

Committee(s): Epping Forest Consultative Epping Forest and Commons	Date(s): 10 10 18 19 11 18
Subject: Epping Forest Consultative Committee Terms of Reference and Schedule (SEF 43/18b)	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
Report author: Jo Hurst – Business Manager Epping Forest	

Summary

The Terms of Reference for the newly established Epping Forest Consultative Committee intentionally retained a number of subject area for agreement by the Consultative Committee including determining how many members are required to hold valid proceedings; and the agreement of a code of conduct for Members.

Now that the Consultative Committee has had time to consider these outstanding elements a more complete proposed set of terms is proposed for agreement and adoption by the Consultative Committee.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Epping Forest Consultative Committee

Main Report

Background

1. The Epping Forest Consultative Committee was established in early 2018, and has had meetings in January and June and October.
2. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee approved the initial Terms of Reference to enable the Consultative Committee to be inaugurated. Broader issues regarding matters of quorum – the minimum number of members required to hold valid proceedings - and a Member Code of Conduct together with other matters raised by Members were to be determined by the fourth meeting of the Consultative Committee.

Current Position

3. Complete Terms of Reference for the Epping Forest Consultative Committee are included at Appendix 1. The terms of reference have been amended to recommend:
 - 3.1 Quorum - based on practices elsewhere, it is suggested the quorate is a minimum attendance of four representatives of locally interested organisations.
 - 3.2 Circulation of Papers; Full papers are circulated a full 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The City Corporation does not support the circulation of additional late papers but will make emergency briefings where appropriate through the Superintendent's Update.
 - 3.3 A proposal to adopt the Code of Conduct used by members of the City Corporation has been proposed as a model for adoption by the Consultative Committee.
 - 3.4 A proposal to offer Consultative Committee Members the opportunity to comment on reports considered by the three Grand Committees not shadowed by the Consultative Committee.
4. The Epping Forest Consultative Committee considered the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) at their meeting on 10th October 2018. Comments included clarification on how to request items for the agenda, the standard wording of minutes and a preference for papers to be sent two weeks prior to the meeting. These areas will be addressed by Epping forest Staff and Town Clerks and do not require a change to the Terms of Reference as appended.

Options

5. The following options should be considered:

Option 1: Agree the Terms of Reference (appendix 1) as written and make no changes to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee or Consultative Committee schedules. ***This option is recommended.***

Option 2: Reduce the frequency of Epping Forest and Commons Committee meetings to four per year, with the Epping Forest Consultative Committee also meeting four times per year. ***This option is not recommended.***

Option 3: Extend the frequency of Consultative Committees to six per year to match the current frequency of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee. ***This option is not recommended.***

Option 4: Maintain the frequency of the Consultative Committee at three times per year, but also provide an opportunity for Consultative Committee members to comment by email on papers that would be placed before the Epping Forest and Commons Committee. ***This option is recommended.***

Proposals

6. As outlined in these Terms of Reference, the Consultative Committee meets at least three times per year.
7. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee currently meets six times a year, in January, March, May, July, September and November. The City Corporation is mindful of the Committee made by the volunteers of both the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and the Consultative Committee, in addition to Officer resources and is therefore reluctant to further increase the frequency of meetings and the administration costs of supporting further meetings. It is therefore proposed that the Consultative Committee should meet in the month preceding three of these. Papers of Grand Committee meetings not preceded by Consultative Committee can be circulated to Consultative Committee members electronically with comments received and circulated by Town Clerks.
8. The schedule outlined above also considers local meetings, Saturday visits and other time commitments of your Committee.
9. In July 2016 the Hampstead Heath Committee agreed a reduction of Grand Committee meetings from six to four to incorporate more easily the schedule of Consultative Committee meetings. After their review period it was agreed to maintain at four meetings per year. This realignment of schedules (four Grand Committees alternating with four Consultative Committees) could be considered in the future, perhaps concurrently with the reappointment of the Consultative Committee due in 2021.
10. Realignment of committee schedules would need significant lead time as Town Clerks would need to accommodate changes into Member's diaries which are agreed some time in advance.
11. Consultative Committees for each of the Commons meet less frequently, so any proposed realignment would not impact them negatively.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. These charges support the Corporate Plan Policy aims and priorities
 - 12.1 Contribute to a flourishing society
 - 12.2 Support a thriving economy
 - 12.3 Shape outstanding environments

13. The updated Terms of Reference make no significant change. The value of the Consultative Committee in informing decision making and communicating policy is already being realised.
14. The City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23 makes a commitment to 'working with our stakeholders and our partners who share our aims'.

Financial Implications

15. Other than the costs of hosting and administering the Consultative Committee, these updated Terms of Reference have no further financial implications.

Conclusion

16. Updated Terms of Reference include code of conduct and other details that were incomplete at the set-up of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Epping Forest Consultative Committee Terms of Reference November 2018
- Appendix 2 – City of London Members Code of Conduct

Joanne Hurst

Business Manager, Epping Forest

T: 020 8532 5317

E: jo.hurst@cityoflondon.gov.uk