

<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest and Commons Committee – For decision	<b>Dated:</b> 12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Epping Forest Consultative Committee – Request to Co-opt a further member (SEF 31/21)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	4, 10, 11, 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jo Hurst, Business Manager Epping Forest	

### Summary

In May 2021, your Committee appointed sixteen organisations to form the Epping Forest Consultative Committee for the next three years.

Unfortunately, due to Officer error, detail for one of the applicant organisations was misrepresented, and permission is sought to co-opt that organisation.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Acknowledge the error in the previous report to Committee regarding the application from Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society and co-opt them to attend the Epping Forest Consultative Committee until the next full selection process.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. In May 2021, the Epping Forest and Commons Committee selected sixteen organisations, from a list of applicants, to take part in the next three years of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.
2. Due to officer error, the membership processes of the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society were erroneously stated as being contrary to the EF

Consultative Committee Terms of Reference, which is not the case.

3. On discovery of the error, The Chairman and Deputy Chairman were informed and opted to invite the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society to the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June, with a view to co-opting the Society to become Consultative Committee members until the next selection round.
4. The Officer has apologised by telephone and in writing to the applicant.

### **Current Position**

5. Paragraph 28 of the Consultative Committee Terms of Reference states “Epping Forest and Commons Committee may appoint further members or co-opt representatives (for example subject matter experts) to attend where it deems appropriate.”
6. Had the membership processes and numbers of the Society been reported to your Committee correctly, it is likely they would have been appointed in preference to other organisations as their membership is relatively large.
7. As a courtesy, the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society were invited to, and did attend, the Consultative Committee meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Options**

8. The option to co-opt the Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society exists under the Terms of reference, and to do so acknowledges the details of their application, without detriment to other organisations who have also had their places confirmed.
9. Although the Terms of Reference recommend a membership of sixteen, the logistics of on-line meetings, which are likely to be a significant aspect of future business, do not make a small increase to seventeen unmanageable. Membership was at seventeen for most of the previous three years after Royal Epping Forest Golf Club were co-opted.

### **Proposals**

10. It is proposed that the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society are co-opted to the Epping Forest Consultative Committee until the next review of membership, due in 2023-24.

### **Key Data**

11. Strategic implications – The continued meetings of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee support the Corporate Plan items 4, 10, 11 and 12.

12. Financial and resource implications – The resources required for room hire (post pandemic), light refreshments, the publication of agendas; reports and minutes are provided by the Town Clerk’s Department.
13. Legal implications – The Epping Forest Consultative Committee is a consultative group, rather than a formal statutory committee, and its constitution is not subject to specific legislative provisions. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee is therefore able to vary its Terms of Reference and membership, as necessary.
14. Prior to exercising certain powers under the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 the Corporation as Conservators must consult such persons or bodies as it thinks appropriate and the arrangements as set out in this report would generally satisfy that requirement.
15. Since the Consultative Committee was first established, it has been confirmed that later iterations of the Members’ Code of Conduct do not apply to the membership of consultative groups, so the Terms of Reference have also been updated on this basis.
16. Risk implications – This is a revision of an existing Consultative Committee structure and is therefore ‘business as usual’ and considered low risk. Implementation of the City of London Governance Review may require a further review of the status of this Committee.
17. Equalities implications –Equalities statements and policies have been incorporated into these revised terms.
18. Climate implications – The UK Government has binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hence global warming by 2050, with the Consultative Committee acting as a key factor in the engagement and protection of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Epping Forest which is directly affected by climate warming.
19. Security implications – None
20. 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.  
Insert text here]

## **Conclusion**

21. Officer error led to incorrect information being relayed to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society application was therefore unsuccessful. By using the power to co-opt, the Society may take part in future meetings.

## **Appendices**

- None

**Background Papers**

Epping Forest Consultative Committee Appointments 2021 to 2024 – 10 May 2021

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