

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	Dated: 04/02/2025
Subject: Risk Management Update Report	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides business enabling functions 	Corporate Plan Outcomes: Diverse engaged communities; Vibrant thriving destination; Providing excellent services; Flourishing public spaces; Leading sustainable environment Business enabling functions: Risk Management
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment
Report author:	Joanne Hill, Environment Department

Summary

This report is presented to provide the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department and its Natural Environment Division are satisfactory and meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011. Risk is reviewed regularly within the Department as part of the ongoing management of the operations.

Your Committee is responsible for two Registered Charities: Hampstead Heath (charity number 803392) and Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn (charity number 232986). In accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), Trustees are required to confirm in the charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. By following the processes defined in the Corporate Risk Management Framework, the management of these risks meets the requirements of the Charity Commission.

Each of the charities holds a risk register which is summarised in the main body of this report and at Appendices 1 and 2.

Recommendation

Members are asked to confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the Summary Risk Registers appended to this report satisfactorily identify the key risks to each of the charities and that appropriate risk management processes are in place.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London's Risk Management Strategy, which forms part of its Corporate Risk Management Framework, requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.
2. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in a charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. These risks are to be reviewed annually.
3. Your Committee receives a quarterly update on the risks faced by the two charities for which it is responsible. Detailed risk registers are presented every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception. This reporting frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Strategy and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.
4. The Executive Director Environment assures your Committee that all risks held by the Hampstead Heath charity and the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park charity continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.
5. Risks are regularly reviewed by the Assistant Director and his management team, in consultation with risk owners, with updates recorded in the corporate risk management information system. Risks are assessed on a likelihood-impact basis, and the resultant score is associated with a traffic light colour. For reference, the City of London's Risk Matrix is provided at Appendix 3.
6. The risk register for Hampstead Heath and the register for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park are summarised in the main body of this report and at Appendices 1 and 2. For each risk, officers are undertaking a range of actions to mitigate the effects.

Current Position

7. For both charities, the two highest risks remain the 'Decline in condition of assets' and 'Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site', both of which are currently scored at Red 16 (likely to occur, with a major impact).

- a. **Decline in condition of assets** – The cause of this risk is the backlog of repair and maintenance works required to be undertaken on the charities' built assets. Additional funding to address the backlog has been approved and officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department to formally assess, allocate and prioritise the funding allocated to the Environment Department to areas of most need. The completion of priority works, along with any alternative funding options identified through the Natural Environment Charity Review should help to reduce the risk. This risk is reported in detail for each charity, at Appendices 1a and 2a, for Member's information.
- b. **Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site** – A departmental reporting system is in place to enable rapid reporting of instances where staff experience abusive or unreasonable behaviour by members of the public, which are then followed up with appropriate action. Alongside this, training on conflict management has been delivered to front-line staff across the North London Open Spaces. At a local level, officers encourage responsible behaviour by members of the public, via social media messaging, onsite signage and face to face engagement. Preventative measures are put in place where possible and collaboration with the police and other enforcement agencies to minimise incidents is ongoing. It is hoped that these actions will enable the risk to be reduced.

Hampstead Heath Risks

8. The Hampstead Heath Risk Register, summarised below and at Appendix 1, contains thirteen risks (two RED, ten AMBER, one GREEN) which are owned and managed by the Assistant Director, North London Open Spaces, and his management team.
9. Since the date of the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system. None of the risk scores have changed.
 - **ENV-NE-HH 007: Decline in condition of assets** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 014: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 001: Budget pressures** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 004: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 002: Negative impacts of visitor pressure** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 003: Outbreak of fire in woodland/heathland** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 006: Risks to health and safety** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 009: Water facilities** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 010: Deterioration of water bodies** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 011: Recruitment of suitable staff** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 013: Tree event or failure** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HH 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases** (*AMBER, 6*)

- **ENV-NE-HH 008: Negative impacts of development and encroachment** (*GREEN, 4*)

Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Risks

10. The Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Risk Register, summarised below and at Appendix 2, contains eleven risks (two RED, eight AMBER and one GREEN) which are owned and managed by the Assistant Director, North London Open Spaces, and his management team.
11. Since the date of the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system. None of the risk scores have changed.
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 007: Decline in condition of assets** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 012: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and site** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 001: Budget pressures** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 004: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 002: Negative impacts of visitor pressure** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 003: Outbreak of fire in woodland/heathland** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 006: Risk to health and safety** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 009: Recruitment of suitable staff** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 011: Tree event or failure** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases** (*AMBER, 6*)
 - **ENV-NE-HWQP 008: Negative impacts of development and encroachment** (*GREEN, 4*)

Risk Management Process

12. Across the Environment Department, risk management is a standing agenda item at the regular meetings of local, divisional and departmental management teams.
13. Between management team meetings, risks are reviewed in consultation with risk and action owners, and updates are recorded in the corporate risk management information system.
14. Regular risk management update reports are provided to this Committee in accordance with the City's Risk Management Framework and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Identification of New Risks

15. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
 - Directly by Senior Leadership Teams as part of the regular review process.

- In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.
- In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

16. Effective management of risk is at the heart of the City Corporation's approach to delivering cost effective and valued services to the public as well as being an important element within the corporate governance of the organisation.
17. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-29, our Departmental high-level Business Plan, charity business plans, the Natural Environment Division's core strategies, and relevant corporate strategies, including, but not limited to, the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport; and Volunteering Strategies.
18. Risks which could have a serious impact on the achievement of business and strategic objectives are proactively identified, assessed and managed in order to minimise their likelihood and/or impact.

Conclusion

19. The proactive management of risk, including the reporting process to Members, demonstrates that the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department is adhering to the requirements of the City of London Corporation's Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Hampstead Heath Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 1a – Hampstead Heath Detailed Risk (reported by exception)
- Appendix 2 – Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Summary Risk Register
- Appendix 2a – Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Detailed Risk (reported by exception)
- Appendix 3 – City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

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