

<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest and Commons – For Decision Epping Forest Consultative Group – For Discussion	<b>Dated:</b> 15/06/2023 21/06/2023
<b>Subject:</b> Revised Terms of Reference for Epping Forest Consultative Group (SEF 08/23)	<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>£</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director, Environment	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jo Hurst, Business Manager Epping Forest	

### Summary

The Epping Forest Consultative Committee was founded in January 2018, and since then has met three times a year to discuss matters of Epping Forest management and policy.

Minor changes to the Terms of Reference are required to reflect recent administrative changes within the City of London, as well as learning points from applications and admissions processes. These updates include the new name, Epping Forest Consultative Group.

### Recommendation(s)

Epping Forest and Commons Committee Members are asked to:

- Agree the updated Terms of Reference

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The Epping Forest Consultative Committee met for the first time in January 2018, following an application process in Autumn 2017 involving membership organisations interested in the use and management of Epping Forest.
2. Since that time the Consultative Committee has met three times per year. The attendance was reviewed, according to the Terms of Reference, in early 2021.
3. Recent administrative changes within the City of London require a change to how the group is organised, managed and referred to.
4. An update to the Terms of Reference also presents an opportunity for clarification around aspects of the admissions process.

## **Current Position**

5. Revised Terms of Reference for the Epping Forest and Commons Committee are included at Appendix 1.
6. Key changes include a change to the groups name, an update to management and administration and additional clarification of the three-yearly admissions process.

## **Options for Epping Forest and Commons Committee**

7. **Option 1** – Adopt the updated Terms of Reference for the Epping Forest Consultative Committee **This option is recommended.**

## **Proposals**

8. The group is no longer referred to as the Epping Forest Consultative Committee, but instead the Epping Forest Consultative Group.
9. Paragraphs 15-18 reflect changes in management, with the Group now administered directly by Environment Officers (no longer Town Clerk's) and meetings Chaired by Assistant Director Environment (previously known as Superintendent Epping Forest). Chairman and Deputy Chairman are invited but no longer obliged to attend.
10. Paragraph 26 clarifies information to be provided by applicant organisation expressing interest in taking part each three years.
11. Discussion at the Epping Forest Consultative Group recognised that changes were small and sought reassurance that meetings would continue with a wide a range of groups with specific interest in the Forest as possible.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

12. Strategic implications – The continued attendance at the Epping Forest Consultative Committee supports the Corporate Plan items 4, 10, 11 and 12.
13. Financial and resource implications – The resources required for room hire light refreshments, the publication of agendas; reports and minutes are from Epping Forest Local Risk.
14. Legal implications – The Epping Forest Consultative Group 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.
15. 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.
16. Since the Consultative Committee/Group 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 reflect this.
17. Risk implications – This is a revision of an existing Consultative Group structure and is therefore 'business as usual' and considered low risk.
18. Equalities implications – Equalities statements and policies are incorporated into these terms.

19. Climate implications – The UK Government has binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hence global warming by 2050, with the Consultative Group 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.
20. Security implications – None
21. 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.

### **Conclusion**

22. The Consultative Group has been a valuable asset to communication at Epping Forest since its foundation in 2018.
23. Necessary amendments following administrative changes at the City of London have been incorporated into these updated Terms of Reference, with the opportunity also taken to clarify selection criteria and processes in readiness for the next review.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Epping Forest Consultative Committee - Terms of Reference – Full Revised September 2022

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