

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Epping Forest and Commons Committee	Dated: 27/11/2025
Subject: Burnham Beeches and The Commons Risk Management	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 provides the Epping Forest and Commons 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. Risks are reviewed regularly within the Department as part of the ongoing management of the operations.

Your Committee is responsible for the following charities: Ashted Common (charity number 1051510), Burnham Beeches (charity number 232987), Coulsdon and Other Commons (charity number 232989) and West Wickham and Spring Park (charity number 232988). 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.

The risk register of each charity is summarised in the main body of this report and provided in full at Appendices 1-4.

Recommendation

Burnham Beeches and The Commons risk management: Members are asked to confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as trustee, that the register appended to this report satisfactorily sets out the key risks to the charities and that appropriate systems are in place to identify and mitigate risk.

Main Report

Background

Corporate Risk Management Process

1. The City of London's Risk Management Framework incorporates the Risk Management Policy; the Risk Management Strategy 2024-29; and Risk Management Guidance and Training.
2. The Risk Management Policy outlines the City Corporation's overarching approach and requirements in risk management.
3. The Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029 articulates the City of London Corporation's approach to identifying, mitigating, and managing risk. It ensures that the City Corporation upholds duties, delivers priorities, and supports and aligns with organisational ambitions including our Corporate Plan 2024-2029 strategic outcomes enabling delivery, continuous improvement and innovation.
4. Risks and mitigating actions are regularly reviewed by 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 5.
5. 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. For example, changes to legislation, resource availability, severe weather events.

Risk governance and reporting

6. For each natural environment charity, the responsible Management Committee retains oversight of risk, with officers under their relevant delegated authority in the operational management of the charity having day-to-day responsibility for managing and controlling risk.

7. 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.
8. The City of London's Risk Management Framework requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.
9. Your Committee, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, reviews the risks faced by the four Commons charities on a quarterly basis to gain assurance that risks are being identified and managed effectively. This reporting frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Framework and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.
10. 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.
11. New risk management reporting appendices have recently been developed for use across all City of London departments as part of the *Informed Decision Making* objective of the Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029. These appendices are intended to help promote consistency and accuracy in risk management reporting to support strategic decision-making. Members will note that the risk register appended to this report takes this new format.

Current Position

12. The Executive Director Environment assures your Committee that all risks held by the four Commons charities continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.
13. Since the date of the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed by the Head Rangers and their management teams and updated in the risk management information system.
14. The detailed risk registers (Appendices 1-4) include explanations of changes to risk scores, target dates, and progress of mitigating actions. All risks are also listed below with their current score, direction of travel and notes summarising significant recent updates, where applicable.

A. Ashtead Common (see also Appendix 1)

- **ENV-NE-AC 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant
- **ENV-NE-AC 004: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant

- **ENV-NE-AC 006: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant
- **ENV-NE-AC 008: Water pollution**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant
- **ENV-NE-AC 009: Decline in condition of assets**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant
- **ENV-NE-AC 001: Budget pressures**
Current risk score: GREEN 4, constant

B. Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (see also Appendix 2)

- **ENV-NE-BBSC 002: Negative impacts of visitor pressure**
Current risk score: RED 16, constant
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 004: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 006: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 009: Decline in condition of assets**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, decreasing
- **ENV-NE-BBSC 008: Pollution**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant

C. Coulsdon and Other Commons (see also Appendix 3)

- **ENV-NE-COC 002: Negative impacts of visitor pressure**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant
- **ENV-NE-COC 004: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant
- **ENV-NE-COC 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant
- **ENV-NE-COC 008: Pollution**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant
- **ENV-NE-COC 009: Decline in condition of assets**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, decreasing
Following the resolution of some long-standing key issues, the likelihood of this risk occurring has reduced, taking the risk from a score of 16 (likely/major) to Amber 8 (unlikely/major). Concerns about the general situation remain and officers continue to liaise with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department with the aim of reducing the risk further.
- **ENV-NE-COC 010: Tree event or failure**
Current risk score: AMBER 8: New risk

This new risk has been added to the register due to the large numbers of older, more vulnerable trees throughout Coulsdon Commons which require regular inspection and works to prevent failure. The risk is exacerbated by a rise in tree disease and the impact of climate change. The risk is actively managed with regular inspections of trees, prioritisation of works, and social media messaging during extreme weather conditions.

- **ENV-NE-COC 001: Budget pressures**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant
- **ENV-NE-COC 006: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant

D. West Wickham and Spring Park (see also Appendix 4)

- **ENV-NE-WWSP 002: Negative impacts of visitor pressure**
Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 010: Tree event or failure**
Current risk score: AMBER 8: New risk
This new risk has been added to the register due to the large numbers of older, more vulnerable trees throughout West Wickham Commons and Spring Park which require regular inspection and works to prevent failure. The risk is exacerbated by a rise in tree disease and the impact of climate change. The risk is actively managed with regular inspections of trees, prioritisation of works, and social media messaging during extreme weather conditions.
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 004: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 005: Negative impacts of pests and diseases**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 009: Decline in condition of assets**
Current risk score: AMBER 8, decreasing
Following the resolution of some long-standing key issues, the likelihood of this risk occurring has reduced, taking the risk from a score of 16 (likely/major) to Amber 8 (unlikely/major). Concerns about the general situation remain and officers continue to liaise with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department with the aim of reducing the risk further.
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 001: Budget pressures**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant
- **ENV-NE-WWSP 006: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
Current risk score: AMBER 6, constant

Corporate and Strategic Implications

15. 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.
16. 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.
17. 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

18. 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 – Ashted Common Risk Register
- Appendix 2 – Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Risk Register
- Appendix 3 – Coulsdon and Other Commons Risk Register
- Appendix 4 – West Wickham and Spring Park Risk Register
- Appendix 5 – City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

Contact

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