

Committee	Dated:
Queen's Park Consultative Group	24 April 2018
Subject: Superintendent's Update	Public
Report of: Bob Warnock, Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Discussion
Report author: Richard Gentry, Open Spaces Department	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the management and operational activities of the Queen's Park Team since November 2017. The report will focus on achievements and forward planning including updates on the Queen's Park Annual Work Plan and its contribution to the Divisional Plan.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:

- Members provide feedback on the Draft Woodland Management Plan, attached at Appendix 1.
- Members provide feedback on the Schedule of Events at Appendix 2.
- Members provide feedback in relation to the variation to the Premises Licence for Films to be shown on a Friday evening in the Park, as set out in paragraph 35.
- Members give their views on the request from the Mayhew Animal Home to hold their Christmas Fayre in the Park in late November or early December 2018 as set out in paragraphs 36-37.
- Members give their views on the City of London supporting the request for an Opera to be held under a big top in the Park in June 2019 for a performance of Queen's Park the Opera, as set out in paragraphs 38-39.
- Members give their views on the proposal of the Park Manager to enter into discussions with Pines & Needles as set out in paragraphs 44-45.
- That the view and comments of the Queen's Park Consultative Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 23 May 2018.

Main Report

Operational Management

Recruitment of Team Leader

1. The Job Description and Person Specification for the vacant Team Leader post have been amended to consider an individual with skills in project management and the ability to support a small team in an urban park environment. Recruitment to this post will commence shortly.
2. Casual staff will be recruited to support the Keepers in the summer of 2018 with the maintenance of the Park.

Projects and Programmes

3. The City has a project procedure, this ensures that all projects, which will exceed £50,000 must be recorded and monitored. The delivery of a project supports the City in delivering its key aims and objectives. The process of monitoring ensures that the project is delivered effectively and efficiently, and the City makes the best use of its available resources.
4. Officers are considering a revised approach to the implementation of two projects within the Park:

Play Area Toilets

5. Officers recognise the concerns which have been raised by the Local Community with regard to the toilet block adjacent to the Play Area.
6. The Park Manager has worked with the Local Community to develop a solution for additional access to a toilet from the Play Area. Within the last six months it has become evident that there is movement in the building. The City of London's Surveyors Department (Property Facility Manager) arranged for a survey to be carried out of the property foundations. Two surveys were carried out, a CCTV and bore hole survey.
7. The advice received from the insurance Loss Adjuster was to remove the horse chestnut at the rear of the toilet block building. Horse Chestnut and London plane tree roots were found in soil samples taken from the bore holes. The Loss Adjuster reported that *'It is quite possible that both trees are influencing the situation, but as the damage to the block is essentially to the rear of it, I am still of the view that it is the Horse Chestnut (which is nearer to the building) that is the primary catalyst for the damage'*.
8. The Park Manager, is preparing a Capital and Supplementary Revenue Project for updating, extending or replacing the toilet block. The first stage is to prepare a detailed project proposal (Gateway 1 & 2).

9. The Park Manager will be meeting with the Principal Surveyor in early April to seek advice on options available for this building as the Gateway Project process is commenced.

Sandpit Redevelopment

10. Tenders received for the redevelopment of the sandpit were costed at more than the available Local Risk Budget for the completion of the works.
11. Consequently, the Park Manager is proposing to include the redevelopment of the sandpit within the same Gateway Project submission as the Play Area Toilets this would enable (pending approval) the Division to deliver the refurbishment as a Capital Project.
12. A plan for the sand pit has already been prepared and as per the comment in para. 8, the Park Manager will seek further advice from the Principal Surveyor on an agreed approach as the Gateway 1/2 Report is completed and submitted for consideration and approval.

Draft Woodland Walk Management Plan

13. A recent focus group meeting was held with Local Stakeholders. The focus group included individuals and organisations from a broad spectrum to ensure that the Management Plan reflected the local knowledge of the Queen's Park Area and all the challenges that it will face in the future. The development of the Woodland Walk Management Plan for Queen's Park will enable the City of London to review its aspirations alongside the physical characteristics of the area and identify management operations for the next 10 years. A draft of the Woodland Management Plan can be found at Appendix 1.

Children's Farm

14. The Park Manager will provide a verbal update on the progress of the Children's Farm redevelopment project.

Tennis Courts

15. The City of London Surveyor's Department are currently tendering for the refurbishment of the Queen's Park Tennis Courts. The Park Manager has requested that works do not commence until after summer 2018. The first phase will involve the resurfacing of the courts. The second phase will be completed in Spring 2019 whereby the final coating will be applied along with the permanent line marking.

City Surveyors Cyclical Works Programme

16. Scheduled works in the City Surveyors 2018/19 Cyclical Works Programme include; flat roof and rainwater goods replacement to Office / Café building, external decoration to staff areas, CCTV replacement and external and internal decoration to the Toilet Block.

Sustainability

17. In late December 2017 and early January 2018, Queen's Park was a drop off point for, primarily, London Borough of Brent residents to dispose of their Christmas Trees responsibly. This year 1,030 trees were deposited in the Park. The trees were collected by the waste contractor Veolia at no cost to the City of London. There is minimal intervention from staff, e.g. collecting trees thrown over fences and erecting a corral.
18. One of the larger costs incurred in the Local Risk Budget is the removal of waste from the Park. In the Financial Year 2016/2017, the Park spent £32,000 removing waste, this figure is not including the staff time to collect and manage the removal of the waste. A 2018/19 – 2020/21 Divisional Plan (see Appendix 3) Project has been identified to develop a long-term waste management strategy including improved collection and disposal services and waste reduction to reduce overall costs.

Ecology and Environment

Avian Influenza

19. Avian influenza (bird flu), a disease of birds, has been identified in wild birds in England. In January 2018, The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) introduced an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone in England (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu-in-winter-2017-to-2018>). Arrangements have been made for the chickens, a goose and ducks at the Queen's Park Children's Farm to be sequestered indoors / fully undercover for their protection.

Oak Processionary Moth

20. At the request of the Forestry Commission, a contractor has carried out a winter survey for Oak Processionary Moth. The contractor has looked at oaks which are within 250m of a pheromone trap that was laid in the summer to see if there is a pattern between moths caught in the summer and nests found.
21. The contractor has reported back that they did not find any signs of infestation in Queen's Park during their recent survey. They will carry out a quality control on a selection of the areas covered under this work and will advise the City of London if there are any findings.

Visitor and Community

22. The Kensal to Kilburn Transition Town vegetable garden at the rear of the Café continues to be successful. This success is not only measured by what they harvest but with the community involvement that has grown within this group.

Update on the Café

23. The tender process for the Queen's Park Café commenced on 9 October 2017 and the submission deadline for tenders was 12 November 2017. In all there were 35 expressions of interest and 12 compliant tenders were received by the submission deadline.
24. A thorough procurement exercise was carried out, with bidders evaluated via a transparent process that encouraged innovation and considered the recommendations from the café engagement and consultation exercise carried out in Queen's Park in early 2017. These recommendations included both the social and environmental values that are relevant to the needs of our customers.
25. On the 8 and the 11 December 2017 the top four operators were requested to attend a clarification meeting to ensure their proposals were fully understood. These meetings were held with the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath and the Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager.
26. On 15 November 2017 the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee approved delegated authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee to award a three year lease for the Queen's Park Café, a three year lease was awarded to the operator Urban Leisure Group (ULG).
27. ULG commenced trading in the café on 3 February 2018. Initial feedback from users is positive with a refreshing and professional ambience in the café.

Pedestrian Counters

28. The Park maintains pedestrian counters at the main entrances and at facility entrances. As the equipment becomes less reliable, the data provided is less accurate especially with equipment failure. The Park Manager will provide an update at the meeting on the data captured from the pedestrian counters.

Learning, Volunteers and Schools

29. Two local schools, Salusbury and Malorees have supported the Park Team in an annual event which involved the planting of daffodil bulbs. Over 700 children took part and planted more than 4,000 bulbs in the Field of Hope, adjacent to the Play Area.
30. To date, the Learning Project Officer has run 14 sessions at Queen's Park. 79 Adults have engaged with the sessions and 177 children have been involved. Playing Wild has been to Queen's Park day twice. In 2017 we engaged with 129 adults and children.
31. Through the Learning Project Officers, 18 work experience students have come to Queen's Park and assisted with Horticulture and Animal care.

32. Four students with special educational needs volunteered in the Park between September and November. They performed duties in the farm and gardens, completing a total of 48 hours.

Hampstead Heath Constabulary

33. The Hampstead Heath Constabulary continue to undertake regular patrols of the Park. On the occasions when the Constabulary witness a dog off a lead, or member of the public cycling through the Park, a warning is issued. The Park Team continue to engage with users of the Park and remind them of the byelaws and how to use the Park responsibly.

Events

34. A draft schedule of events has been provided at Appendix 2. (The dates listed may be subject to change).

NOMAD – Variation to Licence

35. The NOMAD Cinema have requested that the City of London consider a variation to their Premises Licence to accommodate outdoor cinema screenings on a Friday and a Saturday evening. It is proposed in 2018 to have a film on a Friday evening and then another on the Saturday and two further screenings on separate Saturday evenings. Dates are still to be confirmed. An application has been submitted to Brent to vary the Premises Licence. The views of this Committee are sought on the variation to the Premises Licence to include Friday evenings.

Mayhew Winter Fayre

36. The Mayhew are a local animal rehoming charity. They have approached the Park Manager and asked for consideration to be given to holding their annual Christmas Fayre in the Park. They have outgrown the location of the current Christmas Fayre event, which is at their rehoming centre in Trenmar Gardens.
37. The views of Members are sought giving consideration to the request made by the Mayhew to hold their Christmas Fayre in the Park in late November or early December 2018.

Queen's Park, The Opera

38. A provisional request has been made to the City of London, Queen's Park to host a performance of 'Queen's Park, The Opera' in 2019. The event organiser would require use of a big top where the performance would be staged. The proposed event would take place between 27-30 June 2019 (proposed dates).
39. Estimated audience number would be 300. The organisers have suggested funding from the City of London. Estimated costs would be £80,000. Funding for this proposed event would have to be sought by the event organiser as the

City of London would not be in a position to provide any funding for this proposed event. The views of Members are sought on the provisional request for the staging of an Opera in the Park in a big top in June 2019.

City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018

40. The City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 received Royal Assent on 15 March 2018.
41. A copy can be accessed at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/ukla/2018/1>. This additional legislation has significant implications for the City Corporation and its ability to manage its Open Spaces. The Act focuses primarily on three main objectives:
 - Clarifying general management powers;
 - Strengthening the City Corporation's powers to deal with anti-social behaviour; and
 - Providing greater opportunity to generate income to be re-invested back into the running of our green spaces.
42. Exercise of the new powers will be decided by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee following consultation with the Queen's Park Consultative Group.

Income and Expenditure

43. The Superintendent will provide a verbal update of income and expenditure at the meeting.

Pines and Needles Proposals

44. Previously, Queen's Park has been approached by Pines and Needles who, through a retail operation, supply Christmas Trees. In an effort to increase their outlets in the lead up to the Festive Period, they sought permission from the City of London to utilise a space within Queen's Park to sell trees from. Under the existing legislative framework at that time, the City of London was unable to offer this space for retail purposes.
45. With the introduction of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018, the Park Manager would like to recommence discussions with the Operator and the Comptroller and City Solicitor to assess if the previous proposal is viable.

2018/19 Annual Work Programme

46. The Annual Work Programme (AWP) sets out cyclical and project works planned at Highgate Wood over the next 12 months and is integral to effectively prioritising programmes and works for resource allocation. The 2018/19 AWP is appended to this report (see Appendix 4).

Divisional Plan

47. A 4th Quarter update on the status and progress of the 2017/18 Divisional Plan Projects is attached at Appendix 3. Members are asked to note the progress of the Projects, and in particular Projects with April 2018 milestones.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

48. Corporate Plan 2015-19: To provide valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure, to London and the nation. Draft Corporate Plan: Our spaces inspire excellence, enterprise, creativity and collaboration; People are safe and feel safe; People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
49. Open Spaces Business Plan 2017: Improve health and wellbeing through access to green space and recreation.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft Queen's Park Woodland Walk Management Plan
- Appendix 2 – Queen's Park Proposed 2018 Schedule of Events
- Appendix 3 – 2018/19 Divisional Plan (Including 4th Quarter Status & Update for 2017/18 Divisional Plan).
- Appendix 4 – 2018/19 Annual Work Programme

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