

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	Date(s): 01/11/2021
Subject: Superintendent's 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: Executive Director, Environment	For Discussion
Report author: Richard Gentry, Superintendent	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since September 2021.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Provide feedback in relation to the Network Rail Fence Replacement proposal, as set out in paras 14-18.

Main Report

Coronavirus Emergency Response and Issues

1. A number of Covid-19 control measures remain in place across public and staff facilities, in line with guidance.

Constabulary

2. The Constabulary are working in collaboration with colleagues from Epping Forest as they introduce Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN).
3. The Constabulary are in continual discussion with the Metropolitan Police (MPS). There have been recent incidents of unlicensed music events on the Heath which constables have responded to. These events have been reported to the MPS
4. Constables are investigating a number of recent dog on dog attacks which have occurred on Hampstead Heath.

Management Framework

Divisional Plan

5. The Hampstead Heath Divisional Plan 2021-24 (appendix 1) sets out the current position in relation to project work being undertaken across the Division.
6. Officers would like to draw Members attention to the following Divisional Plan projects:
7. Divisional Radio System (HH7) – The Acting Superintendent is in discussion with a London based radio supplier to assist with the relocation of radio equipment. The equipment will be moved to an alternative mast in the Hampstead area. At the time of writing, final checks are being completed. These checks will ensure that the proposed mast site is suitable for the City Corporation's needs, enabling effective radio communications across the Division. The Acting Superintendent is making arrangements for existing City Corporation radio equipment, e.g. antennas to be decommissioned and removed from the St Columba Aerial Mast location.
8. Review the High-Level Asset Management Plan (AMP) 2018 - 2021 (HH12) – A review of the 2018-21 AMP has been undertaken. This has informed the drafting of the 2021-23 AMP, which is attached at appendix 2.
9. Planning (HH26) – A verbal update on current planning application will be provided at the meeting.

Annual Work Programme (AWP)

10. The Hampstead Heath Annual Work Programme Projects 2021-22 is attached at appendix 3. A six month RAG status has been provided in relation to the progress made towards implementing each project.

Cyclical Works Programme (CWP)

11. Upcoming CWP works include:
 - Parliament Hill Highgate Road Entrance – Installation of rising bollards and removal of existing vehicle barrier.
 - Parliament Hill Paddling Pool – Wall repairs.
 - Mixed Bathing Pond – Fencing replacement.

Capital Projects

12. With regard to the Capital Bid Project for the Swimming Safety, Security and Access Improvement. A Project Architect has been appointed and a project timeline will be drafted during the autumn.

Network Rail – Fence Replacement

13. Network Rail have approached the Hampstead Heath Management Team to replace the existing 330 metres of metal fencing along the railway embankment between the Gospel Oak entrance to the Lido Facility and the One O'clock Club.

14. Network Rail first requested to undertake these works in 2014, but postponed due to concerns raised around damage to the line of mature trees along the path running parallel with the fencing and the industrial style fencing proposed.
15. At a site meeting on the 13 October 2021, Network Rail representatives outlined their ongoing concerns about the security of the site and their duty of care to prevent unauthorised access onto the railway and possible serious injury or death. There have been a number of incidents where individuals have managed to climb over the current fencing and gain access. If access is not allowed from the Heath, Network Rail will be forced to carry out the fencing replacement from their own land which will necessitate significant vegetation and habitat clearance and major removal of screening of the Gospel Oak Station and rail line northwards.
16. Network Rail's revised method statement involves removing the existing 1.2 metre fencing at ground level and installing a 1.8 metre high steel palisade fence painted black. The Hampstead Heath Management Team have identified risks to trees and requested conditions to protect the trees during the installation of the replacement fencing. The work will be carried out in 30 metre sections with a heras type fence cordon securing the work site. Each section will be completed in approximately one day. At the end of each day the new fencing will be secured against the old fence for security, and the work will progress northwards and be completed in approximately 3 weeks. It is proposed to commence works in November 2021.
17. Special attention will be given to tree protection, and all trees within the active working area will be fenced off during the dismantling of the old fence and installation of the new palisade fencing. There will be a member of the Tree Team on call each day to oversee the works and liaise with the contractor supervisor on the locations of the new palisade fencing posts (which will be hand dug) in order to minimise damage to the adjacent trees and their respective root systems. The Tree Team will closely monitor and supervise any root severance should this be required.
18. Pedestrians will be diverted around the cordoned off working areas and encouraged to use the pathway leading up to the Lido entrance and then around the western side path and back towards the One O'clock Club. An area will be fenced off for Contractor vehicles in the Lid car park. All materials and plant will be removed from site overnight and the working fenced off cordon well secured.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23: Contribute to a flourishing society, Support a thriving economy and Shape outstanding environments.
20. The projects and works outlined in this report also contribute towards the three objectives and outcomes set out in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2020-21 (a)

Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible, (b) Spaces enrich people's lives and (c) Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

21. The projects and works outlined in this report contribute towards the achievement of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028 Strategic Outcomes A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape, B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors, C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors and D: Greater number of and diversity of People taking care of the Heath.

Financial Implications

22. Donations are currently being sought for the following projects:
- Hampstead Heath Extension Playground (£40,000)
 - Model Boating Pond Island - wildlife sanctuary (£50,000)
 - Bird and mammal shelters (£5,000)
23. Donations can be made via the City of London website: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/hampstead-heath/donate-to-hampstead-heath>

Resource Implications

24. Staff resources are being prioritised keeping the Heath open, safe, accessible and secure.

Climate Implications

25. The City of London launched its Climate Action Strategy in October 2020 and the strategy is now in implementation stage. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing the City of London's carbon emissions. This will be the main objective at Hampstead Heath in the short term, especially following the impact of exceptionally high number of visitors due to COVID-19.

Legal Implications

26. No Impact.

Risk Implications

27. There is a risk that works and staff resources could be further impacted by COVID-19. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register

Equality Implications

28. No Impact.

Security Implications

29. Security implications are addressed in the emergency response to COVID-19 and are being monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Hampstead Heath Divisional Plan 2021-24 (October 2021 update)

- Appendix 2 – Draft Asset Management Plan 2021-23
- Appendix 3 – Hampstead Heath Annual Work Programme (6 month RAG Status update)

Richard Gentry

Acting Superintendent, Environment Department.

T: 020 7332 3322

E: richard.gentry@cityoflondon.gov.uk