

EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE
Thursday, 23 January 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held at
Committee Rooms - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 23 January 2025
at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Benjamin Murphy (Chairman)
Caroline Haines (Deputy Chairman)
George Abrahams
Jaspreet Hodgson
Alderman Vincent Keaveny, CBE
Alderman Bronek Masojada
Eamonn Mullally (Ex-Officio Member)
David Sales
Verderer Paul Morris
Verderer Nicholas Munday

In Attendance:

Philip Woodhouse
Verderer Michael Chapman DL

Officers:

Clem Harcourt	- Chamberlain's Department
Pauline Mouskis	- Chamberlain's Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Foundation
Jagdeep Bilkhu	- City Surveyor's Department
Mark Kober	- City Surveyor's Department
Gordon Roy	- City Surveyor's Department
Anna Cowperthwaite	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Tanith Cook	- Environment Department
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Environment Department
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
Geoff Sinclair	- Environment Department
Tristan Vetta	- Environment Department
Heinz Traut	- Environment Department
Joseph Smith	- Town Clerk's Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department
Zoe Williams	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Gregory Lawrence, Alderman Sir Nicholas Lyons and Verderer William Kennedy.

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

No declarations under the Code of Conduct were made in respect of items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, Members approved the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 as an accurate record of proceedings.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Action Log

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman indicated that Action 2023-2: Target Operating Model (TOM) Review could be closed.
- b) The Chairman suggested a new action needed to be considered as to whether HR could provide analysis on Epping Forest and Commons staffing to ensure the founding principles of the TOM were being met. Officers indicated they would provide the information requested. Another Member suggested it may not be work for the Committee to consider, instead referring staffing matters to the Corporate Services Committee.

5. SSSI FEATURES ASSESSMENT - VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received a presentation from Officers on the SSSI Feature Assessment.

The Committee noted the positive change from 'unfavourable recovering' to 'favourable' for the population of *zygodont forsteri* / knothole moss. It also noted no change in the 'unfavourable recovering' assessment for lowland wet or dry heath. Officers added that changes in condition of SSSI features could take many years, which was why assessments were only performed by Natural England every four years.

6. EPPING FOREST CONSULTATIVE GROUP REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE (SEF 04/24)

The Committee received a report which proposed additional changes to the Terms of Reference for the Epping Forest Consultative Group, primarily to

reflect the outcome of a recent consultation with the current members of that group regarding frequency of meetings.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) A Member stated a need for something different to be done but acknowledged work was in progress and expressed the need for the Committee to agree the Consultative Group Terms of Reference.
- b) The Chairman indicated that feedback from the Consultative Group had suggested it could take some time for minutes to be approved by the next Committee and suggested a need for a better feedback mechanism.

RESOLVED – That, Members –

- Agreed, in principle, the revised Terms of Reference for the Epping Forest Consultative Group.
- Authorised the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, to finalise the Terms of Reference.
- Agreed to hold over the current membership of the Epping Forest Consultative Group until May 2025.
- Agreed that the Superintendent implement a feedback mechanism from Epping Forest & Commons Committee meetings to Epping Forest Consultative Committee Members.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Committee received a report which provided the Epping Forest and Commons Committee with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department are satisfactory and meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman drew attention to the reduction of the risk score for the failure of raised reservoirs from 24 to 16 following weekly inspections by Epping Forest staff and biannual inspections by reservoir engineers and queried, if the control was reducing the risk, what was happening to ensure the control was in place. Officers stated it needed to be ensured there was a biannual inspection by a panel engineer which was recorded and there was a work programme for staff that did visual inspections on a weekly basis.
- b) The Chairman queried what would occur if checks were not carried out. Officers indicated it would be alerted through the management process to ensure checks were still carried out.

- c) The Chairman sought an explanation for the risk score of 12 in relation to the decline in condition of built assets and infrastructure. Officers confirmed it was reduced due to the separation out of heritage-built assets which were a much higher risk and there was now CWP funding allocated, and a project plan being developed.
- d) A Member indicated he was concerned about the unintended effects of affecting upon roots and natural groundwater in existing flood zones put into place to prevent flooding as it could increase the risk if it was not managed correctly. Officers indicated they were about to appoint a hydrologist to carry out a full assessment of plans and how an intervention could affect the area.
- e) The Member sought clarification on whether work would begin until a full assessment had been carried out. Officers confirmed that was the case.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Confirmed, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the risk registers appended to the report satisfactorily set out the key risks to each of the five charities and that appropriate systems were in place to identify and mitigate risks.

8. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR EPPING FOREST UPDATE REPORT OCT-DEC 2024 (SEF 01/25)

The Committee received a report which presented key information on business activity aligned to objectives for Epping Forest for the period October 2024 – December 2024.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman informed the Committee he had recently visited the cattle management overwintering facility and had shared a number of issues which required remediation with the Superintendent, including staff facilities, the need for a great concrete hardstanding, access to the site via the public footpath and the promotion of the role of volunteer warders. The Superintendent agreed to take these items away and feed them into business planning.
- b) The Chairman asked Officers to comment on ornamental waters given how complicated the project was. Officers noted the timeframe was slightly delayed from the last time it was reported on in relation to the pumping station, but that was still beneficial to the work of the Grotto and work would need to be carried out on removal of vegetation, but the intention was to carry out that work before the pond was refilled in 2026. A Wanstead Park Project Officer had been appointed and would join in March 2025.

- c) The Chairman drew attention to the issue of fly tipping as it had become a big problem and noted the project partnership carried out by the Epping Forest team with Essex Police and Epping Forest District Council.
- d) A Member queried whether consideration had been given to involving the judiciary on the issue of fly tipping as pressure needed to be put on them to ensure the full force of the law fell down on culprits. Officers noted the previous Superintendent had a successful meeting with magistrates a few years ago and there was an attempt to repeat that. However, there had been no further engagement.
- e) Another Member suggested coordinated pressure, perhaps at a ministerial level, could be useful as magistrates would ultimately operate within sentencing guidelines which would be formed by the Ministry of Justice and noted the Corporation was in a strong position to speak to the issue.
- f) The Member queried, in relation to the overwintering cattle facility, whether there was any scope for school visits to give children a sense of what real agriculture looked like and the charity's involvement in the provision of agricultural services and facilities in Southeast England. The Chairman noted it had been considered, but further work was needed to ensure toilet facilities, as well as other amenities, were provided before visitors could be allowed onto the site. Officers added it was an aspiration and would continue to be reviewed to see if funding was available.
- g) Another Member asked whether it could be communicated that ANPR technology was now in use to deter fly tipping and whether a reporting mechanism could be established. Officers indicated there was a joint press release being worked on with Epping Forest District Council.
- h) It was questioned by a Member whether portable A frames could be utilised to deter fly tipping. The Chairman indicated there was a challenge in ensuring there was not too much signage in the Forest and suggested a mix of overt and covert CCTV, with partners who could act quickly on the spot, was possibly the best framework for now. Officers suggested that A frames could be helpful for seasonal messages and stated more could be done on how fly tipping could be reported.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report.

9. EPPING FOREST FIVE YEAR BUSINESS PLAN 2025-30 (SEF 06/25)

The Committee received a report which provided an introduction to a five-year business plan for Epping Forest which outlined high level projects and core business plans indicatively for the next five years.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) A Member queried whether Keepers could be deployed by the Summer.
- b) The Chairman indicated it would be useful to see the document as a rolling update and raised the issue of car parking repairs as the project prioritisation number did not seem to be high enough given it was a paid-for service.
- c) The Chairman also suggested the standalone website commissioning was important as it released the potential for benefits and cost avoidance for the charity which had not been focused on through the five-year plan as much. The Chairman added a public self-service tool for facilities and reporting functionality could be helpful.
- d) The Chairman noted the tree safety works were not reflected in the project prioritisation process as a high priority which he stated he found surprising. Officers indicated that refinements and improvements would be seen over the next few months.
- e) A Member requested a link be included for Gift Aid to the charity's website and suggested it would be worth consulting with the City Bridge Foundation Trust before paying an external consultant. Officers stated they were working closely with colleagues from City Bridge Foundation Trust and added the external consultant was for areas of expertise the Foundation did not have, especially on fundraising.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Approved, in principle, the Five-Year Business Plan contained in Appendix A for Epping Forest and authorised the Assistant Director, Epping Forest to make amendments and carry out annual reviews as necessary to re-prioritise or re-scope workstreams to accommodate new pressures or change.

10. EFCC BUDGET ESTIMATE REPORT 2025-26 APPENDIX 1 FINAL (1)

The Committee received a report which presented for approval the revenue and capital budgets for the Epping Forest charity for 2025/26, for subsequent submission to Finance Committee.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) A question was raised by a Member on the reduction in the staffing statement from 91.30 to 88.10. Officers indicated they would need to come back to Members to provide more information on that.
- b) The Chairman enquired as to why there was no mention of CAS projects for future years. Officers stated the table on Paragraph 15 was

referencing current projects at their current stage in the gateway and did not include future projects.

- c) The Chairman noted the allocation from central recharges was significant and was an area that needed focus and a better breakdown to understand how central departments were allocating costs. Officers indicated their agreement and told the Committee they had highlighted the issue as part of the Natural Environment Charities Review. Officers added that more detail was required on what the level of recharges covered and what level of service was provided for the recharges, and there was a need to develop service-level agreements (SLAs) for each of the services provided by the Corporation to charities to ensure there was value for money.
- d) Officers provided further clarification to the Committee regarding central recharges, and stated that previous Epping Forest figures were based on the pre-TOM structure and had now been readjusted based on the current staffing level. It was noted that charges were fixed at approximately £15,000 per FTE for the Port Health and Environmental Services, as it was for Epping Forest, and £13,000 per FTE for the Planning and Transportation Committee which suggested it had not greatly increased over other areas. Officers added there was big investment in IT due to the ERP project which counted for significant increases in central support. They also stated that City Surveyors also involved some of the significant increase in recharges due to CWP work that would be underway in future.
- e) The Chairman expressed a need for the charity to have more autonomy to agree service level agreements, and to have mechanisms in place that provide reassurance the charity was getting its fair share of central service provision for the level of recharge.
- f) A Member agreed, as the charity moved to a grant funding model, that a different type of transparency was necessary to see what services were being used and how they were being resourced.
- g) Another Member sought confirmation that the Park Life project had ceased. Officers confirmed it had and a final closing down report was required. The Chairman added that there was no support from the local planning authorities for the project.
- h) The Chairman drew attention to the combined income of the visitors centre and the golf course at Chingford and suggested it would be worth reviewing the entire costs and management structures of the visitor centres now they were performing better to take into account building maintenance and the cost of the facilities to run.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- i. Noted the latest revenue budget for the Epping Forest charity for 2024/25;
- ii. Approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for Epping Forest for submission for approval by the Finance Committee;
- iii. Approved Epping Forest's capital and supplementary revenue project budgets for 2025/26 for submission for approval by the Finance Committee; and
- iv. Agreed that amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising from changes to recharges and support services or for any further implications arising from corporate contracts, energy price increases, changes to the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) and capital changes during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain, in consultation with the Executive Director, Environment.

11. ROOKERY WOOD RESERVOIR REMEDIAL WORKS

The Committee received a report on a combined project to carry out engineering and forest projects for synergy, which included culvert remedial works and potential improvements to the dam to satisfy the design flood conditions for the engineering team and to carry out removal of Poplar trees planted in the reservoir.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman queried how significant a population of the trees would be removed as part of the project. Officers noted it was approximately 500.
- b) The Chairman asked why a full renewal of the dam had been considered not acceptable. Officers responded that a conservation study had been carried out and Officers at Epping Forest had reported that it was a nationally significant heritage landscape and stated the staff had wanted to explore maintenance options. Officers added the Tudor Pond sat within the Copped Hall Estate which was a registered park and Grade II-listed by Historic England. While it was not a scheduled monument, Officers stated that, following good practice, the first step should be investigating potential maintenance options. Officers added that protected species were identified in surveys carried out in 2022-23; works would require relevant licenses and mitigations.
- c) The Chairman stated that, should the project proceed to completion, it would involve significant cost. There was no information as to how long it would last, the pond was not a scheduled monument, and the project would involve felling of 500 trees.
- d) Officers stated the report was asking for permission to start feasibility work and noted the resource had not been identified for the project yet. Officers added that the project would require relevant licenses and tree removal which would present challenges.

- e) A Member sought clarity as he believed the Tudor Pond was to be restored and expressed concern about chopping trees down on the site on the earthwork banks which could decay in a few years. The Member also queried why badger setts would be removed.
- f) It was suggested by a Member that a site visit be held before a decision on the site was made and queried what impact removing trees could have, particularly on flood risk. An Officer expressed concern that a large amount would be spent developing a project that did not necessarily have the funding to be delivered and suggested the paper needed to be reviewed and brought back to Committee.
- g) A Member suggested that if there was an immediate flood risk, action needed to be taken as a matter of urgency to mitigate it.
- h) Another Member agreed with a previous suggestion for a site visit and indicated the end goal of the project needed to be identified.
- i) Officers indicated there was a risk of the pond becoming classified as a large reservoir and a flood routing exercise had been carried out which did not pick up Cobbins Brook. Officers added they had carried out a site visit to discuss a natural flood management proposal in Cobbins Brook and there were opportunities to create a wetland habitat. Officers summarised that the project was a mixture of safety, flood management and historic feature management with interest from Historic England on the Tudor Pond.
- j) The Deputy Chair noted there had been a previous visit and one only needed to visit the site to realise action needed to be taken in relation to water retention and how the Tudor bricks were affected. The Deputy Chair suggested clarity needed to be had over what was needed and a site visit needed to be conducted.
- k) The Chairman suggested not approving the project and noted a decision could be taken under Urgency Procedures should an urgent health and safety issue become apparent

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Did not agree the recommendations as outlined in the report.

12. **CARBON REMOVALS PROJECT WORKSTREAM ON EPPING FOREST & BUFFER LANDS LEAKY DAMS (SEF 03/25)**

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Carbon Removals project within the Climate Action Strategy which specifically focused on the implementation of the leaky dams in Epping Forest and the Buffer Lands.

A Member emphasised the need for careful scrutiny and oversight of this project in the context of the hydrology of the Forest to ensure that there are no unintended consequences.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Approved, in principle, the implementation of the project described in the report, with up to 400 leaky dams installed at Epping Forest and Buffer Land;
- Authorised the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to decide on the final number and locations of the leaky dams subject to recommendations from expert studies;
- Authorised the Carbon Removals (CR) Project team and Epping Forest (EF) Conservation team to begin discussions with academic and expert partners to outline the scope of a proposed beaver feasibility study in 2025.
- Authorise the Superintendent to enter into all necessary arrangements and agreements, including those to outline, and establish, roles and responsibilities and to manage governance and procurement protocols for the scheme, in consultation with the City Solicitor.

13. LICENCES FEES AND CHARGES 2025/26 (SEF 02/25)

The Committee received a report which made proposals for the setting of fees and charges for activities in Epping Forest for the forthcoming financial year of 2025/26. The report also updated the Committee on the performance of charges levied for licensed activities, produce sales, formal sports, and car park charges in the last full financial year 2023/24.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman suggested the Committee needed to move toward a five-year term to align with the five-year business plan which would have all license fees and charges increase in line with consumer price index (CPI) or retail price index (RPI) on a regular basis unless there was an exception which Officers needed to present to the Committee.
- b) The Chairman noted there was a concern raised from the Consultative Groups on some of the parking charges as they were not updated every year, but every four years due to operational controls as signage had to be updated and the backend systems had to be updated for those who paid electronically. The Chairman added while the report looked like it proposed a 14% increase in charges, it was an average over four years of 3.5% which was in line with CPI.
- c) A Member suggested extending the six-hour parking limit to eight hours in areas that did not suffer from commuter parking and indicated parking users needed to be pushed toward annual license permit, provided it be set at a competitive rate. Officers indicated they would look into it, but there was an issue around consistency and a habitats regulation

assessment in some car parks and the charity was obliged to be consistent with the scheme across the Forest to protect the SAC. Officers added exceptions could be made on a case-by-case basis, mainly for groups, providing they were informed that a user would be parked for longer than 6 hours. Officers added the six-hour limit was set up to avoid commuter car parking.

- d) Officers added that a new system was in place to allow for the purchase of the annual car parking permit electronically.
- e) The Chairman reiterated the need for the parking charges as they contributed to the maintenance of the car parks which cost around £150,000 to resurface which was why a reserve needed to be built up.
- f) A Member suggested pushing Forest visitors toward the annual permit scheme would provide good value for money and a steady income stream that would not be affected by weather conditions.
- g) Another Member queried whether filming receipts would improve next year from previous levels. Officers explained that filming receipts were down due to the Hollywood writers' strike and, during the current financial year, the charity had made three times the amount on filming.
- h) The Member also indicated it would be good to see an analysis of the costs from running the car parks to examine if they were a net generator of income as there were a lot of hidden costs. The Chairman indicated a project had been carried out on the cost of the car parks and suggested the report could be shared with Members.
- i) It was questioned by a Member whether the charity would be entitled to gift aid if the annual fee for car parking was linked to a donation to the charity. The Chairman confirmed that a charitable donation could not be given for a service and, therefore, would not be entitled to gift aid.
- j) The Member also suggested a thorough review of the amount made from the sale of produce (venison, beef and wood).
- k) A Member enquired as to whether filming was charged in fixed amounts or negotiable. Officers confirmed there were set rates, but it depended on the scale of the film as there were a lot of add-ons once car parking and staff time.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the income generated in 2023/24 from charged activities in Epping Forest; and
- Agreed the proposed license fees for 2025/26 as itemised in Appendix 2.
- Authorised the Superintendent to, on occasion, make minor variation to these fees in respect of filming and other licensing where it appears to the Superintendent that the scale of the activity and impact upon the

Forest indicated that a different fee was required in order to ensure an appropriate contribution towards the costs incurred by the Conservators in connection with Epping Forest.

14. EPPING FOREST TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Committee received the final version of the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 for Epping Forest (charity registration number 232990) presented for information in the format required by the Charity Commission.

The Chairman noted he was disappointed that comments made earlier in the year had not been reflected in the report given it had now been signed off. The Chairman added that there was no reflection of the Natural Environment Board which set corporate strategy, an incorrect reference to the Epping Forest Consultative Group, which was referred to as a 'Committee', and there were no comments on the Committee being responsible for setting operational policy, approving the business management plans, managing risk and embedding the Epping Forest Act, 1878.

The Chairman further noted that the Natural Environment Charities Review would look at best practice and regulatory requirements in relation to charity annual reports to ensure that accurate representations were made to the Charities Commission.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report.

15. SUMMARY OF MEDIA COVERAGE FOR EPPING FOREST AND THE COMMONS (2024)

The Committee received a report which gave a summary of media coverage for Epping Forest and The Commons (EF&C), achieved by the corporate Media Team, for the period January to December 2024, as well as a forward look for 2025.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report.

16. BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025/26 - THE COMMONS CHARITIES

The Committee received a report which presented for approvals the revenue budgets for each of the individual Commons charities for 2025/26, for subsequent submission to the Finance Committee.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman raised concerns about West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons and the need for additional budget to cover grounds maintenance costs permanently given it had recently been covered through the Director's local risk budget and suggested the need for Finance Committee to be made aware of concerns that it was not a permanent solution. Officers stated that the costs were reflected in the five-year budget and agreed with the need to raise the issue with Finance Committee.

Matters Arising

Officers agreed to raise concerns to the Finance Committee about the need for additional budget to cover grounds maintenance costs permanently at West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons given it had recently been covered through the Director's local risk budget.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- i. Noted the latest revenue budget for each of the Commons charities for 2024/25;
- ii. Approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common charity for submission for approval by the Finance Committee.
- iii. Approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood and Coulsdon and Other Commons charities for submission for approval by the Finance Committee;
- iv. Approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for the Ashtead Common charity for submission for approval by the Finance Committee; and
- v. Agreed that amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising from changes to recharges and support services or for any further implications arising from corporate contracts, 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.

17. BURNHAM BEECHES AND CITY COMMONS FIVE YEAR BUSINESS PLAN 2025-30

The Committee received a report which provided a five-year costed business plan for the four City Commons Charities comprising; Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (number 232987), Ashtead Common (number 1051510), Coulsdon and other Commons (number 232988-1), and West Wickham Common and Spring Park Woods (number 232988).

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman expressed the need to clearly establish the assessment process, timeline, and a target date for completion. Officers clarified that

'ongoing' referred to an activity carried out every year and suggested it could be presented differently.

- b) The Chairman suggested it would be useful to have a member of staff confident with technology that could assist with the monitoring of KPIs (key performance indicators).

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Approved the five-year business plan contained in Appendix A for the Four City Commons charities and authorised the Assistant Director of the Commons to make amendments and carry out annual reviews necessary to re-prioritise or re-scope workstreams to accommodate new pressures or changes.

18. THE COMMONS: LICENCES, WAYLEAVES AND PRODUCE FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2025/26

The report presented proposals for an October 2024 Retail Price Index increase of 3.4% in 2025/26 on charges levied for licensed activities produce sales and formal sports.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chairman queried how Officers sought to address a reduction in filming and car parking income. Officers stated they were apprehensive about last year due to the Hollywood writers' strike but there had been a relatively good three years in filming. Officers added car parking was an ongoing difficulty, especially at West Wickham, and they would be reviewing car parking charges for the start of next year. Officers further noted they would be looking to address income deficits at West Wickham Common, as well as look at widening the use of car parks for camper van use as the extra income that could be generated was significant.
- b) A Member queried whether the second-car charge was worth retaining as it seemed to be a giveaway and potentially made more sense not to have it. Officers indicated they would follow-up on the issue of the cheaper rate for the second car as they were not aware of the history of it.
- c) The Deputy Chair suggested the need to identify why the second car policy came about.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the income generated in 2023/24 from charged activities in The Commons; and
- Agreed the proposed license fees and sports charges for 2025/26 as itemised in Appendix 2.

19. ASHTEAD COMMON TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Committee received the final version of the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 for the Ashtead Common charity (charity registration number 1051510) are presented for information in the format required by the Charity Commission.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report.

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

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

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business that the Chairman considered urgent.

22. 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.

23. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, Members approved the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 as an accurate record of proceedings.

24. MARKETING OUTCOME – BUFFER LAND AT CLAYS LANE NORTH (SEF07/24)

The Committee received a joint report of the City Surveyor and Executive Director, Environment.

25. REQUEST FOR THE PROVISION OF A DEED OF GRANT EASEMENT (SEF 05/25)

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

**26. TRANSFORMATION FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES –
OUTCOMES OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES REVIEW**

The Committee received a joint report of the Executive Director, Environment, the Interim Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation and the Chamberlain.

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

There were no non-public questions on matters relating to the work of the Committee.

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

There was one item of any other business raised in non-public session that the Chairman considered urgent.

29. RESTRUCTURE REVISION (SEF 08/25)

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

The meeting ended at 4.09 pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Callum Southern
Callum.Southern@cityoflondon.gov.uk**