



Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Date: MONDAY, 9 MAY 2022
Time: 11.00 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL / MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members:

Deputy Graeme Doshi-Smith	Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Benjamin Murphy	Verderer H.H. William Kennedy
Deputy Philip Woodhouse	Verderer Paul Morris
Caroline Haines	Verderer Nicholas Munday
Gregory Lawrence	George Abrahams
Deputy Edward Lord	Alderman Prem Goyal
Alderman & Sheriff Nicholas Lyons	Jaspreet Hodgson
Andrew McMurtrie (Ex-Officio Member)	

Enquiries: Richard Holt
Richard.Holt@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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≤ <https://youtu.be/p1tiF5LKpm0> ≥

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John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

NB: Certain items presented for information have been marked * and will be taken without discussion, unless the Committee Clerk has been informed that a Member has questions or comments prior to the start of the meeting. These for information items have been collated into a supplementary agenda pack and circulated separately.

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**

To receive the Order of the Court of Common Council dates 21st April 2022, appointing the Committee and setting its Terms of Reference.

For Information
(Pages 7 - 8)

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

To elect a Chair in accordance with Standing Order 29.

For Decision

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

To Elect a Deputy Chair in accordance with Standing Order 30.

For Decision

6. **MINUTES**

a) To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 17th of January 2022. (Pages 9 - 18)

b) * To note the minutes of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee meeting on 9 February 2022

7. **2022/23 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision

Epping Forest

8. **APPLICATION TO NATURAL ENGLAND FOR RECOGNITION AS A NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE**
Report of the Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 35 - 40)
9. **EPPING FOREST WORK PROGRAMME 2022/2023**
Report of the Executive Director of Environment Department.

For Decision
(Pages 41 - 56)
10. **PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS 1952-2022 QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY - PROPOSED TREE PLANTING**
Report of the Environment Director.

For Discussion
(Pages 57 - 64)
11. *** EPPING FOREST CAR PARK CHARGING - PHASE 3**
Report of the Environment Director.

For Information
12. *** EPPING FOREST - SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE FOR DECEMBER 2021 TO MARCH 2022 (SEF 13/22).**
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

For Information
13. ***NATURAL ENVIRONMENT EPPING FOREST FORWARD AGENDA PLAN 2022**
Report of the Environment Director.

For Information

Burnham Beeches & The Commons

14. **PROVISION OF CAR PARK CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS THE COMMONS DIVISION AT CAR PARKS AT BURNHAM BEECHES, RIDDLESDOWN AND FARTHING DOWNS.**

Report of the Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 65 - 76)

15. **DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLANS AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESULTS - FARTHING DOWNS, RIDDLESDOWN, KENLEY COMMON & COULSDON COMMON**

Report of the Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 77 - 82)

16. *** ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE FOR THE COMMONS INCLUDING ANNUAL REPORT OF PSPO INCIDENTS.**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Information

17. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

19. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

For Decision

20. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 17th of January 2022.

For Decision
(Pages 83 - 84)

21. **EPPING FOREST CATERING AND LEISURE FACILITIES LEASE RENEWALS - VARIOUS (SEF 15/22)**

Report of the Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 85 - 110)

22. **EPPING FOREST CATERING AND LEISURE FACILITIES LEASE RENEWALS - (SEF 16/22)**

Report of the Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 111 - 120)

23. **BALDWINS AND BIRCH HALL PARK PONDS**

Report of the Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 121 - 138)

24. **NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

25. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

Part 3 Confidential Agenda

26. **CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN**

Report of action taken.

For Information

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KEAVENY, Mayor	RESOLVED: That the Court of Common Council holden in the Guildhall of the City of London on Thursday 21 st April 2022, doth hereby appoint the following Committee until the first meeting of the Court in April, 2023.
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EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE

1. **Constitution**

A Non-Ward Committee consisting of,

- two Aldermen nominated by the Court of Aldermen
- 8 Members elected by the Court of Common Council at least one of whom shall have fewer than five years' service on the Court at the time of their appointment
- the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee (ex-officio)
- plus, for the consideration of business relating to Epping Forest only, four Verderers elected or appointed pursuant to the Epping Forest Act 1878.

2. **Quorum**

The quorum consists of any five Members.

For the purpose of non-Epping Forest related business the quorum must consist of five Committee Members who must be Members of the Court of Common Council.

3. **Membership 2022/23**

ALDERMEN

- 2 Nicholas Stephen Leland Lyons
- 1 Prem Goyal

COMMONERS

- 8 (4) Philip Woodhouse, Deputy
- 7 (3) Graeme Martyn Doshi-Smith, Deputy
- 6 (2) Gregory Alfred Lawrence
- 2 (2) Edward Lord, O.B.E., J.P., Deputy
- 6 (1) George Christopher Abrahams
- 6 (1) Caroline Wilma Haines
- 1 (1) Jaspreet Hodgson
- 5 (1) Benjamin Daniel Murphy

together with the ex-officio Members referred to in paragraph 1 above, and:-

Verderers pursuant to the provisions of the Epping Forest Act, 1878:-

- Michael Chapman, D.L.
- H.H. Kennedy William Kennedy
- Paul Morris
- Nicholas Munday

4. **Terms of Reference**

To be responsible, having regard to the overall policy laid down by the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee, for:-

- (a) exercising of the powers and duties of the Court of Common Council as Conservators of Epping Forest (registered charity no. 232990) and the various additional lands which have been acquired to protect the Forest in accordance, where appropriate, with the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880 (as amended) and all other relevant legislation.
- (b) the ownership and management of the following open spaces in accordance with the provisions of the Corporation of London Open Spaces Act 1878:-
 - Coulsdon and other Commons (registered charity no. 232989), the other Commons being Kenley Common, Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown
 - West Wickham Common and Spring Park (registered charity no. 232988)
 - Ashted Common (registered charity no. 1051510)
 - Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (registered charity no. 232987)

- (c) appointing such Consultative Committees as are considered necessary for the better performance of its duties including:-
 - Ashted Common Consultative Committee
 - Burnham Beeches Consultation Group
 - Epping Forest Consultative Committee
 - West Wickham, Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee

- (d) expressing views or making recommendations to the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee for that Committee's allocation of grants which relate to Epping Forest and Commons.

EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE **Monday, 17 January 2022**

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held Remotely
on Monday, 17 January 2022 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Philip Woodhouse
Peter Bennett
Caroline Haines
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
Deputy Edward Lord
Alderman & Sheriff Nicholas Lyons
Jeremy Simons
Oliver Sells QC (Ex-Officio Member)
Verderer Michael Chapman DL
Verderer H.H William Kennedy
Verderer Paul Morris
Verderer Nicholas Munday

Officers:

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Joseph Anstee	- Town Clerk's Department
Kristina Drake	- Town Clerk's Department
Natalie Williams	- Chief Operating Officer's Department
Graham Nickless	- Chamberlain's Department
Beth West	- Director of Open Spaces, Environment Department
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Andy Barnard	- Superintendent, The Commons
Jeremy Dagley	- Head of Conservation, Epping Forest
Jo hurst	- Business Manager, Epping Forest
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Head of Visitor Services, Epping Forest
Gerry Kiefer	- Business Manager, Environment Department
Martin Newnham	- Head Forest Keeper, Epping Forest
Hadyn Robson	- Business Manager, The Commons
Sarah Reid	- Environment Department

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received from Members in advance of the meeting.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations received.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the public minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee held on the 19th of November 2021.

A member of the Committee asked for an update on the discussion between the open spaces committee chairmen and the Chamberlain. The Deputy Chairman explained that, following this meeting, Officers had confirmed that a dashboard would be prepared for Committee which would provide clarity on the budgetary position, forecasting and key metrics for risk mitigations to make clear the financial risks for the relevant charities under the Committee's purview.

Responding to a query from a member of the Committee the Superintendent explained that an update on the Sesquicentennial Celebrations Epping Forest Working Group would be readied for the Committee shortly.

Replying to a Committee member's query the Superintendent explained that a meeting would be held with the graziers for Epping Forest would be held in May of 2022.

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee held on the 19th of November be approved as an accurate record.

4. **EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS COMMITTEE DATES 2022**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk on the dates for the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in 2022.

The Committee discussed the need to appropriately balance committee business in a long-term outlook to ensure meetings cover the required information. The Deputy Chairman explained that discussions had been held on the governance of the Epping Forest Charity and that a report on this would be prepared for the Committee's consideration on this matter.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

5. **OPEN SPACES BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2022/23**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Open Spaces Business Plan 2022/23.

A member of the Committee requested that future versions of this report highlight matters which are specific to the Epping Forest Charity. The Deputy Chairman agreed and explained that this will be addressed as part of a larger review of the charity governance.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

6. OPEN SPACES BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22 - SIX MONTH PERFORMANCE UPDATE: APRIL TO SEPT 2021

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Open Spaces Business Plan 2021/22 Six-month performance update April to September 2021.

The Committee discussed the need for a more dynamic and interactive reporting dashboard for charities under purview of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.

A Member of the Committee commented on a relative underspend in Epping Forest in comparison to other open spaces to the Business Plan. The Superintendent explained that there was planned to be a larger spend in the later part of the year and but noted that it had been cautious year in terms of spending. Responding to Member's query the Superintendent explained that the level of spending was partly due to the staff recruitment moratorium but added there were issues also contributing.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment which provided the Superintendent's update for Epping Forest in the period from October to November 2021.

Responding to a query from a Committee member the Director of Open Spaces explained that a meeting was being held with the appropriate Highway Officers of the relevant local authorities on the afternoon of the 17th and the Head Keeper of Epping Forest after which a full response will be provided to the Committee on the subject of temporary traffic restrictions in Epping Forest.

Following a suggestion from a Committee member the Chairman requested that Officers should add the date of completion on committee reports and ensure reports are as up to date as possible.

The Deputy Chairman informed the Committee that discussions were being held on the relevant response to the damage to the Epping Forest War Memorial.

The Superintendent answered a Committee member's question by confirming that a meeting with relevant stakeholders would be held on the recent horse collision incidence.

Responding to a Committee member's query the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that Cooped Hall buffer lands would not be used as a SANG.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

8. **LICENCES, SPORTS AND PRODUCE FEES AND CHARGES**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Licences, sports and produce fees and charges for Epping Forest.

A Committee member questioned the validity of charging for a horse-riding license. The Superintendent explained that other similar organisations charged for the horse-riding facilities and as the activity causes considerable damage to the Forest therefore the charge was viewed as appropriate. In response to a comment from the Chairman the Superintendent confirmed that a report on the relative damage to the Forest by the various users would be prepared for Committee consideration.

A Committee member commented that there needed to be a combined approach to income streams for the Epping Forest Charity. The Chairman added that this needed to be covered under the wider governance and data presentation framework. The Deputy Chairman added that the Target Operating Model also impacted this and needed to be incorporated correctly.

A Committee member noted that charges for filming seemed relatively low. The Chairman explained that the City of London Corporation had agreed to take a pan London approach for filming charges however there was concern from some Members with regard to this matter so Officers would be instructed to report back to committee.

RESOLVED- That the proposed charges for 2022/23 as itemised in Appendix A and C, and the continued subsidy for association football be approved.

9. **SIR ROGER GIFFORD MEMORIAL PROJECT**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Sir Roger Gifford Memorial Project.

The Chairman noted that he was keen to see this built into the wider Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

The Committee discussed the suitability of the Lord Mayor's Bottom for the celebratory memorial to the life and work of Sir Roger Gifford. It was agreed that the name was a fine testimony to Sir Roger's sense of humour.

Responding to a Committee member's query the Director of Open Spaces explained the arrangements for maintenance funding going forward.

RESOLVED- That the Committee agreed to support the hosting of the celebratory memorial event in honour of Sir Roger Gifford along with the naming of the lower meadow as Lord Mayor's Bottom.

10. **LARGE EVENT APPLICATION**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on a Large Event Application which had been made. The Chairman noted that a report in the non-public session would also deal with this matter.

RESOLVED- In principle that the application for a large event be approved, subject to:

- (a) Prior consultation being undertaken by the applicant. Consideration of the consultation responses to be delegated to the Superintendent of Epping Forest (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) and the license for the event to be issued only if, after such consideration, the Superintendent of Epping Forest (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) is satisfied that the consultation responses do not disclose any matter which in his opinion should lead to the license being withheld.
- (b) The provision of an environmental impact assessment by the applicant. Consideration of the environmental impact assessment to be delegated to the Superintendent (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) and the license to be issued only if, after such consideration, the Superintendent of Epping Forest (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) is satisfied that the event will not cause material injury to the amenity of Epping Forest or significant impairment to the public enjoyment of Epping Forest.
- (c) The terms and conditions of any license ensuring that the event will not cause material injury to the amenity of Epping Forest or significant impairment to the public enjoyment of Epping Forest. The terms and conditions to be delegated to the Superintendent (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee).
- (d) The granting of the Premises Licence by the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

11. **WANSTEAD PARK: SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE NATURAL GREEN SPACE PROJECT**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Wanstead Park Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space Project.

The Director of Open Spaces explained, in response to a query from Committee member, that the Project had been appropriately considered in connection to other associated plans for the area.

RESOLVED- That: -

- I. The acceptance of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGs) infrastructure funding of up to £100,000 from the London Borough of Redbridge, using developer-funded contributions, to progress visitor access improvements in Wanstead Park and its exchange lands be approved; and
- II. That the completion of any necessary suitable legal agreement with the London Borough of Redbridge for the transfer of monies and delivery of infrastructure to ensure SAC mitigation be authorised, the final terms to be delegated to the Superintendent

12. **WANSTEAD PARK NATURAL PLAY AREA**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of the Wanstead Park Natural Play Area.

Responding to a query from a Committee member the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that all the required health and safety concerns would be completed in this project. In addition, it was explained the natural play features planned for the site were projected to last in the region of ten years.

RESOLVED- That:-

- I. The provision of a joint Epping Forest Charity and community managed natural play area at Wanstead Park be approved; and
- II. That the joint AFA and EFCT funding applications and fundraising arrangements to fund the construction of a natural play area at Wanstead Park.

13. **EFSAC SAMM MITIGATION PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the EFSAC SAMM Mitigation Partnership Agreement. The Director of Open Spaces explained that a draft agreement was very nearly complete and made the distinction that the City of London Corporation was a party to the agreement rather than a partner.

Noting it was the last meeting of the Committee which Jeremy Dagley, Head of Conversation for Epping Forest, would be attending as he was leaving the City of London Corporation the Committee thanked Jeremy for this work and huge contribution to Epping Forest.

The Deputy Chairman confirmed the funds paid to the City of London Corporation needed to be ringfenced for the Epping Forest budget. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the Chamberlain would make the necessary arrangements to ensure this, adding that the allocation of these funds to Epping Forest was a legal requirement.

RESOLVED- That: -

- I. It was approved that the City Corporation (as The Conservators of Epping Forest) acting as the Delivery Body and, thereby, being a party to the EFSAC SAMMS Partnership Agreement (a working draft of which is appended to this report); and
- II. That authority be delegated for the negotiation and completion of the draft EFSAC SAMMS Partnership Agreement to the Executive Director in consultation with the City Solicitor and Chamberlain, and in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, subject to the final terms reflecting the arrangements as set out in this report.

14. **CAR PARKING REVIEW**

The Committee received a late report of the Executive Director Environment on the Epping Forest Car Park Charging Review.

A Committee member highlighted that it was vital to explain that the income from car parking charges were to be used to cover existing costs not to secure further income.

A Committee member commented that he would be bring a report to Officers on his concerns regarding the operational activities of the parking enforcement officers as he believed that best practice was not being followed. The Director of Open Spaces explained that any tickets issued by parking enforcement officers not appropriately dressed had been cancelled. The Chairman confirmed that it was not currently a systemic issue, but it was vital that the provider was performing in accordance with best practice. It was added that further reports would be coming to the Committee which would address concerns on the following of best practice by parking enforcement officers.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

15. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Superintendent's update which provided a general update on issues across the nine sites within the Commons.

Responding to a Member's enquiry the Superintendent confirmed the final costs of the remedial costs of cement.

The Superintendent, replying to a query from the Deputy Chairman, provided an update on the proposed extension of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in relation to the City of London Corporation managed open spaces.

It was explained that a schedule of visits to the relevant open spaces would be prepared for consideration at the May Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting which would include the Commons sites.

At 1pm Members agreed to extend the business of the agenda beyond two hours, in accordance with Standing Order 40, in order to conclude the business on the agenda.

RESOLVED- That the report be noted.

16. THE COMMONS - LICENCES, SPORTS, WAYLEAVES AND PRODUCE FEES AND CHARGES

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Commons Licences, sports, wayleaves and produce fees and charges.

Noting that this was the last meeting of the Committee that Hadyn Robson, Business Manager in the Commons Division, would be attending the Committee thanked Hadyn for his years of service and contribution to the management of the Commons.

RESOLVED- The proposed charges for 2022/23 as itemised in Appendix A approved.

17. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

Following a suggestion from a member of the Committee the Director of Open Spaces arranged a meeting with the Verderers.

The Deputy Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the upcoming Corporate Asset Sub-Committee visit to the Woodredon Estate.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business considered in the public session.

19. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

20. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 19th of November 2021.

RESOLVED- That the non-public minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 19th of November 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

21. **NON-PUBLIC LARGE EVENT APPLICATION**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Environment on the Non-Public Large Event Application.

RESOLVED- That the report be approved.

22. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions received in the non-public session.

23. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

No items of urgent business were considered in the non-public session.

The meeting ended at 1.21 pm

Chairman

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	9th May 2022
Subject: 2022/23 Committee Appointments	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	N/A
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: Town Clerk	For Decision
Report author: Richard Holt, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

The Committee is asked to consider its appointments for the next twelve months. Provision for appointing a Member to serve as an observer on the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee is also to be considered. It is expected that this appointment would encompass the strategic Open Spaces capacity of that Committee. It was agreed in the Governance Review that local consultative bodies be removed from formal centrally-administered structures. It is also proposed that the terms of reference for the consultative bodies be adjusted accordingly.

Recommendations

It is **recommended** that:-

1. Consideration be given to the appointment and composition of the following Consultative Committees and Groups:
 - **Ashtead Commons Consultative Group;**
 - **Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group;**
 - **West Wickham, Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Group;**
 - **Epping Forest Consultative Committee.**
2. Consideration be given to the appointment of a representative to the **Open**

Spaces & City Gardens Committee for the ensuing year as a local observer for this Committee.

3. That the relevant terms of reference for the consultative bodies be updated to reflect that they will be supported locally by the Environment Department and that the job titles listed be updated.

Main Report

Background

The Committee makes a number of appointments to Consultative Committees and Groups that fall within its remit. Although these are reviewed annually it is within the gift of the Committee to set up groups and working parties as required based on the management of projects being undertaken during the year. The Committee are also asked to review terms of reference for the Consultative Committees and Groups.

Options

That consideration be given to making the various appointments detailed in the report, from amongst the Committee membership. Consideration would then be given to filling any subsequent vacancies from the Court of Common Council.

- The Committee are asked to appoint **the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and two** representatives onto the Asstead Common Consultative Group.
- The Committee are asked to appoint **the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and two** representatives onto Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group.
- The Committee are asked to appoint **the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and two** representatives onto the West Wickham, Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Group.
- The Committee are asked to appoint the **Chairman, Deputy Chairman and two** representatives, along with all four Verderers onto the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.
- The Committee are asked to appoint **one** representative onto the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee.

It was agreed in the Governance Review that local consultative bodies be removed from formal centrally-administered structures and granted greater autonomy to be run locally.

In addition, it is proposed that the terms of reference for the consultative bodies detailed in this report replace references to the Town Clerk with local officers to

reflect the decision for these bodies to be supported locally to allow suitable freedom to better reflect their role as consultative rather than decision making bodies. Also, that the terms of reference are updated to accurately reflect correct job titles where they have changed.

Implications

There are no financial, legal or risk implications.

Conclusion

That consideration be made to making appointments to the various Consultative Committees and groups detailed in the report. Also that the terms of reference be updated as suggested to reflect current administration responsibilities and correct job titles.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Epping Forest Consultative Committee Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2 Ashted Common Consultative Committee Terms of Reference
- Appendix 3 Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park Consultative Group Terms of Reference
- Appendix 4 Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group Terms of Reference

Contact: *Richard Holt* Richard.Holt@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Author: Jo Hurst
Date: August 2018



Epping
Forest

Registered Charity

Epping Forest Consultative Committee – Terms of Reference

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Purpose of Committee

1. The Epping Forest Consultative Committee considers and discusses areas of current concern or debate at Epping Forest. It receives public reports prior to their consideration by Epping Forest and Commons Committee and provides advice or opinion on those matters.
2. Minutes of meetings and outcomes of the Consultative Committee's discussions are considered by the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in a public report to inform decision making. Likewise, most recent minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee are to be reviewed by the Consultative Committee.
3. The EF Consultative Committee is not a formal decision-making body, but views will be noted in formal reports to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.
4. Consultative Committee meetings are to be scheduled several weeks prior to Epping Forest and Commons Committee to consider papers and matters arising, with sufficient time scheduled for revisions to papers to be made for Epping Forest Committee, and minutes to be included in documentation.
5. If an Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting is not immediately preceded by a Consultative Committee, then the papers for that meeting will be circulated to Consultative Committee members electronically, with comments received and circulated by Town Clerks.

Conduct, attendance and other principles

6. The City of London Member's Code of Conduct 2018, associated guidance, declarations appendices and all subsequent revisions apply to Members of this Committee.
7. Should an attendee fail to attend 2 or more out of four consecutive meetings, their place may be forfeited. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee may choose to reallocate this space to an alternative interested organisation.
8. Although not a decision-making Committee, deliberations should be sufficiently well attended for advice to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee to be considered representative. For those reasons minimum attendance of four representatives of locally interested organisations is required.

9. Consultative Committee Members are representatives of their organisation, but Code of Conduct and other legal and administrative requirements apply to individuals. Every effort will be made to accommodate attendance by nominated proxy in unavoidable circumstances, but such substitutions may not always be possible and must not be considered routine.

Scheduling, location and public access

10. Meetings are scheduled at Loughton (as far as is possible), as the geographic centre of Epping Forest. Alternative venues may be considered by agreement.
11. Meetings are on a weekday evening, avoiding school and public holidays.
12. There will be a minimum of three meetings a year thereafter.
13. Should a change of frequency or location, including peripatetic meetings be preferred by this forum, that request must be made to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.
14. Meetings will be held in public (numbers subject to venue capacity). Public questions are at the discretion of the Chairman.

Allocation of positions

15. The EF Consultative Committee has representation from Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Verderers and other members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee where interested.
16. Meetings are Chaired by the Chairman of Epping Forest and Commons Committee or Deputy Chairman or other nominated official in their absence.
17. The Superintendent of Epping Forest and other City of London officers will attend as required.
18. The meetings are administered by a representative of City of London Town Clerks Department.
19. Attendants are nominated members of groups holding a specific interest in Epping Forest, either with large membership, a broad geographical spread across the Forest and with knowledge or interest in the themes of heritage; recreation/sport; conservation; general/informal use or voluntary

and friends' groups.

20. Tenants, business partners or other organisations with commercial interest in Epping Forest (or wider City of London Open Spaces) are not invited to attend as other routes exist for such input.

21. Groups nominating a representative must be formal, constituted organisations.

22. Invitations to express interest and to nominate representatives are advertised through print media, social media, email and direct correspondence by City of London. Applications require details of how the nominating organisation meets the above criteria.

23. A balance of themes of interest is ideally met as follows:

Conservation <i>Conservation groups in Forest, or with wider remit</i>	3
Friends/Voluntary <i>Formal working groups e.g. litter pickers groups, 'Friends of' etc.</i>	3
Heritage <i>Historical societies, rural preservation etc.</i>	2
Informal users <i>Schools, Youth groups, families associations, local forums and interest bodies</i>	2
Recreation <i>Recreational user groups – e.g. walkers, riders, cyclists</i>	3
Sports <i>Formal organised sports on Forest e.g. Golf, Football, cricket running etc.</i>	3
	16

24. Should more expressions of interest be received than can logistically be accommodated, selection will be made by members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee by the following (not in order of importance):

- Size of membership
- Geographical area of interest (i.e. area of Forest covered)
- Theme of interest
- Record of attendance (once established)

25. Epping Forest and Commons Committee may appoint further members or co-opt representatives (for example subject matter experts) to attend where it deems appropriate.

26. The Consultative Committee serves as established for three years (starting in 2018), after which the invitation and nomination process outlined above is repeated.

Requirements and responsibilities

27. Nominated representatives must meet criteria similar to those set out by the Electoral Commission for eligibility for local government election:

- At least 18 years old
- Not employed by the City of London, or another organisation holding a commercial interest in Epping Forest or other CoL open spaces.
- Have not been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including suspended sentences), without the option of a fine, during the five years before nominations close.
- Not disqualified under the terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (which covers corrupt or illegal electoral practices and offences relating to donations).

28. Representatives must commit to representing the views of their organisation and members.

29. Representatives must share agenda and documentation internally within their organisation (subject to confidentiality) as well as minutes and outcomes of discussions.

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Ashtead Common Consultative Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The main purpose of the Ashtead Common Consultative Group is to assist the delivery of the latest Ashtead Common Management Plan which itself is a product of extensive stakeholder consultation. The aim of the Management Plan is to ensure an appropriate balance between the needs of access and nature conservation and thereby protect and conserve Ashtead Common *in perpetuity*.

1. To consider the annual work programme as set out in the management plan.
2. To identify and agree areas where further public consultation may be required.
3. To consider any major changes to the plan that may arise from time to time.
4. To consider, where appropriate, issues raised by the local community, or visitors and to assist the Assistant Director in resolving them.
 - In addition, outcomes of Ashtead Common Consultative Group meetings should not:
 - Compromise the long-term welfare of the site
 - Conflict with the site's use for quiet enjoyment
 - Harm the conservation status of the site

Membership

5. Members of the group are invited to attend a series of meetings on the basis that, together, they ensure a broad representation of the local community and/or belong to organisations and bodies that are closely associated with, or have a direct interest or effect upon, the work carried out at Ashtead Common.
6. The City of London has statutory responsibilities and interests and will always be represented at the Group. Other bodies such as Natural England and Historic England also have statutory interests in the management of the sites and they will be invited to attend as meeting agendas dictate.
7. The Ashtead Resident's Association, Ashtead Common Volunteers, Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council will each have the right to a representative at the Group.
8. Otherwise, membership of the Consultative Group will be for a period of four years after which you may be invited to serve for a further period of four years.
9. The Consultative Group will identify and welcome additional participants who have an interest in the management of Ashtead Common and accept the terms of reference

Attendance by members of the public.

10. Members of the public may attend. Any member of the public wishing to bring an issue to the attention of the Consultative Group must provide a minimum two weeks written notice and provide details as required, to the Chairman and Assistant Director who will consider its inclusion on a future agenda as appropriate.

General

11. The Chairman of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee or his nominated representative shall be Chairman of the Committee.
12. Outputs from the Ashted Common Consultative Group will inform the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, which remains the decision making body.
13. Meetings will be held not less than once per year (plus an annual 'external site meeting' to view works carried out and discuss forthcoming project issues).
14. The Group will meet formally in January or February each year.
15. Meetings shall take place locally to Ashted Common.
16. The Town Clerk to convene the meetings and prepare and circulate the agendas and be responsible for the minutes, supported by local Officers where appropriate.
17. A further meeting or site visit may be arranged each year should circumstances require – see **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 1

Protocol for additional meetings site visits

For additional meetings/visits to be held for consideration of essential business by Officers or Members of Consultative Committees/Groups between scheduled meetings.

- i. A minimum of five members of the Consultative Committee/Group, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman must be in agreement to do so.
- ii. The minimum notice period for calling an additional meeting/visit is 28 days.
- iii. The nature of the issue must be submitted in writing to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Assistant Director at least 14 days before the meeting.
- iv. The Chairman or Deputy Chairman and the Assistant Director will preside at all additional meetings/visits.

Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park Consultative Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The main purpose of the Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park Consultative Group is to assist the delivery of the latest management plans for the Commons which themselves are a product of extensive stakeholder consultation. The aim of the management plans is to ensure an appropriate balance between the needs of public access and nature conservation and thereby protect and conserve the Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park *in perpetuity*.

1. To consider the annual work programme as set out in the management plans.
2. To identify and agree areas where further public consultation may be required.
3. To consider any major changes to the management plans that may arise from time to time.
4. To consider, where appropriate, issues raised by the local community, or visitors and to assist the Assistant Director in resolving them.

In addition, outcomes of the Consultative Group meetings should not:

- Compromise the long-term welfare of the sites.
- Create conflict with each site's use for quiet enjoyment.
- Harm the conservation status of the sites.

Membership

5. Members of the group are invited to attend a series of meetings on the basis that, together, they ensure a broad representation of the local community and/or belong to organisations and bodies that are closely associated with, or have a direct interest or effect upon, the work carried out at the Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park.
6. The City of London has statutory responsibilities and interests and will always be represented at the Consultative Group. Other bodies such as Natural England and Historic England also have statutory interests in the management of the sites and will be invited to attend as meeting agendas dictate.
9. The Ward Councillor(s) local to the Open Space may be represented on the Group according to the duration of their election in that specific role.
10. Otherwise, membership of the Consultative Group will be for a period of four years after which you may be invited to serve for a further period of four years.
11. The Consultative Group will identify and welcome additional participants who have an interest in the management of the Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park and accept the Terms of Reference.

Attendance at meetings by members of the public.

12. Members of the public may attend meetings of the Consultative Group.
13. Any member of the public wishing to bring an issue to the attention of the Consultation Group must provide a minimum two weeks written notice and provide details as required, to the Chairman and Assistant Director who will consider its inclusion on a future agenda as appropriate.

General

14. The Chairman of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee or his nominated representative shall be Chairman of the Group.
15. Outputs from the Consultative Group will inform the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, which remains the decision making body.
16. Meetings will be held not less than once per year (plus an annual 'external site meeting' to view works carried out and discuss forthcoming project issues).
17. The Consultative Group will meet formally in January or February each year.
18. Meetings shall take place locally to Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park.
19. The Town Clerk to convene the meetings and prepare and circulate the agendas and be responsible for the minutes, supported by local officers where appropriate.
20. A further meeting or site visit may be arranged each year should circumstances require – see **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 1

Protocol for additional meetings site visits

For additional meetings/visits to be held for consideration of essential business by Officers or Members of Consultative Groups between scheduled meetings.

- i. A minimum of five members of the Consultative Group, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman must be in agreement to do so.
- ii. The minimum notice period for calling an additional meeting/visit is 28 days.
- iii. The nature of the issue must be submitted in writing to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Assistant Director at least 14 days before the meeting.
- iv. The Chairman or Deputy Chairman and the Assistant Director will preside at all additional meetings/visits.

Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The main purpose of the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group is to assist the delivery of the latest Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Management Plans which themselves are a product of extensive stakeholder consultation. The aim of the Management Plans is to ensure an appropriate balance between the needs of access and nature conservation and thereby protect and conserve Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common *in perpetuity*.

1. To consider the annual work programme as set out in the management plans.
2. To identify and agree areas where further public consultation may be required.
3. To consider any major changes to the plans that may arise from time to time.
4. To consider, where appropriate, issues raised by the local community, or visitors and to assist the Superintendent in resolving them.
 - In addition, outcomes of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultative Group meetings should not:
 - Compromise the long-term welfare of the site
 - Conflict with the site's use for quiet enjoyment
 - Harm the conservation status of the site

Membership

5. Members of the Group are invited to attend a series of meetings on the basis that, together, they ensure a broad representation of the local community and/or belong to organisations and bodies that are closely associated with, or have a direct interest or effect upon, the work carried out at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.
6. The City of London has statutory responsibilities and interests and will always be represented at the Group. Other bodies such as Natural England and Historic England also have statutory interests in the management of the sites and they will be invited to attend as meeting agendas dictate.
7. The Ward Councillor(s) local to the Open Space may be represented on the Group according to the duration of their election in that specific role.
8. Otherwise, membership of the Group will be for a period of four years after which you may be invited to serve for a further period of four years.
9. The Group will identify and welcome additional participants who have an interest in the management of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common and accept the terms of reference.

Attendance by members of the public.

10. Members of the public may attend. Any member of the public wishing to bring an issue to the attention of the Consultative Group must provide a minimum two weeks written notice and provide details as required, to the Chairman and Assistant Director who will consider its inclusion on a future agenda as appropriate.

General

11. The Chairman of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee or his nominated representative shall be Chairman of the Committee.
12. Outputs from the Burnham Beeches And Stoke Common Consultative Group will inform the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, which remains the decision making body.
13. Meetings will be held not less than once per year (plus an annual 'external site meeting' to view works carried out and discuss forthcoming project issues).
14. The Group will meet formally in January or February each year.
15. Meetings shall take place locally to Burnham Beeches.
16. The Town Clerk to convene the meetings and prepare and circulate the agendas and be responsible for the minutes, supported by local Officers where appropriate.
17. A further meeting or site visit may be arranged each year should circumstances require – see **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 1

Protocol for additional meetings site visits

For additional meetings/visits to be held for consideration of essential business by Officers or Members of Consultative Groups between scheduled meetings:

- i. A minimum of five members of the Consultative Group, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman must be in agreement to do so.
- ii. The minimum notice period for calling an additional meeting/visit is 28 days.
- iii. The nature of the issue must be submitted in writing to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Assistant Director at least 14 days before the meeting.
- iv. The Chairman or Deputy Chairman and the Assistant Director will preside at all additional meetings/visits.

Agenda Item 8

Committee(s): Epping Forest Consultative – for Consideration Epping Forest and Commons – For Decision	Dated: 09/02/2022 09/05/2022
Subject: Application to Natural England for recognition as a National Nature Reserve (SEF 10/22b)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 11, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N
Report of: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director, Environment	For Decision
Report author: Paul Thomson, Epping Forest	

Summary

A key Government report in the history of conservation, ‘The Conservation of Nature in England and Wales’ Report published in 1947 proposed including Epping Forest in a then new national designation of ‘National Nature Reserve’ (NNR), with the intention of dedicating the site to scientific research and the protection of endangered species. Given the requirements of the Epping Forest Acts 1878 & 1880 to provide public access, which was then considered by Government to be detrimental to the ambitions of wildlife conservation, negotiations with the City Corporation concluded that NNR status was not then an appropriate designation for the more integrated management of the Forest, and the NNR designation was abandoned.

Over time, the Government conservation agency English Nature, and its successor, Natural England, have broadened their approach to public access at NNRs culminating in a new NNR strategy in 2017 ‘NNRs – At the heart of 21st century conservation’. The strategy promotes a broader NNR agenda based upon conservation, environmental research, high quality access for people and stronger local partnerships with landscapes and communities. Following a recent visit by senior officials from Natural England to Epping Forest, the City Corporation has been encouraged to consider seeking nomination for Epping Forest, and selected areas of the Epping Forest Buffer Land, as a new National Nature Reserve, reflecting an improved strategic ‘fit’ between the Forest and the expanded NNR remit.

This report is necessary to seek the views of the Consultative Committee on the opportunities presented by a potential NNR designation for Epping Forest and its associated Buffer Land.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to consider:

- The completion an Expression of Interest to Natural England for the designation of the majority of Epping Forest and its associated Buffer land as a National Nature Reserve.

Main Report

Background

1. National Nature Reserves (NNRs) are a Natural England designation that reflects the recreational and conservation value of important sites across England. NNRs are recognised as being ‘the crown jewels of England’s natural heritage’. There are currently 225 NNRs in England, covering 243,645 acres (98,600 hectares) or 0.7% of England’s land surface. Natural England (NE) – the Government’s adviser for the natural environment – is responsible for designating all NNRs and also manages about two thirds of England’s NNRs. The remaining reserves are managed by other government agencies, such as the Forestry Commission, and organisations approved by Natural England including local authorities and third sector organisations such as The National Trust, RSPB, and Wildlife Trusts.
2. Responding to the shortcomings of the Access to Mountains Act 1939 which failed to provide meaningful public access to mountain, moor, heath, down or cliff, the Dower Report (1945) and two subsequent key Government bodies, sought to plan the provision of public access and the conservation of wildlife in post-War Britain. The National Parks Committee, known as the Hobhouse Committee, sought to select areas and routes for public access and the preservation of natural beauty, while The Wildlife Conservation Special Committee, known as the Huxley Committee, investigated the specific issue of nature conservation in England and Wales, especially potential conflicts with national park designation.
3. While the Dower Report proposed uniting nature reserves and national parks, the Huxley Committee argued that they needed to be administered separately. Naturalists and conservationists expressed concern that nature reserves dedicated to scientific research, or the protection of endangered species, would not prosper if public access were allowed. The Committee’s Report, ‘The Conservation of Nature in England and Wales’ recommended the establishment of National Natures Reserves under the direction of the proposed Biological Service to study wildlife and its management.
4. Given the requirements of the Epping Forest Acts 1878 & 1880 to provide public access, which was then considered by Government to be detrimental to the ambitions of wildlife conservation, negotiations with the City Corporation concluded that NNR status was not an appropriate designation for the more integrated management of the Forest, and the NNR designation was abandoned for Epping Forest.

Current position

5. Currently three of the City's Natural Environment within The Commons team already have NNR status, namely, Burnham Beeches NNR (declared 1992); Ashted Common NNR (declared 1995) and Riddlesdown, Farthing Downs, Happy Valley, Coulsdon and Kenley Commons forming part of the South London Downs NNR (designated in 2019)
6. Over time Government conservation agencies English Nature, and its successor Natural England, have broadened their approach to public access to NNRs, culminating in a new NNR strategy published in 2017 'NNRs – At the heart of 21st century' conservation' The strategy now promotes a broad NNR agenda based upon conservation, environmental research, high quality access for people, and stronger local partnerships with landscapes and communities.
7. To realise its new strategy Natural England is seeking to declare an additional range of new NNR's across England, a process that has been largely moribund since the mid-1990's. A recent visit by senior officials from Natural England to Epping Forest, encouraged the City Corporation to consider seeking nomination for Epping Forest and selected areas of the Epping Forest Buffer Land as a new National Nature Reserve, reflecting an improved strategic 'fit' between the Forest and the expanded NNR remit.
8. Initial discussions with Natural England suggest that given The Wildlife Conservation Special Committee's (1947) early identification of Epping Forest as a potential NNR, alongside the impressive legacy of Essex Field Club's early nature fieldwork and the strong landscape links to 1,800 acres of Buffer Land, Epping Forest would be high on NE's list of potential new NNRs. In addition, Epping Forest contains a range of important NNR components including Local Geological Sites (LoGS), and a series of Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) on the Epping Forest Buffer Lands.
9. The declaration of Epping Forest as an NNR would not only recognise the high recreation and conservation value of the site, but also the high standards of management expertise required to maintain that value. The NNR declaration would present a high-profile opportunity to the City to celebrate the importance of Epping Forest to local people and the conservation work being undertaken.
10. Key strengths of NNR status include:
 - a. Opportunities to increase collaboration between landowners such as the Essex Wildlife Trust at Gernons Bushes and Mallinson Park Wood Trust at Woodford.
 - b. Enhance profile of the owning bodies and managers.
 - c. Recognised as places of excellence where people can engage with nature.
 - d. High standards of biodiversity and geodiversity where an abundance of variety of wildlife can be found.
 - e. Extensive environmental monitoring and research opportunities.

- f. Enables the City to demonstrate its support for the Government's strategic desire to use NNRs to galvanise landscape-scale conservation – reflecting what is known as the 'Lawton principle'.
- g. Higher profile to attract environmental grants.

Options

11. Your Committee has two options:

- (a) To make an expression of interest to Natural England seeking NNR status for Epping Forest and the Epping Forest Buffer Land as a prelude to negotiations with Natural England and the appropriate Local Authorities and neighbours, with the intention of bringing formal proposals to this Committee for subsequent consideration. **This option is recommended.**
- (b) To decline the invitation to make an expression of interest to Natural England, losing the opportunity to secure additional benefits for Epping Forest and the Epping Forest Buffer land. **The option is not recommended.**

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. Epping Forest Consultative Committee – The proposal to respond to Natural England's invitation to consider National Nature Reserve (NNR) status, stimulated considerable debate with many Consultative Committee members expressing concern regarding a greater emphasis on nature conservation at the expense of other duties, and the greater involvement of Natural England to the possible detriment of the Forest. These views partly reflected the original post-war concerns with the original Huxley Committee proposals for Epping Forest. Other Members were generally excited by a further accolade that could protect parts of the Forest beyond SSSI and SAC status and offer the opportunity to involve immediate neighbours who hold parts of the Forest. Many members were persuaded that further negotiations would be appropriate, but insisted that the Consultative Committee should be given a further opportunity to consider the final proposal.

13. The recommendation of this report supports the Corporate Plan with particular reference to the following aims:

- a. Contribute to a flourishing society
 - i. People enjoy good health and wellbeing
 - ii. Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need
- b. Shape Outstanding Environments
 - i. We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity, and collaboration.
 - ii. We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.
 - iii. Our spaces are secure, resilient, and well maintained

14. And supports the Open Spaces Business Plan as follows:

- a. Open Spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.
 - i. Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved, and enhanced
 - ii. London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change
 - iii. Our spaces are accessible, inclusive, and safe
 - iv. Our habitats are flourishing, biodiverse and resilient to change.
 - b. Spaces enrich people's lives.
 - i. People enjoy good health and well-being
Nature, heritage, and place are valued and understood
 - ii. People feel welcome and included
 - iii. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.
 - iv. i. Our practices are financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable
 - v. ii. London's natural capital and heritage assets are enhanced through our leadership, influence, investment, collaboration, and innovation
15. Financial Implications The experience at Burnham Beeches and Ashted Common indicates that NNR status need not place an additional funding burden on the City, apart from the inclusion of the designation in future signage and publications, which can be accommodated over time. Indeed, NNR status can potentially attract additional funding, particularly towards the cost of research and monitoring, alongside greater volunteer interest. NNR status can also raise the land's profile for grants to fund conservation and recreation objectives.
16. The proposal provides opportunities to build closer working partnerships with the Epping Forest District and London Boroughs together with other allied neighbouring landowners such as the Essex Wildlife Trust, to develop shared management plans, objectives, and projects with the prospect of making more efficient use of the resources available.
17. NNR status does not bring greater legal protection, or management obligations, to the land. Conversely, NNR status if utilised correctly could secure high reputational values to NNR landowners and provides greater weight to environmental protection issues as part of the Local Authority's Local Plan.
18. Charity Implications – Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.

Conclusion

19. NNR status has the potential to provide enhanced reputational value for the City Corporation and other participating landowners. Moreover, the collective management of the natural environment in partnership with other allied organisations would demonstrate the City's commitment to the Government's strategic aim to create landscape-scale conservation projects.

Paul Thomson

Assistant Director, Epping Forest, Natural Environment, Environment

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Agenda Item 9

Committee: Epping Forest & Commons – For decision Epping Forest Consultative – For Information	Dated: 09/05/2022 15/06/2022
Subject: Epping Forest Work Programme 2022/2023 (SEF 14/22)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 11, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y
If so, how much?	£250,000
What is the source of Funding?	Local Risk including external grant aid, RASC has agreed £250,000
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Yes
Report of Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director Environment Department	For information: EFCC For Decision: EF&CC
Report authors: Geoff Sinclair, Head of Operations Epping Forest	

Summary

This report is necessary to seek your Committee’s approval for the proposed 2022/23 Epping Forest Work Programme. The work described in this report covers a large number of the 38 Forest and 14 Buffer Land compartments and describes significant visitor access, habitat and heritage conservation and risk management projects.

The varied programme of work across both Forest and Buffer Land is described and will be implemented by in-house teams, with significant contributions from contractors and volunteers. The continued conservation of Forest habitats maintains progress to achieve both the *favourable condition* of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and *favourable conservation status* of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The access management programme addresses work in response to car park charging, improvements and maintenance of the path network in line with the new *Epping Forest Management Strategy* and additional £250,000 capital funding provided to mitigate the impact on Forest paths by high visitor use during the COVID-19 lockdown period. The habitat conservation work proposed for this year centres on the re-pollarding of ancient hornbeams, where a pollard cycle has been established over the last 30 years, and the continuation of the restoration of wood-pasture habitats around them. Grassland and heathland management continues to be managed by a combination of extensive grazing by Longhorn cattle and mowing.

The risk management and resilient environment work involves significant operations in relation to large, raised reservoirs, a continuation of the survey and control of the Oak Processionary Moth populations across all the key visitor “hubs” in the Forest and the Forest-wide management of tree safety. There is a backlog of tree safety works from 2021 due to short term staff capacity issues that will need to be reduced in 2022. Local partners have secured funding that will allow work to progress on the conservation of the Grotto and the creation of a natural play area at Wanstead Park

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- i. Approve the annual work programme as described in the main report.

Main Report

Background

1. This report describes significant visitor access, habitat and heritage conservation, and risk management projects proposed in Epping Forest for the programme year 2022-2023.
2. The work outlined below is drawn from the 2020-2030 Epping Forest Management Strategy and its supporting documents (see *Background* papers below).
3. Works undertaken as part of the Carbon Removals Project (Climate Action Strategy) will be reported separately.

Current Position

4. As reported to your Committee on 8 March 2021 a 10-year Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) grant has been agreed with Natural England (NE) and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The annual work commitments for this grant require the working of approximately 233 pollards, the maintenance of 45 hectares of wood pasture through cutting, with grazing occurring throughout the wood pasture area. Restoration of 18 ha of wood pasture through thinning and creation of new pollards will also be carried out. There is a backlog on pollarding works and on wood pasture restoration and future annual work targets have been amended to complete the agreed work program by the end of the ten CSS year agreement.
5. A total of 110ha of our grass and haylage cutting and the bulk of our 73 km of highway verge cutting is undertaken by local contractors. The verge cutting contract was retendered in 2021 on a three-year basis and we will be retendering the grass cutting works this year for a further three-year period.
6. The Charity proposed three project streams that were started or developed in 2021 and will continue into 2022:
 - 6.1 Queens Green Canopy: A new Commonwealth Grove will be planted on Wanstead Flats in association with the Royal Commonwealth Society and the QGC to mark Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. Other projects proposed in a dedicated report are subject to the provision of suitable funding.

6.2 Wanstead Park Grotto Landing stage: The second phase of a funded work program to safeguard the landing stage following erosion damage. This phase will involve the repair to the land stage surface to make it watertight.

6.3 Wanstead Park Play Area: Partial funding for the play area has been received from the City Corporations Enjoying Greenspaces and the natural Environment Central Funds Grant Scheme which will allow the creation of a core play facility. Fundraising efforts are progressing with our local partners which will allow further works to follow.

7. Reduced capacity following arborist staff leaving the City's employment in 2021/22 has meant that tree safety works need to be rolled forward into 2022/23. Options for creating additional capacity to complete this essential safety work are being progressed, such as the use of contractors and employing casual arborist staff, drawing on local risk funding.

Proposals

8. The work programme sets out work under four of the five Strategic Priorities of the new *Epping Forest Management Strategy*.

Strategic Priority - A Beautiful Forest, sustaining an internationally and nationally important mosaic of wildlife habitats

Wood pasture restoration

9. With the support of the CSS grant funding, the following habitat conservation programme will be delivered for the period up to 31 March 2023:

9.1 Re-pollarding work will be carried out on up to 233 ancient Hornbeam pollards trees. This annual program of work pollarding continues over 30 years of cyclical work, rejuvenating this wood-pasture habitat across the Forest. The operations will be undertaken by an Epping Forest in-house arborist team.

9.2 The limited use of contractors will be concentrated on tree-felling operations, supported by a 100% funding subsidy from the CSS grant. These felling works are to be completed by the end of December 2022 and are targeted at removing younger trees over-shading and outcompeting the ancient pollards, especially the small but ancient oaks scattered across these compartments, as well as opening up sites to allow ground flora to re-establish.

9.3 Alongside the felling operations and Hornbeam pollarding, there will be continued restoration and maintenance of the wood-pasture sites opened up over the last decade. This work will be carried out by a combination of extensive grazing, flailing by the in-house teams, some small tree regeneration removal and some grass cutting. The exact acreage cut during the late summer will be determined by a site review to assess which sites require an annual cut and which others may require a rotational cut every other year or longer. Alongside this work, the impact of the cattle grazing in the wood-pasture areas would also be assessed.

Grasslands, Heathlands and Grazing

10. Grazing and mowing will be combined as in previous years on the Forest's open plains and conservation grasslands. This combination would be managed to ensure a varied sward height and ensure flowering for pollinating insects throughout the summer season and overwintering habitat. For the general grass programme, we continue to seek to increase the area cut by contractors, especially from mid to late summer. This will free up staff time to focus on the CSS grant requirements for the maintenance of wood-pasture by tractor mounted flailing.
11. Late summer hay-cuts will be taken to ensure a good establishment of the flowering plants at the newly created wildflower meadow sites at Whipps Cross and Manor Flats. Grazing and bracken control work will continue on five heathland sites which are integral to the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation as well as selected wood pasture areas and Loughton Camp. In addition, volunteers from the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV) will continue their long-term conservation work on these sites helping to control bracken regrowth and tree establishment amongst the heather and other rare heathland flora.
12. The area enclosed by fencing on Wanstead Flats to restrict disturbance of Skylarks and Meadow Pipits proved very successful in 2021. This was a pilot project and the fence erected was done so using plastic netting with the view it may only last a short term. The fence will last a second year however during 2022/23 we will need to review the desirability of erecting a more permanent fence area that could be open and closed as required through the year. The very substantial and continued help of volunteers from the Wren Conservation Group (WCG) on this project is gratefully acknowledged.
13. Volunteers from the WCG and Friends of Wanstead Parklands (FoWP) were also important in ensuring the success of the 2021 extended cattle grazing at Wanstead Park. In 2022/23, it is proposed that we further extend the area of Wanstead Park to be grazed and to also have larger herd size of six cattle. Over 200 cattle will graze the Forest and Buffer lands this year. There will be increased numbers of animals on the Forest as a whole due to the use of GPS collars which is enabling an expansion of grazing management. Wanstead Park will have up to 6 animals grazing late summer depending on vegetation growth with the possibility of the over-wintering of a couple of animals. New grazing sites for this year include Warren Wood Slope, Warren Hill and Raveners Farm.
14. This winter marked the first complete year of over-wintering a small group of animals on Chingford Plain / Bury wood which is vital for dung dependant insects which are emerging earlier due to our milder winters, the lack of vegetation growth through the winter helps push the animals to browse on young tree growth helping to keep the wood pasture landscape open. The full grazing programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Lakes and Ponds

15. Monthly monitoring for Floating Pennywort at Wanstead Park will be continued during 2022 using a specialist contractor, with any outbreaks responded to as they appear.
16. We are liaising with the City Surveyors Department (CSD) on several increasingly pressing pond and lake management issues and will be working with them on identifying ways forward on these projects:
 - 16.1 Jubilee Pond: A report prepared by the CSD during 2020 identified the need for £98,582 of essential repairs to prevent the continued decline and probable failure of the pond liner.
 - 16.2 Highams Park Lake wharfing: A review of the lake edge wharfing by the CSD has identified £50,000 of hard and soft wharfing works are required.
 - 16.3 Wanstead Park Pump House: CS Department have estimated that it will cost £45,000 to replace the obsolete pump house taking water from the River Roding into the Ornamental Water. A budget is available for progressing this project and this is likely to be a significant development project during 2022-2024.
17. With £45,000 grant support from the Mayor of London's Green Resilience Fund we will undertake a consultancy during 2022/23 looking at the feasibility of directing more water from the urban drainage network into the lake system at Wanstead Park. In addition to promoting water conservation and reducing pollution of the River Roding this project would contribute significantly to the sustainable water management of the lake system. The consultancy will include estimating the quantity of water available and detailing any issues that need to be considered and the work arising from these, such as how to remove pollutants before the water enters the lake system. We are also working with key stakeholders, such as Thames 21 and Thames Water, on identifying funding opportunities to progress any works that arise from this Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme (SUDS).
18. Works scheduled for Large and Small Raised Reservoirs at the Wanstead Park Cascade; Baldwins and Birch Hall Park Ponds will be the subject of separate Gateway Projects Reports.

Volunteer Habitat Management Activity

19. The WCG continues to provide great support to Forest habitat and species conservation in the south of the Forest, around Wanstead in particular. Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV) undertake a varied and invaluable task programme across the Forest, focusing on the wood-pasture restoration areas, heathlands (as above), ponds and bogs. Their work on wetland sites, in particular, has been critical to the maintenance of the special wildlife interest in these places. The Swaines Green volunteers, Highams Park Snedders and Epping Forest Heritage Trust volunteers also undertake significant works in various parts of the

Forest and are an important help to deliver a range of land management projects as part of agreed work programmes.

20. During 2022 the Epping Forest Volunteer Wardens will continue with their work on site patrol and cattle monitoring.

Damaging Introduced Exotic Species (DIES) & Plant Pathogens

21. Monitoring of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM), using external consultants, the Charity will continue to monitor all the main OPM sites as in 2020, with control measures taken as required. Parts of Epping Forest are now in what is referred to as the Core Zone where the Forestry Commission recognises that OPM is established. In these areas control work is not funded by the Forestry Commission and is the responsibility of the landowner. We will maintain a program of removing low level OPM nests with activity targeted to where the most immediate risks of exposure to visitors are found and as directed by the statutory notices served by the FC in non-core zone areas. Given the broad-spectrum character of pesticide spraying, such work has been limited by agreement with Forestry Commission (FC) and NE to locations outside the SSSI only.

22. Ramorum monitoring will be continued across all Rhododendron sites, both existing and historic, including Knighton Woods, Wanstead Park, Paul's Nursery and The Warren Plantation. Arborist and Grassland Teams will continue to remove Rhododendron growth from various Forest locations.

23. The annual Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed control will be carried out across any remaining sites as required.

24. Following the identification of a specimen of the North American Flatheaded apple tree borer beetle (*Chrysobothris femorata*) in the Forest during 2020, Forestry Research officers are undertaking a summer long monitoring survey for this insect pest species. The survey began on 11th April and will continue throughout the summer. The monitoring will involve Forestry Research officers erecting 30 insect traps within trees across the Forest.

Strategic Priority - A Welcoming Destination for all

Ride and Path Management

25. Detailed mapping of path works has been completed on 30km of paths that were severely impacted by high visitor use during the COVID-19 lockdown period. During 2022 and 2023 the Charity will be implementing a program of mitigation works to make good path damage and to ensure conditions where the path verges can recover from the lockdown period of intense use. Works will comprise mainly of drainage works and the construction of around 6 km of new surfaced paths and £250,000 of capital funding has been approved by the City Corporation.

26. In line with the recommendations of the Path Management Policy Development Note (PDN), approved by your committee on 16 November 2020, it is planned that path management continues to be concentrated on the high access categories of

Red+ and Red. During 2022 approximately 31 km of path will have a 1.5m verge cut along both sides. Following a successful 3 year works tendering exercise in 2021 path verge cutting will largely be undertaken by contractors.

27. Formal path monitoring program as outlined in the 2020 Path Management PDN will be implemented fully in 2022/23. This will make use of volunteers trained for the role and will see around 30km of path assessed each year on a cycle of up to ten years.

Car Parks

28. Working with the City Surveyor consideration will be given to regrading and improving further car park surfaces, and in particular adding additional double gate entrances allowing vehicles to leave the Forest after the evening closure of car parks.

Strategic Priority - *Special Heritage Landscapes – protected and celebrated*

Wanstead Park: Parkland Plan

29. Through local partners we have obtained funding to progress important aspects of the Wanstead Park Parkland Plan and The Grotto: Conservation Management Plan. We are also working with key stakeholders to identify additional funding and these projects are outlined below:

- 29.1 Play area: The Aldersbrook Residents Association have received £10,500 of funding from the City Corporation Central Grant Programme – Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment scheme, towards the creation of a simple natural play area based on timber from Epping Forest. Additional funding is still required and is being sought by the working group progressing the play area project however a core facility is planned for opening in July 2022.
- 29.2 The Grotto. The Friends of Wanstead Parkland (FoWP) and the Historic London Trust (HoLT) jointly raised £24,000 towards restoring the landing stage to the Grotto in 2020/21. The first phase of works was completed in March 2022 under the supervision of CSD, with a second final phase to consolidate the main body of the landing stage scheduled for the summer 2022. The support from FowP and HLT is very welcome and has ensured we can deliver this much needed work.
- 29.3 See Ponds and Lakes section.
- 29.4 Vegetation management: Targeted work to open key vistas and paths will be continued where resources allow.

Highams Park

30. Spa Flow Limited completed a report and feasibility study for options to improve the banks of Highams Park lake. The report identifies eight areas of the lake

margin where work is recommended to ensure bank stability and to respond to polluted water. Working with the City Surveyors Department it is proposed that we start to progress work on these improvements.

31. The Highams Park Snedders undertook work in 2021 to reduce competition from holly and brambles as part of a long-term plan to promote and encourage the population of bluebells towards the NW of the Park. We will work with the Snedders during 2022/23 to clearly mark paths to reduce trampling damage to the bluebells.
32. Responding to COVID-19 in 2020 prevented work with local volunteers to seek funding for work proposals through the Park identified in the Highams Park Individual Site Plan. This work has been rolled forward into 2022 and we will first produce a costed action plan based on proposals in the ISP and any consents/assents from NE will be sought as required.

Loughton Camp Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)

33. At Loughton Camp under Countryside Stewardship Scheme grant (CSS) supported works we will continue with the ten-year program, started in 2021, of clearing 0.1 ha/year of holly and other small and medium-sized infilling trees the Scheduled Ancient Monument.
34. A Committee member has drawn attention to the anomaly, first identified by Benjamin Cowper in 1872, of additional earthwork features outside the existing univallate Iron Age Hillforts that were subsequently designated as separate Scheduled Ancient Monument designations. Following site meetings with Historic England as resources allow an application will be made to Historic England to review the existing designation.

Churchill Avenue: Woodford Green

35. A community and stakeholder engagement process was undertaken in 2019 on proposals for the phased replacement, for tree safety reasons, of the London Plane and Poplar tree avenue at Woodford Green. Proposals have been submitted to the London Borough of Redbridge for Conservation Area consent to undertake the work however agreement was not forthcoming in time for the work to be undertaken in 2019 as originally planned.
36. It was proposed that we undertake the phased replanting of the avenue with Common Lime (*Tilia x europea*) with work commencing in September 2020 however COVID work commitments and short-term capacity constraints has meant that we could not progress this work. It is proposed that we start work on the phased replacement of the avenue in September 2022.

Key Views

37. Surveys of nine key views in Forest were undertaken in 2020 and compared the condition of each view today to earlier photographs. Where work was considered

necessary to maintain or restore a view the work needs were assessed. During 2022 we will compile these work strands into a single plan

Strategic Priority - A Resilient Environment

Highway Verge Management

38. Ongoing maintenance of highways edge vegetation is largely contracted out through a three-year agreement with a local provider. In-house teams focus on the more challenging locations where there are significant constraints, such as frequent parked cars, and on maintaining sightlines at path and road junctions.

Tree Safety

39. Trees identified for hazard removal will be a significant proportion of spring and summer programmes for the Arborist Teams. The annual tree safety inspection programme is undertaken by contractors, and this is to be retendered this year on a three-year basis. Overall, works to make good hazardous trees takes up the equivalent of one arborist team's year. Staff restrictions due to COVID-19 and short-term staff capacity issues in 2021/22 has meant that the Charity has a significant backlog of work from 2021 to complete this year. Additional contract support has been sought and we are trialling the appointment of casual arborist staff to help improve short-term staff capacity issues. Responding to the backlog on tree safety work will limit time available for additional projects.

Wildfire Safety

40. Fire control zones will continue to be mown at Leyton and Wanstead Flats. Along the key routes around the edges of these two large grassland sites, grass will either be cut regularly to ensure a short sward along the routes for a 6m width or grass cuttings will be removed after each main cut (depending on the area mown).

41. Areas of older and dead gorse, which is highly flammable, are cut back as part of the regular flailing work at both Leyton and Wanstead Flats

Insurance Claims

42. The root nuisance mitigation will be continued through 2022/23. This work occupies approximately a fortnight each year of an arborist team and contribute to reducing the financial risk arising from subsidence claims. In addition to the case-by-case response process we commenced work in 2019 to reduce the tree cover along Mays Lane, Chingford. Reducing the tree cover will help to reduce subsidence and tree safety liabilities and will also provide the opportunity to improve a currently overlooked part of the Forest. Work on Mays Lane will be ongoing through 2022.

Large Raised Reservoirs (LRR):

43. Woody and herbaceous vegetation will be kept cut on raised reservoirs. Further works will follow on from the six-monthly Panel engineer inspections and will be undertaken in association with the Environment Department.

44. The Environment Department will commence work in late summer on the dam at the Deer Sanctuary (Birch Hall Park) Pond. This work was postponed in 2021 and aims to repair and stabilise the dam and improve the spillway. Planning permission has been received for this work and works have been successfully tendered.

45. The Environment Department is developing plans to respond to leaks in the substantial Baldwins Pond dam. It has proved difficult to engage a supplier for this work and following an unsuccessful tender exercise in 2021 a design and build contractor will again be sought in 2022

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

46. The work outlined in this work programme will contribute significantly to City of London Corporate Plan 2018-2023 Outcome 2 *People enjoy good health and well-being*; Outcome 11: *We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment* and Outcome 12: *Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained*.

47. The proposed work programme actions support the Natural Environment Department's (formerly the Open Spaces Department) Vision of enriching people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.

48. The proposed action meets the Natural Environment Department's objective of '*Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible*'. It will also contribute to the Department's performance measures of the condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), active ancient tree management and income generation.

49. The work programme aims to protect biodiversity whilst improving opportunities for visitors to enjoy the Forest. The programme derives from the new *Epping Forest Management Strategy* the vision of which is: *Epping Forest is a thriving, biodiverse green space that benefits the City of London's communities and enhances the wider environment as part of a larger interconnected landscape*. The proposals meet a wide range of outcomes identified in this Strategy, with the proposals detailed under each of the Plan's five 'Strategic Priorities'.

Financial implications

50. The work outlined in the proposed work programme is to be covered by the local risk budget of the Epping Forest sub-Division together with both revenue and capital funding provided through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, administered by the Rural Payments Agency. The work programme for 2022/23 is expected to cost £931,000, including £718,00 for salaries and £141,00 for grounds maintenance costs. The budget will enjoy an additional £250,000 of capital funding from the City of London for COVID-19 lockdown mitigation works.

51.City Surveyor led works are financed through agreed AWP and CWP budgets.

52.Additional grant aid and public fundraising would be sought where available to fund agreed activities.

Legal implications

53.Formal consent for some works needs to be sought from Natural England under Section 28E of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) for the SSSI and as required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in relation to the SAC. Additional consents for work in locally listed landscapes, APAs and watercourses will be sought during the year.

54.Subject to the provisions of the Epping Forest Acts 1878 & 1880 the Conservators are under a duty at all times to keep Epping Forest uninclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. They are also under a duty at all times as far as possible to preserve the natural aspect of the Forest.

55.The Epping Forest Act 1880 includes an additional power at section 5 to maintain "*ornamental inclosed lands*" which most probably reflects the City Corporation's purchase of Wanstead Park in 1880 and requires the Conservators to make proper provision for securing the enjoyment thereof by the public for exercise and recreation at all reasonable times during the day.

Charity Implications

56.Open Spaces Charity: Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.

Risk implications

57.Individual work programme operations would be subject to current rigorous Health and Safety Risk Assessments and method statements.

58. The CSS work programme elements would be subject to external inspections to ensure cross compliance standards, known as Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) have been adhered to and work completed as specified. Failure to meet standards or to complete certain work prescriptions as defined in the CSS agreement may be subject to financial penalties. For non-CSS works within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), conditions of any Natural England (NE) consents must be met.

59.Short-term staff capacity issues have led to a backlog of tree safety works that has been compounded by additional works following Storm Eunice. It is likely that the backlog will lead to predictable tree failures in high hazard areas, with potentially increased insurance liability issues.

Equalities implications

60.No negative equality impacts were identified for this work programme.

Climate implications

61.The work programme has not been reviewed overall but as the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy and the Open Spaces Carbon Removals Project get underway some assessment work will be carried out in relation to the wood-pasture and pollarding operations and their wood products in particular.

Security implications

62.None.

Conclusions

63.The habitat work programme outlined above reflects the key priorities for the protection of the SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It incorporates the habitat conservation proposals which have been approved by your Committee and assented by Natural England as part of a new 10-year Countryside Stewardship grant application running until 2030.

64.The access and risk management work proposals reflect the outcome of detailed fieldwork and assessment of the condition of the Forest's infrastructure and boundaries. Short-term staff capacity issues has resulted in a significant backlog of tree safety works from 2021.

65.Volunteers will continue to be instrumental in delivering a significant proportion of the work on key projects in 2022/23, including wood-pasture, wet heath and bog restoration, and species protection, including Skylarks and butterflies and path monitoring. Their important and integral contribution to the Forest Management Strategy's Strategic Objectives is gratefully acknowledged.

66.Specialist in-house teams will deliver most of the work detailed in the report. Contractors will be used to for tree-felling where 100% grant support through CSS is available and separately will also contribute significantly to the implementation of the grass-cutting and highway vegetation management works across the Forest and the Buffer Land grasslands.

67.Substantial financial support has been achieved for key projects through external grant aid to the City Corporation or through partner organisations and is subject to external audit and inspection.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** proposed Grazing Programme (subject to weather & ground conditions)

Background Papers

- A Strategy and Management Plan for Epping Forest 2020-30
- SEF13/21 Epping Forest & Commons Committee Report: The 2019 Countryside Stewardship Grant Agreement Amendment. 8th March 2021.
- SEF28/19 Epping Forest & Commons Committee Report: Countryside Stewardship Grant 2019 Proposals. 8th July 2019.
- The Barn Hoppitt Wood-pasture Restoration Plan 2006-2011.
- The Lords Bushes and Knighton Woods Integrated Site Plan 2004-2010.
- High Beach Individual Site Management Plan (2020)
- The Wanstead Flats Individual Site Management Plan (2020).
- Theydon Bois Green Individual Site Management Plan (2018)
- Highams Park, Little Sale and Oak Hill Woods ISMP Plan (2019)
- Leyton Flats Individual Site Management Plan (2019)
- Path Management Policy Development Note (2020)
- The Grotto Conservation Management Plan (2020)
- *Branching Out* Project (Nov 2008) – Keystone Tree & Grazing Strategies.
- SEF 01/13 Epping Forest & Commons Committee Report: Grazing Expansion Plan for Implementing the Epping Forest Grazing Strategy. 13th Feb 2013.
- Wanstead Park Conceptual Options Plan (2019).
- SEF 50/16 Epping Forest & Commons Committee Report: Epping Forest Grazing Expansion Plan Continuity Arrangements. 21st November 2016
- The Topology and Vegetational History of Some Epping Forest Sphagnum Bogs (Report to EF Conservators - K.J. Adams 2017).
- Highway Verge Management Policy Development Note (2018)

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Grazing Programme 2021



Site	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Forest Land												
Big View / Sunshine / Rushley												
Long Running												
Deershelter Plain												
Bury Wood / Fairmead												
Warren Wood Slope												
Chingford Plain / Bury Wood												
Barn Hoppit / Whitehall												
Fernhills												
Trueloves												
Warren Hill / Nursery Fields												
Addisons Meadow												
Giffords Bottom												
Yardley / Yates / Daisy												
Wansted Park												

Site	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Buffer Land												
Warren Fields												
Conservators Pound												
Warlies Estate												
West park												
Warlies Hay Meadow												
Brookmeadow Paddock												
Brookmeadow Field												
Black Barn Field												
Osier Bed Field												
Track / Temple												
Copped Hall												
Behind the Hall												
Ridge / Trafalgar												
Trafalgar plantation												
Deer Park												
North / South 18 Acres												
39 Acres												
Gt Gregories												
Gregories Woodland												
Concrete Road Field												
Railway Field												
Top Field												
Birch Hall Meadows												

Committee	Dated:
Epping Forest Consultative Epping Forest & Commons	09/02/2022 09/05/2022
Subject: Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 1952-2022 Queen's Green Canopy – Proposed Tree Planting Projects (SEF 11/22)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y
If so, how much?	£40,000
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N
Report of: Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director Environment	For Discussion
Report author: Beth West, Environment Department	

Summary

As part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, Epping Forest has been nominated as part of the 70-strong Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative, with successful woodland nominations being announced by the QGC Board in late Spring 2022. Building on anticipated approval, this report outlines how the City Corporation could facilitate a wide range of QGC tree-planting activities across the Square Mile and wider Open Spaces across Greater London, engaging the Lord Mayor, school groups and wider communities.

It is proposed that the City Corporation take an active role in the QGC activities over the course of the next 14 months and align activities in numerous locations around supporting the QGC campaign. Supporting a range of tree-planting activities at Epping Forest for between 159-2,300 trees at 31 locations, is forecast to cost an estimated £40,000 between January 2022 and March 2023 which will require additional fund-raising activity.

Recommendations

Consultative Committee Members are asked to:

- Note the report
- Provide comment for consideration by members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.

Main Report

Background

1. Several City Corporation City Gardens and Open Spaces have previously been utilized to provide planting opportunities to celebrate previous Royal visits, Coronations and Jubilees. At Epping Forest several Royal commemorative initiatives have been provided including a 79-strong Black Poplar Avenue planted on Woodford Green in 1886 (and replaced in 1966), to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1887, to the planting of a Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Grove in 1953.
2. The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a major tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which celebrates the 70 years of the Queen's reign between 1952 and 2022. QGC invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".
3. Epping Forest, alongside other City Corporation Natural Environment sites at Ashted Common and Burnham Beeches, have been nominated as part of the 70-strong Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative, with successful woodland nominations being announced by the QGC Board in late Spring 2022.
4. Epping Forest was also nominated in 2016 as one of four Queen's Commonwealth Canopy (QCC) woodlands across the UK, designated alongside woodlands and new plantings across the Commonwealth. Prince Harry visited the Forest in March 2017 planting an Oak tree on Queens Green, High Beach opposite a Red Oak planted by Queen Victoria to mark the City of London Corporation's purchase of Epping Forest and its joint dedication with Queen Victoria to the public at a public opening of Epping Forest in 1882.
5. Everyone from individuals to Scout and Girlguiding groups, villages, cities, counties, schools, and corporates will be encouraged to play their part to enhance our environment by planting trees during the official planting season between October to March. Tree planting will commence again in October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year.
6. With a focus on planting sustainably, the QGC will encourage planting of trees to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the Nation, which will benefit future generations.
7. As well as inviting the planting of new trees, the QGC will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.¹

¹ <https://queensgreencanopy.org>

Current Position

8. The QGC team have requested that the Lord Mayor plant a tree in the 'iconic' Square Mile before the end of March 2022. They have separately asked if the Ancient Black Mulberry tree in Keats House can be dedicated as one of the 70 ancient trees. The QGC tree are keen for the City Corporation to be actively involved in the campaign.
9. Over the next 14 months, there are several planned initiatives that could be aligned to the QGC programme. We propose that whenever possible with timing and budget, these activities should be included as part of the City Corporation's overall contribution to the QGC.

These activities are:

- Replacing a tree in Whittington Gardens on Upper Thames Street
- Planting three new trees in Giffords Wood in Epping Forest, dedicated to the late Lord Mayor, Sir Roger Gifford. This planting was scheduled for April/May, but we propose to bring this forward to March 2022. Lady Clare is happy to accommodate this change
- Planting 5 beds outside of the City of London School on the riverside. These beds are planned to be planted between now and March with 'experimental' species and soils, which demonstrates our commitment to climate resilience alongside greening the Square Mile

10. A proposed planting programme for Epping Forest is outlined in Appendix 1.

Proposed Additional Plans

11. There are several initiatives that are currently under consideration that could be included within the City Corporation's QGC approach. We would propose to identify all relevant activities and seek to include them in our overarching QGC narrative and campaign. Some proposed additional plans include:
 - Tree planting activities within the City Gardens and where possible, churchyards and rooftops within the Square Mile. We would propose to hold all tree planting activities other than at Whittington Gardens (see above) until the October 2022-March 2023 period so that we can assess/vet any requests to plant trees within the Square Mile, and then allocate planting activities as 'awarded'. It is estimated that this will include only approximately 10 trees based on current space availability. Additional budget may be required to

purchase appropriate trees and for any ceremony, although we would request that those wishing to plant trees cover the costs of any ceremony.

- Tree planting activities within the Open Spaces outside the Square Mile. Looking at the longer 10-year plan, we would assess any near-term tree planting plans and determine if these can be undertaken during the October 2022-March 2023 period.
- Identify within our conservation plans, particularly with regard to ancient trees, where any activities can be adapted to be included in the QGC plans.
- A new 50-tree plantation at Epping Forest planted by Commonwealth Commissioners during the Commonwealth Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in London.
- Work with our apprenticeship programmes, as well as those of our local authority partners, to identify where we can celebrate or add to existing skills programmes on green skills.
- Engage with the education teams to determine where school children can be more involved in these activities; for example, it is already planned for primary school children to go to Epping Forest as part of the Giffords Woods tree planting programme.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The recommendations of this report support the Corporate Plan, with particular reference to the following aims:

a. Contribute to a flourishing society

- i. People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- ii. Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

b. Shape Outstanding Environments

- i. We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration
- ii. We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment
- iii. Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained.

13. The report supports the Open Spaces Business Plan as follows:

a. Open Spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.

- i. Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved and enhanced
- ii. London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change

Strategic Implications

14. These initiatives will allow the City Corporation to be able to become a City Champion for the QGC and demonstrate our relevance in national campaigns, reinforcing our iconic role in the national consciousness.

Financial Implications

15. Additional funds may be required if all the activities, that would have been delivered in future years, are brought forward for QGC ceremonies. It is anticipated that the cost of planting between 159 and 2,300 trees at 31 locations in Epping Forest will require additional spending of an estimated £40,000. This expenditure will require fundraising activity and Committee approval prior to committing to the proposed activities.
16. To be fully successful in delivering a holistic campaign, it is proposed that a senior manager work in this programme full time. Therefore, the salary and costs for this individual will need to be budgeted and come from local risk. Additional communications resource may also be required.

Legal Implications

17. The general powers of the Conservators outlined in the Epping Forest acts 1878 & 1880 include at section 33(if.) a power to '*Plant trees and shrubs for shelter and ornament*'. Tree planting within the Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest is discouraged in favour of natural regeneration and would be subject to a consent process managed by natural England.

Risk Implications

18. No additional risks have been identified beyond the usual risks within the Open Spaces.

Equality Implications

19. There should be no equality implications for these activities; however, we can make efforts to ensure that women and unrepresented groups are engaged in the apprenticeship and education programmes.

Climate Implications

20. These activities will enhance and shine a spotlight on the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy in a positive way.

Charity Implications

21. Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.

Conclusion

22. As part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) team have approved the City Corporation to become involved in QGC activities. It is proposed that the City Corporation take an active role in the QGC activities over the course of the next 14 months and align activities in numerous locations around supporting the QGC campaign, through the creation and promotion of QGC activities across the Square Mile and the Open Spaces, engaging the Lord Mayor, school groups and wider communities.

Appendix – Proposed Planting Projects

Contact

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Appendix One: Queen's Green Canopy – Proposed Tree Planting Projects at Epping Forest

LOCATION	CMPT	LA area	PLANTING TYPE	DETAILS	Tree Numbers (Est)
Wanstead Flats	38	LBWF	Copse	<p>Create a Platinum Jubilee copse on Wanstead Flats to reflect the existing Coronation Copse planted in 1953. Two possible woodland creation options are being considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new 50-tree plantation planted by Commonwealth Commissioners during the Commonwealth Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in London. This would use 6-foot standard tree planting stock plus watering system • A new 2268 tree and shrub copse planted by the local community using 60-90 cm planting and planted at 2.1m spacing. 	50/2300
Whipps Cross Road	36	LBWF	Avenue	There are a number of gaps in the fastigate Hornbeam Avenue established along the Whipps Cross Road as part of the 2012 Olympics celebration. Gapping-up these areas has been requested to achieve a more complete tree line. The Jubilee is an opportunity to progress this project. 6-foot standard trees required plus watering system	10
Chingford Golf Course	26	LBWF	Individual	Chingford Golf Course has been associated with the Royal Epping Golf club since 1888. A ceremonial planting of at least one tree to mark the Jubilee and the Royal association is proposed. Individual tree planted to fit in with the golf play, standard 6-foot tree with stake and individual tree protection from deer	1
Gifford Wood	53	EFDC	Woodland	A project to commemorate the contribution of Sir Roger Gifford to the City of London is currently being progressed. With the agreement of Sir Roger's widow, it is proposed that additional Jubilee trees be added to Sir Roger's memorial tree planting project. Standard 6-foot tree with stake and individual tree protection from deer	3
Platinum Oaks			Individual	Each local authority ward in which Epping Forest and the Buffer lands lies to be offered a tree planting opportunity on Epping Forest land. Single 6-foot standard oak tree with watering systems/deer protection as required	25
Coopersale Common	56		Orchard	A Jubilee orchard of 70 apple trees planted with community involvement on Coopersale Common. All trees will require deer protection.	70

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Committees: Corporate Projects Board - <i>for decision</i> Epping Forest and Commons Committee - <i>for decision</i> Project Sub - <i>for decision</i>	Dates: 02 February 2022 09 May 2022 26 May 2022
Subject: Provision of car park charging infrastructure across the Commons Division at car parks at Burnham Beeches, Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs. Unique Project Identifier: 12063	Gateway 6: Outcome Report Light
Report of: Director of Open Spaces Report Author: Andy Barnard. Asst Director, The Commons	For Decision
<h2 style="margin: 0;">PUBLIC</h2>	

Summary

1. Status update	Project Description: A project to provide infrastructure to enable the introduction of charges for the parking of cars at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs and to improve existing infrastructure at Burnham Beeches. RAG Status: Green Risk Status: Low Costed Risk Provision Utilised: £0 Final Outturn Cost: £120,045
2. Next steps and requested decisions	Requested Decisions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Note this G6 report.</i> 2. <i>Approve closure of this project</i>
3. Key conclusions	The project was delivered in its entirety within budget but to a slightly lengthier timeline due to severe disruption/impacts of Covid throughout the timetabled delivery period. As such the car parking charge infrastructure was fully operational from January 2021 rather than October 2020.

Hardware and software have been working reliably since installation. Car park income is now being realised across all three project sites and currently exceeding the £86,000 annual target set out in the G5 report with the first 11 months having accrued £204,000. Members should note that the early Covid period saw several months of exceptional (2x) use of the open spaces which has inflated income to a very significant extent. It is highly unlikely that this level of income will be achieved in more normal times however, confidence remains that the original income targets remain achievable.

Initial outlay of the project totalled £120,045. Income in year 1 has already exceeded the capital outlay (even allowing for the time value of money) and therefore this project is demonstrating a positive Net Present Value.

In general, the project was more complex than originally anticipated due to the multitude of possible technical solutions on the market. A soft market testing process helpfully refined the solutions so that the final tender specification best suited the remote geographic location of each car park and the available service utilities.

The project tender process was led by the Head Ranger of Burnham Beeches with design and technical expertise provided by District Enforcement and the City's IT systems team in the Chamberlains Dept. Pay by Phone was delivered by RingGo. Civil engineering and landscaping works were carried out by the City Surveyor. Provision of information signage was delivered by the local open spaces team.

Community consultation was delivered by the Open Spaces team via the established Consultative Groups at each open space coupled to newsletter and social media messaging prior, during and post, delivery phase. Given the nature of the project there was perhaps inevitably, still some local concern and resistance. All issues were dealt with by the Superintendent, Chairman of Epping Forest and local teams. The central media team were kept informed and primed should there be any wider press or reputational issues. These community concerns seem to have abated in recent months.

The introduction of Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras (ANPR) was perhaps the most technical issue but has proved of immense benefit as it automated the enforcement of charges and penalties for failure to pay thereby minimising input from local officers. ANPR has also helped to reduce antisocial behaviours on the sites (fly tipping, vandalism, overnight stays etc).

Main Report

Design & Delivery Review

4. Design into delivery	The design work described in the Gateway 5 report set out a clear project delivery pathway and this was very largely followed. The main disruptor was the Covid Pandemic. This led to a programme slippage of 3 months so that the infrastructure went live in a phased manner i.e. December 2020 at Burnham Beeches and January 2021 at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs rather than all in October 2020.
5. Options appraisal	<p>The options appraisal stage was critical to the successful outcome of the project. An early decision not to offer 'pay by cash' helped refine matters and focused activity on the need to offer a variety of other, operationally more efficient payment options to ensure visitors to the open space could pay either by phone or by card. This decision has also helped to reduce the local administration burden particularly at Burnham Beeches where previously cash payment was the only option with all the associated handling costs</p> <p>The use of ANPR ensured that enforcement could be carried out remotely by our existing contractor, District Enforcement, thereby ensuring minimal impact on the Ranger teams. Rangers at all three sites enforce parking charges where there is no ANPR i.e. occasional roadside parking offences and two Pay-by-Phone 'only' car parks at Burnham Beeches.</p>
6. Procurement route	Procurement reference number Prj-CoL- 16459 The services were procured by open tender (preceded by soft market testing) with the assessment and appointment process led by the Project Manager. The process attracted three good quality tenders. The interview process led to further refinement of the technical options/challenges (particularly links between software and hardware and banking/auditing). The option to test the car park charge machines recommended by each contractor ensured that we procured an appropriately robust system that was easy to operate by both car park users and staff.
7. Skills base	As this was a client led project it was project managed by the Head Ranger of Burnham Beeches who had some experience of car park infrastructure at that site. However, project managing the design and installation of an entirely new system was a different category of challenge and provided a steep learning curve. The Head Ranger surmounted all difficulties and acted as a first-class project manager. The City Surveyor has a wealth of experience in delivering this type of infrastructure and facilitated progress with the project manager and lead contractor as required. Software and data advice were a greater challenge with less clarity than was perhaps expected albeit all matters were successfully resolved.

v.April 2019

	<p>District Enforcement, Hectronic and RingGo provided training for the local Ranger and Administration teams on all new software and hardware issues.</p> <p>All new systems have been absorbed by the existing local teams. No new posts were created, or staff costs increased.</p>
8. Stakeholders	<p>Local communities were consulted via the established, local, consultative groups. Despite the ensuing Covid pandemic great effort was taken to explain that the introduction of car park charges was driven by 12% cuts being introduced in 2020/21 financial year. Discussions took place in a timely manner i.e. from January 2019 onwards and were the subject of site visits as well as formal meetings.</p> <p>Some individual objections were raised across all 3 open spaces once the social and local media campaigns had announced the project. These were mainly critical comments expressing doubt for the need for budget cuts. Another common criticism was that the City was being insensitive by introducing the charges during the pandemic. Local Parish, Borough and County Councillors were lobbied by some local residents and they in turn sought comment from the Superintendent asking for the project to be either delayed or cancelled entirely. The Superintendent, with Member support, resisted these views.</p> <p>Whilst the project has been delivered and most now accept the need to charge for car parking on the open spaces the matter is still occasionally being raised.</p>

Variation Review

9. Assessment of project against key milestones	<p>The key dates of the tender process (February-March 2020) were delivered on schedule. The Covid pandemic occurred in March 2020 and matters became significantly trickier as contractors were unable to visit the sites and plan civil engineering works. The October 2020 'go live' deadline for all three sites was missed but all parties worked hard to work to a new, phased, schedule with Burnham Beeches going live in early December 2020 and Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown following in late January 2022. This phased approach minimised loss of income to local risk budgets and allowed time to test equipment /software and resolve any issues at Burnham Beeches before wider use.</p>
10. Assessment of project against Scope	<p>The project set out to introduce 7 day per week car park charges at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs and extend existing weekend car park charges at Burnham Beeches from weekends and bank holidays only to 7 days per week. The project was 'motivated' by</p>

v.April 2019

	<p>the need to meet 12% budget cuts commencing 2021/22. The project has met those criteria within budget albeit to a slightly delayed deadline.</p> <p>The project has also delivered some fringe benefits including reductions in vandalism, antisocial behaviour and vehicle related incursions all of which has helped to reduce pressures on local risk budgets and officer time. Decreasing use of the car park for non-open space activities e.g. dropping off and picking up students from local schools has also helped minimise the amount of unnecessary traffic entering and leaving the sites. Other activities such as professional dog walking has also reduced significantly at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs. Given the above, the sites now provide a more tranquil experience for the majority of visitors. Whilst there is some evidence that car numbers to the sites have reduced, there is also anecdotal evidence that the number of visitors walking and riding to the sites have increased.</p>
<p>11.Risks and issues</p>	<p><i>Did identified risk occur, if so what was the effect?</i></p> <p>Risk 3. IT connectivity. There was an unanticipated issue with software system compatibility that risked the project falling behind schedule in the later stages. The main issue being that the preferred software supplier (Lloyds) is different to the industry standard (World Pay). The Lloyds/World Pay software is used to accept onsite parking payments and slot them into the appropriate City budget. Despite World Pay being the City's second choice supplier the administration process to set up the necessary protocols, codes, mandates caused lengthy delays. However, these issues were resolved with the help of the Chamberlains IT Team prior to the go live date.</p> <p>Risk 5. Covid delaying ability to get on site to confirm details, delay supplies of materials etc. Closure of car parks during the early months of Covid. The pandemic led to a slight delay (2-3 months) to the 'go live' deadline and a phased approach delivery approach was taken to mitigate the worst impacts.</p> <p>Risk 7. Planning issues for signs, pay machines and poles. Planning matters for the introduction of new infrastructure are approved at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs. As the infrastructure at Burnham Beeches was a simple replacement of old with new it was determined at the contract stage that planning consent would not be required however, further discussions with the planning authority indicate that the ANPR pole and camera are 'additional' so a retrospective application is required. Given that</p>

	<p>approval for the other sites has already been given it is unlikely that it will be declined at Burnham Beeches. However, in a worst case scenario, the site would revert to pay by phone and via the new car park machines with compliance testing carried out by local staff, as delivered prior to ANPR. The pole and ANPR camera (value of approximately £4,000) would be stored should there be equipment failures on the other sites. This issue does not affect the City's right to apply, collect and enforce parking charges on the site.</p> <p>There was no costed risk provision for this project.</p>
12. Transition to BAU	<p><i>Did the project have a clear plan for transfer to operations / business as usual? Did this work well?</i></p> <p>The project was designed to minimise and where possible reduce existing staff duties and no new roles were created. Where impacts were unavoidable detailed training was provided, particularly in areas concerning the use of reconciliation software and to a lesser extent the use of equipment to serve Parking Charge Notices where ANPR is not present (roadside verges at all sites and two very small car parks at Burnham Beeches). Old infrastructure at BB was removed and replaced as described in this report as part of this project plan and quickly returned to BAU. For Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown this was a transition to a new business activity that has since settled into BAU.</p>

Value Review

13. Budget	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i></td> <td> Estimated cost (including risk): £130,000 Estimated cost (excluding risk): £130,000 </td> </tr> </table>		<i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i>	Estimated cost (including risk): £130,000 Estimated cost (excluding risk): £130,000																									
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<i>Other*</i>	£	£																											

v.April 2019

	<i>Total</i>	<i>£130,000</i>	<i>£120,045</i>
	<p>Staff costs were not included in the approved G5 report and are omitted here on that basis</p> <p>This account has been verified by the Assistant Director of The Commons.</p>		
14. Investment	<p>This was an invest to save project.</p> <p>The G5 estimated a return of £86,000/annum against a £130,000 investment.</p> <p>The first 12 months period is now complete albeit crossing two financial years. Actual income generated by this project in the first 12 months is £204,000.</p>		
15. Assessment of project against SMART objectives	<p>All objectives and key measures of success were met albeit the delivery deadline slipped by 2-3 months due to the Covid pandemic. See also comments in sections 5 and 10.</p>		
16. Key benefits realised	<p>This was Priorities Pot funded project. All key benefits have been realised. See also comments in sections 5 and 10.</p>		

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

17. Positive reflections	<p>Well led by a determined Project Manager with good partnership working with the City Surveyor and lead contractor. Technical solutions have all worked reliably. Impact on roles for existing staff minimised and successfully absorbed by teams without additional staff time required.</p> <p>Income targets have been exceeded due to exceptional visitor numbers during the covid period but will still be met in more normal years.</p> <p>The use of ANPR has automated the enforcement process and greatly reduced antisocial behaviour particularly at Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown to the benefit of local resources and the visiting public. The sites are designed to operate without ANPR or loss of income, should technical issues arise.</p>
18. Improvement reflections	<p>Several challenges arose with regard to the software systems used to accept onsite parking payments. Lloyds are the City's preferred supplier, but the industry standard is World Pay. Despite World Pay being the City's second choice supplier this issue caused lengthy delays when setting up the necessary protocols, codes, mandates etc albeit these were resolved without impairment to the project timetable.</p>
19. Sharing best practice	<p>Experience already being shared with other open spaces carrying out similar projects</p>

v. April 2019

20.AOB	N/A
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Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Background report	Gateway 5. 30th March 2020. Provision of car park charging infrastructure across The Commons Division at carparks at Burnham Beeches, Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs.

Contact

Report Author	Andy Barnard.
Email Address	Andy.barnard@cityoflondon.gov.uk
Telephone Number	07850 764592

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Project Coversheet

[1] Ownership & Status

UPI: 12063

Core Project Name: Provision of car park charging infrastructure across The Commons Division at carparks at Burnham Beeches, Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs

Programme Affiliation (if applicable): Priorities Investment Pot

Project Manager: Martin Hartup

Definition of need:

The Commons relies on income to deliver key operational services.

The introduction of car park charges will help the Commons Division meet the City Corporation's current and imminent savings targets and help to mitigate their impact on service provision.

Car park charges have been levied at Burnham Beeches since 2011. The current car park charge machines date from 2007 when they were used to collect voluntary car park payments. They require urgent replacement due to their age and maintenance issues. Failure to replace them risks a significant shortfall in existing local risk budgets.

Car parking is currently free at Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown Commons. There is currently no car park charging infrastructure on these two sites and this is required to enable charges to be made.

Project description

Review the current car park charging infrastructure at Burnham Beeches. Scope the technical issues and infrastructure requirements to replace aging equipment and modernise.

Scope the technical issues, infrastructure requirements and income potential at Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs car parks.

Review enforcement procedures, back office and third-party charges for each technological option across all three sites.

Each site will have its own special requirements.

Summarise the above at Gateway 5.

Key measures of success:

1. Operational car park charge system at all locations by October 2020
2. Meet known Corporate financial savings targets by providing additional income of around £56,000/annum from Riddlesdown and Farthing Downs car parks whilst increasing the income target at Burnham Beeches by £30,000 via a change to 7 day/week charges
3. Reduced illegal, vehicle related incursions
4. Improved services for visitors via new payment options.

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<p>Expected timeframe for the project delivery: Delivered by October 2020</p> <p>Key Milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway 5 authority to start works approval – Original date, Sept 2019. Now March 30th 2020 • To appoint contractors identified in tender process. March 2020 to provide and install carpark charging infrastructure at all locations. • Final detailed planning phase 1. April – June 2020 • Construction Phase 2 – Original dates, Oct 2019 – March 2020. Now June 2020 – September 2020) <p>Are we on track for completing the project against the expected timeframe for project delivery? Yes</p> <p>Has this project generated public or media impact and response which the City of London has needed to manage or is managing?</p> <p>To date only minor social media comment at Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown</p>
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<p>[2] Finance and Costed Risk</p>
<p>Headline Financial, Scope and Design Changes: Update relevant section post report approval. Add multiple entries to relevant box if issues reports are approved. Note this section is to tell the 'project story' of how we reached the current position outlined in the main report.</p>
<p>'Project Briefing'</p> <p>G1 PIP opportunity outline approved by Chief Officer 30/05/218:</p> <p>Funding of £130,000 secured via the central 'Priorities Investment Pot' in May – July 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £130,000 • Costed Risk Against the Project: 0 • Estimated Programme Dates: July 2018- March 2020 <p><i>Scope/Design Change and Impact:</i></p>
<p>'Project Proposal' G2 report (as approved by PSC 22/032019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £130,000 • Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk) £5,000 • Spend to date: £5,000 • Estimated Programme Dates: Oct 2019 – March 2020 <p><i>Scope/Design Change and Impact:</i> No changes to scope of project</p>
<p>'Authority to start Work' G5 report (Chief Officer xx/03/20):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £130,000 • Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk) £125000 • Spend to date: £5000 • Estimated Programme Dates: April – October 2020 <p><i>Scope/Design Change and Impact:</i> No changes to scope of project</p>
<p>Total anticipated on-going commitment post-delivery</p>

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Annual Income generation as indicated above to mitigate budget cuts. Income targets include all administrative 'back office costs' associated with the car park payments and enforcement

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Committee name: Epping Forest and Commons Committee	9 May 2022
Subject: Draft Management Plans and Public Consultation results – Farthing Downs, Riddlesdown, Kenley Common & Coulsdon Common	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 11, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Juliemma McLoughlin: Executive Director. Environment Dept.	For Decision
Report author: Assistant Director - The Commons – Natural Environment.	

Summary

New 10-year, draft management plans have been produced for the four Coulsdon Commons i.e. Farthing Downs, Riddlesdown, Kenley Common & Coulsdon Common, to guide the City Corporation's work on those sites. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with a wide range of stakeholders prior to the production of these final draft versions.

Natural England’s (NE) Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) has until now, provided the majority of the funding for the conservation works associated with previous management plans. This source of grant funding expired in March 2021. In September 2021, a fresh grant application was submitted and approved by NE’s under the new ‘Countryside Stewardship Scheme’ (CSS).

This new grant will ensure that The Commons charities can continue essential conservation works for the duration of the proposed management plans. The cost of other works and services within these draft plans will be met from the local risk budget envelope agreed by Members as part of the City Corporation’s annual budget setting process

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- i. Approve the 4 final, draft management plans (Appendices 1 - 4) and associated consultation reports (Appendices 5 - 8) so that they can be submitted to Natural England for ratification and implementation as of 1st April 2022 (NB. to be backdated due to cancellation of March 2022 meeting of this committee)

Main Report

Background

1. The transfer of the four Coulsdon Commons Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve to the City of London Corporation was completed in 1883.
2. Since their acquisition, The Commons team based at the Merlewood Estate Office has actively managed the provision of visitor and conservation services. Community engagement has been central to the successful management of these sites in more recent years.
3. A summary list of achievements during the period of the last plans includes:

All four Commons

- i. In 2019 the four Coulsdon Commons became part of England's newest National Nature Reserve (NNR) known as the South London Downs NNR. This designation brought together 1030 acres of land managed by the City of London Corporation and the London Borough of Croydon to create a linked downland landscape rich in nature and opportunities to engage with the natural world.
- ii. In 2016 the team were the first to trial the new *NoFence®* technology, this has proven to be ground-breaking in the way we will (and do) manage these sites and ensure our grazing remains specific and targeted to meet our conservation objectives. This technology has subsequently been used at other open spaces such as Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest.

Kenley Common

- i. Kenley Revival Project - a National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) project which set out to preserve and protect this significant reminder of Britain's wartime history as the most complete fighter airfield associated with the Battle of Britain and to reveal the significant contribution made by the people who shaped Kenley's history.
- ii. Chalk grassland restoration - the completion of the restoration of Whyteleafe Bank and Hilltop to chalk grassland from scrub and secondary woodland.
- iii. A doubling of the number of conservation volunteer hours, now exceeding 1,000 hours per year.
- iv. Recorded several new species including red kite, peregrine falcon, cave spider, southern marsh orchid and the purple emperor butterfly.
- v. Introduced private rental of vacant lodge to support the charities local risk budgets.

Coulsdon Common

- i. Chalk grassland restoration - through the clearing of over mature scrub, fencing and grazing.
- ii. Wood pasture restoration - this valuable and now rare habitat has been restored at the Grove.

- iii. Woodland management - new woodland rides created across the common to create wildlife corridors and link diverse habitats for the benefit of biodiversity.
- iv. Community involvement, access and recreation - volunteers now average 1200 hours per year. Our events and education offers have grown significantly and now include self-guided trails, bat walks, storytelling, school visits and ranger led talks at community events.

Riddlesdown

- i. Chalk grassland restoration - the creation of a continuous ribbon of chalk grassland which links the fragile habitats of Riddlesdown with the wider landscapes of partner sites. The clearance of over mature scrub in Famet and the woodland edges of the Bull Pen have created a more traditional, species rich, open and diverse landscape.
- ii. Community involvement, access and recreation - a significant increase in the 'family friendly' events programme including self-guided trails, bat walks, forest school activities and ranger led educational visits. Volunteer numbers have more than doubled, achieving in excess of 1500 hours per year.
- iii. Heritage interpretation improved through the development of innovative signage and ranger led guided walks. Interpretation is updated monthly with historical points of interest linked to local stories.
- iv. Introduction of goats to help with the management of the steep chalk slopes in the quarry which were dominated by coarse vegetation and colonisation by silver birch and goat willow. This has allowed kidney vetch to thrive across the sunny slopes and in turn the myriad invertebrate populations it supports.
- v. Introduced car park charges to support the charities local risk budgets.

Farthing Downs

- i. Chalk grassland restoration - we have now achieved the vision of creating a chalk grassland mosaic across all of the site with a variety of age classes and structure favourable for invertebrates, birds and small mammals
- ii. Ditch and bank restoration - protection of the site from illegal trespass achieved through the reinstatement of the historical site boundaries.
- iii. Speed limit reduction and no parking zone introduced along the length of Ditches Lane
- iv. Reduction in the extent of amenity mowing in favour of more diverse grassland that is now managed through haymaking and grazing
- v. Renewed focus on events and community engagement where wildlife themed events have become popular. The volunteers contribute over 820 hours each year to the management of the site.
- vi. Introduced car park charges and business rental of vacant building to support the charities local risk budgets

Previous Management Plans

- 4. The previous management plans for the four commons each ran for a 10-year period commencing 1st April 2011, expiring on 31st March 2021. The local Head Ranger and his team have produced four new draft management plans to set out the continuation of this work. **Appendices 1- 4.**

Consultation.

5. Officers consulted extensively during the production of these plans. External audiences included local communities, Local Authorities, consultative groups and conservation specialists.
6. The Covid-19 pandemic excluded public gatherings to deliver consultation exercises so web based exercises were undertaken for each draft management plan using Survey Monkey. The feedback from these surveys was generally very supportive of the contents of the draft plans and the work of the local team. Other feedback reflected a desire for more facilities such as refreshments, better control of dogs by owners and removal of car park charges, although in every instance the number of comments was low.
7. Members approved the timetable for these draft plans in previous reports to this Committee of January and September 2020. The arrival of the Covid -19 pandemic prevented members from visiting the sites to assess the plans in earlier draft form.

Proposals

8. It is proposed that once approved by the Committee, the four management plans will be forwarded to NE for ratification.
9. The work programmes within the draft plans are already closely aligned to the Countryside Stewardship Grant and payments are flowing.

Options.

Option 1. Approve the draft management plans. **This is the recommended option.**

Option 2. Require amendments to either or both plans. **Not recommended**

Strategic Implications.

Option 1. Will allow the plans to be forwarded to NE for ratification.

Option 2. If members require amendments to the draft plans and they are of a significant nature, the plans may require further external consultation and have consequences with regard to Countryside Stewardship payments.

Financial Implications.

10. Production costs of £10,000 for the draft management plans have been met from local risk budgets. Costs included consultation events, additional mapping/surveys and the publication of the final documents.
11. Conservation work over the previous 10-year period of the earlier management plans was supported by grant income from the Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS). That grant, and 'area payments' under the Rural Payment Agency's Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), covered the majority of costs associated with the conservation management of the nationally important habitats. **See Table 1.**

Table 1.

Annual Grant Income. 2011 - 2021	The Four Coulsdon Commons
Environmental Stewardship Scheme	£29,000
Basic Payment Scheme	£23,000

Table 2

Annual Grant Income. 2022 - 2027	The Four Coulsdon Commons plus West Wickham & Spring Park
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	£31,450
Basic Payment Scheme	2022: £19,320. 2023: £15,697. 2024: £12,075. 2025: £9,800. 2026: £6,600. 2027: £3,300

12. Countryside Stewardship grant funding for the four Commons and West Wickham Common and Spring Park commenced 1st January 2022. **Tables 1 & 2** demonstrate that income has remained stable since the cessation of ESS and introduction of CSS.
13. DEFRA are reducing BPS payments in a phased manner as shown in **Tables 2 and 3** and will cease altogether from 2027. This reduction will mean an aggregate net loss, including the reduction this year, of £19,699 the local risk budgets that support the conservation management of the sites by 2027. This loss has been balanced by additional income generated by the sites from car park charges and property rentals.

Table 3.

Payment Band	Scheme Year			
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Up to £30,000	5%	20%	35%	50%
£30,000 - £50,000	10%	25%	40%	50%
£50,000 - £150,000	20%	35%	55%	65%
More than £150,000	25%	40%	55%	70%

Resource Implications

14. Having been consulted on the production of this report the Human Resources Department has concluded that there are no likely adverse implications.

Equalities Implications

15. Your Assistant Director has assessed the need for an Equality Analysis for the draft management plans. The first step under such circumstances is to carry out a 'Test of Relevance' to determine any negative, positive or neutral impacts of the draft plan. In this instance, the test of relevance concluded 'no negative impacts' so no further assessment was required.

Climate implications

16. The draft management plans ensure a positive contribution to the City's aims of carbon neutrality for its scope 1 and scope 2 emissions by 2027.

Charity Implications

17. The four Coulsdon Commons are all part of the Coulsdon Commons charity number: 232989
18. Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to these Charities must be taken in the best interests of the Charities.

Conclusion

19. Four new management plans have been developed following extensive consultation exercises with conservation experts and the public.
20. Should Members approve the 4 draft management plans they must then be ratified by Natural England.
21. Grant applications under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme were developed in lock step with the development of these draft plans and were successful.
22. Funding of the conservation projects listed in the draft plans is under increasing pressure. Adjustments to ecological and recreational services during the period of these plans will be required if available resources decrease further.

Appendices (TO FOLLOW)

- Appendix 1. (Draft) Management Plan for Kenley Common 2022 – 2032.
- Appendix 2. (Draft) Management Plan for Farthing Downs 2022 – 2032.
- Appendix 3. (Draft) Management Plan for Coulsdon Common 2022 – 2032.
- Appendix 4. (Draft) Management Plan for Riddlesdown 2022 – 2032.
- Appendix 5. Kenley Common- Survey Monkey public consultation report 2022.
- Appendix 6. Farthing Downs -Survey Monkey public consultation report 2022.
- Appendix 7. Coulsdon Common- Survey Monkey public consultation report 2022.
- Appendix 8. Riddlesdown- Survey Monkey public consultation report 2022.

Background Papers:

- January 2020 Timetable report
- September 2020 Timetable report
- Equalities Impact Assessment – Test of Relevance

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