

HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS ADVISORY FORUM

MONDAY 12 MAY 2014

MINUTES OF THE HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS ADVISORY FORUM HELD AT THE STAFF YARD, PARLIAMENT HILL FIELDS, LONDON NW5 ON MONDAY, 12 MAY 2014 AT 6:30PM.

Present

Members:

Richard Sumray (Chairman)	-	Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee (London Council for Sports and Recreation)
Nigel Robinson	-	Camden Council (Head of Sport and Physical Activity)
Rudolph Benjamin	-	HH tennis coach
John Carrier	-	Camden CCG
Richard Priestley	-	Highgate Harriers
Simon Taylor	-	Hampstead Rugby Club
Marc Hutchinson	-	HH Winter Swimming Club/ Heath & Hampstead Society
Jeff Gooding	-	Camden Schools' Association

In attendance

Jeremy Simons (Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee Chairman)

Officers

Natasha Cendrowicz	-	Note taker (also Highgate Harriers)
Bob Warnock	-	Superintendent, Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	-	Operational Service Manager,
Paul Maskell	-	Leisure & Events Manager, Hampstead Heath
Katherine Radusin	-	PA to Superintendent

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Dave Bedford, Dave Walton and Virginia Rounding.

1A. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed Katherine Radusin to her first meeting and gave thanks to Natasha Cendrowicz for previous minutes

2. **Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27 January 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising for these minutes.

4. **Fatality at Kenwood Ladies' Pond**

A report (prepared by Bob Warnock) setting out the measures taken in response to the fatality at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond in August 2013, was considered. The Sports Forum was asked to comment on the six recommendations set out in Appendix 3 of the report. It was noted that this report had already been discussed by the Swimmers' Forum and had been referred to the Chairperson of the Kenwood Ladies' Pond Association.

A discussion took place regarding the extent to which the lifeguards would be expected to inquire about underlying health issues with unfamiliar swimmers and what to do with such information. The hazards relating to cold water swimming needed to be made more apparent on signage at the swimming ponds. The proposal to refresh blackboards with relevant information everyday was supported. However, the onus of responsibility should be on swimmers to acknowledge whether they had the competency to handle cold water swimming.

The number of lifeguards in attendance was dependent on swimmer numbers. During busy times, when numbers exceed 50, a mobile lifeguard would be required to patrol the further reaches of the ponds.

The recommendation to remove fishing from the mixed and men's ponds was then discussed. This was supported, provided enhanced alternatives were provided. Bob Warnock suggested that it might not be possible to remove all fishing from the men's pond, but there would be advantages in removing all carp (such as better water quality) and thereby only offering coarse fishing at the men's pond.

Paul Maskell provided an update on the recent annual review by Peter MacGregor, a Risk Management Consultant. Overall, Mr MacGregor was happy with the way that the safety review had been implemented, although improving signage was one area that needed to be addressed.

Finally the Sports Forum discussed the extent to which the design of the jetty at the Ladies' Pond could be improved. It was noted that the current configuration meant that swimmers could swim underneath the concrete platform and therefore out of sight of the lifeguards. Whilst it would be difficult to make part of the platform transparent, options to stop swimmers swimming under the platform were welcomed.

Changing the height of the platform was not supported, but adding a handrail above water level and more raked ladders was supported. John Carrier requested that consideration be given to installing another static platform at the far end of the ponds for the lifeguards, in particular at the men's pond.

RESOLVED: That;-

- i) the recommendations set out in Appendix 3 of the report be supported; and
- ii) additional consideration be given to lifeguards taking health details of swimmers new to the ponds and second static platforms with a report back to the next meeting.

5. **Progress with the Charging Policy**

A report (prepared by Bob Warnock), providing comparative information about the Parliament Hill Fields (PHF) and nearby athletics tracks, was considered. Bob Warnock explained that comparative information about these various tracks would help to assess how greater usage of the PHF track could be encouraged. The Chairman added that while the economics of running an athletics track were complex, he did not want to see this becoming an indeterminable exercise.

The different charging models were discussed. John Carrier inquired whether a per capita model could be introduced for schools. Paul Maskell explained that no school meeting involved less than one hundred children and overall, school athletics days generated the most income for the track. Jeff Gooding added that the lack of cover deterred schools from using the track outside the busy June and July period. Primary school curriculums were so tight that one off (rather than regular) usage of the track was unlikely. Richard Priestly requested that information about secondary school usage be provided. In response to a question by Nigel Robinson, Paul Maskell explained that the £3 charge was not time limited and included use of the facilities all day. Simon Taylor stated that enforcement was weak, due to the lack of card readers and ease with which users could jump over the perimeter fence.

Willesden, Battersea and Mile End tracks might also provide useful comparative information. It was noted that Finsbury Park track was not certified. Nigel Robinson referred to a fees and charges almanac (that used to be circulated by Paul Minton annually) although now slightly out of date, could also provide useful comparative information. Bob Warnock welcomed the chance to collate this information so that a better understanding of the subsidy provided for both the athletics track and lido, could be made.

RESOLVED: That further comparative information about nearby athletics tracks (Mile End, Battersea and Willesden), inform a future report about fees and charges.

6. **Lido**

Bob Warnock provided an update about measures to restore the north east boundary wall of the Lido, which had collapsed on 14 February. He added that the majority of these works would be covered by insurance.

The Chairman shared with the Sports Forum a series of architectural drawings setting out ambitious improvements to the Lido, initiated by the GLC in 1984. He welcomed the opportunity to consider long term options for the Lido. Bob Warnock explained that the Lido cost £125,474 to run last year taking account of staff costs, expenditure and income. Income between 2009 & 2013 varied from £116,000 to £258,000. Infrastructure spending on the fabric of the building formed part of the City Surveyor's Annual Work Programme and is in the region of £100,000 per year.

A discussion took place regarding whether some of the undercover areas could be better used to generate income. For instance, the Education Centre could be relocated and that room could be used as a dance studio instead. In response to a question by the Chairman, Jeremy Simons confirmed that the City of London was not wanting to embark on any further large infrastructure projects. However, private investment options could be explored.

RESOLVED: That:-

- i) efforts be made to copy and circulate the GLC architectural plans to the Sports Forum; and
- ii) options for redevelopment of the Lido area be further explored that would also include reducing the revenue costs to the Corporation.

7. **Update on 'Give it a Go'**

A report (prepared by Paul Maskell), regarding a proposal to install a triples table tennis table on the Parliament Hill side of Hampstead Heath, as a precursor to the forthcoming 'Give it a Go' festival, was considered. He added that he hoped to attract top table tennis players to the launch event and that Camden Council had now withdrawn from the 'Give it a Go' festival. John Carrier recommended contacting The Times journalist Matthew Syed, who used to compete for GB in table tennis. Use of the triples table would be free and a nominal fee for hiring out balls and bats would be exercised.

RESOLVED: That the proposal to install a triples table tennis table on the Parliament Hill side of Hampstead Heath, be supported.

8. **Update on Bowls Club and Croquet**

Declan Gallagher provided an update on the new five year lease to the Bowls and Croquet Clubs. Five key performance indicators to encourage take up and participation had been agreed with both clubs.

Declan Gallagher would be meeting regularly with both clubs to ensure they continued to address their targets.

RECEIVED.

9. **Verbal Feedback on the Night of the 10,000m event (10 May)**
Richard Priestley thanked staff at the athletics track for all their hard work in helping to prepare for this event. The athletic endeavours and large audience estimated at about 1,400, belied the unfavourable weather on the night. Winners in both championship races had achieved qualifying times for the Commonwealth and European Championships. Feedback had been overwhelmingly positive. It was noted that the City of London had contributed towards the running costs, and it was hoped that British Athletics would be a more active sponsor next year. In response to a question by Natasha Cendrowicz, Richard confirmed that the date for this event had been chosen by event organiser, Ben Pochee. Bob Warnock added that a lot of effort had been put into ensuring that the showers worked on the night.

The organisers were congratulated by the Forum with the hope expressed that this could continue to develop as an annual event.

RECEIVED.

10. **Update from PAC**
Nigel Robinson provided an update on Pro Active Camden campaign (PAC). He referred to a £1.3m investment programme in seven schools in Camden to increase physical activity and engage with local communities. Jeff Gooding noted that a number of schools over the years had adopted less robust play designs for their playgrounds, with less emphasis on running around and more on quiet garden space. These investments reversed that trend. While acknowledging that sport had to compete with other academic subjects, children needed to be encouraged to pursue less sedentary pastimes. It was noted that those secondary schools in close proximity to Hampstead Heath were not included in this programme. Responding to a question by Rudolph Benjamin, Nigel confirmed that these enhanced playgrounds would be available for wider community use outside of school hours. He concluded, by inviting the Sports Forum to attend an open evening at UCL on 3 July.

RECEIVED.

11. **Verbal Presentation by Jeff Gooding on Camden Schools' Association**
Jeff Gooding gave a presentation on the work of the Camden Schools' Sports Association (CSSA) to engage primary schools across the Borough in a range of different sport competitions. Funding for sport in primary schools had recently improved and Ofsted guidance had changed to require schools to justify how they were spending sports

premium money. His programme required all schools to enter girls' teams alongside boys' teams. As the CSSA was a voluntary organisation, there was limited capacity for growth. In response to a question by the Chairman, he explained that a few individual Head Teachers were less supportive of his programme, which accounted for three of the thirty eight Camden Primary schools.

RECEIVED.

12. **Any other business**

- i) Swimmers' Forum The Chairman reported that he was trying to forge closer links with the Swimmers' Forum and suggested that a representative from the Swimmers' Forum attend Sports Advisory Forum meetings. This was agreed.
- ii) Rugby Trophy Simon Taylor reported that Hampstead Rugby Club had been awarded a trophy as winners of the County Development Club of the year. Congratulations were given to him and the club.

13. **RECEIVED.**

Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED: That the next meeting be held on 22 September 2014 starting at 6:30pm.

The meeting closed at 8:23pm.

CHAIRMAN

**Contact: Natasha Cendrowicz
tel. no. 07952096201
e-mail: natasha @cendrowen.freeseve.co.uk**