

Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons Epping Forest Consultative	17/01/2022 9/02/2022
Subject: Large Event Application (SEF 06/22a)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 10, 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: Juliemma McLoughlin –Environment Department	EF&CC - For Decision EFCC – For Comment
Report author: Jacqueline Eggleston – Head of Visitor Services – Epping Forest	

Summary

This report is necessary to consider an application for a weekend music event on Chingford Plain for a capacity ticketed attendance of up to 9,999 people per day. Under the Open Spaces Events Policy, events of this size may require committee approval.

The event is proposed to take place over a single weekend in September 2022. The event is a concert with 80’s headline pop/soul acts and tribute bands and would be subject to full public consultation; an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the granting of a premises licence and if necessary statutory consents which would all be funded by the event organiser. All licence income received from the event will be reinvested in the management of Epping Forest.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve in principle, the application for a large event, subject to:
 - (a) Prior consultation being undertaken by the applicant. Consideration of the consultation responses to be delegated to the Superintendent of Epping Forest (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) and the license for the event to be issued only if, after such consideration, the Superintendent of Epping Forest (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) is satisfied that the consultation responses do not

disclose any matters which in his opinion should lead to the license being withheld.

- (b) The provision of an environmental impact assessment by the applicant. Consideration of the environmental impact assessment to be delegated to the Superintendent (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) and the license to be issued only if, after such consideration, the Superintendent of Epping Forest (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee) is satisfied that the event will not cause material injury to the amenity of Epping Forest or significant impairment to the public enjoyment of Epping Forest
- (c) The terms and conditions of any license ensuring that the event will not cause material injury to the amenity of Epping Forest or significant impairment to the public enjoyment of Epping Forest. The terms and conditions to be delegated to the Superintendent (in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee)
- (d) the granting of the Premises Licence by the London Borough of Waltham Forest

Main Report

Background

1. Large events and gatherings have always been a part of the recreational activity taking place in Epping Forest. In the 1800s crowds of 200,000 were reported to have gathered on May Day at Chingford Plain.
2. Today events that take place are fully assessed to ensure that they are safe and that there is no damage to the protected areas of the Forest.
3. To provide guidelines and consistency as to what events are permitted and how they must be managed the Open Spaces Events Policy Part 1&2 was approved at your Committee of 14 May 2018.
4. The policy provides a framework for the approval of the type and scale of events that would be permitted across the Open Spaces. Whilst most events and activities are assessed and approved by an officer group, within the policy provision is made that large events (5001+) or more complex events would come to your committee for approval: The statutory criteria for permitting events are set out under Legal Implications and include requirements that the event must not cause material injury to the amenity of Epping Forest or significant impairment to the public enjoyment of Epping Forest
In some cases, such as when events are very large the application will be referred to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.
5. In 2019, your committee approved in principle a major event (audience 30,000) but the event organiser later withdrew after undertaking more detailed feasibility studies.

6. At your committee of 10 March 2020, an approach was approved to advertise for larger events and invite tenders. This was conducted in the summer of 2021 once the majority of pandemic restrictions had been lifted.
7. However, there was very small interest from this process, and nothing was presented that was deemed viable. It is assumed that the industry is behaving in a very cautious manner at present.

Current Position

8. A direct approach for a large event was made to officers from a local business enterprise. Initial discussions and scoping exercises have taken place with officers and an application has now been submitted for the event.
9. Officers have carried out an initial assessment of the application and the initial requirements for the event have been met. Although it is not possible to confirm at this stage that the statutory criteria for allowing an event are met and that the license should be granted, the initial assessment indicates that potentially (subject to appropriate conditions), the adverse impacts could be acceptably managed such that the event may be permitted. However, this will not be definitively known until the environmental impact assessment has been evaluated and all other relevant considerations have been taken into account. Because this is a large event and the first one of this scale for some time in Epping Forest, it is being presented to your committee to agree in principle to the event, subject to the more detailed evaluation demonstrating that the impacts are acceptable, and the statutory criteria are met. It is proposed that this evaluation be undertaken by the Superintendent under delegated authority in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. If the more detailed evaluation indicated the license should not be granted, then it would be withheld. However, unless approval in principle is agreed at this stage, the organiser is unlikely to proceed with the necessary environmental impact and other assessments, given the investment required to undertake these.
10. The organiser will make an application to the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) for a premises licence for the event. The LBWF Safety Advisory Group (SAG) will scrutinise all the health and safety and emergency plans before making their recommendation for a licence.
11. For the events the organiser will undertake comprehensive event planning all of which will be scrutinised by local authority licencing officers in LBWF along with the Metropolitan Police Services and London Fire Brigade and other relevant expert officers such as TFL before the event can be licensed. Event plans include:
 - Event Safety Management Plan
 - Noise Management Plan
 - Crowd Management Plan
 - Traffic and Travel Management Plan
 - Crime Management Plan
 - Waste and Sustainability Plan

Proposals

Line Up

12. The application is for a two-day event to take place in September 2022. This date provides sufficient lead in time for the organisation and licensing process, it avoids nesting season and the ground conditions should be much drier than earlier in the year.
13. The proposal is for a concert to be held over two days with gates opening on Saturday at 11.30am and closing at 10pm. Catering units will sell from midday with background music playing. The concert will commence at 2pm and will feature a 'mature' (70's/80's) pop headline band along with a selection of tribute bands from the same era.
14. The Sunday line up will have the same format with headline band and tribute acts based on soul music.
15. There will be a family friendly emphasis to the Saturday event with children's activities.
16. The event will require a build up and breakdown period so will be on site for around 8- 10 days in total

Location (see map at Appendix 1)

17. The event will take place on Chingford Plain within the area defined for the preliminary ecological appraisal undertaken in 2019. Dedicated car parking will be on the Bury Road car parks (and overflow) with the 'golf club' car park retained for general public access.
18. A travel plan will be produced to manage traffic flow, encourage active travel; attendance by public transport use and create further off-site park and ride facilities. The production of the travel plan will be a requirement of the SAG.



Local Engagement .

19. The event organisers are committed to holding a minimum of two local engagement surgeries to discuss resident/ user concerns, the first being held this month or early in February so that feedback can be built into the planning. They will also have a dedicated website and phone number for the event that will be in operation in the lead up to and during the event.

Noise

20. There will be an acoustic study carried out to ensure noise does not cause material injury to the amenity of the open space or significant impairment to its enjoyment. Any license issued by the Conservators would include conditions imposing noise limits. . The LBWF Environmental Health team will also review the acoustic study and monitor the event to ensure that noise limits are adhered to. At present the plan will be to face the stage away from the residential areas.

Environment and Amenity

21. The event is being planned to minimise the impact to non-event visitors with regular walking routes across the site kept open. The Bury Road overflow car park will be dedicated to the event with the main Bury Road car park open to both the general public and event visitors and the golf car park available for golfers and non-event visitors. The Event fee levied to the organisers includes a charge to compensate the charity for 'loss of amenity'.
22. The licence conditions imposed by the Conservators would require the organisers to reinstate the grassed area, car parks etc to their pre-event condition and an additional damage deposit will be taken to cover the potential need for reinstatement costs if this is not achieved.
23. It is likely that bare patches of earth will be apparent across parts of the event area and that these will remain for a period of around 8 Weeks whilst re-seeding takes effect. There may be a need to erect temporary fencing around more prominent patches. This will need to be communicated as part of the event communications.
24. A full environmental impact assessment (of which the acoustic study would form a part) will need to be carried out and evaluated as a pre-requisite for any license to be granted, and the license would only be granted if the assessed impacts were considered acceptable. Any license would be subject to conditions imposing such limitations, requirements and restrictions as were considered necessary to mitigate impacts and ensure the statutory criteria for permitting an event were met

Options

25. Your committee can consider two options:

Option 1.

To agree in principle to the proposals for a large-scale concert event with an audience up to 9,999 per day to take place on Chingford Plain over one weekend in September 2022 and subject to the necessary detailed evaluation of impacts and consents from the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The September date for the event will help to mitigate against ground damage and environmental impacts. The events policy allows for this type of event and further approval for the safety and organisation of the event are required from LBWF before the licence from the Conservators would be issued

The income generated from the event will be reinvested into the management of the Forest. **This option is recommended**

Option 2.

Do not approve the proposed event. Income will not be achieved that could be used to reinvest in the management of the Forest and to meet savings and income targets. . **This option is not recommended**

Key Data

N/A

Corporate & Strategic Implications

City of London Corporate Plan 2018-2023

26. This report helps achieve three Corporate Plan aims:

Contribute to a flourishing society.

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need

To support a thriving economy

- We are a global hub for innovation in finance and professional services, commerce and culture.

Shape outstanding environments

- We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration

Open Spaces Department Business Plan 2020-21

27. It will also deliver the Open Spaces Departmental Business Plan top line objectives:

- A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.
- B. Spaces enrich people's lives.
- C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

Financial implications

28. The financial consideration for this event is reported later on your agenda under the non-public agenda. The fee is based on the scheme of charges outlined in the Events Policy but is intended to be increased on the basis of a percentage income in future years should the event be continued. All licence income received from the event will be reinvested in the management of Epping Forest.

Resource implications

29. The cost of Epping Forest staff time incurred in enabling the event to go ahead has been added to the fee levied to the organisers.

Legal implications

30. Under section 7 of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 the Conservators may temporarily use or permit others to use Forest land for the purposes of an event; provide, or arrange for another person to provide, equipment, facilities or services for the event; so far as necessary restrict, or authorise others to restrict, access to an area of Forest land temporarily in connection with the event; and charge for such permission or provision, or charge or authorise others to charge for admission to the event.
31. The above powers must be exercised having regard to the approved Events Policy. Under the Events Policy, in deciding whether, and on what terms, to permit an event, the Conservators must have regard to the character and local environment of the Forest (or the part of the Forest in which the event is to take place, in this case Chingford Plain). The Events Policy (and statute) also contain provision that the event does not cause material injury to the amenity of the open space or significant impairment to the public enjoyment of the open space. The general duties of the Conservators to preserve Epping Forest as an unenclosed public open space and as far as possible to preserve its natural aspect also still apply, subject to the above provisions. Any decision taken must be in the best interests of the Epping Forest charity.
32. Consent may be needed under Section 28E of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Risk implications

33. There is reputational risk of the event not being financially sound, not taking place or not meeting expectations. Due diligence checks have been undertaken on the directors of the company to ensure there are no irregularities and regular checks and correspondence with officers will help to reassure that the event is progressing in the correct way. Loss of amenity presents a reputational risk, and this is being factored into site plans to minimise this as far as possible. Conditions will be imposed to mitigate impacts. Compliance with conditions would need to be monitored during the event and measures taken to secure compliance or cessation of the event should persistent breach occur
34. The event organisers will hold public surgeries to engage local residents and stakeholders, including Forest users, about the proposed event to answer queries

and build solutions for concerns into the planning process. A communications plan will also be drawn up between the event organisers and the City of London to provide clear information and response to the public and media.

35. The COL Events Policy and LBWF licencing legislation provides a clear requirement for event managers to engage with the appropriate legislative and licensing regimes to demonstrate events would be run safely and professionally before licencing of the event is approved.

Equalities implications

36. The Events Policy requires event organisers to provide an Equality Policy. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken for the event and any areas for improvement addressed prior to the event.

Climate implications

37. An environmental impact assessment will be undertaken that is bespoke to this event and will set parameters and mitigation for the protection of Forest land and the surrounding SAC. The Conservators will need to be satisfied that these mitigation measures are sufficient to prevent material injury to the amenity of the open space before the licence will be issued.

38. A waste management plan will ensure that all waste is recycled and disposed of correctly and high standards for the use of reusable materials will be incorporated into the event plan

Security implications

39. The event emergency plan will include pre- event planning to cover security threats in advance of the event as well as during. This will be scrutinised and agreed through the Safety Advisory Group.

Charity implications

40. 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. It may be seen then that the best interests of the charity are met by raising income to invest in the management of the Forest, provided the provisions in the Open Spaces Act 2018 are met.

Property

41. If events are to be permitted on the Forest, they should be governed by suitable licence terms to ensure that COL is suitably indemnified and that consent to use represents best value according to the charitable operating requirements.

Conclusion

42. The proposed event is potentially acceptable under the Open Spaces Events Policy parts one and two. Initial checks have been undertaken on the organisers and company and are satisfactory and additional due diligence will be undertaken before signing of contracts. Detailed evaluation of impacts would be carried out prior to any decision to grant a license, and the license would not proceed unless the impacts were considered acceptable, and the statutory criteria were met

All necessary checks and procedures would be put in place to manage public concerns and any impact on the Forest from the event. The income generated from the event will be additional funding that can be invested into the management of the Forest.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Location Map p34 Ecological Assessment

Background papers

Epping Forest Events Policy (SEF 16/18) EF&CC 14 May 2018

Epping Forest Events Tender (SEF 06/20) EF&CC 10 March 2020

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