

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public</b>
Burnham Beeches Consultation Group Minutes of 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>For Information</b>
Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke & City Commons	
<b>Summary</b>	
<p>This report provides your committee with the minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014 meeting of the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group (BBCG)</p> <p>The main topic's covered at the meeting were</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of Dog Control Orders (DCO's) at Burnham Beeches</li> <li>• Service Based Review</li> <li>• Work Programme Review 2014</li> </ul>	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	
Receive this report	

### **Minutes if Burnham Beeches Consultation Group – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **1. Welcome:- Chairman Barbara Newman**

**In Attendance:-** Alan Samon, Mark Frater, Naomi Turner, Andy Booth, Peter Cathcart, Joy Winyard, John Melish, Alan French, Adrian Sutton, Brian Bilgorri, Caroline Spicer, Mary Kohlhase, Andy Barnard, Martin Hartup, Deb Harris, Debbie Bennett & Margaret Rook

**Apologies:- Chairman Haines, Deputy Abrahams,** Helen Read, Simon Gray, Tim Crauford, Sheila Riley, Peter Adam & Don Lindskog

#### **2. Minutes of the last meeting – matters arising**

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **3. The Superintendent's expanded role**

The Superintendent highlighted how the new division fits into the Open Spaces departmental structure and detailed initial changes in personnel that have been made over the last year. Recruitment of a Support Services Manager is underway to assist the management team coordinate the

business and administrative elements of the division and two new posts have been created for City Commons covering livestock and information/marketing. These new posts come about as a result of a restructure and natural wastage therefore do not represent growth.

The priorities for the coming year involve merging the two original divisions, work to develop the management team, standardisation of elements such as health & safety practice and adoption of the corporate identity project. Alongside these projects we are also embarking on a three year programme of savings and income generation informed by the Service Based Review (SBR).

In response to a question from the floor the Superintendent stated he anticipated spending two days a week at Burnham Beeches and two days at City Commons therefore allowing one day to be utilised for meetings in London.

#### **4. Service Based Review**

During the next three (2015-18) years the department is required to make savings of 2.189m using officer's proposals across three main topics, Operational Efficiencies, Income Generation and review of Core Provision. Communication about our progress during this period will be made through updates at Consultation Group meetings.

The Director spoke of the financial pressure on parks and green spaces both in London and across the country with some services facing 50% cuts. She announced her involvement in a task force attempting to improve funding for Green Spaces which will contribute to the Mayor of London's fifty year plan.

In response to question's the Director was able to confirm the Department is looking at outsourcing and the generation of income through the letting of vacant properties. The later is subject to an act of parliament to be tabled after the next election.

Locally the Superintendent will be identifying activities outside of the core provision, income generation and efficiencies around our local rota system. Redundancies and redeployment are to be minimised as far as possible across the department and it's currently thought that this particular division is well positioned due to the recent restructure where savings have already been achieved and offered up.

#### **5. Dog Control Order's**

An update on progress since Epping Forest Committee approval of the Order's was provided by the Superintendent. The work in preparing the infrastructure required to enforce the order's was highlighted and copies of the 'Dog Management Strategy' and 'Enforcement Protocol' were circulated.

Implementation from December is on track and will be initially be in the form of advice unless a very serious offence is committed with full enforcement of the Order's from January.

The Superintendent detailed some additional issues arising from the DCO consultation that included minor site improvements and consideration of an elected representative from the dog walking community to this Consultative Group. The Superintendent also informed members that the Epping Forest and Commons Committee had asked him to provide an update on DCO's in July 2016 with a full review in January 2017.

The Superintendent thanked the Group and staff for their support during the development and implementation of the orders.

#### **6. Representation of specialist groups within the Committee**

The group discussed progress and felt that an additional dog walking representative for the committee would be of benefit. It was felt the individual should also have an interest in the site as a whole. **ACTION Superintendent** to approach to suitable candidate(s) with a canine interest and consider other stakeholder representation such as horse riders thereafter.

#### **7. Expansion of the conservation grazing scheme**

Introduction of a third invisible fence loop during 2014 increased grazing coverage to 37% of the site. It is anticipated subject to technological improvements that we can achieve up to 95% coverage of the site with extended loops which are being trialled at Epping Forest. Further progress updates will be available in the April meeting.

#### **8. Projects and achievements May – October 2014**

Works to install the new invisible fence cable, resurfacing and cutting of paths across the site have been completed along with major restoration work at Stoke Common. Huge progress has been made onsite utilising our high volunteer numbers who now contribute to a wide range of projects from practical task experience to survey and administrative work.

Rangers have spoken to over 500 people about dog control orders and held a variety of events and activities for visitors. Additionally it was reported that Burnham Beeches has retained its Green Flag and Green Heritage award status.

#### **9. AOB**

A question from the floor regarding the renovation timeframe for required works on the ponds was discussed. The Superintendent explained that the work required is extensive due to additional remedial action required on the embankments. It is anticipated the project could cost as much as £200,000 and is therefore in a medium term plan i.e. not expected in the immediate future.

**Date of next meeting during April to be advised.**