

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Monday, 17 November 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall. on Monday, 17 November 2025 at 5.30 pm

Present

Members:

Alderman Gregory Jones KC (Chairman)
John Arnoldi, Heath Hands (attended virtually)
Liz Andrew, London Natural History Society
Nick Bradfield, Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee
John Etheridge, South End Green Association (attended virtually)
Colin Gregory, Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association (attended virtually)
Michael Hammerson, Highgate Society
Dr Gaye Henson, Marylebone Birdwatching Society (attended virtually)
Ella Mitchell, Hampstead Rugby Club (attended virtually)
Alethea Silk (attended virtually)
Susan Rose, Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee (attended virtually)
Richard Sumray, London Council for Sport and Recreation (attended virtually)
Jeff Waage, Heath & Hampstead Society
Michele Martin Williams, Vale of Heath Society

In attendance:

John Beyer (observer)
William Upton KC (observer)

Officers:

Marguerite Jenkin	- Chamberlain's Department
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Foundation
Joseph Smith	- Corporate Strategy & Performance
Sussannah Behr	- Environment Department
Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Tom Hoyle	- Environment Department
Jo Hurst	- Environment Department
Andrew Impey	- Environment Department
William LoSasso	- Environment Department
Zoe Williams	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from John Weston and Helen Payne.

The Chairman welcomed Susannah Behr, Head of Development and Partnerships.

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 the Hampstead Heath Consultation Committee

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 16 September 2025 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

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

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 21 October 2025 be noted.

3.3 Matters arising

A Member requested an update on the status of the fundraising report that would be shared with Committees. Officers responded that they were in the process of analysing the recommendations of the fundraising consultant and compiling a plan for each of the charities with recommended options.

They noted that while they were not intending to share the fundraising consultant's report due to the commercially sensitive information it contained on other charities, they would be producing a summary of the report for Committees. They further explained that this report would include the recommended option for the Charity which would feed into its business plan.

4. APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MANSFIELD CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk to note the nomination of a new external Member of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee, nominated by the Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee & Neighbourhood Association Committee, to represent local interests.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the report and its contents.

The Committee agreed to discuss the Hampstead Heath Ponds verbal update before the Grant Funding Model and Fundraising Briefing.

5. GRANT FUNDING MODEL AND FUNDRAISING BRIEFING

The Committee received a verbal briefing and presentation from Officers of the Environment Department about the Natural Environment Charity Review, income generation and the Grant Funding Model.

The Heath and Hampstead Society representative asked who under the Hampstead Heath Charity would have authority to control resources such as the endowment and who would decide how the funds were allocated. They further

queried who the decision maker would be for commercial activities. Officers assured the Member that the governance structure would not change as the Grant Funding Model was focussed on reframing the relationship between the City Corporation as a corporate trustee, and as grant funder, to give confidence to external funders who may wish to be involved. They confirmed that relevant decision-making responsibilities would continue to remain with the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee and the allocation of resources would form part of the budget setting process.

The Chairman asked whether there was confidence in the robustness of the assumptions regarding externally raised funding for years 0 to 3. Officers explained that, to give charities the best chance of success, no assumptions on growth in fundraising income had been included within the first transitional grant.

The London Council for Sports and Recreation (LCSR) representative asked whether Officers would consider improving the staffing structure at Hampstead Heath, given the insufficient resourcing in areas such as the Constabulary. Officers responded that while they would not consider a major restructure in the near future, part of the Natural Environment Charity Review would involve ensuring the teams of staff within the Natural Environment Charities were right-sized. Officers confirmed that recruitment was underway for four additional Constables. They also noted that as part of the business plan, a formal review would be conducted after the Constabulary had operated at its current full capacity for one year. The Highgate Society representative noted that in areas such as West Heath, the City Corporation was at risk of a serious incident occurring if the Constabulary did not have sufficient presence. The Chairman noted that it was important that the Metropolitan Police were not absolved of their responsibility for policing on Hampstead Heath.

The LCSR representative further asked how, if the Constabulary review concluded that additional resources were still required, this would be incorporated into the three-year funding cycle, which would commence before the review took place. Officers responded that there was a provision within the proposal for adjustments to be made if that were the case. They noted this would be subject to Committee approval and strong evidence would be required to support such a request. The Member expressed concern that reliance on grant funding could pose the risk of reduced resources for Hampstead Heath over time and stressed the need for greater transparency regarding the flexibility of the model in its early stages.

The Member also noted that while there were some positive expectations about fundraising, it was likely to be more difficult to raise money than it had been in the past. The Member also queried whether match funding had been considered in respect of major capital projects at Hampstead Heath such as the Hill Garden Pergola. Regarding the presence of a reserves policy, the Member asked how long it would take before there was sufficient reserve to match the policies. Officers responded that match-funding would be considered on a case-by-case basis. They explained that, where funding applications required match funding, the preferred approach would be to secure this from an external source rather

than using charity reserves. Using reserves would only be considered as a last resort. In relation to the Hill Garden Pergola, Officers noted that some funding would be available through the City Surveyor's Cyclical Works Programme to provide match funding for that project.

Finally, the Member expressed concern that, although there was a governance structure whereby decisions for the Charity were made by the City Corporation, there may be a perception that the Charity was entirely separate from the Corporation. They cautioned that such a perception might make it more challenging to raise funds in the long term. The Chairman acknowledged that there was a common misconception among the public that the City Corporation can use funds from business rates to support Hampstead Heath.

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association (HGSRA) representative queried what lessons had been learnt from the West Ham Park and Epping Forest charities who had started operating through the Grant Funding Model. Officers explained that they were in the first year of this transition and that the most significant changes would only become apparent at the end of the year. They added that more insights could be shared once the fiscal year ended.

In response to the HGSRA representative's concerns, the Chairman noted that Hampstead Heath would not be a standalone charity as the City Corporation would remain the sole corporate trustee. The Member responded that this was reassuring and noted that they hoped this would be reflected in the arrangements.

The Hampstead Rugby Club representative acknowledged the rationale behind the change in the funding model but expressed concern about maintaining relationships with community groups under the new approach. They noted that some changes appeared to encourage more commercial partnerships and asked how this would be balanced with voluntary support and community engagement.

Officers emphasised the critical importance of these community relationships, highlighting that many of the outcomes contributed to promoting wellbeing, sport, and recreation. They assured Members of their commitment to keeping Hampstead Heath accessible for those who rely on it and to ensuring community groups remained integral to the overall management strategy. Officers further confirmed that the Superintendent's team continued to work closely with community and sports organisations. Additionally, they noted that the enhanced focus on fundraising creates opportunities for partnership working at all levels, including with community groups.

With regard to fundraising, the Highgate Society representative queried whether Officers would be advertising specific projects to attract donations. Officers responded that they would be putting a fundraising portfolio together and it would be important to consider a range of fundraising possibilities from more specific projects to general donations. The Member also asked how Officers would ensure fundraising was attracted across the Natural Environment Charities, rather than just the larger portfolios. Officers noted that a significant piece of work

was underway to develop a professional fundraising strategy. They explained that the new Head of Partnerships and Development would present a report on the initial progress at the next Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting.

6. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from Officers of the Environment Department about the Hampstead Heath Ponds.

The Chairman gave William Upton KC permission to speak during this discussion.

The representative from the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association requested an update on the judicial review process of the City Corporation. The Chairman gave a brief update on the judicial review process, with a hearing due to be held on 17 December 2025.

The Member also asked how the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee would be able to provide input into the outcome of the consultation. The Chairman noted that while both the City Corporation's Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, and Policy and Resources Committee would be involved in considering the outcome of the consultation, the decision-making framework was yet to be determined. Officers further explained that they wanted to ensure the City Corporation's Ponds Access Policy was considered in the correct sequence alongside the City Corporation's Gender Identity Policy and the Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance. The Chairman confirmed that the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee would have the opportunity to provide input on the discussion of the consultation's outcome.

The Deputy Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee asked whether, given the scale of the consultation and the revised timeline for the Committee's decision, Officers could indicate when an expected timescale would be confirmed. Officers advised that while they were working to establish this, as the consultation had not yet concluded and a peak in responses remained possible and they were reluctant to commit to a definitive timeframe.

In response to the Chairman's query about when the decision-making framework would be confirmed, Officers responded that this needed to go through the appropriate corporation governance routes so they could not confirm at the time what the timescale for this would be. The Chairman noted that consideration should be given to whether the decision would be more appropriately delegated to a senior officer or taken by the Court of Common Council.

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

Hill Garden Pergola

In relation to the Hill Garden Pergola being listed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, the LCSR representative asked what the City Corporation's response was to accelerate its restoration. Officers responded that they hoped

the Pergola's inclusion on the Heritage at Risk Register would create an opportunity for fundraising, as it had been identified as a significant asset requiring support. They noted that the City Corporation had allocated funding to develop a Conservation Management Plan, which would set out its commitment to maintaining the structure in good repair. Officers further explained that this would be a major, multi-million-pound project, accompanied by a dedicated fundraising campaign. They added that a project timeframe was being prepared to clarify what needed to be achieved, how it would be delivered, and when. In addition, they noted that work was underway to develop an understanding on the types of donors that might be able to contribute to this.

In response to a query about when the Conservation Management Plan would be expected to be brought to Committee, Officers responded that the fundraising report that would be brought to the Committee in January would include considerations of what could be done in the next fiscal year.

The Highgate Society noted the coverage this had received in local media and asked about the response the City Corporation had provided to this. The Chairman noted that a press release had been issued, and they had appeared on a local news outlet to address this.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the date of the next meeting was Tuesday 13 January 2026.

10. 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, Page 14 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.

At this stage the Committee agreed to extend the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 39.

11. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

11.1 Non-Public Minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 16 September 2025 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

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

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on 21 October 2025 were noted.

Matters arising

One further matter was discussed.

12. REMARKETING OF CAFES AT HAMPSTEAD HEATH

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

13. REMARKETING OF SPACE AT PARLIAMENT HILL LIDO

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

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

There were no questions raised in non-public session.

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

There was no urgent business raised in non-public.

The meeting ended at 8.44pm.

Chairman

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