

Committee(s)	Dated:
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	7 March 2016 14 March 2016
Subject: Hampstead Heath Management Plan Review	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Information
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Summary

The beginning of 2016 marks the eighth year of the ten-year span of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan. It is proposed that work to undertake a review of the management plan commence immediately to ensure a renewed ten year strategic plan and management framework is in place by 2018.

This report proposes an approach based on the working group model that was successful in developing the current plan. Five broad themes are proposed for undertaking this review: measuring progress and achievements to date; reviewing the structure of the plan and associated framework for delivery; refreshing the objectives, actions and goals to ensure relevance in the current and future contexts; fostering a spirit of shared stewardship; and adopting an outcomes-based approach.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Since becoming custodian of Hampstead Heath in 1989, the City of London is committed to reviewing regularly the management plan for Hampstead Heath. The current management plan was released in November 2007 and is current to the end of 2017.
2. The Project and Management Support Officer was appointed in October 2015 and will lead the management plan review with the aim of a renewed strategic management plan being in place by January 2018.

Current Position

3. The format for the current management plan was agreed and set out in 2004. It was agreed that the plan must be comprehensive and forward-looking to reflect the scale, significance and complexity of the Heath. The result was a strategic

management framework extending over a ten-year period and made up of three parts.

4. Part I – Towards a Plan for the Heath 2007-2017 sets the long-term strategic direction for management of the Heath, addressing eight key themes and setting out overriding objectives, essential actions and aspirational goals for each theme.
5. Part II – Topic Papers was to include a series of topic papers providing greater detail for each key theme and would follow approval of Part I. Working Groups for each theme were able to progress topic papers to varying degrees. To date, completion of Part II has been achieved for Natural Landscape with detailed information and policies developed by the Ecology Team and the Natural Landscape Working Group.
6. Part III – Management Specification is intended to set out in detail how the management techniques will be applied to each area of the Heath and to align with various work programmes, site-specific plans and annual work plans. As above, the Natural Landscape theme provides an example of this with the preparation of 15 compartment management plans and an Annual Works Plan.

Proposals

7. The beginning of 2016 marks the 8-year mark in the ten-year span of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan. It is proposed that work to undertake a review of the current management plan commence immediately to ensure a renewed strategic plan and management framework is in place by 2018. In so doing, the importance of maintaining continuity with the current plan and preceding policies is recognised, as well as the valuable contribution of the working groups and contributors. The proposed approach is to review the current plan and apply the learnings to the preparation of a plan for 2018 to 2027, as outlined below.
8. Progress
Review achievements and progress towards the actions and goals set out in Part I of the plan. It is proposed that this be undertaken collaboratively by re-convening themed working groups to provide context and continuity. Questions to be considered by working groups may include: What actions have been achieved since 2007? How effectively has the management plan guided management, prioritisation and decision-making on the Heath? How can we measure success?
9. Structure
Review the effectiveness of the structure of the management plan. Working groups may consider the following questions: What are the reasons for Part II and III remaining incomplete for several themes? How has this affected management of these themes and values? What can we learn from the approach applied to Natural Landscape? How can we embed the strategic objectives at the delivery level?

10. Relevance

Review strategic objectives, aspirations and actions to ensure relevance in the current and future environmental, social, economic and policy context. Questions to consider include: During the past 8 years, what changes are relevant to the Heath? What trends, challenges and opportunities are likely to affect future management and how can these be addressed?

11. Engagement

Review consultation processes and effectiveness of engaging the Heath's community. How inclusive are existing forums for engaging the Heath community? Are there further opportunities to foster a shared sense of stewardship for the Heath in the future?

12. Evaluation

Develop an outcomes framework to assist in the allocation of resources and prioritisation for future investment to successfully realise the aspirations of the management plan. An outcomes approach may also underpin a framework for monitoring and evaluation with an emphasis on celebrating successes and applying learning.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. Review of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan will be in accordance with relevant corporate policies and in reference to the Corporate Plan, Open Spaces Business Plan and the Community Strategy. A number of implications have been considered in proposing the above approach to the review of the current management plan, as set out below.

14. A completion date of January 2018 aligns well with the Corporate business planning schedule, with key actions, projects and programmes able to be prioritised in the 2018/19 Open Spaces 3-year Business Plan.

15. The timeframe also aligns with the Open Spaces Service Based Review and enables key changes to service delivery models to be reflected in the renewed strategic plan and management framework.

16. The development timeframe coincides with the conclusion of the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project in 2017 and provides an opportunity for engaging the Heath community about the future of the Heath, looking beyond the debate arising from the Ponds Project.

Implications

17. There will be facilitation and engagement costs which will be allocated from the Superintendent's Local Risk Budget.

Conclusion

18. The proposed approach to conducting a review of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan 2007 – 2017 aims to produce a renewed strategic management plan and management framework for implementation by 2018. This will build on the strengths and reflect the intentions of the current management plan while ensuring it remains relevant into the future. The renewed plan will span ten years and will be strategic, comprehensive and forward-looking to reflect the scale, significance and complexity of the Heath.

Appendices

- None

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