

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Committee(s): Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee | Date(s): 23 May 2022 |
| Subject: Assistant Directors 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? | N |
| If so, how much? | |
| What is the source of Funding? | Local Risk |
| Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department? | |
| Report of: Executive Director, Environment | For Discussion |
| Report author: Stefania Horne, Assistant Director | |

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on matters relating to Hampstead Heath since January 2022.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.
- Provide feedback on the draft Divisonal Plan 2022-25 (appendix 1).
- Provide feedback on the draft Swimming Annual Review 2021/22 (appendix 4).

Main Report

Management Framework

1. The draft Divisional Plan 2022-25 (appendix 1) is presented for Members feedback.
2. Members feedback on the overarching projects (1-18) and Hampstead Heath Charity specific projects (HH1-HH8) as set out in appendix 1.

Biodiversity and Climate Action Strategy

3. The work the Tree Team have completed on veteran tree protection over the last 12 months has been a great success, with the stock fence enclosures now verdant with new ground cover. This new growth demonstrates that the soil is recovering from the effects of intense visitor pressure over the pandemic, and in turn allows the rooting zones of the veteran trees to regenerate. The new enclosures also provide excellent habitat for nesting birds and other wildlife.

4. As part of the work supporting the objectives of the City of London's Climate Action Strategy the Conservation and Trees Manager and Ecologist are preparing a plan for the conversion of areas of amenity grassland into meadows, where grassland will be allowed to revert back to a more floristically diverse state and cut annually. The change of management will mean less compaction from regular cutting machinery, significant fuel and emissions reductions, and improved soil condition. These new meadow areas will provide important new habitat for wildlife species and add biodiversity value to ponds and wetland habitats nearby. As part of this, a small scale pilot will be undertaken in summer 2022 and a report will be prepared for member's discussion in Autumn 2022.

Cycling

5. Officers from London Borough of Camden have consulted with 'Green School Runs', a Camden based group promoting cycling to and from local schools. Green School Runs' have collated data to support future proposals for possible new cycle routes for school children on Hampstead Heath (appendix 2). The data was captured by the HomeRun App from the schools listed below and captured journeys within 3 miles of Hampstead Heath:
 - UCS junior branch
 - South Hampstead High School
 - Hampstead Hill school
 - UCS Pre-prep
 - The Mulberry House School
 - St Christopher's school
 - Fitzjohn's Primary School
 - St Anthony's preparatory school
6. Heath Officers will continue to engage with Officers from Camden. Proposals put forward by Camden will be discussed with the Stakeholders and Members.

Capital Projects

7. A "project on a page" summary (appendix 3) has been prepared in relation to the Swimming – Safety, Access and Security Capital Project. An online surveys seeking feedback from swimmers on the proposals ran between 1-25 April 2022. Feedback from the survey is included in the Swimming Annual Review 2021-22 (appendix 5).
8. Key project milestones:
 - Planning submission - 27 May 2022 (outcome of planning expected end of August 2022)
 - RIBA Stage 3 development - June 2022
 - Works commence on site - October/November 2022
9. A Gateway 2 report for the resurfacing of the Parliament Hill Athletics Track has been agreed by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee. A copy of the report has been shared with the Hampstead Heath

Sports & Wellbeing Forum and the Track Forum, and is available online at: [Agenda for Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee on Wednesday, 4th May, 2022, 4.00 pm - Modern Council \(cityoflondon.gov.uk\)](#).

10. The procurement to appoint the project Team is planned for summer 2022. Development of the design will be undertaken in 2023, with works expected to commence on site from December 2023.

Murphy's Yard

11. A letter of representation (appendix 5) has been submitted to the London Borough of Camden in relation to the Murphy's Yard development. As set out in the summary:

The principle of the Proposed Development could be considered acceptable to the City Corporation but the scale of development proposed raises a number of concerns that will need to be discussed and mitigated.

The application submission on the whole does not consider in sufficient detail the various impacts of the development on the Heath as a result of the proposed development.

We have however highlighted areas where further study or mitigation could be proposed to address these concerns.

- *A more detailed consideration of the impact of development at the scale proposed in views to and from the Heath in line with LP policy A2.*
- *Receive reassurances on the overshadowing of the Parliament Hill Fields Lido.*
- *Work with the applicant to define impact on the Heath and prepare a mitigation plan that can account for intensification, particularly looking at facilities and the ecological impact*
- *Review access for cyclists and work with the City of London to design suitable access and provide parking*

The City Corporation consider that the inclusion of suitable mitigation measures in a S.106 agreement pursuant to the grant of planning permission would be reasonable and necessary in this instance.

12. We understand that the application will be considered by the London Borough of Camden planning committee in the near future. As this is likely to be before the next meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee, a delegated authority has been granted to allow the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee and the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath, to finalise what suitable mitigation measures for the Murphy's Yard re-development we would ask to be included in a S.106 agreement if it is resolved to grant planning permission.

Storm Eunice

13. The total tree damage or lost due to the storm were 87, with 68 trees failures on Hampstead Heath. Staff worked tirelessly to clear fallen trees and ensure paths were accessible following the storm.

Events

14. Recent events include:

- The National Cross Country Championships (Hampstead Heath, 26 February 2022).
- The Showman's Guild Easter Fair (Hampstead Heath, 9-18 April).
- Affordable Art Fair (Hampstead Heath, 4-8 May 2022)
- Night of 10,000m Personal Bests (Hampstead Heath, 14 May 2022)
- Jubilee Fun Day (Golders Hill Park, 2 June 2022)

15. The City of London Corporation in partnership with Barnet Council will be hosting a Jubilee Fun Day in Golders Hill Park on Thursday 2 June from 2pm to 10pm, to celebrate her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The event, which is free for all to attend, will feature live music, entertainment, a traditional children's fair, food and arts and crafts stalls. There will also be a chance to witness the historic event of a Jubilee beacon being lit at 9.30pm – part of a whole series of beacons across the country being lit to celebrate the Queen's 70 years of service to the nation. This event, suitable for all ages, will culminate in a spectacular fireworks display over Golders Hill Park.

16. Upcoming events:

- Race for Life (Hampstead Heath, 18 June 2022)
- Give it a Go (Hampstead Heath, 16 July 2022)

Constabulary Update

17. During the COVID Pandemic there has been an increase in visits and the use of green spaces, this has brought with it challenging behaviours and anti-social behaviour, with instances of criminal damage and increased litter. A series of workshops with staff took place to discuss strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in line with this change of use and useful discussions took place with constables to develop ideas for an improved service which will continue to meet the needs of our users and the aims and objectives of the Charity.

18. Moving forward there will be an emphasis on engagement and education as a preventative tool, use of data for proactive and targeted interventions and a consistent uniformed presence that will continue to provide reassurance for the visitors of the Heath.

Good News

19. A Gardening Apprentice has recently passed their Level 2 assessment, and will be progressing to a Level 3 horticultural apprenticeship. The Apprentice has been supported by Staff from Hampstead Heath and Queen's Park.

20. Shire Horses from Operation Centaur undertook ground restoration works at the beginning of March, to aid restoration of the National Cross Country Championships route across the Heath.
21. A new series of biodiversity board interpretation inserts (appendix 6) have been produced. The Spring interpretations insets were installed in March.
22. East Heath playground reopened in March after improvement works which took place over the winter. The new playground incorporates some new equipment alongside some of the existing equipment. The project was funded by City of London Corporation, North Camden Community Infrastructure Levy and the Pilgrims to Willoughby Residents Association.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

23. 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.
24. 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

25. Donations are currently being sought for the following projects:
 - Hampstead Heath Extension Playground (£40,000).
 - Model Boating Pond Island - wildlife sanctuary (£50,000). The Trees and Conservation Officer and Heath Ecologist are also drafting an application to the London Wildlife Trust's Rewilding London Fund for works to install additional reed beds and protect the island at the Model Boating Pond.
 - Bird and mammal shelters (£5,000).
26. 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

27. Staff resources are being prioritised to keep the sites open, safe, accessible and secure.

Climate Implications

28. Included within the Divisional Plan 2021-24 is series of projects which contribute towards achieving the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2020. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions.

Legal Implications

29. We are awaiting the result of the High Court hearing (Efthimiou v Mayor and Commonalty and Citizens of the City of London) which took place on 23-24 February 2022.
30. There are no other impacts to raise at the moment.

Risk Implications

31. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Hampstead Heath Charity and Queen's Park and Highgate Wood Charity Risk Registers, and will form part of the next Committee meeting agenda pack.

Equality Implications

32. No impact.

Security Implications

33. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Hampstead Heath Charity and Queen's Park and Highgate Wood Charity Risk Registers.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft Divisional Plan 2022-25
- Appendix 2 – HomeRun App data
- Appendix 3 – Project on a Page (Swimming Capital Project)
- Appendix 4 – Draft Swimming Annual Review 2021/22
- Appendix 5 – Murphy's Yard Representation letter (February 2022)
- Appendix 6 – Biodiversity Interpretation Boards

Stefania Horne

Assistant Director, Environment Department.

T: 020 7332 3322

E: stefania.horne@cityoflondon.gov.uk