

Committee(s): Epping Forest and Commons Committee – For Decision	Dated: 13.09.21
Subject: Epping Forest and The Commons Communications Plan (SEF 37/21)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Bob Roberts, Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs; Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces	For Decision
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City’s Corporate Plan

Contribute to a flourishing society

1. *People are safe and feel safe.*
2. *People enjoy good health and wellbeing.*
3. *People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.*
4. *Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.*

Support a thriving economy

5. *Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible.*
6. *We have the world’s best legal and regulatory framework and access to global markets.*
7. *We are a global hub for innovation in finance and professional services, commerce and culture.*
8. *We have access to the skills and talent we need.*

Shape outstanding environments

9. *We are digitally and physically well-connected and responsive.*
10. *We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration.*
11. *We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.*
12. *Our spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained*

Summary

The aim of the Communications Plan is to raise the profile of Epping Forest and The Commons as charities serving millions of people from diverse communities across London and the UK.

We plan to use a proactive campaign to build knowledge, understanding and support of how Epping Forest and The Commons are managed and the value they provide.

We plan to use all forms of communications to deliver the key messages below to our wide range of local, national and international audiences.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Agree this Communications Plan.

Main Report

Background

Members asked for a communications plan for Epping Forest and The Commons for the coming 12 months.

Communications Plan

Our aim is to deliver key messages for Epping Forest and The Commons.

For the forest, these will be:

- ***Epping Forest as a registered charity relies on the public for income and donations to protect the people's forest.***
- ***We receive more than £4m a year from the City of London Corporation to spend on the "green lungs of London" delivering an outstanding environment attracting 4.5 million visits annually.***
- ***We now need to do more to ensure the future of 2,400 hectares of land with over one million trees and which is of national and international conservation importance.***

For The Commons, these will be:

- ***The Commons as a registered charity relies on the public for income and donations to protect 800 hectares of outstanding environments attracting 2.5 million visits annually.***
- ***We receive more than £2.5m from the City of London Corporation to protect The Commons which stretch from Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common in Buckinghamshire to the borders of South London, Croydon and Surrey.***
- ***We now need to do more to protect these important sites for wildlife and visitors and include Sites of Special Scientific Interest, historic landscapes and scheduled monuments.***

These messages are deliberately similar as we want them to be memorable and there will not be a significant audience overlap.

We will build this into a wider narrative of how the City Corporation protects 11,000 acres of green space in London and south east England – including Epping Forest and The Commons - and over 200 smaller sites in the Square Mile, investing more than £40m a year.

The messages will be delivered in the attached one-year look ahead of scheduled proactive interventions by the Town Clerk's Media Team and the Open Spaces department relating to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.

The target audiences will be

- Visitors
- Local communities
- Londoners and the wider public
- Stakeholders

These will be reached via national, London and local broadcast, print and digital media

The Town Clerk's Communications team will use the following methods to reach these audiences: news releases; the Chairman's monthly Epping Forest Guardian column, media interviews, photo calls and social media.

The Open Spaces department team will deliver local marketing and stakeholder communications, social media, local signage and print publications, local news releases.

This will build on successful coverage for projects such as the new wildflower meadows blooming on the site of the temporary mortuary at Wanstead Flats, the coverage of the crackdown on illegal fungi foraging at Epping Forest and the restoration The Commons after lockdown damage.

The Open Spaces Department Epping Forest and The Commons Communications planner is attached as Annex 1. This includes the planned proactive media interventions for the coming year

A further, more detailed Open Spaces department planner ensures that regular seasonal, key dates, occasions and small events communications are diarised and covered in appropriate channels such as listings, web updates and social media.

Other initiatives such as fundraising projects, bespoke websites, philanthropic giving drives, sponsorship and supporter schemes could all be considered in the future. However, at present there are insufficient resources to support additional activity within local risk.

Social media activity could – and in the view of the Director of Communications should be – increased when resources allow.

Corporate & Strategic Implications –

Strategic implications – as above

Financial implications – none

Resource implications – none

Legal implications - none

Risk implications – none

Equalities implications – none

Climate implications – Digital media is used increasingly. This reduces the need for printed material, reducing consumables and waste.

Security implications - none

Conclusion

1. This report presents a communications plan for Epping Forest and The Commons for the next 12 months.
2. Members are asked to approve the report.

Annexes

- Annex 1: The Open Spaces Department Epping Forest and The Commons Communications Planner

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