

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board - For information. West Ham Park Committee- For information. Epping Forest & Commons Committee- For information. Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee- For information.	Dated: 11/12/2025 11/12/2025 09/01/2026 13/01/2026 03/02/2026
Subject: Senior Officer Recruitment	Public report: For Information
This proposal: • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties • provides business enabling functions [delete as appropriate – details should be added in the strategic implications section]	Leading Sustainable Environment; Flourishing Public Spaces; Providing Excellent Services
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£
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
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Summary

This report outlines the process for recruiting a new Deputy Director for the Natural Environment Division, following the resignation of the previous postholder. It details interim arrangements to ensure continuity of leadership and the steps for permanent recruitment, in line with the Senior Officer Recruitment Procedure. Members are asked to note the report and endorse the proposed approach.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.
- Endorse the recruitment plan for the Deputy Director, including interim arrangements and committee involvement.

Main Report

Background

1. The Deputy Director of the Natural Environment Division has resigned and will be leaving the Corporation at the end of January 2026. This is a critical senior management position, essential for strategic, operational, and stakeholder leadership within the Division.

Current Position

2. The responsibilities and job description for the Deputy Director have been reviewed and updated to reflect the evolving needs of the Division. The role remains unchanged in grade and core duties but now includes line management of Head Rangers for The Commons and removal of Stakeholder Engagement Officer role (Appendix 1).

Proposals

3. To ensure continuity of leadership and maintain delivery of statutory obligations and Corporate Plan outcomes, the following steps are proposed:

Interim Appointment

An internal interim Deputy Director will be appointed on a six-to-nine month secondment/acting-up basis. This provides stability for the Natural Environment Division and offers a development opportunity for existing staff and will enable a handover with the outgoing postholder.

Permanent Recruitment

An external recruitment process for the permanent Deputy Director will run concurrently with the interim arrangements. The process will follow the Senior Officer Recruitment Procedure, with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Natural Environment Board involved in shortlisting and interviews.

The job description has been updated to reflect current needs, including line management of the Commons Head Rangers.

Timeline

Interim appointment: Beginning of January 2026 – September 2026.
Permanent recruitment: campaign launched early March, appointment expected by early September.

Risk Mitigation

This approach minimises management risk, ensures continuity of leadership, and supports staff engagement during the transition period.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications - The recruitment plan directly supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024–2029. It ensures strong leadership for environmental sustainability and climate resilience under the outcome of Leading Sustainable Environment. It also secures the stewardship of green spaces in line with Flourishing Public Spaces and maintains continuity of high-quality services for communities and visitors under Providing Excellent Services. By implementing this plan, the Natural Environment Division can continue to meet its statutory obligations and strategic priorities without disruption.

Financial implications – None.

Resource implications - The interim appointment will be managed through an internal secondment, making use of existing staff resources and minimising additional costs. The permanent recruitment process will require support from the Human Resources team and involvement from the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Natural Environment Board during shortlisting and interviews. No additional capital expenditure is anticipated, and any minor costs, such as advertising, will be met from existing budgets.

Legal implications – None.

Risk implications - If no interim arrangements were in place, there would be a significant risk of leadership gaps affecting statutory compliance, project management, operational delivery and communications. Delays in the permanent recruitment process could extend the interim arrangements, but this risk is mitigated by running both processes in parallel. There is also a reputational risk if continuity is not maintained, which will be addressed through a structured handover and clear communication with stakeholders.

Equalities implications – The recruitment process will comply fully with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. All stages, including advertising, shortlisting, and interviews, will be conducted in a fair and transparent manner to ensure equal opportunity for all candidates. The proposals within this report are not expected to have a negative impact on individuals protected under existing equality legislation, such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to support candidates throughout the process.

Climate implications – None.

Security implications – None.

Conclusion

4. This report sets out the approach to recruiting a replacement for the outgoing Deputy Director of the Natural Environment Division. By appointing an interim Deputy Director and commencing the permanent recruitment process in parallel, the Division will maintain continuity of leadership, safeguard statutory obligations, and ensure delivery of Corporate Plan outcomes.

The updated job description reflects current operational priorities (Appendix 1), and committee involvement in the recruitment process provides assurance of transparency and governance. These measures collectively mitigate operational and reputational risks while supporting staff development and organisational stability.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Updated Job Description

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