampstead Rugby Club)
Jeff Waage (Heath and Hampstead Society)
John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Simon Williams (Vale of Health Society)

Officers:

Richard Gentry	- Acting Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	- Operational Service Manager
Paul Maskell	- Leisure and Events Manager
Jonathan Meares	- Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager
Katherine Radusin	- PA to Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Leanne Murphy	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Etheridge, Cindy Galvin (Heath Hands represented by Merlin Fox), Dr Gaye Henson, Simon Hunt, Sharlene McGee, Helen Payne, Harunur Rashid, Ellin Stein and Simon Williams.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2021 were approved as a correct record subject one amendment to the attendance of the meeting.

Matters arising

Members were informed that a Member (Representative of Clubs using facilities on the Heath) had provided Officers with advice regarding the Athletics

Track advice and asked that the documentation concerning the capital bid be shared.

With regards to the tree planting plans at Parliament Hill, a Member (Hampstead Rugby Club) requested that the diagram be provided that could be shared with the Rugby Club and users. Officers confirmed they were preparing a finalised plan which would be shared.

4. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD & QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The draft public minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee meeting held on 29 September 2021 were received.

5. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS & WELLBEING FORUM ACTION POINTS**

The draft action points of the Hampstead Heath Sports & Wellbeing Forum held on 12 October 2021 were received.

A Member (London Council for Recreation and Sport) felt that funding for the Athletics Track, which required refurbishment every 10 years to remain safe and compliant, should be deemed as cyclical works moving forward, as the Capital bid process required significant effort and led to huge delays to works. Members agreed and asked if this could be reviewed.

The Chair advised that a new Executive Director of Environment was in place and had appointed an Interim Senior Manager to help progress the Target Operating Model and transition Open Spaces into the new Environment Department structure. The Chair agreed to write to the Director making the suggestion that the Athletics Track's ongoing maintenance be included within the Cyclical Works Programme for future years.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent regarding Hampstead Heath, and the following comments were made:

Network Rail – Fence Replacement

- Officers stated that they had concerns regarding planned fence replacements at Parliament Hill and had met with Network Rail representatives to discuss the proposals. It was confirmed by Network Rail, that the works involved the removal and replacement of the above ground fencing structure only.
- A Member (Heath & Hampstead Society) raised a concern regarding hedgehogs. Officers confirmed concerns had been raised with Network Rail, who were receptive to installing intermittent gaps of 13cm in the fencing to allow for movement of animals.
- A Member (London Council for Recreation and Sport) enquired how detritus removal would be dealt with and it was felt this should be the responsibility of Network Rail. Officers confirmed they had been

approached on many occasions about this. When the rubbish removal was complete, the Chair agreed to write to Network Rail regarding their ongoing commitment to deal with detritus.

- It was noted that the fences would be painted black, and Members enquired if camouflage green colouring could be used. It was noted that dark green had been used in the past but black had also been used well at other sites. Officers agreed to raise the recommended dark green colour with Network Rail.

Drone guidance

- Officers were finalising the updated guidance plus a new request form to fly drones on the Heath which would be shared with Members.

Savernake Road signage

- Following a previous request, a Member (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee) enquired if there had been further discussions regarding implementing a fingerpoint sign or Corporation notice board at Savernake Road.
- Officers confirmed that the London Borough of Camden had been approached regarding the installation of a sign. Members felt this should be on the Camden side and Officers agreed to liaise further.

Cycling

- A Member (London Council for Recreation and Sport) enquired if there was any further information concerning the previous proposal to pilot school cycle bursts on Hampstead Heath.
- Officers advised that they had made several attempts to follow up with London Borough of Camden concerning the proposed pilot but had received no response to date.
- Members were in agreement that the trial of cycle bursts would not be considered until more information was provided by Camden and a full review had taken place.
- A Member (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) noted that cyclists were using posts and fencing along Merton Lane to park their bikes which Members agreed highlighted the need to improve cycle parking options.
- Officers confirmed they were speaking with London Borough of Camden regarding cycle parking around the Heath and had prioritised installation of cycle parking at Heath facilities, such as the Bathing Ponds.

Planning

- **Jack Straws Castle (2020/1828/P)**. A Party Wall Consultant has been appointed and discussions are ongoing.
- It was noted that the Heath & Hampstead Society were also concerned and agreed to work with the Corporation to raise the issue. The Chair was supportive of the continued collaboration.

Forest schools

- Members discussed the upcoming plan for to introduce a licensing scheme for Forest Schools and it was agreed that a representative be invited to talk to the Committee to a relevant meeting in the future.

Projects seeking donations

- In response to a query regarding the Model Boating Pond Island donation project. Members were informed that the funds would cover the removal of the pipe, establishment of additional wetland planting and creation of wildlife shelters on the Island.
- A Member (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee) stressed the need to improve the fundraising website and recommended looking at the Just Giving and Kickstarter websites for inspiration. Recommended improvements included progress targets, pie charts, encouraging statements, opportunities for people to explain why they donated, a more exciting form, gift aid ability and the option to share with friends.
- The Chair stated that this as a real priority and would share the feedback with the new Project Manager to ensure a more accessible site across all City Corporation Open Spaces.

RESOLVED – That Members provide feedback in relation to the Network Rail Fence Replacement proposal, as set out in paras 14-18.

7. **REVIEW OF THE 2021 EVENTS PROGRAMME & PROVISIONAL EVENTS PLANNED FOR THE 2022 PROGRAMME**

Members considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment providing Members with an overview of the significant impacts Covid-19 has had on the 2021 Hampstead Heath Events Programme and setting out the provisional 2022 events schedule.

Members requested clarity on the policy concerning major events as it was felt events needed to be evaluated and brought back to Committee if coming back for second time or if the event has changed in any way.

It was confirmed that the Officer Event Group reviewed all events and would continue to consult Members in relation to Large and Major. Members have previously been consulted on the proposal to host a secondary event after the Affordable Art Fair, and for the Showman's Guild to host a longer Easter Fair.

Officers advised Members that they were happy to receive feedback on any of the proposals listed, noting that most were repeat events.

RESOLVED – That Members provide feedback on the proposed 2022 Events Programme (appendix 1).

8. **TWO YEAR REVIEW OF THE OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT'S LEARNING PROGRAMME 2019-21**

Members noted a report of the Director of Open Spaces providing Members with an overview of the Open Spaces learning programme from 2019 to 2021.

A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) noted there was an active educational exercise during the Ponds Project and the importance of keeping this resource as it could be used as an example and fed back to the Team.

Members highlighted the need to include figures concerning engagement with BAME groups, which were not mentioned in the report, and recommended including this in the next report. It was also noted that there was work being undertaken in the most deprived boroughs in London; however, it appeared to be only some of these boroughs.

A Member (Heath and Hampstead Society) was particularly concerned by worrying child poverty statistics in Gospel Oak and enquired if the Learning Team had any learning and engagement that could be used in this area.

A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) noted that adult education should also be included as a learning opportunity that the Heath provides.

The Town Clerk agreed to share this feedback with the Head of Learning and the Chair requested a discussion at the next meeting.

RECEIVED.

9. **HEATH HANDS UPDATE**

Members received a volunteering update from Heath Hands.

Members were advised that volunteering activity was back to normal, with Heath Hands recruiting new members, and bringing in themed walks and new activities. A report of activities would be shared at the next meeting.

10. **QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The following business was raised:

- Members were reminded that the annual Hampstead Heath Calendar was available to purchase at the Parliament Hill Farmer's Market.
- It was noted that a press release would go out tomorrow announcing the appointment of the new Superintendent, who would start in January 2022.
- With regards to an enquiry regarding the location of future HHCC meetings, Members were reminded that Guildhall was chosen based on the feedback from Members at the last meeting as the facilities for hybrid meetings were not available at Parliament Hill. The Chair advised that the current position would be trialled for another meeting to allow transparency. It was suggested that enquiries be made with local schools to see if they had the necessary facilities and accommodation.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the 2022 meetings were noted as 24 January 2022, 23 May 2022, 5 September 2022 and 7 November 2022.

The meeting ended at 6.59 pm

Chair

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