

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Date(s): 30 October 2023
Subject: Hamstead Heath Constabulary Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Interim Executive Director, Environment	For Discussion
Report author: Assistant Director	

Summary

This report provides Committee Members with an update on the Hampstead Heath Constabulary and its restructure as part of the new TOM process. Included with the report as appendices are a dashboard for Constabulary operations and activities during September, and a report summarising Parkguard's work over the summer period.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

Main Report

TOM structure update

1. As part of the North London Open Spaces TOM restructure process, the Hampstead Heath Constabulary was reconfigured to have a two-tiered layout, with four Ranger Constables and supporting Operative Rangers, all working under a Senior Ranger (Enforcement). After discussions with the current Constabulary Team, the previous Assistant Director, the new Director of Natural Environment, and the new Assistant Director, we are proposing to revise the structure to a single team of six Ranger Constables managed by a Senior Ranger (Enforcement). We believe that this will deliver a more effective enforcement service for the same budget, as the six Ranger Constables will be able to provide a more effective enforcement function working in rostered teams and the staffing structure change will be cost neutral to the Corporation.

Parkguard's supporting role

2. Parkguard are a National Police Chief's Council-approved company operating in and around London, operating at a number of other City of London sites, including West Ham Park. Parkguard has been successfully deployed since early July 2023, providing essential support for the Constabulary Team over the last three months. They provide two levels of staff: a police-accredited officer and a community engagement officer. Parkguard provided critical support for staff and the Constabulary in the heat wave during the school holidays. We plan to retain Parkguard until the end of November to support the Constabulary Team. At the same time, we will start the process of recruiting new Constables as noted above to join the team so that we enter the new year with a full complement of staff. Once we have the full complement of Ranger Constables in post, we can phase out the Parkguard support.
3. We anticipate using Parkguard again next year to support the Constabulary Team at busy periods during the summer. We now know more accurately how best to deploy Parkguard staff having used their services this summer.

Next steps

4. We now plan to launch an external recruitment programme in November/December to fill the currently vacant Ranger Constable posts and start the process of rebuilding the team. We will initially recruit 4 Grade C Constables as approved in the TOM2 and will recruit to the other vacant roles when Committee approval has been received. We are fortunate to have a team of very experienced staff who will be able to support the new team members and reestablish a cohesive and effective team.
5. The team's sergeant, who is currently off sick, is making a good recovery and the management team have been supporting the family with the help of the City of London's Occupational Health Team and HR. We are very fortunate to have had a very capable and committed constable who has acted up in the absence of the sergeant, and he will continue in that position until further notice.
6. Going forward into next year, we anticipate continuing to use Parkguard's service in the busy summer holiday periods and particularly on weekends and during hot weather episodes to provide additional support to the core team as required.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

7. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environment.
8. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028 Strategic Outcomes A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape, B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors, C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors and D: Greater number of and diversity of People taking care of the Heath.

Financial Implications

9. No impact foreseen.

Resource Implications

10. No impact foreseen

Climate Implications

11. Included within the annual plan for 2023/24 (appendix 1) are a series of projects which contribute towards achieving the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2020. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Strategy will be embedded into future strategies which are currently being drafted within the Natural Environment Division.

Legal Implications

12. In order for us to ensure that we are fully aligned with data protection regulations and to maintain compliance, we will work with colleagues in the Comptroller and City Solicitors Department to review the current arrangements with Parkguard and make sure we are meeting the required data protection standards. This will help us maintain the trust and confidence of the public and continue to provide a high-level service with the support of Parkguard particular in the busy summer months, while prioritising the privacy and security of all personal data that we handle.

Risk Implications

13. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register.

Equality Implications

14. No impact.

Security Implications

15. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk register.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Constabulary Dash Board September 2023
- Appendix 2 – Parkguard Activity Report Summer 2023

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