

HAMPSTEAD HEATH CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Monday, 7 March 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held at the Parliament Hill Conference Room, Parliament Hill Fields, Hampstead Heath, NW5 1QR at 7.00 pm

Present

Members:

Virginia Rounding (Chairman)	Thomas Radice (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Jeremy Simons (Deputy Chairman)	Susan Rose (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Ray Booth (Barnet Mencap)	Steve Ripley (Ramblers' Association)
Colin Gregory (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association)	Ellin Stein (Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)	Richard Sumray (London Council for Sport and Recreation)
Dr Gaye Henson (Marylebone Birdwatching Society)	Simon Taylor (Hampstead Rugby Club)
John Hunt (South End Green Association)	David Walton (Representative of Clubs Using the Heath)
Nigel Ley (Open Spaces Society)	
Susan Nettleton (Heath Hands)	
Helen Payne (Friends of Kenwood)	
Mary Port (Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Advisory Committee)	

Officers:

David Arnold	- Town Clerk's Department
Bob Warnock	- Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	- Open Spaces Department
Lucy Gannon	- Open Spaces Department
Richard Gentry	- Open Spaces Department
Paul Maskell	- Open Spaces Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Stewart Purvis (Vale of Health Society) and John Weston (Hampstead Conservation Area Advisory Committee).

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

There were none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 9 November 2015 be agreed.

Matters Arising

City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill

Petitions to the Bill had been submitted by the Kennel Club and an individual who routinely opposed Private Bills related to open spaces. Tulip Siddiq MP was making a representation to the Bill, possibly regarding the Bill's impact on roadways across the Heath.

The proposals for the events policy were currently being considered. The policy would be submitted to the next Committee meeting for discussion.

Athlone House

The applicants did not apply for a Court of Appeal hearing by 12 November 2015. The premises was now being sold to a new purchaser.

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

There had been no developments in relation to OPM during the winter but it was expected to return during late spring/summer.

Landscape Improvement Works at Millfield Lane

Implementation of the works had been delayed until autumn to prioritise completion of the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project.

4. HAMPSTEAD HEATH SPORTS ADVISORY FORUM MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum meeting held on 2 February 2016. The Chairman of the Forum (London Council for Sport and Recreation) noted that the introduction of a Tag Rugby League had been considered carefully by the Forum to avoid any adverse effects to Rugby Union players. The Leisure and Events Manager advised that a licence had been prepared to allow a 14 week Tag Rugby League to take place at the bottom of the Parliament Hill Lido playing fields, away from the dedicated Rugby Union playing areas, which would generate income for the Heath.

The Superintendent added that discussions with the London Borough of Camden (LBC) regarding funding for the introduction of Outdoor Gym equipment had been on-going and were looking more promising.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Hampstead Heath Sports Advisory Forum meeting held on 2 February 2016 be noted.

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided an update regarding the management and operational activities across the Heath since November 2015. The Superintendent provided some additional information regarding the following matters:-

Property

- The Mixed Pond was currently being used as a Ladies' Pond whilst works were carried out at the Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond.

- Works at the Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond were due to be completed by 30 April 2016.
- The Ladies' Pond would re-open and the Mixed Pond would return to a mixed male and female pond on 7 May 2016.
- In response to a member's (Highgate Society) question regarding reports of willow trees being cut down at the East Heath Car Park, the Superintendent advised that this was not the case so he would look into it.

Planning

- The LBC had re-consulted on the planning application for the Water House up until 1 February 2016.
- The City of London Corporation provided representations against the development because a survey carried out in January 2016 showed that the road was not capable of receiving Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic, which would also cause damage to a veteran oak tree.

Fees and Charges

- In response to a member's (Hampstead Rugby Club) question regarding the additional fee for late Rugby kick off times, the Superintendent advised that staff shift patterns and charges would be discussed with the Rugby Club(s) on a case by case basis.

Events

- The Southern Counties Cross Country Championships held at Parliament Hill on 30 January 2016 had been a success, with a total of 5,115 runners having taken part, and a recovery plan for the route was being implemented where the ground was dry enough.
- Some members (Highgate and Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committees) noted their concerns that the event was becoming too large-scale so damage to surfaces along the route was becoming more noticeable, suggesting that the number of participants be limited.
- The Deputy Chairman, amongst other members (London Council for Sport and Recreation and the Representative of Clubs using the Heath), noted that Cross Country events at the Heath had always been popular and well-attended.
- The Superintendent assured the Committee that problem areas were being monitored carefully, new repair and recovery techniques involving compaction machinery were being developed, and the route differed each year to avoid areas that had not recovered fully from a previous event.
- In response to a member's (Highgate Society) question, the Superintendent advised that alternative substances to Christmas Tree chippings would be looked into for path recovery.

Golders Hill Park

- The disabled car park landscaping works were due to be completed by the end of the week.

- Plans for the restructuring of the Zoo and Queen's Park Children's Farm had been completed so a business plan would be submitted to the next Committee meeting.

Projects

- The audit and review of the Open Spaces Department's fleet and motorised equipment was complete and an estimated saving of £122,850 had been identified, which would be ring fenced to support the energy efficiency programme.
- Members were asked to provide feedback about the draft sign to replace the existing one on Parliament Hill before the artwork and design was finalised.
- A QR code would be included on the sign to enable smartphone users to compare with pictures of historic views from Parliament Hill.
- A survey of all memorial benches at Parliament Hill Fields and Golders Hill Park had been carried out in order to review the bench style and update records.
- Approximately 100 people were on the waiting list to obtain a ten-year commemoration sponsorship, the fee for which would be reported back to the Committee once agreed.
- The various consultation stages regarding staff working arrangements were due to be completed by October 2016.
- In response to a member's (Marylebone Birdwatching Society) question, the Superintendent advised that the consultations were in relation to changes in working patterns to address work/life balance issues, not job losses.
- In response to a member's (Highgate Society) question, the Superintendent advised that MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) were continuing to carry out archaeological monitoring of the Ponds Project and they would be contacted shortly for an update.

RESOLVED – That the Superintendent's Update be noted.

6. HAMPSTEAD HEATH PONDS PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee received a joint report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath and the Ponds Project Director regarding the progression of the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project. The Superintendent provided the following updates:-

- Earthworks had started at Model Boating Pond (MBP) and it was expected to take around two weeks to remove the remaining silt;
- One Alder tree had been removed by MBP to allow for the Kenwood Ladies' Pond building to be brought onto site;
- Desilting at Viaduct was halted due to debris in the pond so the Project Team were looking into the best way to de-silt this pond, which would take place once works at the Kenwood Ladies' Pond had been completed;
- Hampstead No. 1 was due to be finished by Easter; and
- Hampstead No. 2 was due to be finished by mid-April.

In response to a member's (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) question, the Superintendent assured that works would not be carried out during the Easter weekend and that staff would be mindful of vehicle movements during the Easter School Holiday period.

RESOLVED – That the progress of the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project be noted.

7. HAMPSTEAD HEATH - CAFÉ TENDER PROCESS

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided details about the process and progress with regard to the retendering of the Hampstead Heath Cafés at Parliament Hill Fields, Parliament Hill Lido, and Golders Hill Park.

In response to members' questions, the Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager advised that applicants were asked how sustainably they would deliver products and whether or not the products would be locally prepared, as part of the bid quality criteria. Quality was also evaluated by carrying out market-testing of applicants' products, sample menus and proposed prices. He added that the decision to evaluate bids based on 55% quality and 45% price (meaning rent payable and business plan strength, not the proposed price of products to be sold at the café) was made in consultation with the City's procurement team and expert consultants. Some members suggested that the evaluation of bids should be based on a greater consideration of quality during future tendering processes.

In response to a member's (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) question, the Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager advised that applicants who bid for more than one café were still treated as single, separate bidders for each site. Any potential benefits to the City of London Corporation of having one applicant occupy all five North London Open Spaces Cafés were not taken into account.

Members noted that the results of the successful applicants at each café would be announced after a decision had made by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee on 14 March 2016. Members were encouraged to provide feedback about the management and performance of each café during the coming months.

RESOLVED – That the progress made in the retendering of the North London Open Spaces Cafés be noted.

8. OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT – PROGRESS ON SPORTS PROJECTS AND PROGRAMME BOARD AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that outlined the progress made with the Sports Projects and Programmes Board; specifically with regard to the development of a strategic partnership approach with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). Members were advised that the LTA would assist in the provision of a new online booking system, including

a mobile app to be launched in May 2016, and support for the Heath's tennis coach. Staff would still be available on site to assist users unable to use an online system.

In response to a member's (Representative of Clubs using the Heath) question, the Superintendent explained that the LTA partnership would contribute £20,000 worth of departmental savings as part of the Service Based Review. An additional report regarding the savings achieved at all sites and facilities across the North London Open Spaces would be submitted to a future Consultative Committee meeting.

In response to a member's (Barnet Mencap) question, the Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager advised that the LTA would assist the Heath's tennis coach with the development of a training programme for disabled users.

The Superintendent added that figures for the use of the Heath tennis courts during the past three years could be provided after the meeting.

RESOLVED – That:-

- a) The progress made by the Sports Programme and Project Board be noted; and
- b) The partnership approach with the LTA be supported.

9. HAMPSTEAD HEATH MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding the development of the 2018-2028 Hampstead Heath Management Plan. Members noted that the Management Plan review process would also include a review of the wider engagement approach taken during the development of past Management Plans. A member (Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents' Association) added that it would be useful to consider where consultation conflicts have arisen in the past and how they have been resolved before the Plan was finalised.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. QUESTIONS

In response to a member's (Mansfield Conservation Area Advisory Committee) question regarding the Savernake Road bridge, the Operational Services Manager advised that he had informed LBC of the condition of the area under the bridge and they had cleared it today. Discussions would continue with LBC, Heath Hands and the Heath and Hampstead Society to consider the possibility of regular cleaning carried out by volunteers.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Chairman advised that it was the Deputy Chairman and John Hunt's (South End Green Association) last meeting as Committee Members. The Committee thanked both Members for their contributions and, in return, both Members thanked the Committee for their support.

12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the date of the next meeting, to be held on Monday 27 June 2016, be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Chairman

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