

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee – For Information Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee – For Information	Dated: 29 th April 2025 20 th May 2025
Subject: Report of Action Taken	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provides statutory duties• provides business enabling functions	
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of:	Ian Thomas CBE, Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Report author:	Callum Southern, Governance Officer

Summary

This report provides details of decisions taken under Delegated Authority procedures under Standing Order 41(b) between Committee meetings.

Recommendation

Members are asked:

- To note the report.

Decisions taken under Delegated Authority under Standing Order 41(b)

Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee Terms of Reference

Background

1. At its meeting on 3rd December 2024, the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee were asked to consider and approve its revised Terms of Reference as part of its annual governance review process.
2. The Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee Delegated Authority to the Town Clerk (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman) to consider and approve any subsequent changes to Committee Terms of Reference required ahead of the April 2025 Court of Common Council.
3. At the meeting, Chairman suggested the removal of the word 'joint' in 'Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee' and Queen's Park Joint Consultative Committee, as well as a change of 'Committee' to 'Group' in 'Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee'.
4. Therefore, the Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chair, to draft appropriate wording. The Committee Clerk has consulted with Officers in Comptrollers and City Solicitors, as well as the Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk, and the suggested revision to the Terms of Reference is included in the background papers.

Decision Taken

5. Following consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, the Town Clerk approved the proposed revision to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee Terms of Reference, for onward approval to the Policy & Resources Committee and, following that, the Court of Common Council.

Budget Estimates 2025/26 – Hampstead Heath Charity

Background

1. The latest 2024/25 budget for Hampstead Heath was a net expenditure of (£4.336m) as at December 2024, a net increase of (£846k) compared to the 2024/25 original budget of (£3.490m) net expenditure. The reasons for the budget increase were:
 - a. (£780k) re-phasing of CWP projects at Hampstead Heath managed by the City Surveyor. Please note that the CWP does not form part of the City Surveyor's local risk budget and is a programme of works over multiple financial years, with variances carried over to future years. The carry-over of unspent balances is reported to Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee;

- b. (£64k) increase in local risk funding from central contingency to support energy pressures;
 - c. (£2k) additional recharges following an increase in the cost of the Natural Environment Directorate for 2024/25 which is subsequently recharged to all the various services within the department.
- 2. The proposed 2025/26 budget was net expenditure of (£6.204m), an increase of (£2.714m) compared to the 2024/25 original budget. The 2025/26 budgets included:
 - a. a 2% uplift for inflation as a cash limit to Chief Officers' budgets;
 - b. a clear distinction between local risk, central risk, and recharge budgets; and
 - c. responsibility for budgetary control placed on departmental Chief Officers.
- 3. The Budget Estimates 2025/26 – Hampstead Heath Charity report went to the 4th February 2025 meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee requesting approval for the revenue and capital budgets for the Hampstead Heath charity for 2025/26, for subsequent submission to the Finance Committee.
- 4. The Committee voiced concerns with regard to the detail of the Cyclical Works Programme and wished to have the detail provided before the budget was approved. Therefore, the Committee delegated authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to approve the revenue and capital budgets for the Hampstead Heath charity for 2025/26, subject to the provision of the detail behind the figures provided for the Cyclical Works Programme.
- 5. The Cyclical Works Programme budget by project was provided to Members following the meeting on 25 February 2025 as part of consultation process.

Decision Made

- 6. Following consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, the Town Clerk, as per Delegated Authority powers granted under Standing Order 41(b):
 - a. Reviewed and approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for Hampstead Heath for submission for approval by the Finance Committee;
 - b. Review and approved Hampstead Heath's capital and supplementary revenue project budgets for 2025/26 for submission for approval by the Finance Committee; and

- c. Agreed that amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising from changes to recharges & 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 Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

Budget Estimates 2025/26 – Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Charity

Background

1. The latest 2024/25 budget for Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park was a net expenditure of (£2.215m) as at December 2024, a net increase of (£349k) compared to the 2024/25 original budget of (£1.866m) net expenditure. The reasons for the budget increase were:
 - a. (£282k) re-phasing of CWP projects at Highgate Wood & Queen’s Park managed by the City Surveyor. Please note that the CWP does not form part of the City Surveyor’s local risk budget and is a programme of works over multiple financial years, with variances carried over to future years. The carry-over of unspent balances is reported to Projects and Procurement Sub-Committee;
 - b. (£37k) agreed carry forward from 2023/24 for safety play surface installation at the play area;
 - c. (£5k) increase in local risk funding from central contingency to support energy pressures.
2. The proposed 2025/26 budget was a net expenditure of (£2.093m), an increase of (£227k) compared to the 2024/25 original budget. The 2025/26 budgets included:
 - a. a 2% uplift for inflation as a cash limit to Chief Officers’ budgets;
 - b. a clear distinction between local risk, central risk, and recharge budgets; and
 - c. responsibility for budgetary control placed on departmental Chief Officers.

Committee and Consultation

3. The Budget Estimates 2025/26 – Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Charity report went to the 4th February 2025 meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Committee requesting approval for the

revenue budgets for the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park charity for 2025/26, for subsequent submission to the Finance Committee.

4. The Committee voiced concerns with regard to the detail of the Cyclical Works Programme and wished to have the detail provided before the budget was approved. Therefore, the Committee delegated authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to approve the revenue budgets for the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park charity for 2025/26, subject to the provision of the detail behind the figures provided for the Cyclical Works Programme.
5. The Cyclical Works Programme budget by project was provided to Members following the meeting on 25 February 2025 as part of consultation process.

Decision Made

6. Following consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, and the Members of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, the Town Clerk, as per Delegated Authority powers granted under Standing Order 41(b):
 - a. Reviewed and approved the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park for submission for approval by the Financial Committee; and
 - b. Agreed that amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising from changes to recharges & support services or for any further implications arising from corporate contracts, energy price increases, changes to the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) and capita charges during budget setting be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

Background Papers

If you require the background papers, please contact the Town Clerk.

Callum Southern

Governance Officer, Town Clerk's Department

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