

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 7 December 2022

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, 7 December 2022 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chair)
Alderman Gregory Jones KC (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy John Absalom
John Beyer
Councillor Marcus Boyland
Timothy Butcher
John Foley
Alderman Prem Goyal
Deputy Madush Gupta
Caroline Haines (Ex-Officio Member)
Emily Hills
Pauline Lobo
Wendy Mead
Councillor Arjun Mittra
Alethea Silk

Officers:

Sally Agass	- Natural Environment Department
Jako Beatrix	- Chamberlain's Department
Neil Chambers	- Chamberlain's Department
Ellen Fouweather	- Town Clerk's Department
Declan Gallagher	- Natural Environment Department
Elisabeth Hannah	- Natural Environment Department
Joanne Hill	- Natural Environment Department
Stefania Horne	- Natural Environment Department
Paul Maskell	- Natural Environment Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department
Edward Wood	- Comptroller & City Solicitor's

MATTERS ARISING

RESOLVED – That Pauline Lobo, nominated by the Ramblers' Association, be appointed as a Member of the Management Committee for the consideration of business relating to Hampstead Heath, in accordance with the London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew McMurtrie.

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

Timothy Butcher declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item 5, regarding the appointment of a contractor for the delivery of a landscape scale project around Burnham Beeches and encompassing the National Trust/Dorneywood Trust land. It was noted Timothy Butcher was a Member of Buckinghamshire Council.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 5 October 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. **OTHER MINUTES**

4.1 **Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee**

RESOLVED – That the draft minutes be noted.

5. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the Director's update on the work of the Natural Environment Division and Environment Department since the last Committee in October 2022. It was noted that the new descriptions of what the individual open spaces charities did had not yet been finalised and the wording provided in the report would be subject to further revision before the Charity Commission website was updated.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

6. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director, Environment concerning an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park since October 2022.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman, the Assistant Director, Environment explained that there had been some temporary arrangements put in place on the path leading up to Parliament Hill due to the need for emergency repairs. A date for their completion would be confirmed as soon as possible to the Committee.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Assistant Director, Environment noted that conversations concerning access by anglers to the Men's Bathing Pond north bank had been held between the Hampstead & Highgate Angling Society and swimmers. Measures had been put in place to enable the north bank to be used for angling and restricted to use by the angling society members.

In response to a question raised by a Member about the proposed use of a contractor for parking enforcement, the Assistant Director, Environment confirmed that there would be no cost involved in using a third party contractor

for parking enforcement, as they would receive remuneration from the enforcement charges that were successfully recovered. The Assistant Director confirmed that there would be a profit-sharing arrangement and there was a similar arrangement already in place at Epping Forest.

RESOLVED – That,

- a) Members agree the proposal to implement parking enforcement arrangements, as set out in paragraphs 9-16 of the report.

7. ***OPEN SPACES BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23 - PROGRESS REPORT (MID-YEAR, APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2022)**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on progress made against the 2022/23 High-Level Business Plan of the Open Spaces Department.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman regarding the performance measures, the Executive Director, Environment confirmed that the High-Level Business Plan covers the whole of the Natural Environment Division, as such it is a strategic level plan

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

8. ***OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT (PERIOD 6 APRIL - SEPTEMBER) 2022/23 - HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain concerning an update on the operational finance position from April -September 2022/23 for Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman, the Chamberlain confirmed that the athletics track project as outlined under paragraph 15 of the report was given approval by the Resources Allocation Sub-Committee on 7 December 2022.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Chamberlain confirmed that concerning paragraph 17 this was the debt position at the end of September 2022 and debts from July have now been paid.

RESOLVED – That, the report be noted.

9. **DEPARTMENTAL AND SERVICE COMMITTEE BUDGET ESTIMATES 2023/24**

The Committee considered a report for approval of the Chamberlain concerning the revenue and capital budgets for the Hampstead Heath Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee for 2023/24.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman concerning energy price increases, the Chamberlain confirmed that the current budget for Hampstead Heath, Queen's Park and Highgate Wood was £115k. For the current financial

year 2022/23 the Chamberlains Department would pay for any increases out of its contingency budget. However, for 2023/24 it was noted there was no expectation that cuts would be made to existing running budgets.

In response to a question raised by a Member concerning inflationary issues, the Chamberlain noted that pay awards for the following year had not yet been decided and the Department were not aware of any large contract budgets which would cause issues for the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee. It was noted that the Corporation was currently reviewing its spending priorities across the organisation and additional revenue streams that could be generated by the individual charities were also being considered to help with any potential shortfalls. The Executive Director, Environment said that one of the ambitions of the Department was to deliver the Charity income generation strategy which would be brought back to the Committee in the future with further detail.

RESOLVED – That,

- a) Members approved the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee's proposed revenue budget for 2023/24 for submission to Finance Committee;
- b) Members approved the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee's capital and supplementary revenue project budgets for 2023/24 for submission to Finance Committee;
- c) Members agreed that amendments for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 budgets arising from changes to recharges or for any further implications arising from corporate contracts, Target Operating Model (TOM), energy price increases, changes to the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) and capital charges during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain in consultation with the Executive Director Environment subject to approval to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee and;
- d) Members noted that the draft budget does not include estimated increases in energy costs which are currently being reviewed in light of changing market prices with budgets to be adjusted once a final agreement on energy forecasts is made.

10. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The following items of urgent business were raised:

- The Chairman noted that the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) had confirmed that they were no longer able to provide a nominee to be a Member of the Management Committee. As such,

views had been canvased regarding a replacement, with colleagues from the Natural Environment Department suggesting that the London Wildlife Trust (LWT) would be a suitable alternative body, as they also represent ecological interests. It was noted that a prospective candidate had been approached by the LWT and confirmation of their interest was awaited. The views of the Consultative Committee would also be sought before any appointment came back to the Management Committee for decision.

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That, the following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

13. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2022 be approved as a correct record.

14. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 6.32pm

Chairman

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