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| Committee(s): Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee | Date: 13 November 2019 |
| Subject: Queen's Park Café – Engagement and Consultation Exercise | Public |
| Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath | For Decision |
| Report author: Richard Gentry | |

Summary

Following the termination of the café lease at the Queen's Park Café in October 2019 The City of London Corporation appointed Groundwork London to develop and deliver a public engagement and consultation exercise to inform future lease arrangements at the Queen's Park Café.

This report provides feedback to this Committee on the public user engagement and consultation exercise. It describes the key findings of the engagement and consultation process and makes recommendations in respect of the use of data gathered to inform future café tenders.

This report also sets out a revised timeline for the delivery of this project for the tendering of the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café and the Queen's Park Café.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- Members note the outcomes of the public engagement and consultation undertaken by Groundwork London (Appendix 1).
- Members agree the revised timeline for the tendering of the Queen's Park Café and the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café (Para 12).
- Members agree that further consultation is carried out with the Queen's Park Consultative Group and the Highgate Wood Consultative Group regarding the development of tender documentation supporting the tender process of both cafés (Para 13).

Main Report

Background

1. Urban Leisure Group (ULG) terminated the lease for the Queen's Park Café in October 2019. The café is currently being managed by Hoxton Beach under a tenancy at will.
2. Following the termination of the lease by ULG it was agreed that further public user engagement and consultation would take place at Queen's Park to inform the development of the tender pack.
3. The Consultation Report is based upon two pop up events in the Park, a focus group session with members of the local residents' association and an online questionnaire. The engagement and consultation took place between 15 September – 14 October 2019.
4. Public user engagement and consultation was previously carried out in Highgate Wood in October 2016. The feedback from this and overarching themes from the most recent Queen's Park engagement exercise will inform the tender pack for the Pavilion Café.

Current Position

5. Highgate Wood Pavilion Café is currently being managed by Hoxton Beach on a tenancy at will following the departure of the previous proprietor in March 2018.
6. The current rent received from the tenant at Queen's Park will have an impact on the Parks local risk budget, with a reduction of income over the current financial year from the café facility.

Engagement and Consultation

7. Groundwork London deployed a number of different methodologies in order to ensure that the views and aspirations of both current and potential users of the Queen's Park café were accounted for in the process.
8. An online questionnaire was developed, this was open to the public from 15 September 2019 – 14 October 2019. A total of 440 questionnaires were completed. A detailed analysis of the results of the survey can be found at Appendix 1.
9. Two pop events were held in Queen's Park on 15 September 2019 and 2 October 2019. Participants were offered the opportunity to leave comments. These events attracted 318 people and 89 individual comments.
10. An onsite focus group meeting was held with representative from the local residents' association. The purpose of this group was to delve deeper into issues and aspirations of the Park users which were coming through the questionnaire and other engagement events.

11. Overall, the key messages from the engagement exercise is that the Management of the Queen's Park Café should have:

- Strong links with the local community
- Be passionate about making the café an integral part of the community
- Be innovative and creative
- Cater for a diverse community
- A diversity of seasonal activities
- Offer quality food at affordable prices
- Provide a family friendly offer
- Be environmentally aware
- Offer a range of payment options

Timeline

12. It has taken longer than initially expected to complete the engagement and consultation exercise at Queen's Park. Consequently, the Superintendent recommends that the timeline for the delivery of this project is revised, allowing Officers sufficient time to review the feedback from the consultation exercise and to consult further with the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Consultative Groups in the development of the tender packs.

- 13 November 2019 – Give feedback to the HHHWQPC on the learning from the public engagement and consultation and discuss the proposed tender methodology.
- 14 November 2019 - Share the Ground Work report with the Queen's Park and Highgate Wood Consultative Groups.
- December 2019 – Taking account of feedback develop the tender packs for the Highgate Wood Pavilion and Queen's Park Cafés.
- December / January 2020 – Consult with Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Consultative Groups on draft tender documents / expected outcomes.
- January 2020 – Present draft tender process methodology to Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee. Seek Committee approval to proceed with tender process.
- January 2020 – City Surveyors Department to complete planned Cyclical Work Programme works at Highgate Wood Café.
- February - April 2020 - Period of tendering exercise for Highgate Wood Pavilion and Queen's Park Cafés.
- 11 March 2020 – Update given to the HHHWQPC on the current position of the tender of the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Cafés.
- April 2020 - Evaluation of the Café tender submissions.
- Late April 2020 – Evaluation of submissions concluded.
- 3 June 2020 – HHHWQPC agree the award of the leases for the Highgate Wood Pavilion and Queen's Park Cafes
- June 2020 - Lease agreed, begin lease mobilisation

Proposal

13. It is recommended that further consultation is carried out with the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Consultative Groups in the development of the tender packs.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. Highgate Wood & Queen's Park, Kilburn is a registered charity, for which the City of London Corporation is the Trustee. The purpose of the charity is the preservation of Highgate Wood & Queen's Park for the exercise and recreation of the public. The HHHWQPC manages Highgate Wood and Queen's Park on behalf of the City of London Corporation and must take decisions in the best interests of the charity.
15. The provision of Café facilities provides income that contributes to the maintenance of the open spaces, and the cafés must be let on the best terms that can reasonably be obtained for the charity, in order to comply with the duties of the Trustee. However, the cafés are also fundamentally part of the experience provided to users and the HHHWQPC may consider the wider social and environmental benefits that they bring to the open spaces.
16. In letting the Cafés for the longer terms that are now available under section 6 of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018, Members must have regard to the desirability of ensuring that the service or facility is provided to a satisfactory standard throughout the duration of the lease. Before granting a lease, the HHHWQPC must consult such persons or bodies as it thinks appropriate. Part II of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (which provides security of tenure for commercial tenancies) does not apply.
17. The letting of the Cafés at Highgate Wood and Queen's Park contributes towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporation Corporate Plan 2018-23: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environments, in particular the following Corporate Plan outcomes:
 - (4) Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.
 - (5) Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible.
 - (10) We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration.
 - (12) Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained.
18. It also meets the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Department Business Plan 2019-20: (a) Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.
19. A communications plan will be prepared to keep visitors informed throughout the tendering processes.
20. The rental income received from the letting of the Cafés will be reinvested in the management of Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Conclusion

21. The public engagement and consultation has provided the City Corporation with feedback which will assist the development of a tender pack for the Queen's Park Café.
22. Engagement with the Highgate Wood and the Queen's Park Consultative Groups will continue during the tender process.
23. The tender of the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café will follow the same timeline as the Queen's Park Café tender process.
24. The City of London (Open Spaces) Act 2018 provides the opportunity of a longer-term lease allowing greater continuity of service, investment in the facilities and development of the business.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Queen's Park Café Consultation Report, October 2019

Background Papers

Hampstead Heath Café Engagement (HHMC, 15 May 2017)

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