

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Queen's Park Consultative Group	27 March 2019
<b>Subject:</b> Superintendent's Update – Queen's Park	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Bob Warnock, Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Richard Gentry, Open Spaces Department	

### Summary

This report provides an update on the management of the Park and operational activities of the Queen's Park Team since the previous meeting of this group in October 2018.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Members provide feedback on the proposed events for 2019, as set out in paragraph 34 and Appendix 3 and the proposed event at paragraph 36.
- That the views and comments of the Queen's Park Consultative Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 5 June 2019.

### Main Report

#### Operational Management

1. Over the winter months the Queen's Park team continues to collect from the ground leaf litter. Leaves collected in public spaces can make good leaf mould which could be put to use in seed-sowing compost, or mixed equally with sharp sand, garden compost and good quality soil for use as potting compost. Sadly, Queen's Park lacks the space to enable this process to be effectively managed. Any leaf litter collected is deposited in a green waste container and it's removed from site by our contractor.
2. Over a four-week period in November 2018, a mulching deck was hired. The purpose of this was to trial a machine which could reduce the amount of staff time collecting leaf litter, allowing leaves to be mulched and left on the ground. Decomposing leaf litter releases nutrients into the soil and also keeps it moist.
3. The staff member who used the mulching deck considered it a success, reducing staff time in the collection of leaf litter. A decision will be made to consider whether the Park invests in a mulching deck or one is hired in the future.
4. Since September 2018, the UK has been hit by 6 storms. Most recently storm Gareth hit the UK 11 March 2019. These storms, may on occasion, require the

City of London Corporation to restrict access, or close certain areas of its Open Spaces. These measures are in place, taking in to consideration the safety of our visitors and staff.

5. The Team Leader has undertaken a review of the 65 park benches. Working with colleagues, an asset database is being developed and bench locations are being plotted on a map of the Park. This will enable improved management of our benches, including maintenance and allocation of locations for memorial benches.
6. The Park has recently taken delivery of an electric pedestrian platform truck, this will be used to aid the collection of waste and recycling and the movement of materials around the Park. The truck will reduce vehicle movements.
7. An Apprentice appointed within the Golders Hill Zoo team is supporting the management of the Children's Farm in the Park two days a week. The Apprentice is in the final year of his animal husbandry apprenticeship having spent the first two years at the Animal Reception Centre.
8. The Park is currently recruiting to two vacant posts, a Team Leader and an Animal Keeper and Engagement Assistant.

### **Projects and Programmes**

9. The Park Manager is continuing to work with The Parks Agency, to develop further, the Queen's Park Woodland Walk Management Plan. An update on the project will be provided at the March Consultative Group meeting. As part of this project a focus group meeting has been arranged which we hope members of this group will be able to attend.
10. A mid term review of the Queen's Park Conservation Management Plan 2014 – 2023 will be taking place in 2019. This plan was approved by this Group in June 2014 and the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee in September 2014. The review will ensure the Plan remains current and relevant, focusing on a review of actions and outcomes.
11. Regarding the redevelopment of the Sand Pit and rebuild of the Public Toilet, in January 2019, the Superintendent presented a Gateway 2 Report to the Project Sub Committee. This Committee has given approval to proceed to the next Gateway process (Gateway 3).
12. The Options Appraisal (Gateway 3) report will set out an outline of the options summarised at Project Proposal stage (Gateway 1/2). The City of London, Projects Sub Committee have asked that Officers consider all the options as they submit the Gateway 3 report to the next stage of the process.
13. Tennis Courts 1- 6 will be painted and relined in 2019. The Park Manager is in consultation with the City Surveyor's Department to agree a date which causes the least disruption to users but allows the works to be completed at an appropriate time of year.
14. Funding will be sought during the next round of applications from the Wembley National Stadium Trust. The next application window is due to open in spring 2019. Funding will enable the City of London to procure a tennis practice wall

which could be installed by the tennis courts. Anticipated cost is between £1,500 - £2,000.

15. The Cyclical Works Programme for 2019/20 has an allocation of £35,000 for building refurbishment.
16. The Park Manager will provide an update on the redevelopment of the Children's Farm on a walk prior to and during the Consultative Group meeting. This has been achieved through an effective collaboration between members of staff from across the Division.
17. The three-year Divisional Plan 2019-2022 (Appendix 1) has been reformatted to reflect the outcomes in the Management Strategy. The projects are listed according to their primary Outcome and links to the other Outcomes are referenced. This will assist with monitoring progress, reporting on the impact of our work and to share and celebrate success. A transition document has been prepared which records the changes from the Divisional Plan 2018-2021.
18. The Annual Work Programme 2019-2020 (Appendix 2) establishes our commitments for the year and comprises of both Cyclical Work and Project Work. It is the mechanism for prioritisation, planning and delivery and demonstrates how our work contributes to the Outcomes of the Management Strategy.

### **Sustainability**

19. The Divisional Waste and Recycling Review is now well under way. Several options are being investigated to improve the current service, both in terms of sustainability and cost effectiveness. For the Financial Year 2018/19 Qtr. 1 – to Qtr. 3 the Park incurred costs for the collection of waste, including dog waste, recycling and skip hire costs. These costs equate to £ 30,007.51 and include costs for the removal of materials as part of the redevelopment of the Farm.
20. In partnership with the London Borough of Brent and their contractor, Veolia, the Park was a location for the recycling of Christmas trees. In excess of 1,200 trees were collected which equated to 11 tonnes. This process required intervention from the team by them having to collect some trees which had been left at entrance gates.

### **Ecology and Environment**

21. Semi-Permanent LED lights have been installed in a London Plane tree, located adjacent to the café. These lights were lit over the festive period as an alternative to the installation of a Christmas Tree with lights. Following positive feedback, the Park Manager proposes to install further lights in trees adjacent to the London Plane, making this a feature, not only for the Festive Period, but to be used on other occasions and events during the year.
22. The Hampstead Heath Arboricultural Team have carried out a number of tree related tasks in the Park since October 2018. These have included: The felling and removal of a dead Horse Chestnut on the western side of the main field, Air Spade excavation of trench through roots of London Plane opposite café on main field to assist with installation of power supply and the annual inspection of all park internal trees.

23. An update on Oak Processionary Moth is given in a separate report which will be presented to this G.

### **Visitors and Community**

24. A successful event which begun in December 2016 is the Junior Parkrun. This activity is attracting an average of 72 children each week, who run 2K on a Sunday morning around the Park. This event does not involve any staff resource.
25. A regular group play tag rugby in the Park between April – August. A licence fee is charged for this activity.
26. The City of London maintain a dialogue with the Lawn Tennis Association, focussing on how court usage can be increased, and users benefit from opportunities to develop their game. The City of London will be scheduling tennis courses for all abilities and ages from April 2019.
27. Following the granting of a licence for Weddings and Civil Ceremonies, the Bandstand has a confirmed booking for a wedding ceremony in June 2019. A tentative enquiry has been made for a wedding in May 2020 from a local resident.
28. A verbal update will be provided at this meeting on the Queen's Park Café.

### **Learning and Schools**

29. The Learning Project Officer will be supporting a group of special education needs sixth form students who will be working in the reopened Farm at the end of March. The Queen's Park Team, will provide support for future learning events planned for the spring and summer of 2019.
30. Locally the staff are hosting work experience sessions for special educational needs adults. The sessions are held for 2 hours each week with 2 pupils attending over a 6-week period. This is the fifth year we have in collaboration with Westminster College, sessions include gardening and animal care. The feedback from the pupils and tutors from Westminster College are positive making these sessions very meaningful.

### **Volunteering**

31. The Divisional Volunteering Improvement Group led by the Park Manager continues to meet and discuss opportunities across the Division. The Park has a number of volunteers who maintain the vegetable area behind the café. Transition Towns have been asked to support with the upkeep of vegetable planters Children's Farm, which will be located in the Farm, with some of the produce being used to feed the animals in the facility.

### **Events**

32. A small Christmas Fayre took place on the 8-9 December 2018 between 11am – 5pm on the café forecourt. Regent Brass attended and played festive tunes and John Parnham, the supplier of fair rides at Whitsun, provided a children's ride at no cost to users or the City of London as a gesture of good will.

33. To guide future events in Queen's Park, a Site Specific Events Policy has been adopted, following comments from this Group and the approval of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.
34. The Events Policy will continue to inform the future usage of the site and will apply to events taking place after 1 April 2019. The Park Manager has already been approached in relation to the below proposed events in 2019:
  - John Parnham Children's Fun Fair, 24th to 28th May, two-day break on 29th and 30<sup>th</sup>, reopen 31st May to 2nd June.
  - Shakespeare in the Squares – 22 June 2019
  - Queen's Park Book Festival – 29 and 30 June 2019
  - Brass Bands on the Bandstand June – August (Dates TBC)
  - Children's Entertainment (each Mon and Wed in August)
  - Queen's Park Day – 15 September 2019
35. The views of Members are sought regarding these proposed events, which have all previously been successfully held in the Park. (Appendix 3).
36. The City of London have received a tentative enquiry about hosting Queen's Park the Opera in July 2020. The event organisers are yet to secure funding or the permission of the City of London. The event is proposed to be held under a big top. The purpose is to promote and advance music education to members of the public and in particular children in the United Kingdom by teaching musical literacy and performance skills through workshops, concerts and production of musical theatre. The views of members are sought on this venture.
37. In February 2018, Brent won the award for London Borough of Culture 2020. The City of London look forward to an opportunity of working in partnership with Brent as the Borough celebrates a year-long collaborative cultural programme.

### **Income and Expenditure**

38. The Superintendent will provide a verbal update of income and expenditure at the meeting. (Appendix 4).

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

39. The Open Spaces Department and Queen's Park actively contributes to the following Corporate Plan 2018 – 23 aims and outcomes:

#### **Contribute to a flourishing society**

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential
- Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need

### **Shape outstanding environments**

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

### **Support a thriving economy**

- Our land management supports local businesses and enterprises

### **Conclusion**

**40.** The City of London continues to deliver a much-loved green space in the heart of a multi-cultural urban environment. The City of London is looking forward to the opportunity to work in partnership in 2020 with the London Borough of Brent as they celebrate the London Borough of Culture 2020.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Divisional Plan 2019-2022
- Appendix 2 – Annual Work Programme 2019/20
- Appendix 3 – Queen’s Park 2019 Events Programme
- Appendix 4 – Income and Expenditure 2018/19

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