

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE
Monday, 21 November 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 21 November 2016 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Virginia Rounding (Chairman)
Deputy John Barker
Anne Fairweather
Michael Hudson
Clare James
Professor John Lumley
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons
Councillor Melvin Cohen (London Borough of Barnet)
John Beyer (Heath and Hampstead Society)
Maija Roberts (Ramblers' Association/Open Spaces Society)

Officers:

Fern Aldous	-	Town Clerk's Department
Susanna Lascelles	-	Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	-	Chamberlain's Department
Bob Warnock	-	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Declan Gallagher	-	Open Spaces Department
Lucy Gannon	-	Open Spaces Department
Richard Gentry	-	Open Space's Department
Esther Sumner	-	Open Space's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Karina Dostalova, Keith Bottomley, Revd Dr Martin Dudley, Alderman Ian Luder, Graeme Smith, Councillor Sally Gimson (London Borough of Camden), Rachel Evans (RSPB) and Philip Wright (English Heritage).

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The Chairman thanked Dennis Cotgrove, who had submitted his resignation, for his work on the Committee.

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

RESOLVED – The minutes of the meeting held on the 18 July 2016 be approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

- The Viewpoint sign had been successfully unveiled.
- The pilot of the cross country run would be taking place on the 18th February 2017.

3.2 Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee Minutes

The Committee received the minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee. The Chairman stated that the minutes were to be cross referenced against each item in the agenda, so the views of the Consultative Committee could be taken into account when considering the recommendations.

RESOLVED – That the draft minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2016 be noted.

Matters Arising

Heath Hands

The Chairman reiterated her thanks to Heath Hands for their hard work on the Heath over the past year.

Capital Projects

A Member noted that the £50,000 threshold for Capital Projects was for those projects that had not had funding ring-fenced and were outside the additional works programme for repairs and maintenance.

Vale of Heath

The Superintendent reported that meetings had taken place with the Heath and Hampstead Society and the Vale of Health Society to discuss the options for the parcel of land adjacent to the Vale of Heath.

3.3 Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee

RESOLVED – The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 9 November 2016 be approved as an accurate record.

It was noted that no additional comments had been received on the work programme.

3.4 Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group Minutes

RESOLVED – That the draft minutes of the meeting held on the 9 November 2016 be approved as an accurate record.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided Members with an update regarding the following management and operational activities across the Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park since July 2016.

Affordable Art Fair

The Committee discussed the proposal to move the Affordable Art Fair to an earlier date. A Member queried whether the contract with the Fair could be changed to allow for the Corporation to receive a percentage of revenue as part of the license fee. The Superintendent confirmed the licence fee related to the area of the Heath that was set aside to permit the event on the Heath. However, it was noted that the Heath and Hampstead Society would not object to more revenue being generated from an existing commercial operation. A report on the review of 2016 Events Programme would be coming to the next meeting of the Committee.

Noting the support of the Consultative Committee, the Committee approved the change to the time of the Fair.

Zippo's Circus

It was confirmed that the online petition was still to be received. Approximately 600 petitions were thought to relate directly to the Heath as part of a wider petition against the circus. 6000 people had attended the 12 performances. It was noted that cats would not be included in the performances going forward, and the circus had up to date animal welfare checks. Members were supportive of the recommendation from the Consultative Committee to develop a policy against which applications from circuses could be considered.

Open Spaces Bill

The Open Spaces Bill completed its Opposed Committee stage in the House of Commons on Tuesday 15 October. The Committee determined that there should be one addition to clause 12 (Community Protection Notices), regarding the use of FOI. Officers are currently considering this. The next step is the Report Stage and the Third Reading of the Bill in the Commons, the timing of which has not yet been settled.

Capital Projects

The Capital Project reports for the East Heath Car Park, The Hive and the Adventure Playground would progress through the Consultative Committee and the Management Committee in January, with Gateway 2 reports to be presented to Projects Sub Committee in February 2017.

Cafés

The Café Working Group was due to meet on 21 November 2016 to discuss the initial results from the consultation exercise. A report would be presented to the Committee in January with recommendations to guide future decisions on the café leases.

The Committee discussed the consequences of the withdrawal of the tenant of the Lido Café. It was confirmed the tenant was still within the six month rent free period, and Members asked Officers to investigate introducing a 12 month half rent period instead, to allow for some income to be collected in similar instances. The Consultative Committee's suggestion for pop-up facilities being installed in the interim period was supported.

Drones

Following a recommendation from the Consultative Committee it was confirmed that the Drones Policy would include the pathway for commercial use authorisation.

Members discussed the pros and cons of introducing a change to the bye-laws to enforce the ban on drone usage. It was noted this could leave all the bye-laws exposed to enforced changes. It was felt that consideration should be given to the introduction of a regulation as opposed to a bye-law to allow the Heath Constabulary to enforce the drone's policy banning them on the grounds of the Heath being a "congested area". The introduction of the regulation would be investigated with the Comptroller.

Staff Consultation

The changes to staff rotas had gone into effect on the 1st October and it was felt to have been successful. Changes to the contracts for the Lifeguard team, the Hampstead Heath Constabulary and on the use of the lodges were now at the personal consultation stage.

Planning

- Planning permission had been granted for Athlone House.
- The Heath House application would be considered at the London Borough of Camden Development Control Committee on the 15th December. The Superintendent would be objecting on the grounds of the impact on the Metropolitan Open Land.
- The applicant at the Water House has submitted an appeal against the refusal to grant planning permission. The Superintendent is awaiting confirmation of how the Planning Inspector intends to hear the appeal. Along with interested parties the City will be writing to the Inspector to recommend a site visit and local hearing would be relevant in this case.
- Planning permission had been refused White Stone House.
- A Planning application for 46 apartments had been submitted for 114-120 West Heath Road. An objection would be submitted on the grounds of the impact of Golders Hill Park and the West Heath.
- The Superintendent is continuing to monitor the redevelopment proposals at Parliament Hill and William Ellis Schools. It was confirmed a representative from the Open Space's Department sat on the Community Working Group for the project.

Learning

Members congratulated the Open Space's Department on the success of the Learning Programme launched in April 2016.

The Superintendent informed the Committee that two written representations had been received regarding the use of Golders Hill Park by Heathside High School. Meetings had been held with the school to discuss their use of Golders Hill Park and the wider Heath. It was confirmed their use of the tennis courts did not prevent other patrons from making bookings.

The Committee noted the successful year for Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park in the Green Flag, Green Heritage and London in Bloom awards.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

5. **FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath regarding the changes to fees and charges for 2016/17. It was noted that the proposals had been considered and supported by both the Sports Advisory Forum and the Consultative Committees.

RESOLVED – That the proposed fees and charges for 2017/18, as set out in appendix one of the report, be agreed.

6. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW FINDINGS**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath outlining the process to review and update the 2007 Management Plan and the formation of the 2018 plan. The future plan would be shorter, more strategic and more closely embedded into Divisional ways of working to enable regular reporting and continuous improvement throughout the ten year period. A consultation would be conducted with Heath users, focusing on their vision for the Heath looking towards 2028 and beyond, and the draft plan would be brought back to the Committee for consideration (as set out in the programme included in Appendix 3 of the report).

The comments of the Consultative Committee regarding the establishment of a tiered management framework to enable matters to be considered at the appropriate level (operational to strategic) and at the formative stages will ensure the Consultative Committee members have the opportunity to make representations to Committee. This approach will enable the Committee to input at the strategic level, in the knowledge that the supporting plans and documents are in place for effective execution.

Members asked for a shorter overview document to be produced with future versions of the plan which directed the Committee to the issues on which their input would be required.

The Committee noted the comprehensive approach to the review of the 2007 Plan and the effectiveness of the engagement workshops to ensure learning from the last process informed recommendations for the development of the 2018 Plan.

RESOLVED – That Members endorse the report.

7. **REVIEW OF ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2016**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath outlining the proposed 2017/18 annual work programme for Hampstead Heath.

The Superintendent informed that Committee that as a result of the survey work undertaken, 32 trees had been identified as being infested with Oak

Processionary Moth, two trees had been infected with Ash die-back and 50 Plane Trees (around 20% of the population) had been found to have Messaria.

A Member noted that the Heath & Hampstead Society would undertake to provide detailed comments on the 2017/18 Annual Work Programme by January 2017.

RESOLVED – That the Annual Work Programme and Projects Plan for January 2017 to March 2018 be approved.

8. **HAMPSTEAD HEATH CHARITY REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2015/16**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain presenting the Hampstead Heath Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2016.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. **PONDS PROJECT UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath outlining progress made on the Ponds Project since the last meeting. The contractor, BAM Nutall had virtually completed their works and the Heath team would continue with ecological and planting works. A Gateway 7 report would be presented to the Committee.

Members noted the success of the Model Boating Pond opening ceremony, which had marked the end of the works. In response to a statement from a Consultative Committee Member, it was being investigated whether a small area on the island could be set aside as a bird sanctuary.

The Committee wished to thank the previous Chairman for his hard work at the start of the project and his dedication to consultation with Heath users.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

10. **UPDATED POLICING PLAN**

The Committee received the updated Constabulary policing plan. Members noted the Consultative Committee's desire for Constabulary visibility to be a key priority.

RESOLVED – That the updated plan be noted.

11. **HIGHGATE WOOD SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath detailing operational and management activity at Highgate Wood since July 2016. The receipt of the Green Flag award for the 20th consecutive year was commended. It was noted that a special meeting of the Committee would be convened in January 2017 to discuss the outcome of the Café consultation.

The Committee concurred with the views of the Consultative Committee on the agreement for the permanent adoption of the amended closing times.

RESOLVED – That the amended opening hours and the proposed Highgate Wood annual work programme, as set out in appendix 1, be approved, and that the report be noted.

12. **QUEEN'S PARK SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath detailing operational and management activity at Queen's Park since July 2016.

Area for Dogs

Noting the Consultative Committee's view, Members did not support the creation of an area in which dogs could be allowed off a lead.

Café

Members discussed the options for the re-tendering of the café lease at the Park, following the withdrawal of 'Minkies', the winning tender from the first process. Following a recommendation from the Consultative Committee to expedite the process, it was reported that there was potential for the new tenant to be in place by October or November 2017. Members expressed concern that this would require the new occupier to start trading in the slack Autumn/Winter period. Officers undertook to investigate options for the length of the tendering process.

Play Area

Members noted the survey results in relation to potential improvement of the toilet block in the play area, and the capital project that would be required to undertake the work.

RESOLVED – That:

- The Superintendent to agree a catering lease of up to 13 months with the existing proprietor of the Queen's Park café in consultation with the Comptroller and City Solicitor.
- The Comptroller and City Solicitor to be instructed to complete the documentation for the café lease.
- Agreement to be given for a public engagement and consultation exercise be undertaken to inform an options appraisal to guide future decisions on the café lease.
- The proposal from a local resident to create a fenced area to permit dogs off lead not be supported, and;
- That the report be noted.

13. **QUEEN'S PARK - OUTCOME OF EVENTS SURVEY 2016**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Hampstead Heath providing an update regarding the events survey that was carried out between May 2016 and September 2016, the outcome of which suggested that residents would most welcome low level community events. An events policy based on the

survey results would be developed against which applications could be considered.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

14. **QUEENS PARK AND HIGHGATE WOOD CHARITY REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain which presented the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2016 for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

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

There were no questions.

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

The Committee considered a late report setting out the 2016/17 budget. A Member asked that the table set out in appendix 3 also include the anticipated budget for 2017/18 for easy comparison.

RESOLVED – That:

- The provisional 2017/18 be approved for submission to the Finance Committee;
- The Chamberlain, in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces, be approved 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; any changes over £50,000 to be reported to Committee.
- If specific service based review proposals included with the budget report are rejected by the Committee, or other Committees request that further proposals are pursued, that the substitution of other suitable proposals for a corresponding amount be delegated to the Town Clerk in discussion with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the relevant Committee. If the substituted saving is not considered to be straight forward in nature, then the Town Clerk to also consult the Chairman and Deputy Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee prior to approving an alternative proposal(s).

One Member abstained from voting.

17. **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 by Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

18. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The non-public minutes of the meeting on the 18 July 2016 were approved as an accurate record.

19. INTRODUCTION OF A FORMAL OUT-OF-HOURS CALL-OUT ROTA, AND THE RESULTANT REDUCTION IN REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATIONAL RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

The Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath relating to the introduction of a formal out-of-hours call out rota.

20. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The Superintendent responded to a query in relation to the café at Queen's Park.

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

There was no further business.

22. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

The Committee received the confidential minutes of the meeting held on the 18 July 2016.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm

Chairman

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