

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 24 November 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held at Committee Room 2 - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 24 November 2014 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Jeremy Simons (Chairman)
Virginia Rounding (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy John Barker
Revd Dr Martin Dudley
Ann Holmes
Professor John Lumley
Barbara Newman
Tom Sleigh
Councillor Melvin Cohen (London Borough of Barnet)
Tony Ghilchik (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Maija Roberts (Open Spaces Society/Ramblers' Association)
Philip Wright (English Heritage)

Officers:

David Arnold	Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	Chamberlain's Department
Nigel Lefton	Remembrancer's Department
Sam Cook	Remembrancer's Department
Edward Wood	Comptroller & City Solicitor's Department
Sue Ireland	Director of Open Spaces
Bob Warnock	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	Operational Service Manager
Paul Monaghan	Department of the Built Environment
Thomas Creed	Department of the Built Environment
Esther Sumner	Ponds Project & Management Support Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Clare James, Edward Lord, Deputy John Owen-Ward, Martyn Foster (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), and Councillor Sally Gimson (London Borough of Camden).

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

There were none.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 15 September 2014 be agreed, subject to the following amendment:

Weddings & Civil Ceremonies at Hill Garden & Pergola

In response to Members' questions, the Superintendent advised that a Friday and Saturday ceremony had occurred on the same weekend once and that a report regarding the full costs and income generated from weddings and civil ceremonies would be presented at the next appropriate Committee meeting.

3.2 Minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

RESOLVED – That the draft public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee meeting held on 3 November 2014 be noted.

4. OPEN SPACES LEGISLATION

The Committee considered a joint report of the Remembrancer and the Director of Open Spaces that outlined officer discussions which had taken place concerning possible modifications to the legislation governing the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces.

The Director of Open Spaces advised that this report was an introduction to the project, which will continue over the next 24 months. Members were advised that this informal consultation stage would involve the views of consultative committees and local interest groups.

The Remembrancer added that, once local views had been sought and considered, officers would present a detailed set of proposals to the relevant Committees. The earliest date for depositing a Private Bill in Parliament would be in November 2015.

RESOLVED – That officers be instructed to test the views of local interest groups on possible modifications to Open Spaces legislation.

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Superintendent of Hampstead Heath verbally updated the Committee on the following matters relating to Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Property

Hampstead Garden Suburb Great Wall

The Superintendent advised that maintenance works had been delayed by four weeks due to an investigation into parts of the Great Wall which were leaning.

Lido

The Superintendent advised that repairs works to the Café roof would last 16 weeks between December 2014 and April 2015. As part of a separate project,

the Lido wall would be re-built to original height with the addition of a fence on top to increase the level of security. The City Surveyor's Department was aiming to co-ordinate these two projects.

Parliament Hill

Members were informed that the tennis courts had been open for two weeks since completion of resurfacing works, which was one month ahead of schedule. Temporary markings had been put in place during winter which would be re-painted in spring 2015 when the top surface was applied. This would involve a closure of the courts for approximately two weeks.

Parking

Members were advised that they may be contacted by local residents regarding a parking amendment introduced by the London Borough of Camden in North End Avenue. The Superintendent was following up with officers from Camden.

Planning

Athlone House

The Superintendent advised that the City of London Corporation had applied for Rule 6 Status to enable the City to make a representation at the Planning enquiry in February 2015. An expert witness had been appointed to argue that the current planning application would have a negative impact on the surrounding landscape as well as a detrimental impact on Metropolitan Open Land.

Highgate Police Station

Members were advised that representations had been submitted to the London Borough of Haringey against the planning application to demolish the former Magistrates' Court and the Highgate Police Station and redevelop the site. In response to a Member's question, the Superintendent advised that the objections were based on the redevelopment having a negative impact on the views west from within Highgate Wood.

Highgate Wood

The Superintendent advised that a local resident had recently written to staff at Highgate Wood asking for the ban on cycling within the Wood to be lifted and to open the path running parallel to Muswell Hill Road. Members were advised that a report to consider these issues would be submitted the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee in April 2015.

RESOLVED – That the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath's update be noted.

6. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS - 2015/16**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chamberlain and the Director of Open Spaces that updated the Committee on its latest approved revenue budget for 2014/15 and sought approval for a provisional revenue budget for 2015/16 for subsequent submission to the Finance Committee.

The report also outlined the effects of the Service Based Review proposals for the Open Spaces Department. Members were advised that, as part of these proposals, a saving of £332,000 would be made in year one (2015/16), £306,000 in year two (16/17), and £440,000 in year three (17/18). A saving of £252,000 would be made through the ending of the City Bridge Trust grant for educational and volunteering activities. As the educational activities of the department were judged to be suitable for funding from the Bridge House Estates' charitable funds, an application would be made before April 2015 to access this funding.

RESOLVED – That:-

- a) The provisional 2015/16 revenue budget be approved for submission to the Finance Committee;
- b) The draft capital budget be approved; and
- c) The Chamberlain, in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces, be authorised to revise these budgets to allow for any further implications arising from Corporate Projects, departmental reorganisations and other reviews and changes to the Additional Works Programme.

7. REVIEW OF ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2014

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided a review of the Management Operations and activities carried out on the Heath over the past 12 months as part of the 2014 Annual Work Programme and sought approval for the implementation of the new 2015 Annual Work Programme.

The Superintendent advised that the Work Programme had been reviewed and that the quarterly walks with the Heath and Hampstead Society had continued to prove beneficial in the development of the Work Programme. The Superintendent also thanked Heath Hands volunteers for their tremendous contribution to the 2014 Work Programme. Clearing storm damage from October 2013 had impacted on the 2014 Annual Work Programme as other planned work had to be postponed.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Open Spaces advised that the Service Based Review proposed savings focussed on income generation, sports and activities, and operational efficiencies rather than landscape management. The latter would be unaffected.

Members were advised that they could still submit their comments regarding the 2015 Annual Work Programme to the Superintendent for a short time.

RESOLVED – That the implementation of the proposed 2015 Annual Work Programme be approved.

8. MANAGEMENT WORK PLAN FOR THE HAMPSTEAD FLEET STREAM COMPARTMENT

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that presented a detailed Management Work Plan for the Hampstead Fleet Stream compartment. The overall vision of the Work Plan was to management

the compartment in order to maintain the stream as a visible above-surface water course.

Members were advised that the Superintendent was discussing bramble management within the compartment with a member of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee.

In response to Members' questions, the Superintendent advised that the final Management Work Plan would be published online and reviewed in 2017/18. He added that he would make the Management Work Plan document more widely available to visitors at the Heath.

RESOLVED – That the Management Work Plan for the Hampstead Fleet Stream Compartment be approved.

9. FEES AND CHARGES REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that set out the proposed fees and charges for a range of facilities and services provided across Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park for 2015/16. Members were advised that a more fundamental review of fees and charges, including benchmarking, would be carried out by the end of 2015.

The Superintendent advised that Children's Football Coaching at Highgate Wood and Queen's Park would not be included in the proposed changes to fees and charges because providers would be charged under a licensing regime from spring 2015.

RESOLVED – That the proposed fees and charges for 2015/16 be approved.

10. HAMPSTEAD RUGBY CLUB REQUEST FOR A THIRD RUGBY PITCH

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that set out a request received from the Hampstead Rugby Club to create an additional third rugby pitch on the Hampstead Heath Extension.

The Operational Services Manager advised that Hampstead Rugby Club had successfully increased their junior and women sections, so a third pitch would be required on designated sports area of the Heath Extension to incorporate their growing membership. Members were also advised that the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and the Sports Advisory Forum both supported the request for a third pitch.

In response to a Member's question, the Operational Services Manager advised that the new pitch would be created on the outfield of the cricket pitches during the autumn/winter rugby season. This would not impact the cricket squares during the spring/summer cricket season.

RESOLVED – That a third rugby pitch be allocated to Hampstead Heath Rugby Club with usage to be reviewed at the end of the 2016/17 playing season.

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

There were none.

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

The Committee congratulated the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath for being officially appointed in his post on a permanent basis. The Director of Open Spaces advised that she would circulate written confirmation of this appointment to Members in December 2014.

The Chairman advised Members that the next Committee walk would take place on Friday 20 March 2015 to ensure the availability of Members of this Committee who were also Members of the Community and Children's Services Committee.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item No.

14 – 16

Paragraph No.

3

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the last meeting held on 15 September 2014 be agreed.

15. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk that informed Members of urgent action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, since the last meeting on 15 September 2014.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

16. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT - PRE AUTHORITY TO START WORK ISSUE REPORT**

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of the Built Environment and the Director of Open Spaces regarding the current position of Hampstead Heath Ponds Project.

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

There was one question.

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

There was none.

The meeting ended at 2.30 pm

Chairman

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