

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 7 November 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at Guildhall, West Wing, Committee Rooms on Monday, 7 November 2022 at 5.30 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chairman)
John Foley
Merlin Fox
Colin Gregory
Michael Hammerson
Dr Gaye Henson
Simon Hunt
Helen Payne
Richard Sumray
Jeff Waage
David Walton
John Weston

Officers:

Jonathan Meares	- Natural Environment Division
Declan Gallagher	- Natural Environment Division
Paul Maskell	- Natural Environment Division
Stefania Horne	- Natural Environment Division
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ray Both (Barnet Mencap).

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

There were none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 26 September 2022 be approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) suggested a correction on page 9 on the section on grass management paragraph two should read, 'in what circumstances would less than annual cutting be considered appropriate.'

3.1 Draft minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

The Committee were informed by the Town Clerk that the draft minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee were ready for distribution and would be sent outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED – That, the draft minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee be received outside the meeting.

4. **SPORTS AND WELLBEING FORUM - DRAFT ACTION POINTS**

The Committee received a report of draft action points of the Hampstead Heath Sports & Wellbeing Forum.

A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association), asked for an update on the Parliament Hill athletic track project regarding timings and approval processes. Members were informed that there were no significant changes since the last meeting. It was noted that a review was being considered and Members would be provided with an update at the next meeting. The Assistant Director also confirmed the London Youth Games would take place on the 19th November 2022.

A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) asked if an update could be provided on funding improvements to cricket facilities at Parliament Hill, Highgate Woods and the Heath Extensions. The Assistant Director confirmed that the proposal is at consultation stage and key users are being contacted.

RESOLVED – That Members receive the report and note the contents.

5. **DIRECTORS UPDATE**

The Committee noted the report was withdrawn.

6. **ASSISTANT DIRECTORS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment, providing the Assistant Director's Update.

Concerning the Sub-Divisional Plan, the Assistant Director reported that the national lottery heritage fund had been approached and they were positive about the Highgate Woods kiln restoration project, it was noted that a funding application was currently being drawn up. The Assistant Director said work had been undertaken with the Heath and Hampstead Society regarding the issue of grazing, including discussing the possibility of sheep grazing returning to the Heath. Members were also informed that the Affordable Art Fair had been moved to 6th May to avoid a clash with the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.

In response to questions raised by a Member (London Council for Sport and Recreation), the Assistant Director confirmed a team had now been allocated to deal with licence schemes and progress needed to be made on implementing licences. Regarding planning concerning Murphy's Yard, it was noted that the no proposals have been re-submitted and the Natural Environment Department would work to feed into any new proposal. Concerning the café tendering, the

Assistant Director said surveyor site visits were scheduled for the coming week. Regarding waste and recycling, the Committee were informed about the challenges of litter management during the summer and the extent of the good weather. Concerning biosecurity, the Committee were notified that the Natural Environment Department was working with DEFRA on a pilot project at Highgate Wood for pheromone disruptions concerning oak processionary moth, it was hoped that this project would assist with a nature-based solution to manage the issue rather than large-scale spraying.

In response to a question on visitor numbers at Hampstead Heath raised by a Member (Heath and Hampstead Society) the Assistant Director noted that the Natural Environment Department wanted to strengthen its knowledge of where visitors were coming from and what it offered at a local level but also those who visit from distance, and this was being considered under a strategic framework.

A Member (London Council for Sport and Recreation) suggested that a report on how the midterm strategy would be reviewed be brought to Committee at a future meeting.

Events

In response to questions by Members on the Affordable Arts Fair, the Assistant Director noted that discussions take place each year regarding financial circumstances, including how the partnership can be strengthened to continue to generate income.

Swimming

The Assistant Director informed Members that the swimming season was extremely busy due to the good weather, it was noted that the Lido offered good community events that boosted participation. Members noted upcoming events taking place including the Christmas and New Year's Day dip. The Assistant Director said capital projects for the Ponds infrastructure improvement continued to progress well with planning permission being granted and procurement taking place. It was noted that any Amber risks in relation to budget risks would be mitigated through value engineering.

Parking Enforcement

The Assistant Director confirmed that parking enforcement was being modernised and engagement would take place with contractors to enable investment in enforcement infrastructure such as number plate recognition.

Gift Aid

The Assistant Director said the department was waiting for HMRC to provide feedback as all information had been submitted. It was noted that the department is proposing to work with Just Giving, a third-party contractor, who would help to simplify processes for users.

A Member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) asked whether the Gift Aid Project had gone beyond a pilot and was now in place permanently. The Assistant Director confirmed that the Gift Aid was still a pilot which included Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park. As such, the pilot would look at implementing Gift Aid for Hampstead Heath and thereafter be extended to all charities if successful.

In response to questions raised by Members, the Assistant Director agreed to take feedback on changes and updates to be made to the website for Hampstead Heath website regarding messaging.

Queen's Green Canopy

Members were informed by the Assistant Director that all trees for the Queen's Green Canopy had been purchased and deliveries were expected. It was noted that events for tree planting would be made available to Members.

Regarding Keats House, the Chairman noted that the mulberry tree had been acknowledged as one of the 70 ancient trees across the country that were part of the Queen's Green Canopy.

A Member (Highgate Society) commented that it would be good to see a focus also on restoring ancient hedgerows and replacing veteran oaks. In response, the Assistant Director confirmed there were several trees, specifically oaks which would be marked and planted in line with ancient hedgerows, and the point raised would also be considered.

Good News

The Assistant Director highlighted the Heath Extension playground, noting it had been a partnership project with the community which had raised nearly £50,000, thanks were given to all those involved in the project. In response to a question raised by a Member regarding the Heath extension playground, the committee discussed the naming of the playground. It was decided that this should be discussed at a local level by the residents association in conjunction with other interest groups, and their views would be sought before it was considered further by the committee.

The Assistant Director informed the committee that Hampstead Heath had one of the highest participation figures for learning and participation this summer with over 12,000 children involved in play activities and 8,000 in learning activities with schools.

A Member (Friends of Kenwood) commented that in future when planning educational activities further collaboration with the Heath and Kenwood estate should be considered. The Member also informed the Committee that there was a master planning exercise taking place regarding Kenwood.

In response to questions raised by Members, the Assistant Director said it was important to have an overview of the various way participation takes place,

Members were also informed that there was a strategic framework for the Natural Environment Department that has been reviewed which focuses on learning and participation.

RESOLVED – That Members receive the report and note the contents.

7. **CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY PROJECT**

The Committee received a presentation of the Executive Director, Environment, providing information on the Climate Action Strategy for 2020-2027.

RESOLVED – That Members receive the presentation and note the contents.

8. **HEATH HANDS NOVEMBER UPDATE**

The Committee received the draft action points of the Hampstead Heath Sports & Wellbeing Forum from November 2022.

The Chairman asked if further information could be provided on the opening of an interpretation centre. The Committee was informed that an opportunity would be available for people to visit the Dairy and learn more about the ecology of the Heath with further information to be provided at the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED – That Members receive the report and note the contents.

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

There were no questions.

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

There were no urgent items.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted the dates of the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.15pm

Chairman

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