

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	9 December 2014	
Subject: Business Plan: Quarterly Performance Update	Public	
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report summarises departmental performance at the end of the second quarter of financial year 2014/15. The report contains details of progress made to deliver key projects, achievements against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and changes to key risks during the first half of the financial year.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>That this report is received for information.</p>		

Main Report

Background

1. The Open Spaces Department Business Plan was agreed by this committee in April 2014. The Business Plan details the aims and objectives of the department. This report considers progress made in the first half of financial year 2014/15.

Current Position

Delivery of Key Projects 2014/15

2. Significant progress has been made on a number of key departmental projects.
3. The Hampstead Heath Ponds project remains the highest risk and highest profile departmental project. Planning permission for the project will be considered by the London Borough of Camden in December by which point a judicial review decision will have been received. Ground investigations have been completed, including four originally delayed by nesting birds. Regular stakeholder meetings have continued, although the format of the stakeholder group may change when works commence. The education programme has been developed and an education officer is in post and building relationships with local schools.

4. Progress has also been made on the Highams Park Dam Project. Ground works on the dam have commenced and regular engagement with the public is taking place. On the 15th October a site tour and question and answer session was held for local community groups. Local councillors, interested members of the public and residents groups have been kept informed through a fortnightly newsletter. Signs and posters have also been placed at the site to explain the works to passers-by and minimise disruption by suggesting alternative pedestrian routes.
5. Details of progress on achievement of actions for all departmental projects are shown in the tables below.

a. Hampstead Heath Ponds Project

Actions/Milestones	April 2014 – June 2014 Facilitation of ground investigations Achieved
	April 2014 – March 2015 regular stakeholder meetings Achieved
	January 2015 – March 2015 Mobilisation phase
	March 2015 Scoping documents produced for management and maintenance plans
	March 2015 Education programme developed

b. Delivering Savings

Actions/Milestones	June 2014 – Proposals produced for Finance Committee Achieved
	September 2014 – Agreement of Department Action Plan Achieved through establishment of project boards
	March 2015 – Delivery of any identified year one savings

c. Epping Forest Management Plan

Actions/Milestones	December 2014 – Initiation of the consultation on the management plan Delayed
	March 2015 – Completion of consultation stage Delayed

d. Highams Park Dam Project

Actions/Milestones	March 2015 – Completion of community engagement programme during works at the site Ongoing
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e. Shoot Project

Actions/Milestones	April 2014 – Gateway 3/4 approval Achieved
	June 2014-September 2014 – Planning application Achieved
	September 2014 – Gateway 5 approval Achieved
	January 2015 – March 2015 – initiation of works

f. City Churchyards management arrangements

Actions/Milestones	March 2015 – Completion of review – In progress
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g. Queen's Park playground modernisation

Actions/Milestones	September 2014 Initiation of Phase 3 including fundraising activities Achieved
	March 2015 Completion of the installation

h. Kenley Revival Project

Actions/Milestones	June 2014 - Develop Activity Plan Achieved
	September 2014 - Develop Conservation Plan Achieved
	December 2014 - Develop Management and Maintenance plan – Physical and Digital
	December 2014 -Develop Learning Plan
	December 2014 - Submit HLF bid

i. West Ham Park Nursery feasibility study

Actions/Milestones	March 2015 – Completion of assessment and medium/long term plans for the nursery produced. Ongoing
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j. West Ham Park Café feasibility study

Actions/Milestones	September 2014 – Completion of initial scoping, including discussion with City Surveyors Achieved
	April 2015 – Development of project plan

k. City Commons and Burnham Beeches management arrangements

Actions/Milestones	March 2015 - Deliver new structure at City Commons
	March 2015 - Identify and deliver new ways of 'collegiate' working across the 3 City Commons' sections whilst ensuring their status as separate Charities.
	March 2015 - Identify development/training needs to support the above
	March 2015 - Integrate communications across the City Commons and Burnham Beeches teams

l. Grazing project

Actions/Milestones	September 2014 – Full completion of over-wintering facilities at Great Gregories (Epping Forest) Delayed
	December 2014 – installation of hard and invisible fencing at the grazing zone (Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches)
	March 2014 – Completion of full year of free range grazing (Epping Forest)

m. Introduction of Land Management Category Board

Actions/Milestones	April 2014 – Establishment of the board Achieved
	June 2015 – Agreement of priorities for year's work Achieved
	March 2015 – Reporting of savings achieved.

n. Roll out of the Open Spaces visual identity

Actions/Milestones	April 2014 – Presentation of identity 'tool-kits' to staff Achieved
	September 2014 – Completion of initial training of staff in use of the toolkits Achieved
	March 2015 – Completion of roll out for all annually renewed

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2014/15

6. A dashboard containing details of performance against the four KPIs is available at Appendix 1.
7. The conservation KPI measures the number of current management plans in place for City of London Open Spaces. Almost all sites have current management plan. The Queen's Park plan was agreed in June 2014 by committee.
8. The process of developing the management plan at Queen's Park and that agreed for Highgate Wood in spring 2014 resulted in a number of lessons learnt. Managers of both sites felt it was most productive to produce short, concise documents which are actively used to guide day-to-day management. They felt engagement between on the ground staff and a wide range of stakeholders was a key part of the process.
9. Epping Forest Management Plan is still being developed. Themes and sub-themes for consultation which had previously been presented to committee are being re-drafted. A new consultation timetable has been developed, which should see the final draft brought before committee by May and the start of public consultation in July.
10. KPI 2 measures visitor satisfaction. In its first year the measure will provide a baseline for satisfaction. The measure consists of a percentage of visitors ranking their satisfaction following visits as good or better. Currently slightly different methodologies are used at different sites, which mean scores are not directly comparable. In future years a joint methodology will be developed so the measure can be used more effectively to inform site management.
11. KPI3 measures income generated at each site, with income expressed as a percentage of actual local expenditure. The seasonal nature of income at Open Spaces sites means this measure will have increasing value when we are able to compare figures year on year.
12. KPI4 measures training spend at sites as a proportion of direct staff expenditure. A target was set of training budgets representing 1.5% of direct staff spend. Currently this target is not being met at any sites. It is likely that the bulk of staff training will occur during the third quarter of the year, due to limitations on staff time available for training over the summer. This will be kept under review.

Financial and risk implications

13. The Risk Register agreed as part of the Business Plan is reviewed quarterly and individual risks are discussed at Senior Management Team meetings.
14. Risks have been reviewed several times during the reporting year and actions taken to minimise and mitigate risks. Some changes have been made in year and the amended risk register is available at Appendix 2.
15. A new risk has been identified of **Financial Failure**. This risk superseded earlier risks named **Unavoidable reduction in income** and **Implications of increasing energy costs**. A previously recorded risk entitled **Inability to deliver additional burial space** has been removed from the departmental risk register, although it remains a divisional risk for the Cemetery and Crematorium. A new broader risk has been identified entitled **Project Management Failure**.
16. All departmental budgets are forecast to be within budget by the end of the financial year.

Conclusion

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

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