

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 16 September 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at
Parliament Hill Staff Yard, Parliament Hill Fields, Highgate Rd, London NW5 1QR on
Monday, 16 September 2024 at 5.30 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chairman)
John Arnoldi (Heath Hands)
Nick Bradfield (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Suburb Resident's Association)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Richard Sumray (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Jeff Waage (Heath & Hampstead Society)
Michele Martin Williams (Vale of Heath Society)

In Attendance:

John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)

Externals:

Wendy Fidler (Land Management Services)
David Withycombe (Land Management Services)

Officers:

Jonathan Cooper	- City Surveyor's Department
Isobel Tucker	- City Surveyor's Department
Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Environment Department
Abigail Tinkler	- Environment Department
Charlotte Williams	- Environment Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Helen Payne and Councillor Marcus Boyland.

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

No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Draft Minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

RESOLVED, that, the public minutes and non-public summary of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 10 June 2024 were approved.

3.2 Draft Minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

The public minutes and non-public summary of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 10 July 2024 were formally noted.

3.3 Draft Informal Minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

The informal minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 10 June 2024 were formally noted.

3.4 Draft Minutes of Hampstead Heath Sports and Wellbeing Forum

The public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Sports and Wellbeing Forum held on 15 July 2024 were formally noted.

Matters Arising on the Minutes

It was agreed by the Committee going forward that statements captured in the minutes from Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meetings would be attributed to represented organisations.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Appointment to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

The Committee noted the appointment of Councillor Marcus Boyland by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee.

5. APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBER OF ENGLISH HERITAGE TO THE HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE

The Committee noted the report.

6. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Committee received the Assistant Director's report which presented an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since the last Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting on 10 June 2024.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) A representative of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Resident's Association (HGSRA) raised questions regarding the flood mitigation and

whether measures were related to alleviating flooding due to increased risk of volatile climate events. Officers indicated that the London Borough of Barnet had submitted proposals for work on the Heath extension, but Officers had asked they be reviewed following an initial meeting which Barnet agreed to.

- b) Officers indicated that work was being carried out on the Heath on reducing grass cutting to allow for meadow development, as well as creating several ponds and leaky dams from locally sourced materials to hold water back on the Heath and reduce flooding downstream.
- c) The Chairman queried whether the work was taking place along the Fleet Stream area. Officers confirmed it would be, but also noted some ponds had been created on the eastern end of Cohen's Field.
- d) The representative of the Highgate Society (HS) questioned whether the proposals were in response to an identified problem caused by hard services around the Heath. Officers noted there had been flooding events near Decoy Brook.
- e) The HGSRA representative requested an update on the replacement of the cricket nets. Officers reported that a decision was made to move from two lanes to one lane due to demand, and no need for planning permission, and to ensure the protection of nearby tree roots. The final figure for the new structure was slightly more than anticipated in the City Surveyor's pot, but monies had been transferred from the local risk budget and the procurement process was currently underway. Officers indicated the new structure could hopefully be in place by November 2024.
- f) It was queried by the HGSRA representative if there was an update on the Heath Extension changing rooms. Officers indicated the changing rooms had been disinfected again and were retested for Legionnaires'. The results would take around one to two weeks to be reported. Officers hoped that the changing rooms would be opened for the rugby season if the results were acceptable.
- g) The HGSRA representative expressed approval of the filling of the Zookeeper position and explored what the Golders Hill Park Zoo was for going forward. Officers explained that the first priority was ensuring full staffing and exploring experiences to bring visitors in, including introducing a native collection at the zoo. Officers would find out in November whether the Zoo would be accredited and were in discussions with colleagues from the Learning Team to look at how to incorporate learning into the Zoo experience.
- h) A representative from HS discussed whether breeding native species at the Zoo had been considered. Officers confirmed it needed to be looked at in line with accreditation but a strategy was being considered and were looking to put together a collection plan for Queen's Park Farm.

- i) The London Council for Sport and Recreation (LCSR) representative enquired whether more punitive action would be taken against dog walkers without licenses on Hampstead Heath. Officers noted the Constabulary had enforcement powers, but the priority was to educate and inform Heath users as the dog walking scheme was relatively new. Discussions had taken place with solicitors to allow users to opt-in to dog walking licenses on the Heath throughout the year.
- j) A representative from the Heath & Hampstead Society (HHS) considered whether there were future plans to designate areas where dog licenses did not apply due to increased threat to wildlife. Officers indicated it had not been a problem yet as there had been low uptake, but the zones would continue to be considered once enforcement and license uptake was underway.
- k) The Chairman requested a brief summary on Automatic Number Plate Recognition. Officers reported that it had been live for July and August and had seen an increase in payment via the RingGo app. Officers were also now able to track uptake and manage compliance with the scheme. Officers noted that while some limited complaints had been received regarding administration of it, they did have the ability to waive penalty notices that had been inadvertently sent. No other issues regarding the introduction of the ANPR system were raised at the meeting.
- l) Officers indicated that a local councillor from the London Borough of Barnet was happy to support an application for CIL funding for the renovation of the sandpit and playground at Golders Hill Park.

RECEIVED.

7. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation from the consultants, Land Management Services.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) The representative from LCSR requested an opportunity to consult on a draft of the strategy at Consultative Committee before it went to the Management Committee for approval. Officers responded that the Working Group, which all Members had been invited to join, was established to represent the Consultative Committee and the Management Committee on the detailed review given the expedited deadline.
- b) LCSR explored whether changing financial circumstances would be taken account of in the management strategy. Officers indicated a project prioritisation process was being worked on to provide a framework on how to prioritise projects which operated against available budget totals.

- c) The Chairman enquired how the strategy and project prioritisation process related to one another. Officers noted the strategy, as a high-level document, would be interpreted and delivered through the project prioritisation process alongside five-year business planning.
- d) HGSRA and LCSR expressed the need for an income generation objective to be reflected in the revised management strategy.
- e) A Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee (HCAAC) representative considered how the Heath could be preserved without becoming overrun by visitors. Officers indicated it was important they were data-led and were looking at the impact currently numbers were having on the Heath; work could be done with stakeholders to manage visitors away from more sensitive areas of the Heath if needed.
- f) The HS representative suggested that increasing the resilience of the natural environment needed to be a headline of the strategy.
- g) Vale of Heath Society (VHS) queried whether approximate costings and funding sources would be identified as part of Project Prioritisation Process documents. Officers reported it would feed into business planning process and the financial model was currently under review as part of the Natural Environment Charities Review and was difficult to discuss at this stage.
- h) VHS considered when the Committee would be able to look at what work needed to be completed going forward and what resources were available to complete it. Officers reported it would be at the beginning of the next financial year.
- i) Chairman requested a draft document on the Project Prioritisation Process be shared.

RECEIVED.

8. **HEATH HANDS UPDATE**

The Committee heard an update from Heath Hands and noted their written report.

RECEIVED.

9. **HILL GARDEN PERGOLA UPDATE**

The Committee received the Assistant Director's report which presented an update on matters relating to the Hill Garden Pergola on Hampstead Heath and outlined options to complete the needed capital repairs.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) LCSR emphasised the need to raise money due to reputational risk of Grade II listed Pergola having to be taken down and expressed agreement with the recommendations.
- b) HGSRA indicated agreement with the recommendations and highlighted a need to demonstrate why the Pergola was special to instigate a successful revenue raising exercise and explain why it mattered that it needed to be redeveloped.
- c) HS representative suggested approaching the ancestors of Lord Leverhulme to explore whether they may have an interest in restoring the Pergola. Officers indicated they had done some initial research on potential donors but cautioned on the need to recruit additional staff to develop fundraising relationships.
- d) The Chairman considered whether it may be worth reaching out to local residents for sources of funding.
- e) HCAAC suggested potentially allowing a donor to attach their name to the Pergola to attract possible fundraising opportunities. Officers suggested this was something they would explore and expressed the need for ethical considerations.

As this point, the Chairman sought approval from the Sub-Committee to continue the meeting beyond two hours from the appointed time for the start of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 40, and this was agreed.

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10. **WILDLIFE MONITORING ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

The Committee welcomed the report of the Executive Director of Environment which intended to provide Members with an update on monitoring undertaken of selected Hampstead Heath fauna over the last ten years.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) HS and LCSR representatives considered whether it was possible to make the report more digestible to the public as they would not often see the Heath in that guise. Officers emphasised that there was increased species diversity and much of the work was supported by volunteers.
- b) HS suggested that the outcomes should include underscoring Hampstead Heath as a nationally renowned natural environment.
- c) LCSR emphasised the need to highlight the risks related to the habitat alongside the monitoring.

- d) HHS suggested data should not be presented without trends and indicated it would be useful to consult universities in London to analyse the trends.

RECEIVED.

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

There were no questions relating to the work of the Committee.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business considered urgent raised by the Chairman

13. 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.

14. MINUTES

14.1 Draft Non-Public Minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

RESOLVED, that, the non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 10 June 2024 were approved.

14.2 Draft Non-Public of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

The non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 10 July 2024 were formally noted.

15. UPDATE ON WEST HEATH - VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath.

16. REVIEW OF LEARNING AND HERITAGE ASSETS AND ACTIVITIES

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

17. REPORT ON TENDER OF CAFES AT NORTH LONDON OPEN SPACES

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment.

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

There were no questions relating to the work of the Committee.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business considered urgent raised by the Chairman.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

Chairman

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