

Committee: Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee	Date: 24 February 2021
Subject: Report of Action Taken	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Information
Report author: Leanne Murphy, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

This report advises Members of action taken by the Town Clerk under urgency or delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chair since the last meeting of the Committee, in accordance with Standing Orders No. 41 (a) and (b).

Recommendation:

- That Members note the report.

Main Report

Urgency request: Departmental and Service Committee Budget Estimates 2021/22 [15.01.21]

1. A special meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee (HHHWQP) was held on 7 January 2021 to allow its Members the opportunity to review and approve the proposed 2021/22 budget in advance of its submission to the Finance Committee on 16 February 2021.
2. The Committee reviewed the proposed budget and Members voiced concerns about reducing the revenue budget when taken in combination with the impacts of a substantial reduction of the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP), a fivefold increase in footfall at its Open Spaces, and the expectation to achieve 12% savings in local risk when the current Covid-19 restrictions made revenue generation opportunities virtually impossible. In light of these concerns, Members approved recommendations (ii) and (iii) of the budget estimates report subject to a revision of the wording, and resolved that concerns about recommendation (i), the proposed 2021/22 revenue budget, should be drawn to the attention of the Resource Allocation Sub Committee (RASC). An urgent resolution was subsequently submitted to highlighting the position of the Committee.
3. At the RASC meeting on 11 January 2021, consideration was given to the concerns of the HHHWQP Committee. This resulted in a commitment to monitor the 2021/22 revenue budget and if during the financial year income losses due to the Covid-19 pandemic created unmanageable budget pressures, RASC could consider the overall settlement, whilst still expecting expenditure to be very carefully controlled (see Appendix 3).

4. The CWP will also be monitored during the financial year. Wear and tear as a result of the pandemic will be reviewed and any urgent health and safety items prioritised through discussions between the Superintendent and City Surveyors Department.
5. Following these clarifications, approval was sought and granted to the remaining recommendation in relation to the 2021/22 revenue budget.
6. This report was considered under urgency procedures in order that the HHHWQP Committee's budget could be approved in advance of its submission to the Finance Committee on 16 February 2021 and the Committee did not meet again until 24 February 2021.
7. Action taken: The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, agreed to:
 - approve the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee's proposed revenue budget for 2021/22 as set out in the report for submission to Finance Committee; and
 - agree that minor amendments for 2020/21 and 2021/22 budgets arising during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain.

Conclusion

8. Background papers for Members are available from Leanne Murphy on the email address provided below.

Leanne Murphy

Town Clerk's Department

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