



West Wickham Commons Consultative Committee

Date: WEDNESDAY, 27 JANUARY 2016

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: METROPOLITAN POLICE SPORTS CLUB, THE WARREN, CROYDON ROAD, BROMLEY, BR2 7AL

Members:

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)	Bridget Hogan (West Wickham and Spring Park Volunteer's Group)
George Abrahams	Geoff Newton (West Wickham Police Community Advisory Panel)
Sylvia Moys	Cllr Tom Philpott (London Borough of Bromley)
Barbara Newman	Val Polydorou (West Wickham Residents' Association)
Verderer Peter Adams	Sue Short (Heartsease Girl Guide Camp)
Cllr Nicholas Bennett (London Borough of Bromley)	Cllr Neil Reddin (London Borough of Bromley)
Gladys Edmonds (Wickham Common Residents' Association)	Sam Wheatcroft (Wickham Common Residents' Association)
Avril Glover (Bromley Bridleways Access Group)	
Cllr Hannah Gray (London Borough of Bromley)	
Peter Hodges (Hayes & Coney Hall Police Community Advisory Panel)	

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020 7332 1174

**Refreshments will be served in the Sports Club from 6:30 pm.
NB: Part of this meeting could be the subject of audio or video recording**

**John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **MINUTES**
To agree the public minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2015.
For Decision
(Pages 1 - 6)
4. **THE COMMONS DIVISIONAL PLAN 2015-18**
Report of the Superintendent of The Commons.
For Information
(Pages 7 - 22)
5. **OPEN SPACES BILL**
The Superintendent of The Commons to be heard.
For Information
6. **SERVICE BASED REVIEW**
The Superintendent of The Commons to be heard.
For Information
7. **PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND SITE VISITS**
Report of the Superintendent of The Commons.
For Discussion
(Pages 23 - 28)
8. **MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND PRIORITIES**
The Head Ranger for West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons to be heard.
For Information
9. **REVIEW OF ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16 AND PRESENTATION OF THE 2016/17 PROGRAMME**
The Head Ranger for West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons to be heard.
For Information
10. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**
11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
12. **DATE OF SUMMER WALK**
The date and time of the summer walk to be agreed.
For Decision

WEST WICKHAM COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 20 January 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the West Wickham Commons Consultative Committee held at the Metropolitan Police Sports Club, The Warren, BR2 7AL at 7.00 pm

Present

Members:

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)	Bridget Hogan (West Wickham and Spring Park Volunteers' Group)
Barbara Baker (Heartsease Girl Guide Camp)	Cllr Neil Reddin (London Borough of Bromley)
Sylvia Moys	Sue Short (Heartsease Girl Guide Camp)
Gladys Edmonds (Wickham Common Residents' Association)	Sam Wheatcroft (Wickham Common Residents' Association)
Keith Harris (West Wickham Residents' Association)	

Officers:

Philippa Sewell	Town Clerk's Department
Andy Barnard	Superintendent, Burnham Beeches, Stoke & City Commons
Allan Cameron	Head Ranger
Barry Gutteridge	Senior Ranger
Richard Van Neste	Information Ranger

In Attendance:

Vicky Hughes (public)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from the Deputy Chairman George Abrahams, Barbara Newman, Verderer Peter Adams, Cllr Nicholas Bennett, Avril Glover, Cllr Hannah Gray, Geoff Newton, and Cllr Tom Philpott.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED - That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 22 January 2014 be agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

Visitor Survey 2012

The Chairman confirmed that officers had liaised with the London Borough of Bromley regarding the possible extension of the footpath in Spring Park.

4. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee noted their terms of reference, and requested that an additional Member be added.

RESOLVED – That the terms of reference be amended to include a representative from the Hayes & Coney Hall Police Community Advisory Panel.

5. **UPDATE ON STRUCTURAL CHANGES**

The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons updated the Committee on the changes made over the last year as a result of the two divisions being merged. Members noted that many adjustments had been made, but more were to needed to address the impact of combining two roles, four separate charities and the geographic spread of sites totalling 2000 acres across three counties. The restructuring of the City Commons team was completed in April 2014, including the permanent appointment of the Superintendent, the reduction of one Head Ranger post and the creation of a Support Services Manager, Livestock Ranger and Information Ranger.

In response to a Member's question regarding communications, the Superintendent advised that, prior to the merge, the two divisions operated very differently and the team were now trying to improve communication processes to work more effectively.

RECEIVED.

6. **SERVICE BASED REVIEW**

The Committee received a verbal report of the Superintendent regarding the Service Based Review. Members were informed that the Open Spaces Department was required to make savings of £2.189 million by 2017/18, which represented a 14% budget reduction over three years. The Superintendent advised that the savings proposals made for Open Spaces were being considered in three strands: focusing on the core activities (nature conservation and recreation), increasing operational efficiency, and generating income. £1.175 million of savings would be met through the first strand, such as third party provision of sports facilities and a review of the Department's facilities; £541,000 would be met through operational efficiencies such as improved vehicle fleet management; and £473,000 would be met through increased income generation by increasing car park charges, adding new charges and letting out surplus properties on the Commons.

In response to Members' questions, officers advised that there were no plans to reduce staff visibility and that charges for wayleaves were likely to be reviewed (currently an annual fee of £5 was levied for West Wickham Common). The Chairman added that the joint efforts of the local team and community would be instrumental in communicating the upcoming changes and reasoning behind them, and thanked members of the Consultative Committee in advance for their support required during this financial challenge.

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7. **EPPING FOREST LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**

The Committee received a verbal report of the Superintendent regarding changes to legislation governing the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces. He explained that each open space within the directorate was governed by specific Acts of Parliament from the 1870s and amendments had to be agreed by Parliament via Various Powers Acts. This had been used to enact specific changes in the past, but Members noted that there was now a need to amend and update the Acts more generally to incorporate the motor car, increasing financial challenges, population increase, and anti-social behaviour.

The Superintendent added that the following issues could be addressed with a Various Powers Act amendment:-

- Surplus vacant accommodation on the Commons could be let to domestic or commercial private tenants instead of remaining vacant or being demolished;
- Business and Commercial contracts could be no longer limited to three year periods;
- Fines that were limited to specific amounts across the Open Spaces Directorate could be increased in line with the national scale of fines to better act as a deterrent against anti-social behaviour;
- Exclusion of the public from small areas to allow staff to charge for filming to take place;
- Damage to verges caused by vehicles and commuter parking could be addressed via a legal framework within the Acts.

In response to a Member's question, officers advised that each Common had different byelaws, which would not be affected by this Act and could only be changed through a separate process.

Members were advised that a summary paper would be circulated to all Consultation Committee Members and that feedback would be welcome during the consultation process up to 15 April 2015. This would shape the Superintendent's report to the City's Court of Common Council, after which (if approved) formal consultation would take place before a Parliamentary paper submitted in November 2015.

The Superintendent will circulate his presentation and a separate paper giving more details, to inform Member's considerations.

RECEIVED.

8. **PROPOSED CROSSING BY TFL ON THE A232 AT HARTFIELD CRESCENT**

The Committee received a verbal report of the Head Ranger regarding the pedestrian crossing proposals from Transport for London (TfL) on the A232 at Hartfield Crescent. He gave a history of proceedings, which dated from 2004, and confirmed that in November 2014 TfL met with City of London Officers to present three options. These were outlined in detail to the Consultative Committee, who discussed the suitability of each. Members noted that the three

options would be presented to the Epping Forest & Commons Committee in March 2015 for approval.

In response to Members' questions, officers confirmed that the approximate area of land-take of each option did not include the reclamation of car park space, as this was deemed to be too expensive and complex to act as mitigation and would not necessarily be advantageous for visitors. Officers also advised that Options 2 and 3 only concerned City of London land, but Option 1 affected land owned by both the London Borough of Bromley and City of London. With regard to highway safety, Members discussed the history of the junction, which had always been a hazard for pedestrians, and discussed the positive impact a crossing would have independently of the option of widening Hartfield Crescent.

The Committee requested that plans for all three options be circulated electronically, and it was agreed that all comments would be fed back to officers by 1 February 2015.

RESOLVED – That:

- (a) Plans for all three options be circulated to Consultative Committee Members electronically; and
- (b) All comments be fed back to officers by 1 February 2015.

9. REVIEW OF THE 2014/15 WORK PROGRAMME

The Senior Ranger introduced a presentation to the Committee on the 2014/15 Work Plan:

Tree Inspections

Four rangers had completed a Professional Tree Inspector course to bring tree safety inspections in house.

Oak Processionary Moth surveys

Owing to a rise in moth population in nearby areas, the Forestry Commission would be carrying out a winter survey on the Common, the results of which would be circulated in March/April.

Heathland restoration on West Wickham Common

This was a key project which was progressing well thanks to help from volunteers.

Infrastructure

Six-monthly reviews of infrastructure continued, with green woodworking skills used for improvements.

Signage

Hedges around the car park had been lowered, new signage put up, and the car park was being closed after dark; Members noted that this would be more welcoming for visitors as well as deterring anti-social behaviour.

WWaSP

A decade of the WWaSP volunteering had been celebrated this year; the Chairman expressed his thanks to all those involved.

Small-Leaved Lime Project

Year two of the project had been completed; 35 tonnes of lumber had cleared by heavy horses, and the area had re-established and restored itself quickly.

Community Engagement

Education and promotion had been increased, including visits from Wickham Common Primary School and talks to the local community; additional talks had been booked for spring/summer as these had been well attended and well received.

Green Flags

A decade of flying Green Flags had been celebrated this year; the Chairman expressed his thanks to all the volunteers and officers that helped achieve this.

RECEIVED.

10. MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES & ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Senior Ranger introduced a report on Management Priorities and the Annual Work Programme for 2015/16, noting that the key priorities for West Wickham Common and Spring Park were:

- The final year of the Small-Leaved Lime project;
- Heathland Restoration;
- Heritage Conservation – both the proposal to apply for West Wickham Common to become a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the Green Heritage Award application;
- Monitoring the A232 pedestrian crossing; and
- The coppicing at Spring Park.

A Member queried the late circulation of newsletters and notification of events, and officers advised that the recently appointed Information Ranger would be overseeing community engagement to ensure any delays in communication were avoided.

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

There were no questions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That dates be circulated electronically to confirm the date of the summer visit.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Philippa Sewell
philippa.sewell@cityoflondon.gov.uk



OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENT

‘The Commons’

**Planning together, managing collaboratively,
delivering locally.**

Divisional Plan 2015 - 2018

Contents

Page	Description
2	Contents
3	Superintendent's foreword
4- 6	Section 1 - Framework. Plans, Policies, Links, Responsibilities
7-8	Section 2 – Guidance. Making sense of the plan and using it
9-10	Section 3 – Aspirations. Vision, Objectives, Values and KPI's
11-13	Section 4 – Background. Useful stuff to bear in mind
13-14	Section 5 – Delivery. Roadmaps and annual plans
15-16	Section 6 – Summary table. A simple reference point

Superintendent's Foreword

The City of London Corporation has protected and managed parks, gardens and open spaces in and around London for over 135 years. In 1880 the City Corporation acquired Burnham Beeches near Windsor, an ancient woodland and medieval wood pasture of peerless splendour. In 1883 the City Corporation acquired the Coulsdon Commons, beautiful woods and downs located close to Croydon in South London. Later these four Commons were joined and enhanced by West Wickham Common then Spring Park, both near Bromley. More recently the fabulous ancient oak woodland of Ashted Common, near Leatherhead, was acquired and lastly in 2007, Stoke Common, a rare fragment of heath near Gerrards Cross.

'The Commons' Division was formed in 2015 bringing the management of these sites under a unified team of rangers, conservation specialists and support services staff, led by the Superintendent based at Burnham Beeches. This 'Divisional Plan' sits centrally within a hierarchy of Corporate, Departmental and local, site based plans and policies. Each has a clear link to the other and ensures that our work contributes to the aims of the Open Spaces Department and remains relevant to the City Corporation.

In many ways this document is aspirational as it sets out the direction of travel for the new Division rather than the detail of what we will deliver. Much of the detail of policy and working practice has yet to be identified and agreed and this will only come with the passage of time. As tempting as it might be to rush that process I am certain that only by allowing ourselves time to recognise and resolve and occasionally accept our inconsistencies, will we reap the largest dividends. Amongst those challenges is the relative remoteness of the nine individual sites from one another, their existence as four independent charitable trusts and their overall geographic spread across three counties. This Division Plan is our first, significant step on a journey that aims to deliver clear communications and effective management to bridge these barriers. The achievement of consistently high standards, wherever the sites are located and whatever the resources available, should be both our purpose and our litmus test.

Each site is a high quality, accessible and thriving open space managed by staff who form part of and are supported by, their local communities. In this manner each open space is provided 'in perpetuity' for future generations to enjoy and within which wildlife can thrive. This success can only be achieved through the dedication of our employees, volunteers, contractors and partner organisations. The aim of ensuring that these wonderful open spaces continue to provide for enjoyable recreation activities whilst ensuring that they remain wildlife rich appears at first sight to be quite simple. However, over the coming years there will be times when compromise will be needed and others where a clear line in the sand should be drawn. Such decisions will require close cooperation with our partners, local communities and the wider visiting public as it is only in this manner that we can hope to achieve their long-term understanding and support.

Andy Barnard.

Superintendent, 'The Commons'

Section 1. Plans, Policies, Links and Responsibilities.

‘The Gold and Silver Threads’

How ‘The Commons’ Plans and Policies fit with those of the Open Spaces Department and City.

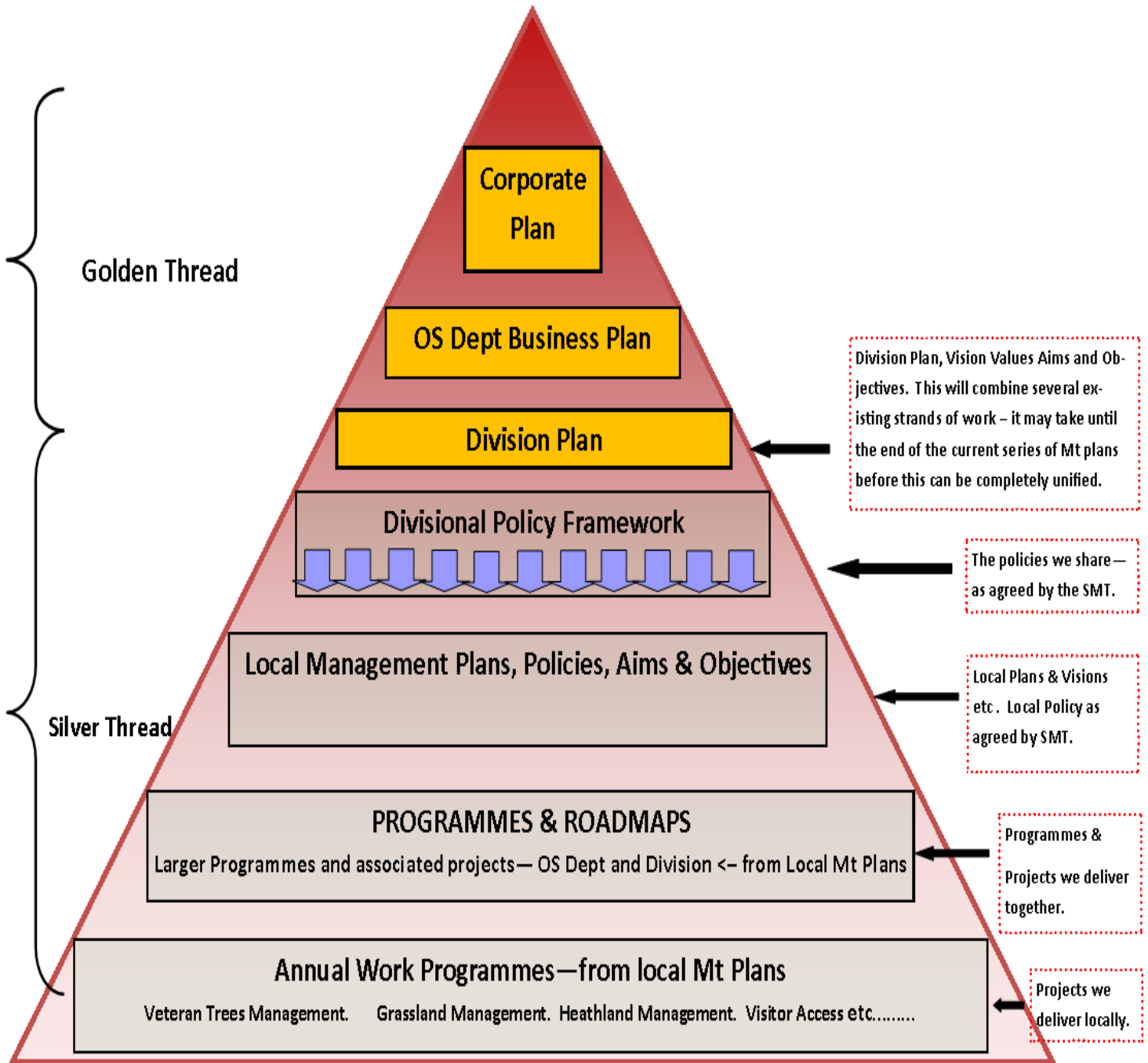


Diagram 1

Responsibilities

‘Where they sit and how they fit’

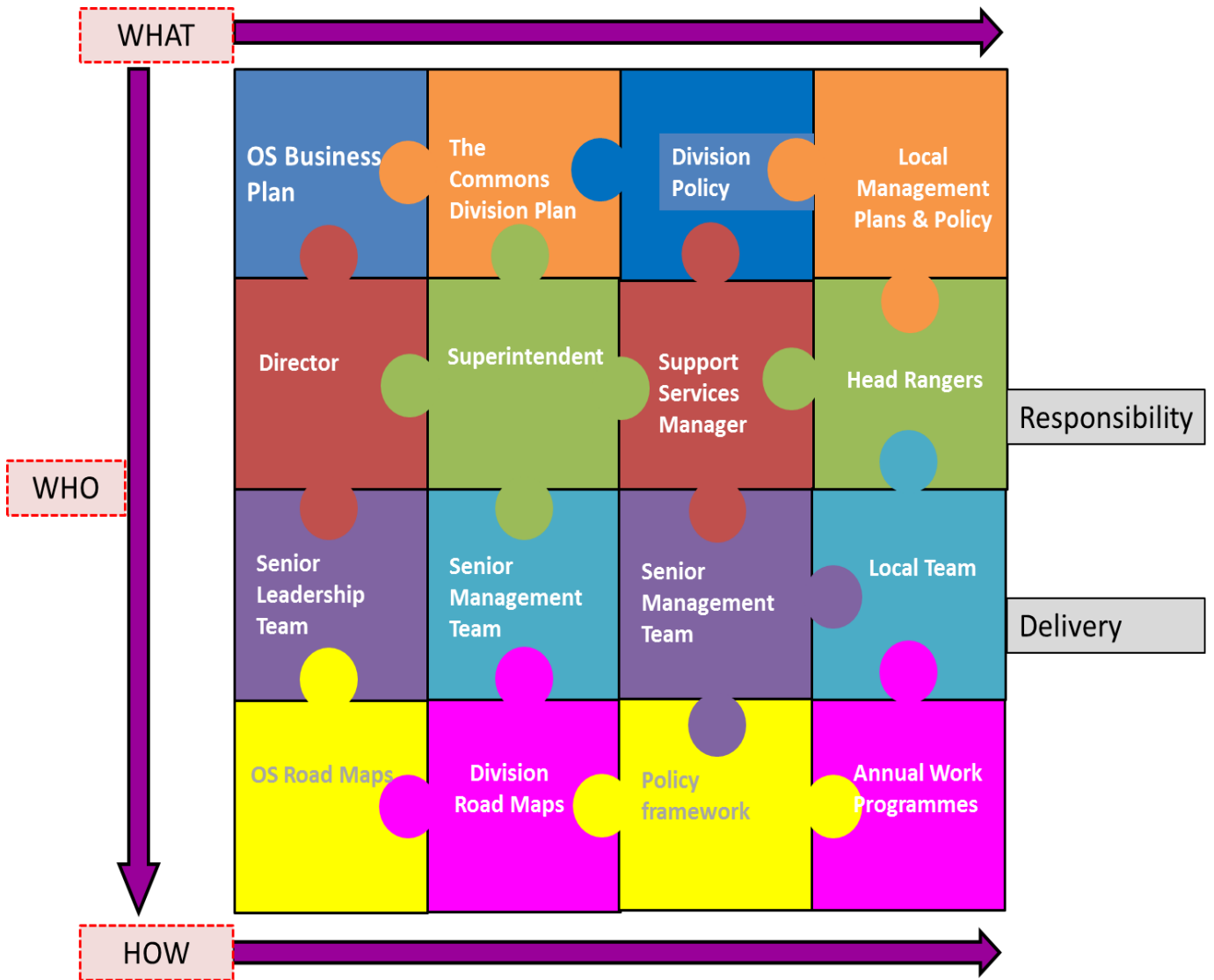


Diagram 2

The Commons Team

‘How the teams fit and support each other’

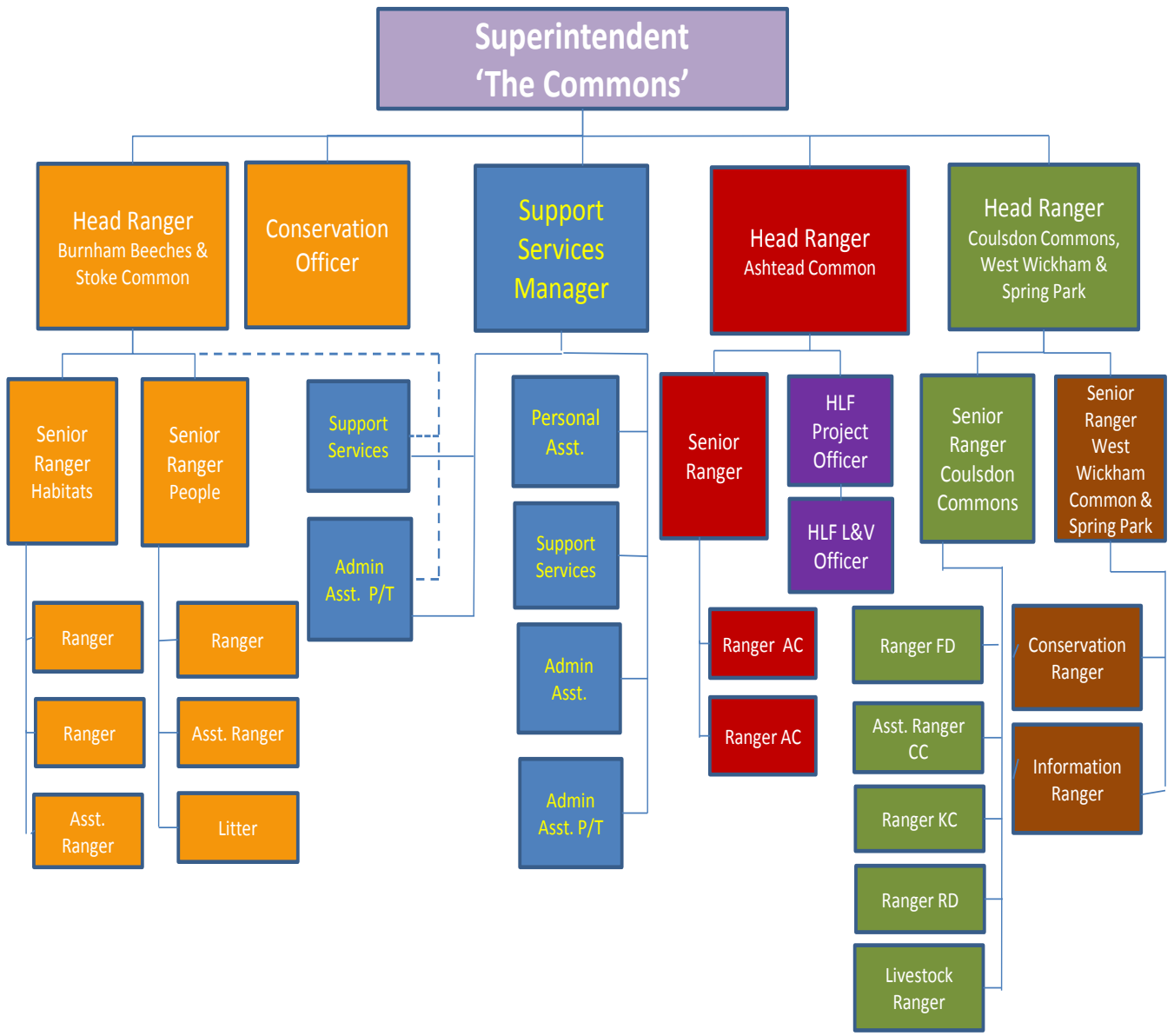


Diagram 3

Section 2 - Making sense of the plan and using it!

The purpose of this document is to remind us of our direction of travel and help to ensure that when the division is presented with choices, we don't inadvertently stray from the most sensible path.

Diagram 1

Sets out in simple terms where the Division Plan sits in terms of the 'plan hierarchy' of the Open Spaces Department and the City of London. For a further analysis please refer to the Open Spaces Business plan 2015-18 and the Corporate Plan 2015-19

It also sets the context for our strategic aims, values and behaviours and shows how these will be met by our shared plans, policies and programmes. It accepts that we may need to reflect these as general principals within more local plans, visions, objectives, policies and work programmes. This will be an ongoing challenge for the Senior Management Team.

A governing principal should be that overarching policies, plans etc. should be identified and agreed wherever possible by the SMT and developed and coordinated by the Support Services Manager.

Any differentiation to provide a local context will be with the agreement of the SMT, and developed by the appropriate Head Ranger, assisted as necessary by the SSM. Appropriate elements of these local documents will be shared wherever possible to maintain consistency across sites. Staff should be involved in this local decision making process wherever it is felt that benefit will accrue.

Diagram 2

Builds on the above by showing how the various local, divisional and departmental teams will work together to achieve the bigger picture for the Department.

Diagram 3

Indicates our current divisional working structure and who ultimately delivers the work described in the preceding diagrams.

Governing Principals

Whilst much can be said about plans and policies, of equal importance is the spirit in which we work together as a team to ensure that we are an operationally cohesive division capable of clear and timely communications. This is perhaps encapsulated in the following statement which should be used as both a reminder and measure of our success:

'Planning together, managing collaboratively, delivering locally'

Standards and KPI's

Behind each value or objective are our (often unwritten) standards. Sometimes we use KPI's and national approaches to achieve common standards. Green Flag and Investors in People are good examples of this. Occasionally the City or Open Spaces Department provides them for us e.g. through various policies, standing orders and audits such as finance, H&S and Sustainability.

However, we must also develop our own standards for many of our operational activities. As an amalgamation of three separate 'divisions' we have, over many years, developed

slightly differing approaches to the same issues and we must, as a priority, begin to identify and agree what should be adopted for all sites and what should be dealt with more locally. This process will be led by the Superintendent and the Support Services Manager who, with the help of the SMT will identify priorities, provide timetables, encourage progress and monitor outcomes. This will be a 'work in progress' to be concluded by the end of this plan.

To 'us' these issues may appear to be purely bureaucratic or perhaps taken for granted as 'common practice'. From a customer point of view they may well be 'expectations' to which is attached great importance and sensitivity. As a demonstration:

CV1. 'Provide welcome, safe and secure sites for people and wildlife'.

This speaks of our ultimate aim but 'unwritten & beneath' sit both the common and differentiated standards in use across the division for the two audiences mentioned i.e. people and wildlife. A brief analysis produces:

- Habitat/conservation work programmes
- Provision of uniformed and appropriately resourced staff
- Rotas to provide cover during operational hours, 365 days a year
- Emergency contact numbers to ensure staff are available outside of standard operational hours
- Policies such as those covering Health and Safety and our patrolling activities
- Monitoring and research to that we can better understand and adapt to the needs of visitors and wildlife.

All of the above can be further analysed to reveal similarities and differences in approach across the Division and it will be for the SMT to slowly unravel these and develop a more standardised approach whilst accepting the need to acknowledge local diversity. Any desire to move independently should be openly discussed and challenged and outcomes agreed by the SMT. Ultimately this sort of local detail should be expressed in the site management plans at their next drafting.

A legal duty to manage

The City of London's open spaces are protected under their own Acts of Parliament, brought in to acquire land for the recreation and enjoyment of the public and to protect these sites from development and enclosure. The Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878 empowers us to raise funds and appoint people to protect and manage our open spaces.

As a public body the City Corporation is required by law to comply with certain duties relating to conservation, as set out in the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006. These require us to take reasonable measures to enhance the aesthetic, cultural, historic and biological interest of its open spaces.

Section 3 - Vision, Objectives, Values and KPI's

1. A Shared Vision

A progressive, thriving division that excels in the protection and conservation of exceptional sites for wildlife whilst providing high quality open spaces for local and wider communities to enjoy.

2. Shared Strategic Aims/Objectives

SA1	Protection and conservation of biodiversity and heritage of the Commons through the projects and programmes contained in local management plans
SA2.	Provision of accessible sites that bring benefit to and are valued by, local and wider communities who play an active part in their management
SA 3	Develop stakeholder relationships to promote the Commons in the context of their wider landscapes whilst seeking to balance conflicting demands
SA 4	Embed innovative financial sustainability across our activities

3. Shared Core Values

i) For the Community

CV1	Providing welcome, safe and secure sites for people and wildlife
CV2	At the heart of the local community
CV3	Working with others to maximise benefit to the Commons and surrounds

ii) For the Team

CV4.	Outward facing, forward looking
CV5.	Ready to challenge and wherever possible mitigate, environmental threat
CV6.	Maintaining multifunctional staff, valued for their skills and knowledge

4. Shared Core Behaviours

CB1.	Lead
CB2.	Empower
CB3.	Trust

5. Shared Key Performance Indicators

These necessarily reflect the KPI's set by the Open Spaces Department as well as those of The Commons division. Where possible this overlap is shown in **Table 1** below. At the time of writing the Departmental KPI's (*shown in italic*) are also under review so it may be necessary to review and rationalise the table below in the near future to reflect any changes are known.

Table 1

Departmental Objective Division Objective/Value	KPI for The Commons - 2015/16
Preserving the ecology and biodiversity of our sites SA1. SA4. CV1. CV5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All Sites with current management plan</i> • <i>All nominated Sites with Green Flag awards</i> • <i>All nominated sites with Green Heritage awards</i> • <i>All SSSI conditions – improving or favourable</i> • <i>No heritage assets on the 'at risk' register</i> • No loss of open space to unauthorised encroachment • Monitor annually all sites for invasive species • Meet conservation targets for each habitat as defined in 'Nature of the City'
Customer satisfaction SA2. SA3. CV1. CV2. CV3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Completion of 100, 60 second surveys per annum for each charity</i> • Volunteers satisfaction rating of 97% • 2 x Consultation group meetings per year for each charity • Min 2 x 'meet the ranger days' at each charity per annum • Delivery of monthly 'E-news' across the Division
Finance SA4. SA1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SBR Road map financial targets met</i> • OS financial KPI's met • Meet all RPA grant compliance requirements
Developing our staff CV4. CV6. CB1. CB2. CB3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OS Personnel KPI's met • Minimum 33% of staff to attend knowledge sharing/organised visits to other Commons within the division each year • Minimum 25% of staff to attend knowledge sharing/organised visits other Dept/ external Open Spaces each year • Achieve and apply the key principals of IIP.

Energy efficiency and sustainability SA4. CV5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reduce utility energy consumption by 2.5% per annum</i> • <i>Reduce fuel consumption by 5% per annum</i> • <i>Generate between 100 - 150kw electricity generation or similar</i>
Annual Work Programmes and roadmaps SA1. SA4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver roadmap programmes and projects according to the agreed timetable • Deliver 95% of priority 1 projects as detailed in the annual work programme for each Common

Section 4 - Background Information

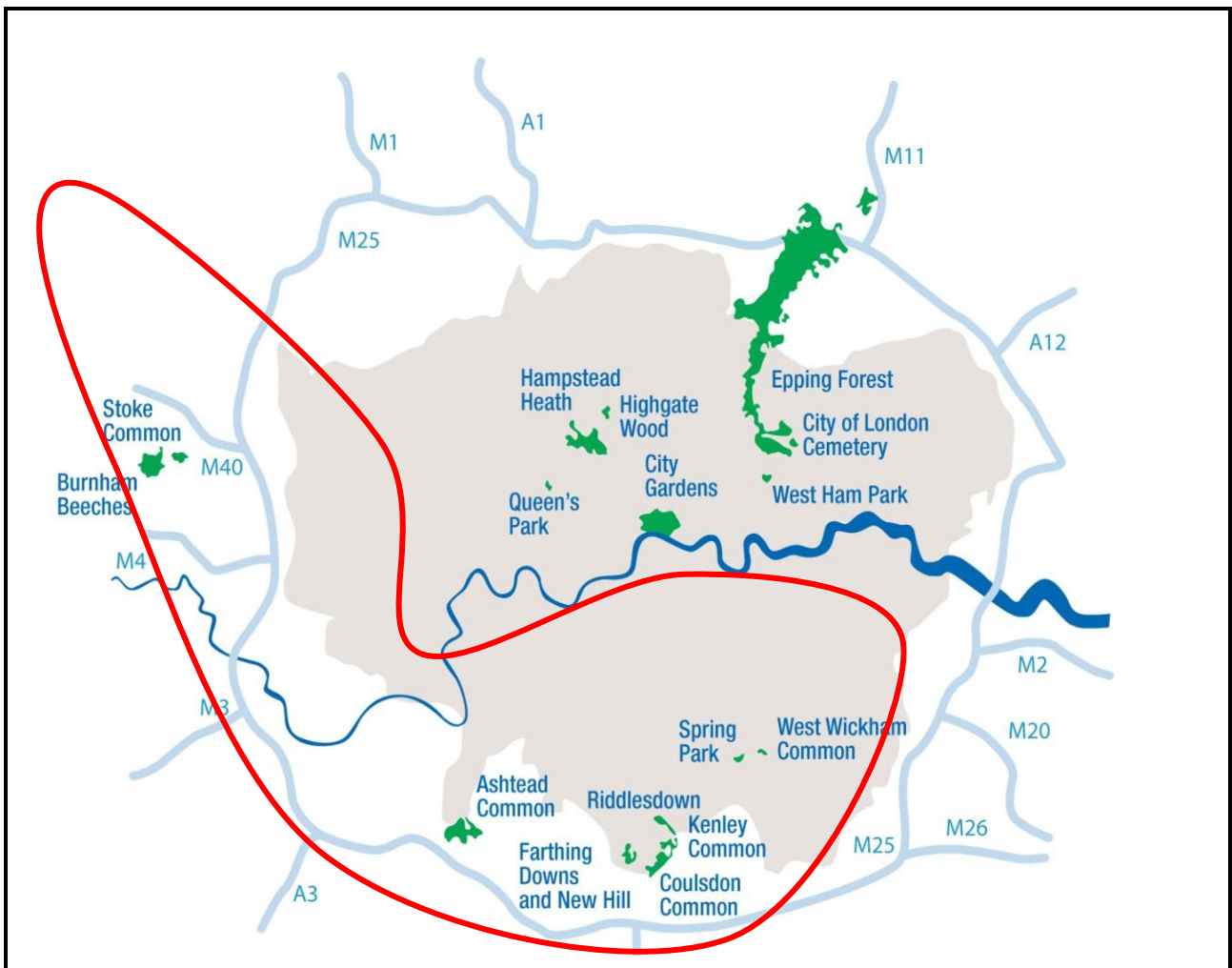
‘The Commons’ - ‘Planning together, managing collaboratively, delivering locally’.

The Commons is an area comprised of nine open spaces extending as an arc from Burnham Beeches to the west of London and culminating finally at West Wickham Common to the South East of London.

- Ashtead Common – 202 hectares. This is a National Nature Reserve and SSSI site. It is a wooded common with two scheduled monuments and over 1,200 ancient oak pollards. In addition to these veteran trees, the site supports a wide diversity of habitats and wildlife. The mosaic of ancient woodland, scrub grassland, meadow, ponds and brook means there is much to discover.
- Burnham Beeches – 220 hectares. This is recognised as an ancient wood pasture and is a SSSI, NNR and a Special Area of Conservation, a European designation. Recognised internationally for its collection of beech pollards, wood pasture and heathland which in turn supports a dynamic population of various mosses, lichens, insects and other invertebrates that thrive in such surroundings.
- Coulsdon Common – 51 hectares. This site is located in the London Borough of Croydon and is an area of wooded common and valuable chalk grassland which supports a thriving flora and butterfly population. Used locally for walking it is also an amenity space for a local football team. Additionally it also has a small Archaeological Priority Zone
- Farthing Downs and New Hill – 95 hectares. This is a SSSI site and has the most extensive area of semi-rural natural downland in Greater London. This supports a diverse mosaic of pockets of ancient woodland, historic hedgerows and scrub. All of which promote a wide variety of plant and animal species.
- Kenley Common – 56 hectares. This site is the best preserved example of a World War II fighter airfield in Great Britain. It also boasts a diversity of habitats that include pockets of ancient woodland, hedgerows and scrub as well as unusual variety of grassland types within a small area.

- Riddlesdown – 43 hectares. Another SSSI site because of its largest single expanse of long established calcareous scrub in Greater London and also for its rich herb land. There is also evidence of thousands of years of human activity with earthworks, track ways and a Roman road.
- Spring Park – 20 hectares. This is a relatively small site but has been designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation for its ancient woodland and is enhanced additionally by its numerous springs and pools, meadows, scrub edges and hedgerows.
- Stoke Common – 80 hectares. This is a SSSI site and the largest area of open heathland in South Buckinghamshire which supports an abundant and diverse population of heathland plants, reptiles and amphibians. Although much of the site is a large open space it is bordered by secondary woodland utilised by a thriving bird population
- West Wickham Common – 10 hectares. This small site has also been designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation for its mosaic of ancient woodland, including oak pollards, acid grassland and surprising heathland in the centre. Although a relatively small site it's diversity in turn is reflected in diverse flora and fauna.

Location of 'The Commons'



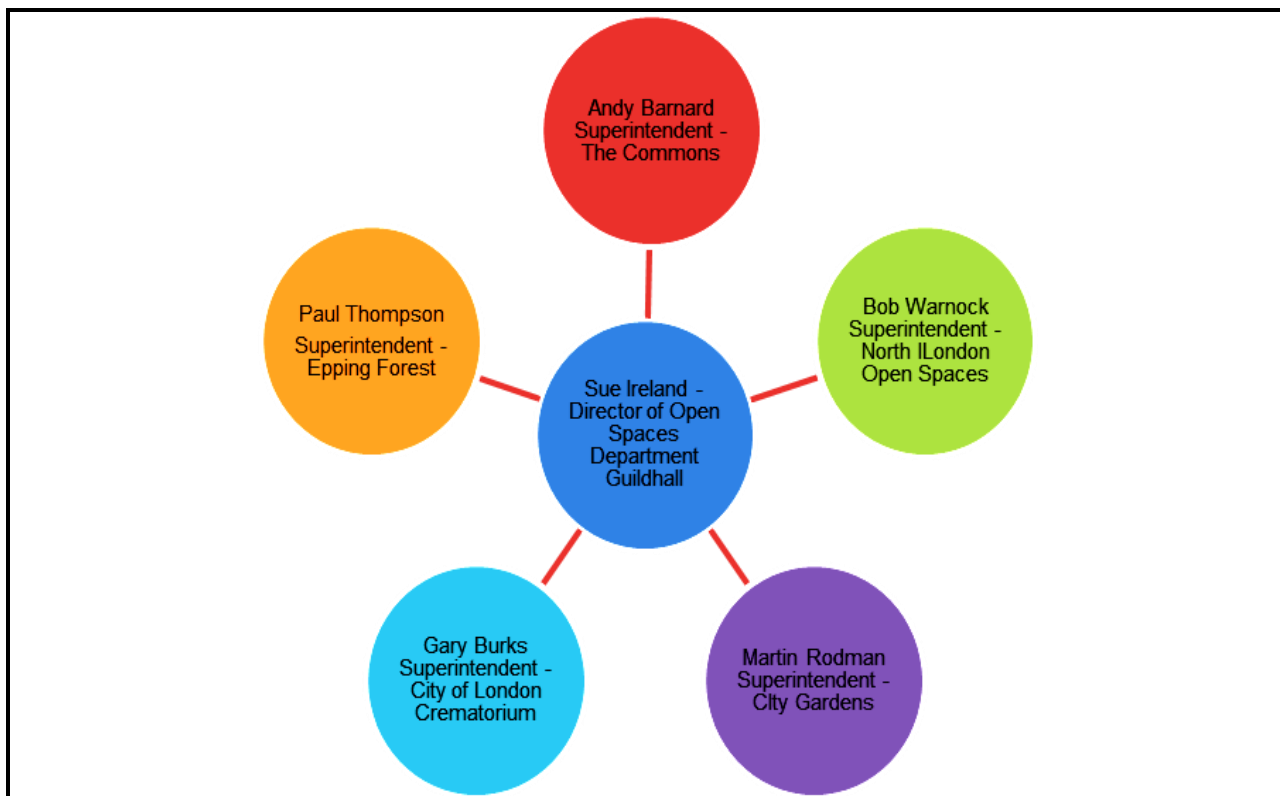
The Open Spaces Department

All management of City owned open spaces is carried out by the City Of London Corporation's Open Spaces Department which is centrally managed from the Irish Chamber at Guildhall and then further divided into five Divisions:

- The Commons
- Epping Forest
- North London Open Spaces – Hampstead Heath, Queen's Park and Highgate Wood
- Parks and Gardens – including City Gardens and West Ham Park
- City Of London Corporation Crematorium

The sites, managed by the Department, that lie outside of the City are legally protected as permanent open spaces and on which building development is not allowed under statute.

With the exception of the City of London Corporation Cemetery and Woodredon and Warlies Farm estate all of the open spaces outside of the square mile are funded from the City's own resources and at minimal cost to the public. The Director of Open Spaces is responsible for overseeing the overall management of the Department with the assistance of five Superintendents:



Section 5 - Roadmaps and Annual Plans

Department and Division strategy is not only demonstrated in the Open Spaces Business Plan and local management plans but is additionally illustrated and ultimately delivered by a number of 'Roadmaps'.

These demonstrate the programme and project process and include objectives and time scales to achieve them. Roadmaps and plans are reviewed periodically.

The primary Roadmap for both Department and Division for the next two years is known as Service Based Review or 'SBR'.



Master OS Roadmap,
07.08.15.xlsx

\\dosdata\data_dos\OS Portfolio\00 Programme Delivery Folder\01 Roadmaps

Although savings were initially a major stimulus in driving this programme, the new approach for the Department is far more wide reaching and is now, additionally, much more focused on opportunity, outcomes, our customers and Departmental long term sustainability.

Following on from this primary objective are a number of other initiatives which include local Management Plans for The Commons that are drafted in consultation with and the cooperation of local communities. These plans are usually for a 5-10 year period but are reviewed annually or as demand requires.

The Management Plans are specifically drafted and tailored for each site and consideration is given to the needs of each to encourage public access and enhance biodiversity with the available resources.

This is achieved with the assistance of an additional plan or 'Annual Work Programme' to deliver the objectives identified. Large or 'one off' projects within the Annual Work Programmes may sometimes be reflected in the Local and Departmental road maps.

This programme, once approved by the Superintendent, is managed locally by the Head Ranger and their operational staff which includes a team of Rangers and is also reinforced with the business assistance of the Support Services Team.

The Commons – Objectives

Objective – SA1	Objective – SA2	Objective – SA3	Objective – SA4
<p>Protection and conservation of biodiversity and heritage of the Commons through the projects and programmes contained in local management plans.</p>	<p>Provision of accessible sites that bring benefit to and are valued by, local and wider communities who play an active part in their management.</p>	<p>Develop stakeholder relationships to promote the Commons in the context of their wider landscapes whilst seeking to balance conflicting demands.</p>	<p>Embed innovative financial sustainability across our activities.</p>
<p>How we will do this:</p>	<p>How we will do this:</p>	<p>How we will do this:</p>	<p>How we will do this:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sites with current management plan • All nominated sites with Green Flag awards • All nominated sites with Green Heritage awards • All SSSI conditions – improving or favourable • No heritage assets on the ‘at risk’ register • No loss of open space to unauthorised encroachment • Monitor annually all sites for invasive species • Meet conservation targets for each habitat as defined in ‘Nature of the City’ • Creating and maintaining ponds and scrapes • Maintaining and restoring watercourses • Surveying and monitoring wildlife, soils and water • Maintaining and restoring woodland • Maintaining and restoring wood pasture • Maintaining and restoring species rich grassland • Cutting and laying hedgerows • Managing vegetation in freshwater and wetland habitats • Maintaining and restoring heathland • SAMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformed patrol of sites 365 days per year ensuring site and public security and enforcing byelaws • Volunteer satisfaction rating of 97% • Manage sites to ensure they are accessible to all • Monitor planning applications that may adversely influence site enjoyment • Reporting incidents, accidents and dangerous occurrences • Managing boundaries and entrances • Keeping the site clean and well maintained • Installing and maintaining gates and posts • Controlling development • Working with emergency services • Issuing licence agreements • Maintaining ditches and banks • Keep Rights of Way open • Constructing and maintaining surface tracks as access for all • Installing and maintaining countryside furniture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Consultation Group meetings for each charity per year • Two ‘Meet the Ranger’ days at each site per year • Delivery of monthly E-news across the Division • Completion of 100, 60 second surveys for each charity per year • Working with local countryside management projects • Liaising with statutory agencies, authorities and utility companies • Sharing information about the site • Facilitating educational activities and school visits • Attending and hosting seminars, conferences and forums • Providing and maintaining facilities • Maintaining amenity grassland • Promoting strategies and initiatives for the protection and conservation of green space through regional partnerships e.g. All London Green Grid and Green Infrastructure Task Force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Roadmap projects and programmes according to the agreed timetable • Reduce fuel consumption by 5% per year • Reduce utility energy consumption by 2.5% per year • Generate 100-150Kw electricity or similar • Meet all Rural Payments Agency requirements • Open Spaces financial KPI’s met • Investing in people’s performance at work • Controlling local risk budgets income • Managing livestock husbandry records • Inspecting and maintaining vehicles, machinery and equipment • Implementing the Local Sustainability Plan • Preparing and reviewing project requirements and contract specifications • Preparing and reviewing management and business plans • Promotion of our services • Flexible and multifunctional people

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Committee(s):	Date(s):
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee West Wickham and Spring Park Consultative Committee	18 November 2015 13 January 2016 27 January 2016
Subject: Proposed alterations to Consultative Committee meetings and site visits	Public
Report of: Superintendent of 'The Commons'	For Discussion
Summary	
<p>The merger of the City Commons with Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common to form a single Division has united the management of four Consultative Committees under one Superintendent. Each Consultative Committee is currently aligned to one of the four charities within the new division.</p> <p>This report examines the impact of the merger upon the frequency and nature of consultative meetings/site visits and seeks to reduce demand on the Members and Officers involved whilst ensuring that effective governance and community engagement is maintained.</p> <p>Following discussions with each Consultative Committee it is proposed to take final proposals to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for decision in March 2016.</p> <p>Recommendations. Members are asked to consider and provide feedback as far as their involvement in each of the following committees is concerned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. West Wickham and Spring Park Consultative Committee (WW&SP) and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee. Approval 'in principle' of a re-merger of the West Wickham and Spring Park Consultative Committee (WW&SP) and the Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee (CCCC) with the proviso that a further meeting or site visit may be arranged each year should circumstances require. ii. Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group (BBCG). Approval 'in principle' of a reduction of the frequency of meetings of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group from three to two per annum with the proviso that a further meeting or site visit may be arranged each year should circumstances require. iii. Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group. Note the Town Clerk's role to administer the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group (BBCG) thereby bringing it in line with other Consultative Committees within the Division. 	

Main Report

Background

1. The Consultative Committees for Ashtead Common, West Wickham, Spring Park, Coulsdon Commons, and Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (known as the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group) were separately formed between 1991 and 2006.
2. In 2013 the Superintendent of the City Commons split the 'West Wickham, Spring Park & Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee' to form two separate Consultative Committees, i.e. The 'West Wickham and Spring Park Consultative Committee' and the 'Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee'.
3. This ensured that each charity in the City Commons Division had its own Consultative Committee and that each of his Head Rangers had their own Consultative Committee to manage.
4. The City Commons and Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Divisions were formally merged to form 'The Commons' on the appointment of the current Superintendent in December 2014.
5. This merger concluded with a staffing restructure which reduced the number of Head Rangers from four to three thereby removing much of the management logic that differentiated between the 'West Wickham and Spring Park' and 'Coulsdon Commons' Consultative Committees.
6. The Town Clerk currently administers three of the consultative committees the exception being at Burnham Beeches.

Current Position

7. Experience and feedback from Members and Officers over the last two years indicates that the current meeting and site visit frequency of the four Consultative Committees may not be necessary to assure the good governance of the charities nor is it considered to be particularly resource efficient. Agendas can be highly repetitive as there is a need to present the same issues and messages to each of the four Committees.
8. Further, the frequency of site visits caused by the four committees can lead to the subject matter of some visits being more of 'general interest' than of immediate priorities to the management of the Commons.
9. Each consultative site meeting and visit requires significant input from Members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and Consultative Committees as well as Officers from the Open Spaces and Town Clerk's Department. Hospitality, transport and room hire costs also apply in some instances.
10. The current meeting and site visit frequency is set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1.

Charity	Consultative Committee meetings	Consultative Committee site visits
Ashtead Common	1	1
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	2	1
Coulsdon Commons	1	1
West Wickham and Spring Park	1	1
Total	5	4
Total per annum	9	

11. From the figures presented in Table 1 above, it is estimated that there is an administrative commitment to the City across the year of 56 days i.e. EFCC Members (20 days) and Officers (34 days) plus hospitality, room hire and transport costs. (NB. Excludes local committee member time/costs).

Options

- Option 1. Do nothing. Maintain the current situation and associated commitment of Member, Officer and local risk resource.
- Option 2. Seek alterations to the frequency of site meetings and visits across the Division whilst ensuring appropriate levels of governance and community engagement and maintaining an appropriate balance between cost and benefit. See Table 2.

Should circumstances dictate, additional meetings and site visits may be arranged at the instigation of Members or as may be suggested by the Superintendent.

Table 2.

Charity	Consultative Committee meetings	Consultative Committee site visits
Ashtead Common	1	1
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	1	1
CC, WW & SP	1	1
Total	3	3
Total per annum	6	

12. From the figures presented in Table 2 above, it is estimated that the proposed position requires a commitment across the year of 36 days i.e. EFCC Members (12 days) and Officers (24 days) plus catering, rental and transport costs. This suggests that an overall saving to the City of London Corporation of twenty working days plus other costs is possible over the current position.
13. The Open Spaces Department must deliver savings of £2.18 million by 2018. These proposals reduce costs and release Officer and Member time, thereby contributing to the implicit aim of providing a more efficient service.

Proposals

14. The following approach seeks to achieve a more balanced set of governance and consultative visits and meetings across the Division:
 - i. **Consultative Committees.**

Should members approve 'in principle', I propose to reduce the number of annual consultative site meetings and visits by:

 - a. Re-merging the West Wickham & Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committees. This would reduce the number of site meetings and visits by one per annum respectively.
 - b. Reducing the number of annual meetings of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group from three to two. This will bring this Consultative Committee in line with the others in the Division.
 - c. Seeking support from the Town Clerk to administer the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group. This will bring it in line with the others in the Division.
15. Agenda's will be re-evaluated to reduce repetitiveness and to provide a greater focus on local issues and priorities.
16. So as to ensure that these proposals do not reduce the effective governance of the Division it is also proposed that additional 'issue based' meetings and visits may be organised should Members, Officers or circumstances require.
17. It is estimated that the proposals will provide financial savings of approximately £3,000 per annum and efficiency savings in terms of freeing up Officer and Member time.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. The proposals support the Strategic aims of the City and Open Spaces Department by:

Inclusion. Involving communities and partners in developing a sense of place through the care and management of our sites.

Implications

19. These proposals will produce significant savings in terms of Member and Officer time and modest cash savings at a time when resources are under substantial stress.
20. The four consultative committees are not decision making. The terms of reference of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee state that it may appoint 'such consultative committees as are considered necessary for the better performance of its duties'.
21. Given the above it will be necessary to provide the Epping Forest and Commons Committee (EFCC) with a report 'for decision' that summarises the feedback provided by each of the four Consultative Committees. That report would be presented during the March 2016 Committee cycle.
22. The Superintendent appreciates that members of each Committee must remain confident that the effectiveness of their governance and community engagement is retained.

Conclusion

23. The creation of 'The Commons' Division and associated staffing structure provides an opportunity to review, re-balance and re-focus the work of the four Consultative Committees without losing integrity of governance.
24. This report also seeks to reflect the current resource challenges faced by the Open Spaces Department.
25. Finally it seeks to ensure that the administration of the various Consultative Committees is delivered in a consistent fashion through the Town Clerk's Office.
26. Members are asked to consider the two options provided by this report and provide feedback.

Appendices

None

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