

DECISIONS OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

10 November 2008

*Councillor John Hart (Barnet) (Chairman)
*Councillor Will Motley (Vice-Chairman) (Brent)

Councillors:

Tom Davey (Barnet)
*Mary Farrell (Brent)
\$Julie Johnson (Barnet)
James O'Sullivan (Brent)
*Hugh Rayner (Barnet)
Bob Wharton (Brent)

Organisation

Barnet Council for Sport and Recreation
Brent Sports Council
British Waterways
Environment Agency
Greater London Assembly
Hendon Rifle Club
Hendon Rifle Club
Hendon Rifle Club
Local Agenda 21
London Wildlife Trust
London Wildlife Trust
Natural England
Old St Andrew's Residents' Association
Princes Park Youth Football Club
Training Ship Broadsword
Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre
Welsh Harp Sailing Association
Welsh Harp Youth Sailing Base
West Hendon Community Forum
Woolmead Residents' Association

Representative

Frank Hewlett
David Carter
* John Guest
Martin Everett
Mike Waite
Peter Castle
A Jefferson
Klaus Schuricht
Molly Savage
* Clive Cohen
John Colmans
* Kate Mitchell
John Thompson
Jon Bell
Commander G F Beck
* Roy Beddard
* Jeff Bartley
Harry Mackie
Brian Turgoose
Vacancy
Judy Shepherd
Geoffrey Johnson

*denotes Member present

\$ Denotes Member absent on Council Business

Also in attendance were:

Julie Warren – Barnet Greenspaces
Jonathan Regal – Barnet Democratic Services
Leslie Williams – Brent Parks Service

1. MINUTES (Item 2)

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 July 2008 be approved as a true and accurate record.

2. MATTERS ARISING (Item 3)

The Chairman, Councillor John Hart, informed the Committee that the Barnet Borough Archivist had agreed to give a display of laminated material about the History of the Welsh Harp for use in schools in Brent and Barnet.

3. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (Item 4)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Julie Johnson (Barnet), who was absent on Council business, John Colmans (London Wildlife Trust), Harry Mackie (Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre) and Geoffrey Johnson (Woolmead Residents' Association).

5. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (Item 5)

No interests were declared.

6. WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN (BRENT) (Item 7)

Leslie Williams presented a progress report from Brent's Director of Environment and Culture detailing progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues.

The Committee during deliberations raised the following issues:

a) Clean-up activities

The Big Tidy Up Group, part of the Tidy Britain Group, was willing to help with community clean-up activities. John Guest, British Waterways, said that there was an annual spring clean of the canal areas leading from the reservoir. The canal areas were cleared of graffiti and litter by the Thames 21, volunteers of canal keepers.

b) Walking events

Brent Council had produced a new leaflet to encourage participation in healthy walks in areas such as the Welsh Harp. Roy Beddard, Welsh Harp Conservation Group, said that the conservation group organised monthly walks. A question was raised about Barnet's provision for healthy walks and it was thought that the programme had been withdrawn / limited. Kate Mitchell, Natural England, said that Andy Jennings, Natural England's Health and Green Space Adviser, co-ordinated healthy walks.

Action:

1. The Chairman, Councillor John Hart, to contact Barnet's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport regarding funding a Welsh Harp healthy walks programme.
2. Jonathan Regal to send contact details of Andy Jennings, Natural England's health and green space advisor, to the Committee.

c) Pollution and illegally dumped waste from industrial estate

John Guest, British Waterways, said that the 3-year programme to clear pollution and illegally dumped industrial waste had been completed ahead of schedule. British Waterways with the Environment Agency had successfully prosecuted a business that had illegally dumped industrial waste. The Environment Agency had taken samples of the discharge and it was assumed that they were safe.

Action:

A letter to be written by Kate Mitchell, Natural England, to ask the Environment Agency to investigate the pollution and illegally dumping of industrial waste from the industrial estate.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the progress report on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues be noted.
- (2) That the revised version of the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan be approved.

7. WELSH HARP MANAGEMENT PLAN (BARNET) (Item 8)

Jenny Warren presented a progress report from Barnet's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport detailing progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan and related issues.

The Committee during deliberations raised the following issues:

a) Japanese Knotweed Control Programme

Clive Cohen, London Wildlife Trust, said that he had obtained from the Environment Agency website (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/conservation/) that Japanese Knotweed was a source of nectar and needed to be treated and not eradicated. Kate Mitchell, Natural England, said that she had advised Barnet Council on the programme and the environmental impact of Japanese Knotweed.

b) Unauthorised swimming

Councillor Hugh Rayner enquired whether British Waterways could stop people swimming in the reservoir. John Guest, British Waterways, said that there were no bye-laws against swimming and that members of the sailing club often told people to stop swimming. Jenny Warren said that the no swimming signage was advisory and Barnet Council were processing new bye-laws, including those not permitting swimming, that were currently at the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Leslie Williams advised that Brent's Warden Service would ask people to stop swimming.

Action:

A meeting to be organised by Jenny Warren with British Waterways, Brent Council, Welsh Harp Sailing Club and Welsh Harp Sailing Association to discuss ways of dealing with unauthorised swimming and each parties risk assessments.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Item 9)

There was no other business.

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (Item 10)

A. Birchen Grove Residents' Association

Jonathan Regal informed the Committee that Dorothy Jakes had withdrawn the association's membership to the Committee.

B. Future of Barnet Council's Greenspaces team

Clive Cohen, London Wildlife Trust, asked about the impact on the Welsh Harp of the 'privatisation' of Barnet Council's Greenspaces team. Councillor Hugh Rayner said that nothing had been decided regarding the future shape of Barnet Council.

The meeting ended at 7.53pm