

EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 18 May 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 18 May 2023 at
11.00 am

Present

Members:

Benjamin Murphy (Chairman)
Jaspreet Hodgson
Alderman Vincent Keaveny
Gregory Lawrence
Andrew McMurtrie (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Verderer William Kennedy
Verderer Paul Morris
Verderer Nicholas Munday

Officers:

Jako Beatrix	- Chamberlain's Department
Neil Chambers	- Chamberlain's Department
Deborah Cluett	- Comptroller & City Solicitor
Polly Dunn	- Deputy Town Clerk's Department
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Natural Environment Department
Elisabeth Hannah	- Natural Environment Department
Stefania Horne	- Natural Environment Department
Clem Harcourt	- Chamberlain's Department
Joanne Hill	- Natural Environment Department
Jo Hurst	- Natural Environment Department
Juliemma McLoughlin	- Natural Environment Department
Tim Munday	- Natural Environment Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Geoff Sinclair	- Natural Environment Department
Blair Stringman	- Deputy Town Clerk's Department
Paul Thomson	- Natural Environment Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Nicholas Lyons and Deputy Graeme Doshi-Smith.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

The Committee received the order of the Court of Common Council held at the Guildhall of the City of London on Thursday 27th April 2023, which appointed the Committee until the first meeting of the Court in April 2024 and approved its terms of reference.

RESOLVED - That the order be noted.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

The Committee considered the report to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29.

The Town Clerk explained the Standing Order of the Court held on 27th April 2023 to the Committee.

The Committee received an Expression of Interest from Benjamin Murphy to be elected as uncontested Chair of the committee.

RESOLVED - That Benjamin Murphy be declared as Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

The Committee considered the report to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30

The Committee received one Expression of Interest from Caroline Haines to be elected as uncontested Deputy Chair of the committee.

RESOLVED - That Caroline Haines be declared as Deputy Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

6. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the public minutes of the Committee held on 16th March 2023.

RESOLVED, that the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 16 March 2023 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

7. **MATTER ARISING**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk concerning Matters Arising.

7.1 **Action Log**

The Chairman remarked that this was a new concept to the Committee and explained the importance was for tracking the progress dates of action items and to encourage closure of all action items within specified timelines.

The Chairman noted that the Chamberlain's report for the last five years income which would help predict how to generate income in the future

had been delayed and would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. **2023/24 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the appointment of Members to various groups.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

Appointed the following Members to the listed Consultative Committees and Groups:

- Ashted Commons Consultative Group;
The Chairman was appointed and a vacancy was rolled over to the next Committee meeting.
- Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group;
The Chairman and Paul Morris
- West Wickham, Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Group;
The Chairman and Andrew McMurtrie subject to his willingness to serve.
- Epping Forest Consultative Group
Verderer William Kennedy and Paul Morris
- Deer Management Oversight Group;
Verderer Michael Chapman DL, Verderer H.H. William Kennedy, Verderer Paul Morris, Verderer Nicholas Munday and Gregory Lawrence.
- Verderer Paul Morris as an observer to the Natural Environment Board.
- Approved that the relevant terms of reference for the consultative bodies be updated to reflect that they will be supported locally by the Environment Department and that the job titles be updated.

9. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning Epping Forest's activities between February and March 2023.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment summarising activities across The Commons between February 2023 and March 2023.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

11. SURREY HILLS AONB BOUNDARY EXTENSION PROPOSALS

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning proposals to extend the boundaries of the Surrey Hills and Chilterns Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The Chairman requested that the Superintendent clarify the relationship between the Committee and the Conservation Board going forward and work out the governance structure.

RESOLVED – That the Committee agreed to:

- support the inclusion of part of Farthing Downs in the proposed Happy Valley extension to the Surrey Hills AONB.

12. FARTHING DOWNS LAND REGISTRY MAPPING ANOMALY ADJUSTMENT

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the Land Registry application or transfer to be undertaken to restore the boundary situation at Farthing Downs Land.

RESOLVED – That the Committee agreed that:

- a Land Registry application be made to restore the boundary of the City Corporation's registered title to Farthing Downs to reflect the locally understood boundaries, or alternatively that a Transfer of the relevant strip of land is made by the City Corporation back to the London Borough of Croydon for nil consideration to achieve the same effect.

13. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on Epping Forest activities.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the Cross-Divisional risks management update and summary of the risk register for each of the charities.

RESOLVED – That the Committee agreed:

- that the report be noted; and
- to confirm on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the registers appended to the report satisfactorily set out the key risks to each of the charities and that appropriate systems are in place to identify and mitigate risks.

15. SPORTS STRATEGY VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the Sports strategy updates.

The Chairman remarked that it would be helpful to put the report through the Consultative Committees and Groups for review.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16. CHARITIES REVIEW UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Head of Corporate Charities Funding Unit to be heard.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

19. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED - 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.

20. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESLOVED - The non-public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 16 March 2023 be agreed as an accurate record.

21. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk

21.1 Action Log

22. HISTORICAL INCOME REPORT (2018-24) FOR EPPING FOREST

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain

23. RENEWABLE ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment.

24. AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE OF A DEED OF GRANT EASEMENT AND DEED OF RELEASE

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Environment.

25. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

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

There were two items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 1.45pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Blair Stringman
Blair.Stringman@cityoflondon.gov.uk