

Committee:	Date:
Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee	18 December 2017
Subject: Open Spaces Department Business Plan 2017-2018 Q2 Monitoring Review	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
Report Author: Bob Warnock Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	

Summary

The Open Spaces Business Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 was approved by this Committee in May 2017. The plan included objectives which were to be supported by a series of key actions divided into milestones and cross cutting projects.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:-

- Members note the Quarter 2 progress against our Key Objectives, KPI's and Corporate Service Response Standards.
- Members agree to maintain the current schedule of charges pending the outcome of a price review in Spring 2018.

Main Report

Background

1. The Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee approved the Open Spaces Departmental Business Plan for 2017/18 on 30 May 2017. The Department's mission is to protect our treasured green spaces for people & wildlife and ensure our outstanding heritage assets are protected, accessible, & welcoming.
2. Our Departmental ambitions are that:
 - Our habitats are ecologically thriving, and diverse
 - Our places for play, learning, tranquillity, cultural experiences, enjoyment, wellbeing and exercise are high quality, inclusive and accessible to all
 - Our heritage is preserved and we share history and stories through our spaces and buildings
 - We provide thought leadership which is grounded in our innovative practices, knowledge and expertise.

3. The plan outlined how the Department would deliver our ambitions and mission through our service objectives and projects, and by fostering a collaborative culture within the Department to support the utilisation of expertise and knowledge. Our objectives are:
 - Protect and conserve the ecology, biodiversity and heritage of our sites.
 - Embed financial sustainability across our activities by delivering identified programmes and projects and continuously developing income generating endeavours.
 - Enrich experiences by providing high quality and engaging, visitor, educational and volunteering opportunities.
 - Improve the health and wellbeing of the community through access to green space and recreation.
 - Improve service efficiency and workforce satisfaction.
4. These objectives were to be delivered and monitored through a series of key actions and performance indicators.

Current Position

5. This report includes a summary of progress against each key action in appendix 1 and the key performance indicators in appendix 2.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)-funded access improvements

6. An Architect has been appointed as the designers for this project, primarily funded by the Camden CIL fund. Initial proposals have been developed and shared with the Keats House Consultative Committee.

Grants

7. Keats House has been awarded a grant of £2,800 by the Keats Foundation to deliver a programme of free public workshops and open mic performances led by the Keats House Poets. The programme will commence in January 2018.

Staff changes

8. The Principal Curator left Keats House in November 2017. Interviews have been completed and an offer has been made to subject to medical and references.
9. A Customer Service Apprentice has been appointed. This is a new fixed-term role centrally funded by the City of London for 14 months. The Apprentice will be assisting with visitor services, operations, administration and marketing.
10. A new Information Officer has been appointed. They will be primarily acting as duty manager at weekends and assisting with events.
11. Seven new casual staff have been recruited to assist with private hire and covering when, for example, staff are on leave.

Fees & Charges

12. A review of admission prices and private hire charges will be carried out during spring 2018, following the appointment of the new Principal Curator. It is proposed that the current schedule of charges (see appendix 3) are maintained pending the outcome of this review.

Accreditation

13. Keats House has been awarded Full Accreditation by Arts Council England after submitting its accreditation return in autumn last year. The following comment was received from the assessor: “My written assessment and verbal feedback to the Panel relayed how strong the museum’s Accreditation return was and how responsive and helpful everyone has been at the museum. The major redisplay and strong visual merchandising were noted as positive developments during the assessment and at the Panel meeting.”

Financial Position

14. Keats House’s Local Risk position at the end of September 2017 (6 month position) was net expenditure of £116K against a profiled budget of £117K. The outturn forecast is expected to be on budget at £199K.

Conclusion

15. The past six months have been positive, seeing increases in visitor numbers and engagement with the events programme. Schools figures are lower than last year but bookings for the autumn are strong.
16. Progress has been made with all major projects, including the appointment of a Poet in Residence, planning for Keats200, the exhibitions programme, the Camden CIL funded access project and the Premises Licence application.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Business Plan 2nd Quarter update
- Appendix 2 – Key Performance Indicators update
- Appendix 3 – Current schedule of charges
- Appendix 4 – Visitor statistics

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