

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 22 April 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at
Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall. on Monday, 22 April 2024 at 5.30 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chairman)
Liz Andrew
John Arnoldi
John Foley
Colin Gregory
Michael Hammerson
Michele Martin Williams
Richard Sumray
Jeff Waage
Simon Williams

In Attendance:

Nick Bradfield
Dr Gaye Henson
Helen Payne
David Walton

Officers:

Emily Brennan	- Natural Environment Director
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Charlotte Williams	- Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Environment Department
Blair Stringman	- Town Clerk's Department
Helen Evans	- Environment Department
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge House Estates
Isobel Tucker	- City Surveyor's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Liz Andrew and John Weston.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

3.1 To agree the draft minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 15 January 2024

RESOLVED – That, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 January 2024.

3.2 ***To note the draft minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held 12 February 2024**

The minutes were noted.

MATTERS ARISING:

The following points were noted.

- London Council for Sport and Recreation Member expressed concerns about the Constabulary's visibility and numbers, noting a significant reduction compared to previous figures and questioned whether this had been addressed by the HHMC.
- Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association Member raised a query about uniforms not being provided by the city police, the implications for visibility, and whether funding would need to come from the Heath. The Assistant Director responded that the issue predates current discussions, uniforms were sourced through colleagues and other departments, and funding would need to come from the Heath.
- The Chairman indicated the intention to ensure the work of Heath Hands is reported and acknowledged, stating it was in Heath Hands' remit to do so.
- It was noted by Members that the committee representation had decreased for some representative bodies. The London Council for Sport and Recreation Member committed to bringing a name back to the next consultative committee.

3.3 ***To note the draft minutes of the Sports Advisory Forum Minutes held on 28 February 2024**

The minutes were noted.

MATTERS ARISING

Forum Strategy

London Council for Sport and Recreation Member expressed satisfaction with the forum's shift towards a more strategic focus rather than operational, emphasising the importance of balancing officer work and strategic planning for health and wellbeing. They noted this as a good starting point to reset and enhance the forum's value.

Sports and Wellbeing Integration

Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association Member discussed the Sports and Wellbeing Forum, mentioning an issue with accessing the sports strategy link, which seemed to be focused on the square mile. They raised questions about integration and the business plan item related to the swimming forum's relation to the Sports and Wellbeing Forum.

Swimmers Forum and Sports Strategy

Head of Operations and Parks informed Members that the swimmers forum has been established with the first meeting scheduled for 23 April, including representatives from the lido, men's and ladies' mixed ponds. They mentioned

upcoming meetings with the Head of Sport Strategy & Engagement regarding the sports strategy review, ensuring it includes NLOS.

London Council for Sport and Recreation Member highlighted the necessity of including open spaces in the sports strategy and the importance of utilising the current strategy until a new one is developed. They committed to providing an update on the sports strategy.

4. ***HEATH HANDS UPDATE - MARCH 2024**

The Committee received an update from Heath Hands.

The Heath Hands representative gave a summary of the Heath Hands activities in the first quarter, including wildlife monitoring, interpretation centre, landscaping work at the men's and mixed pond, and the upcoming 21st anniversary celebrations.

The Committee noted the heath hands agreement and clarified that no decisions had been made and nothing is currently planned for the tennis hut at Parliament Hill.

5. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since the last Hampstead Heath Consultative Meeting on 30 October 2023.

The Assistant Director's report covered the formal opening of the athletics track, progress of the Parliament Hill sports and leisure facilities, the status of the pergola restoration project, the completion of the Ponds Access Project, and the conservation and ecology work on the heath. The committee discussed various topics related to the Heath and it was noted that a small working group would be formed to review and update the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy.

Parliament Hill

Head of Operations and Parks noted the Cricket nets project had been delayed, Members were informed that the plan to relocate or refurbish the cricket nets on the Heath had been postponed due to planning issues and lack of sufficient budget. It was noted that the City Surveyors team has an allocated funds that could be used for either option, but not both. A Member expressed disappointment and suggested looking for external funding sources. It was agreed that a further update to be provided at the next meeting. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association Member noted that the association could help make up the current shortfall of approximately £20,000 and proposed to speak to other boards for assistance.

Golders Hill Pergola Update

The Assistant Director provided a summary on the pergola update, stating that long-term repair would require a significant sum and that temporary works might not be sufficient, but a better sense would be obtained after works

currently underway were completed. They advised erring on the side of caution.

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association Member inquired about the funding source, whether it was from capital resources or a local budget, and what issues might be faced. The Assistant Director responded that there was not sufficient funding for this, and the source of funds was an open question. Members noted works were being carried out in May subject to weather conditions.

Ponds

The Head of Operations and Parks reported that all work at the mixed and ladies pond, including snagging, was completed. The remaining works included a sliding door from Finland, which was being manufactured and expected to be installed between 7-10 May, with an end of May completion target.

Conservation

The following points were noted.

- The recent desilting work on the Heath Extension had finished.
- There was a lot of ongoing work on the ponds and wetlands by the conservation team, including the amphibian survey of all 30 ponds, which was assisted by Heath Hands.
- The discovery of Black Hair Streak larval eggs on the Heath was mentioned as an exciting new development.
- Leaky dams, constructed out of wood, are being installed on the streams and tributaries of the Fleet Stream as part of the climate action strategy to create pools, damp woodland habitat, and assist with flood mitigation.
- The conservation team completed a week's work at Burnham Beeches, doing specialist work on the most vulnerable Beech pollards.

In response to a discussion on windspeed, it was suggested that notices about risks or dangers could be put up at main entrances when people come onto the Heath. A Member noted that signs are put up and social media is used to inform when windspeed exceeds 40mph, leading to the closure of ponds, particularly the ladies pond.

Constabulary

During the meeting, there was a discussion about the Constabulary and its current makeup, presence, visibility, and effectiveness on the Heath. The topic of the role of Parkguard was also mentioned and it was suggested that it may need to be touched on in the future.

In relation to questions raised on the licensing scheme for dogs and the resource limitations at COL for managing the Kenwood estate, officers noted that consideration has been given to the topic but no action was currently possible.

The representative for London Council for Sport and Recreation raised concerns about safety on the Heath due to drug paraphernalia and proposed

that the work plan should include a review of Constabulary policing over the year, with a review to be provided by the end of the year.

Boarded Up Cottage

It was reported that the initial timeline for the repair of the boarded-up cottage had been delayed. The decision was made to retain and repair, which will be covered through insurance, with construction estimated to take 9 months to a year, aiming for a 2025 completion.

6. MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR FY'2024-25 (BUSINESS PLAN)

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning an overview of the planned key management activities and initiatives at Hampstead Heath for financial year 2024-25.

The Assistant Director reported that there has been significant planning and strategy development happening across COL. A 5-year business plan is being created for North London Open Spaces this year, and a 1-year plan has been developed for this year. Officers noted that the document is a working document, and the forthcoming 5-year business will seek to align with the multiple strategies across the organisation. Members noted that there a delicate balance needs to be struck to ensure that all activities are happening in the right way. Sport was discussed as a key strategy for the Natural Environment Division, including access and recreation. The need to incorporate connections, and physical activity, health, and exercise management into the strategy was also discussed.

The meeting was extended for 45 minutes.

7. REVIEW OF CURRENT DESIGNATED, UNRESTRICTED, AND RESTRICTED INCOME FUNDS HELD AND PROPOSED CHANGES

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment concerning the complete list of the current designated, unrestricted, and restricted income funds held for Hampstead Heath with the recommended future usage and changes required for these funds, to meet charity accounting SORP rules.

The interim head of finance at Chamberlain's, presented a report on the review of current designated, unrestricted, and restricted income funds held and proposed changes. She explained that the report was a building block that reviews the information held by the organisation and appears in the charity accounts each year. Members noted that the report showed the movement of funds for Hampstead in 2022-23 and the balance on the 31st of March 2024, subject to audit. Officers also mentioned that there was ongoing work on the charity review, and there may be more precise notes in the statutory accounts that would be produced in the future.

The London Council for Sport and Recreation representative inquired about the permanent endowment mentioned in appendix 1 of the report. The Member was interested in knowing if the amount had changed over the years or had been built up and if the endowment has kept in line with inflation. It was

explained that the permanent endowment mentioned on page 46, is something where the capital must be maintained unless the originator specifies otherwise. Members noted the income could be spent, but there was no requirement to maintain the asset.

8. ***DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk concerning decision taken under urgency authority.

8.1 **Hampstead Heath Fees and Charges for Financial Year 2024-2025**

The report was noted.

8.2 **Parliament Hill Athletics Track**

The report was noted.

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

There were now questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

11. **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.

12. ***TO NOTE THE DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2024**

The minutes were noted.

13. ***DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk concerning decision taken under urgency authority.

14. **CORPORATE CHARITIES REVIEW SCOPING EXERCISE TO SUPPORT THE NATURAL CHARITIES REVIEW**

The Committee received a report of the Managing Director, City Bridge Foundation.

15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 10 JUNE 2024**

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chairman

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