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| <b>Committee:</b>   | <b>Date:</b>          |
| Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee  | 16 April 2018         |
| <b>Subject:</b><br>Hampstead Heath Site Specific Events Policy<br>Part 1 & Part 2 | <b>Public</b>         |
| <b>Report of:</b><br>Superintendent of Hampstead Heath                            | <b>For Discussion</b> |
| <b>Report Author:</b><br>Paul Maskell – Open Spaces Department                    |                       |

### Summary

The City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 received Royal Assent on 15 March 2018, and requires the development of an Events Policy for each of the City Corporation's Open Spaces.

Hampstead Heath, in common with many of the City Corporation's Open Spaces, has a long tradition of events, spanning back to the 18th Century when bank holiday fairs were a major attraction attracting large crowds to the Heath. Nowadays, the Heath hosts over 100 events a year, including community, charitable and commercial events that range from fun fairs, cross-country running and sporting competitions to cultural, health and wellbeing and entertainment events.

To reflect the increasing volume and complexity of event requests being considered by the City Corporation's Open Spaces, it is proposed that an overarching Departmental Policy be adopted, with a Site Specific Local Policy sitting below that. This will ensure that events are consistently managed across the Department; and that individual events are considered against the impact they may have on a specific Open Space. Some of the areas managed by the City Corporation Open Spaces have enhanced environmental protection, and consideration must be given to ensuring disruption in these areas is minimised. The Site Specific Policy for Hampstead Heath is appended to this report (see appendix 2) and sets out such areas where events will be considered in relation to the Heath (see appendices 2b & 2c). Additionally, the Site Specific Policy sets out the charging rational associated with the holding of events.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members give feedback in relation to the draft Hampstead Heath Site Specific Policy (Appendix 2).

- Members give feedback in relation to the proposed event zones, as set out in the schedule of locations (Appendices 2b & 2c)
- Members give feedback in relation to the proposed lower threshold for decision-making about events at Hampstead Heath as set out in paragraph 12.
- The views of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 23 May 2018.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. Hampstead Heath, in common with many of the City Corporation's Open Spaces, has a strong and rich history of hosting public events under existing statutory powers. Over the years events have included fairs, circuses, concerts, sporting events and charity initiatives.
2. Currently events are managed locally, and the application and licensing process is not consistent across the Open Spaces sites. The creation of an Open Spaces Departmental Policy (Appendix 1) will help to ensure a consistent approach to the approval and management of events. It will also highlight the existing legal restrictions at each site and meet the specific requirements of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018.
3. The proposed policy framework which has been developed draws upon these considerations and wider legislative requirements regarding public safety and local authority licensing procedures.
4. The City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 requires the development of an Events Policy for each of the City Corporation's Open Spaces.

### **Current Position**

5. In recognition of the differing characters of the Open Spaces managed by the City of London Corporation, an Open Spaces Department wide policy framework has been developed in collaboration with Officers from all sites. The Policy seeks to protect the environment and character of each distinct site from pressure of events, whilst recognising the value that amenity events can bring to the spaces. The overarching Policy (Part One), is attached as Appendix 1.
6. More detailed Site Specific Policies with associated charges are being developed by the individual Open Spaces sites. These should be read in conjunction with Part One of the Departmental Open Spaces Events Policy (Appendix 1). The draft Hampstead Heath Site Specific Policy and application form are attached as Appendices 2 & 2a respectively.
7. Both Policies are drawn from extensive experience of managing and hiring spaces for events by Officers across the Open Spaces Department.

Benchmarking with policies from several other London Boroughs has also informed the development of the Policies.

8. Hampstead Heath has been the venue for several types of event. Currently, a draft annual events programme is presented to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee for discussion, and to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee for approval in the spring.
9. There are an increasing number of requests to hold events on the Heath. A Departmental Policy will ensure that a fair, consistent and transparent system operates for decision making and to regulate the number, type and frequency of events that take place. Such regulation is also particularly important given the environmental sensitivity of the Heath and its statutory protections for nature and heritage conservation.

### **Proposals**

10. Events will be accommodated on Hampstead Heath according to the conditions outlined in the draft Open Spaces Department Events Policy Part Two, Hampstead Heath Site Specific Policy.
11. Large events with more than an anticipated audience of 2,000 or up to three days, Major events with more than an anticipated audience of 5,000 or up to four or more days and/or events that are assessed by the Officer Event Group as unprecedented or unusual will be referred to the Committee.
12. For large and major events, the Superintendent will present a proposal along with a recommendation to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee for consideration and representation to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee for approval.

### **Consultation and Committee process**

13. A Hampstead Heath Events Advisory Group, comprising of representatives of the HHCC and Officers have been consulted on and involved in the development of the draft Part Two: Hampstead Heath Site Specific Policy.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

14. Corporate Plan 2015-19: To provide valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure, to London and the nation.  
Draft Corporate Plan: Our spaces inspire excellence, enterprise, creativity and collaboration; People are safe and feel safe; People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
15. Open Spaces Business Plan 2017: Improve Health and Wellbeing through access to green space and recreation.

## **Financial**

16. The scale of hire charges for events will be discussed with Committee in the autumn and will form part of the Fees & Charges for Hampstead Heath. The charges will cover the administration and consideration of the event by Officers but also raise revenue for re-investment into the maintenance and upkeep of the Heath.

## **Environmental**

17. The number, type, frequency and location will be considered for every application for an event to ensure the ecology and environment of the location is not harmed. Seasonality and special designations may prevent events in some locations. The Heath Ecologists and Arboculturalists will be consulted as part of the application process.

## **Reputation**

18. The careful assessment of event requests through a clear and consistent policy approach should ensure fairness consistency and equality of access. A clear requirement for event managers to apply the appropriate legislative and licensing regimes, which will increase the likelihood of events being run safely and professionally.

## **Property**

19. If events are to be permitted on the Heath, they should be governed by suitable licence terms to ensure that the City of London is suitably indemnified and that consent to use represents best value according to the charitable operating requirements.

## **Conclusion**

20. The City Corporation frequently receives applications to hold events on the Heath. This policy framework creates a fair and transparent system for assessing these applications and regulating the number, type, location and frequency of events that are permitted.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Open Spaces Events Policy Part One: Departmental Policy
- Appendix 2 – Draft Open Spaces Events Policy Part Two: Hampstead Heath Site Specific Policy
- Appendix 2a – Event Application Form
- Appendix 2b – Proposed Schedule of Locations
- Appendix 2c – Proposed Site map

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