

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 29 April 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 29 April 2025 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 Residents' Association)
Dr Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society)
Ella Mitchell (Hampstead Rugby Club)
Richard Sumray (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Professor Jeff Waage (Heath & Hampstead Society)
John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Michele Martin Williams (Vale of Heath Society)

In Attendance:

John Etheridge (South End Green Association)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Dr Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood)

Officers:

Jonathan Cooper	- City Surveyor's Department
Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Jack Joslin	- Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Environment Department
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department
Zoe Williams	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Liz Andrew.

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

There were no declarations.

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 14 January 2025 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

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 04 February 2025 were formally noted.

4. HEATH HANDS UPDATE

The Committee received an update from Heath Hands, which detailed recent highlights, and its work towards its strategic objectives.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) The representative for the London Council for Sport and Recreation (LCSR) noted that Heath Hands' presentation at the recent Sport and Wellbeing Forum was well received.
- b) The Chairman asked for an update on the progress that had been made for the use of the old tennis hut. Officers responded that they were waiting for Heath Hands to complete its review of the agreement, and that the plan was to open it as an information hub in the near future. In response to a further query, Officers responded there was still some work that needed to be done by surveyors, but they believed the information hub could be reopened and used in the interim before these works occur.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

5. ASSISTANT DIRECTORS 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 14 January 2025.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) The representative for the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association commented that he was assured to see engagement with the London Boroughs of Camden and Barnet. The Member asked how these London Boroughs had coordinated with each other, and how the City Corporation had found their responses. Officers responded that they were recently contacted by the Resilience Team from the London Borough of Barnet, who had come up with a series of revised proposals for the Heath extension, and they had an initial meeting scheduled to discuss the proposals. Officers confirmed that the documents about the proposal would be shared with the Committee. The Officer noted that they were not

aware of coordination between the London Boroughs of Camden and Barnet.

- b) The representative also asked for an update on when the Cricket Nets would be ready. Officers responded that final work on the Cricket Nets was taking place that week and it would be opened in May 2025 once the turf had been given time to 'knit in'.
- c) The representative of the Heath and Hampstead Society asked whether the City Corporation was comfortable with the idea of a 30-year commitment to a particular area of land, with regard to biodiversity net gain offsetting, and whether the income associated with it would go directly back to Hampstead Heath. Officers responded that no decisions had been made as it would take a significant amount of consultation and analysis before the City Corporation agreed to this 30-year commitment, and a consultant had been engaged to help the City Corporation understand whether there was potential. Officers also assured the representative that any income derived would remain with the charity that received it, and that any commitment of that length of time would be carefully considered and consulted upon as appropriate.
- d) The representative from the Highgate Society asked whether Officers could give Members a presentation on what the implications and application of biodiversity net gain would look like for the City Corporation's Open Spaces portfolio. Officers noted that they would check whether a recent presentation could be shared to Members.
- e) In response to a query about water run-off, Officers noted that there was no data to estimate how much water run-off from surrounding roads and pavements went onto the Heath. They assured the Member that this is a conversation that had been held with the Camden Resilience Team in respect to the flooding at Southend Green.
- f) The representative also asked whether the cost of antisocial behaviour at Hampstead Heath could be estimated. Officers responded that a large amount of this cost would be associated with staff time responding to issues, which would be difficult to measure. Officers acknowledged it would be helpful to monitor the cost of these incidents to help inform budgeting and operational decisions.
- g) In response to a query about the potential of an archaeological strategy for Hampstead Heath from the Highgate Society representative, Officers noted that they would ask the City Surveyor's Department about the information that exists on this topic, and they could talk to the Member about the strategy at the next walk.
- h) With regard to an incident at Hampstead Heath on 2nd March 2025, the LCSR representative urged that a working group be set up as soon as possible, to further prevent conflict between groups represented on the Heath. Officers responded that a partnership-based working group was

underway, and this incident emphasised the importance of reinitiating this partnership-based approach.

- i) In response to a question about installing a second sauna in the Lido, Officers noted that the option of a second sauna was being explored as the current sauna was very popular and often at capacity.
- j) The representative from the South End Green Association noted that people were very concerned about the effect the recent Cross-Country event had on the Heath. The Member noted support for the event and requested that the Committee consider how this could be held in a way that was less disruptive to the environment, such as at a different time of year. The Chair noted that the muddy conditions at the Cross-Country event was ideal for the runners, and the event is held once every three-years. Another Member noted that Hampstead Heath is a nationally renowned location for Cross-Country and people had previously agreed that it is important to keep a balance between preserving the environment of the Heath, whilst allowing for such events to take place. With regards to recovery, Officers noted that after the event they tried to get onto the grounds as soon as possible to chain-harrow the ground, put up fences, and put new grass seed down.
- k) In response to a request from the Chair for an update on the Cafes, Officers noted that the plan for the remarketing of the Cafes had been reported to the Committee, and they were continuing to work towards the goal of completion.
- l) The Chairman also queried whether Officers expected any potential changes with regards to windspeed at Hampstead Heath. Officers responded that they were completing analysis for all four North London Open Spaces, and they expected to bring a paper to the next meeting which would provide an update and inform the committee of any proposed changes.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

**6. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
COMPLEMENTARY LAND POLICY AND COMPLEMENTARY LAND USE
APPRAISAL**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment which proposed the scope and terms of reference for the Natural Environment Complementary Land Policy and Complementary Land Use Appraisal for consultation.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) The representative from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association (HGSRA) sought clarity on whether there was an existing land

use policy for Heathfield House. Officers responded that there was not, hence the need for an overarching land use policy.

- b) The Heath & Hampstead Society representative emphasised that Hampstead Heath's experience with development should inform policy, particularly regarding proximity to green spaces. Concerns were raised about light and water pollution and the need to protect buffer land around Epping Forest. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association representative highlighted increased scrutiny of planning applications near the Heath. Officers confirmed the importance of updating policy, stating that most sites are unsuitable for housing development due to climate targets and local agreements. The review aimed to clarify land use, restrictions, and future opportunities.
- c) The LCSR representative asked about how Heathfield House would be funded in the future. Officers responded that the asset review would consider all existing uses and identify whether they were essential. Officers noted Heathfield House is essential for operational purposes and it would be incorporated as a high priority into the site-based assessment. Officers explained that income generated from within the boundary of Hampstead Heath would be channelled back into the charity. Officers noted the details of this would be finalised as part of the Natural Environment Charity Review.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

7. TRANSFORMATION FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES - PROJECT UPDATE AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain and the Executive Director of Environment which provided an update on project governance arrangements.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) In response to a query from the Chairman, Officers noted that after the summer recess there would be an update from the Chamberlain's department on the Grant Funding Model which would provide committees with information on how the current model was functioning. Officers noted that this would be a substantive update which may contain decisions to be consulted on. Officers noted that the Chamberlain's department would be providing an interim report in the meantime with an overview of why the grant funding model was agreed on.
- b) The LCSR representative sought clarity about whether West Ham Park and Epping Forest would still be pilots in the implementation phase. Officers responded that while this was previously considered, the transition is instead being phased over a two-year period as all eight

charities move to the new model. Officers noted that this process would be closely monitored.

- c) In response to a request, Officers noted that future reports would clearly outline the areas of the report where consultation with HHCC was expected.
- d) The LCSR representative also queried whether there had been a risk assessment on the impact of this project. Officers noted that the risk register was provided to the Policy and Resources Committee and could be provided to the Committee at a later stage. Officers explained that anything affecting the Committee would be included in its risk register.
- e) The Member sought clarity about decision-making processes for Hampstead Heath. Officers explained that the Court of Common Council is the corporate trustee which delegated its decision making to the relevant committees. Officers assured the Member that they would aim to provide the Committee with a substantive update on the governance process before the summer recess. The Member requested that a structure chart be included in this.
- f) The representative from the HGSRA requested that the Committee receive the updated financial regulations to retain grant surpluses in the Charities that was considered by the Finance Committee. The Member reiterated their desire for the Committee to understand the decision-making arrangements so that it can contribute meaningfully to the processes. Officers noted that the Chamberlain's team would attend the next Committee meeting to outline the work that had happened to date, and what needed to be decided on to allow the City Corporation to amend to a grant funding model.
- g) The representative from the Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee (HCAAC) requested that when it was available the Committee receive a presentation on income generation at Hampstead Heath.
- h) The HHS representative queried why best practice with Member tenure and selection to sit on charity committees was being scrutinised in this project. Officers responded that Member tenure would be looked at across committees as part of the Natural Environment Charity Review and current practices in Member tenure was not in line with Charity Commission good practice.
- i) The representative from the Vale of Heath Society (VHS) expressed concern that they had not had face to face interaction with the decision-making committees, and certain Members of the Consultative Committee did not feel they had been well consulted on the decision that was made about the Natural Environment Charity Review. The Member cautioned that future decisions should involve a more collaborative process.
- j) The HGRSA representative noted it would be assuring if the Committee could hear from the Chamberlain's department and the fundraising

consultants before the Finance Committee made a decision on these matters so Members have all the available information before decisions were made. Officers assured the Committee that they had put in place monthly catch ups between the Natural Environment Charity Chairs and Deputy Chairs, and the Finance Chair and Deputy Chair to ensure there was effective coordination across the Committees.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

8. FIVE-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Environment which provided an updated draft of the first five-year business plan for Hampstead Heath.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) The VHS representative queried why water fountains were not funded in the five-year plan. Officers noted that they would ensure the water fountains were included in the Five-Year Business Plan, and finding the necessary revenue to repair these water fountains would be a priority in the coming year.
- b) The LCSR representative noted that the review of the Constabulary was not included in the current plan. Officers acknowledged that the omission of the Constabulary review was an oversight. They explained that, given the ongoing hiring process, conducting the review in a year's time, after the Constabulary was fully staffed, would provide a more accurate assessment of the performance and effectiveness of the Constabulary.
- c) In response to a query, Officers clarified that the order in which the items were listed on the plan was not in order of prioritisation, and that this first version focussed on current years.
- d) The Friends of Kenwood representative noted the urgent repairs needed for the Hill Garden Pergola. They noted concern that submitting an expression of interest for the national Lottery Heritage Fund would present delays, and any delays to repair would cause costs to escalate. Officers noted that this was a priority. They acknowledged that this would be a multi-year endeavour, noting that they plan to submit an expression of interest this year with the aim to establish it as a priority over the next five years.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

As this point, the Chairman sought approval from the Consultative Committee to continue the meeting beyond two hours from the appointed time for the start of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 39, and this was agreed.

9. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report and its contents.

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

The Chairman asked what the Corporation is doing in response to the recent Supreme Court judgement on the statutory interpretation of the equalities act, and the gender recognition regarding the definition of "woman," particularly in relation to Heath facilities. Officers confirmed that the ruling was under review within the Corporation, with updated guidance expected. Officers explained that existing policies remain in place for now, with a commitment to ensuring all facility users are treated respectfully.

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

There was no urgent business.

12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the date of the next Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting would be Tuesday 17 June 2025.

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. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

14.1 **DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE HAMPSTEAD HEALTH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 January 2025 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

14.2 **DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES 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 04 February 2025 were formally noted.

15. CYCLICAL WORKS PROGRAMME (CWP) AT HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK

The Committee received a report of the City Surveyor.

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

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

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

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

The meeting ended at 7.59pm.

Chairman

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