

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee	Date(s): 25/11/2020
Subject: Superintendents Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	
Report of: Open Spaces Department	For Decision
Report author: Bob Warnock, Superintendent	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park since September 2020.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Agree the Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum tree planting proposal as set out in para 15.
- Agree the Highgate Wood priorities that will then be included in the Plans for Future Periods section of the Annual Charity Report 2021/22 as set out in para 20.
- Agree the Queen's Park priorities will then be included in the Plans for Future Periods section of the Annual Charity Report for 2021/22 as set out in para 24.

Main Report

Coronavirus Emergency Response and Issues

1. Following the Government announcement on 2 November, and the start of the second National Lockdown, the following facilities have closed between 5 November – 2 December 2020. The Superintendent will provide a further update at the meeting and will continue to monitor the Government Guidance.
2. Closures include:
 - Parliament Hill Athletics Track

- Tennis Courts (Parliament Hill, Golders Hill Park and Queen's Park)
 - The Parliament Hill Fields Lido
 - The Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds
 - Weddings (Golders Hill Park & Queen's Park)
 - Children's Farm (Queen's Park)
 - Zoo (Golders Hill Park)
 - The pitch and putt (Queen's Park)
 - The Peggy Jay Centre/ One O'clock Club
 - The Adventure Playground and Clubhouse
 - Guardians Gym (at the Lido)
 - Winter Swimming Club
 - Football and Rugby
 - Volunteering
 - Licenced Events e.g. workshops, children's activities, Be Military Fit and the Hampstead Winter Swimming Club.
3. The Chair of this Committee wrote to the Secretary of State on 2 November, asking the Government to consider keeping outdoor sports open during the second National Lockdown, with strict social distancing and other COVID-secure measures in place (appendix 1).

Constabulary

4. The Constabulary Manager will provide a verbal update at the meeting.

Licencing

Forest Schools

5. Applications for short term licences to operate Forest Schools on the Heath and Highgate Wood have been received. The Superintendent and Conservation and Trees Manager have reviewed the applications and short-term licences are in the process of being issued. Forest School activity is permitted to take place during the second National Lockdown.
6. In early 2021 the Superintendent will form a small working group to progress the development of the licencing arrangements in the longer-term.

Ecology and Conservation Annual Work Programme November 2020

7. The following monitoring activities have taken place:
- Reptile and dragonfly monitoring by volunteers has continued.

- Detailed analysis of the Heath wide breeding bird survey begun in partnership with the Heath and Hampstead Society is being undertaken with selected territorial maps produced.
8. The following works have been undertaken as part of the Annual Work Programme (AWP):
 - Grassland management has been undertaken in August and September with most of the planned cutting completed.
 - Targeted desilting of the Sandy Heath ponds has been undertaken to maintain these ponds as important amphibian spawning sites.
 9. Officers are currently putting together the AWP for 2021/22 which will be presented to Members for discussion and approval at the next meeting in February 2021.

Contractors & Maintenance

10. At Parliament Hill, the main path which runs from the Highgate Road to the Staff Yard has been re-laid. The works took place between 5-9 October 2020.
11. The East Heath Car Park will be resurfaced, with works currently scheduled to start in early February 2021. The Jack Straw's Castle Car Park will be available for parking during the works.

Planning

12. The Superintendent will provide an update on the following planning applications:
 - 55 Fitzroy Park
 - Jack Straws Castle
 - Telecoms Mast (Spaniards Road)
 - 108 South Hill Park
 - Telecoms Mast (outside Ivy House)

Golders Hill Park Accessible Car Park

13. The Golders Hill Park Manger will provide an update at the meeting. Unfortunately, the tender process which took place during summer 2020 was impacted by COVID-19 and therefore the tender will be re-run.

Finance

14. The Director and Superintendent will provide a verbal update on the in-year position budget position and the draft budget for 2021/22.

Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum (DPNF) – Parliament Hill Tree Planting Proposal

15. The DPNF have written to the Superintendent/Chair to put forward proposals to plant additional London plane trees in the Parliament Hill area, to act as a long-term replacement for the mature plane trees within the area. A number of options were discussed by the HHCC at their walk on 17 October, and at the virtual meeting of the HHCC on 19 October 2020. Members supported the option to plant a cluster of trees, as shown in appendix 2. If Members are agreeable, the tree planting will be incorporated into the 2021/22 Annual Work Programme, and the cost of the trees will be met from fundraising and sponsorship.

150 Year Anniversary of the Hampstead Heath Act

16. The Chair of the Committee to be heard.

Highgate Wood

17. The Highgate Wood Manager will provide a verbal update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
18. In previous years, Highgate Wood Consultative Group (HWCG) meetings have received a written report prepared by the Highgate Wood Manager, summarising recent achievements and issues at Highgate Wood.
19. It is proposed that the October 2021 meeting of the HWCG will be used to reflect on progress against priority projects to date and begin to set the objectives for the following business year, with the following spring meeting being used to finalise the end of year reports for onward submission to this Committee.
20. Members views on the revised priorities for April 2021 onwards are sought. The priorities will then be included in the Plans for Future Periods section of the Annual Charity Report when it is submitted in Spring 2021:
 - Deliver the tender for the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café.
 - Deliver the Annual Work Programme and in conjunction with the City Surveyor's Department, deliver the Cyclical Works Programme.
 - Continue to support the Roman Kiln Project and future funding applications.
 - The continued monitoring and regulation of Forest School activities and their impact on ecology and biodiversity.

Queen's Park

21. The Park Manager will provide a verbal update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
22. In recent years, Queen's Park Consultative Group (QPCG) meetings have received a written report prepared by the Park Manager, summarising recent achievements at Queen's Park.

23. It is proposed that the October 2021 meeting of the QPCG will be used to reflect on progress against priority projects to date and begin to set the objectives for the following business year, with the spring meeting being used to finalise the end of year reports for onward submission to this Committee.
24. Members views on the revised priorities for April 2021 onwards are sought. The priorities will then be included in the Plans for Future Periods section of the Annual Charity Report when it is submitted in Spring 2021:
 - Develop a project for the refurbishment of the Queen's Park Children's Sandpit.
 - Improve provision of equipment in the Children's Play Area.
 - Consult on, finalise and implement the Queen's Park Woodland Walk Management Plan 2020.
 - Mid Term Review of the Queen's Park Conservation Management Plan.
 - Develop a Park Activity Plan.
 - Deliver the tender for the Queen's Park Café.
 - Deliver the Annual Work Programme and in conjunction with the City Surveyor's Department, deliver the Cyclical Works Programme.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Correspondence with the Secretary of State, November 2020.
- Appendix 2 – Proposal for additional tree planting along the Broad Walk.

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