

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	7 July 2014	
<b>Subject:</b> Business Plan: Quarterly Performance Update	<b>Public</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>	
<b><u>Summary</u></b>		
<p>This report summarises departmental performance at the end of the fourth quarter of financial year 2013/14. In addition it provides early indications of performance in the current financial year. The report contains details of key projects delivered and achievement against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).</p>		
<b>Recommendation</b>		
That this report is received for information.		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Open Spaces Department Business Plan is revised annually and agreed by this committee. The Business Plan details the aims and objectives of the department. This report considers progress made in the first quarter of the new financial year as well as summarising performance in 13/14, with a particular focus on the final quarter of the year.

### **Current Position**

#### **Delivery of Key Projects 2013/14**

2. The reporting year saw the delivery of a number of high profile projects including the completion of the final year of the City Bridge Trust funded project 'Inspiring Londoners through Landscapes and Biodiversity', Heritage Lottery Fund approval for stage one of the Kenley Revival Project and public consultation on the Hampstead Heath Project.
3. However, the timetables for a number of projects scheduled for delivery within the reporting year slipped. These projects included Introduction of Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches, the Epping Forest Management Plan, Golf Course Review at Epping Forest, the Grazing Strategy implementation, the Jubilee Pond relining project and the Land Registration Project.

4. There were a variety of causes for the slippages, although two factors were causal in a number of projects: lack of internal resource and unforeseen external factors. The business planning process for 2014/15 sought to improve performance through setting appropriate and achievable deadlines, with special attention being paid to sequencing activities so that appropriate resource is available. Deadlines were also challenged to ensure that they were appropriate. Consideration will also be given to improving project planning skills within the department to ensure all risks to projects are identified early in the planning process.

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2013/14**

5. A dashboard containing details of performance against each of the twenty one KPIs is available at Appendix 1.
6. Of the twenty one KPIs eight were not achieved in year. In the case of the three KPIs relating to the performance of the Cemetery and Crematorium this reflects the scale of ambition of the targets and specific operational circumstances, for example the withdrawal of cremators from service at a crucial point in the reporting year for the installation of solar panels on the modern crematorium.
7. A reduction in reported accidents was not achieved. This reflects a drive within the department to encourage reporting of all accidents and near misses.

### **Quarter 1 performance 2014/15**

8. Good progress was made towards achieving key objectives outlined in the Business Plan. Reported progress on all projects is summarised in the table below.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Reported progress</b>
a. Hampstead Heath Ponds Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitation of ground investigations ongoing</li> <li>• Regular stakeholder meetings carried out</li> <li>• Ongoing work developing education programme</li> </ul>
b. Delivering Savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff suggestions submitted and collated</li> <li>• Management planning meeting held</li> <li>• Planning regarding the exiting of grant funding from the City Bridge Trust</li> </ul>
c. Epping Forest Management Plan	No planned action in quarter one
d. Highams Park Dam Project	No planned action in quarter one

e. Shoot Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gateway 3/4 approval gained in April</li> </ul>
f. City Churchyards management arrangements	No planned action in quarter one
g. Queen's Park playground modernisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundraising and landscaping activities</li> </ul>
h. Kenley Revival Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing preparation for Stage 2 application</li> </ul>
i. West Ham Nursery Business Plan	No planned action in quarter one
j. West Ham Park Café development	No planned action in quarter one
k. City Commons and Burnham Beeches management arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team meetings held</li> <li>• Recruitment of Support Services Manager initiated</li> </ul>
l. Grazing project	No planned action in quarter one
m. Introduction of Land Management Category Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First meeting of the Category board held.</li> </ul>
n. Roll out of the Open Spaces visual identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new publications produced using the new identity</li> <li>• Toolkits provided to relevant staff</li> <li>• Initial staff training carried out</li> </ul>

9. Performance against the four key performance indicators is summarised in Appendix 2. At this stage in the reporting year data is limited, with the income measure particularly unreliable at this early stage.

### **Data Quality Assurance**

10. Following the adoption of the Corporate Data Quality Policy in April 2011, the Director of Open Spaces is required to provide assurance to the committee of departmental data quality. Limited assurance can be given for departmental data quality. For a number of performance indicators data is not currently verifiable or auditable.

11. Work is currently in progress to ensure full assurance can be given by the committee for financial year 2014/15. The KPIs for 2014/15 are all verifiable and auditable. Additional datasets used within the department are being refined and developed to meet the standards of the policy. As an example, guidance has been developed by education officers to ensure that a standard methodology for measuring education sessions is introduced. Methodologies used at sites to measure visitor numbers are being documented and audited at sites.

### **Financial and risk implications**

12. At the end of 2013/14 the Open Spaces local risk budget was underspent by £232. Requests have been made to the Chamberlain to carry forward underspent budget to the current financial year to a total of £217,000.

13. The Risk Register agreed as part of the Business Plan is reviewed quarterly and individual risks are discussed at Senior Management Team meetings.

### **Conclusion**

14. Progress in delivering the current year's business plan will continue to be monitored and the remedial action described above will be taken.

### **Contact:**

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