



Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

Wednesday, 9 November 2011 at 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane,
Wembley, HA9 9HD

Membership:

| Members | Representing | first alternates | Second alternates |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Councillors: | | Councillors: | Councillors: |
| Ashraf (Chair) | LB Brent | Hashmi | CJ Patel |
| Hart (Vice Chair) | LB Barnet | | |
| Kataria | LB Brent | J Moher | Crane |
| Khatri | LB Barnet | | |
| Johnson | LB Barnet | | |
| Mashari | LB Brent | Kabir | John |
| Rayner | LB Barnet | | |
| Singh | LB Brent | R Moher | Hirani |

For further information contact: Bryony Gibbs, Democratic Services Officer
020 8937 1355 bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk

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www.brent.gov.uk/committees

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Membership continued:

Member

David Carter
Leela O'Dea
Neale Hider
Neil Winter
Peter Castle
A Jefferson
Klaus Schuricht
Molly Savage
Clive Cohen
Kate Mitchell
Jon Bell
Commander G F Beck MBE
Dr Leo Batten
Roy Beddard
Harry Mackie

Julia Touloumbadjian
Judy Shepherd
Geoffrey Johnson
Jon Guest
Brain Turner

Organisation

Brent Sports Council
British Waterways
Environment Agency
Environment Agency
Hendon Rifle Club
Hendon Rifle Club
Hendon Rifle Club
Local Agenda 21
London Wildlife Trust
Natural England
Princes Park Youth Football Club
Training Ship Broadsword
Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Welsh Harp Environmental Education
Centre
Welsh Harp Sailing Association
West Hendon Community Forum
Woolmead Residents' Association
British Waterways
Training Ship Broadsword

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

| Item | Page |
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| 1 | Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests | |
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Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on this agenda.

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| 2 | Minutes of the previous meeting | 1 - 8 |
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| 3 | Matters arising (if any) | |
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| 4 | Membership application | 9 - 10 |
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At the previous meeting held on 19 July 2011, it was agreed that the West Hendon Allotment Society be invited to make an application to join the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee. An application has subsequently been made and is attached for the committee's consideration. The committee, in considering an application, must be satisfied that the organisation has sufficient interest in the Welsh Harp to justify its nomination.

Ward Affected: All Wards **Contact Officer:** Bryony Gibbs,
Democratic Services
Tel: 020 8937 1355
bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk

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| 5 | Barratt Homes development | |
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Representatives of Barratt Homes have indicated that they are willing to attend a meeting of the committee to address any queries that committee members may have; however, confirmation of whether they are available to attend this meeting is currently pending.

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| 6 | Environment Agency - verbal report | |
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| 7 | Management Plan (Barnet) | 11 - 20 |
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This report details the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and on-going site management.

Ward Affected: All Wards **Contact Officer:** Jenny Warren, Green
Spaces Manager

8 Management Plan (Brent)

21 - 26

This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main local land-holding organisations: Brent Council, British Waterways, and the London Borough of Barnet.

Ward Affected: All Wards **Contact Officer:** Leslie Williams,
Environmental Policy Officer
Leslie.Williams@brent.gov.uk

9 Planning Issues (if any)

10 Date of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Welsh Harp is on 10 January 2012.

11 Any Other Urgent Business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



- Please remember to **SWITCH OFF** your mobile phone during the meeting.
- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.
 - Toilets are available on the second floor.
 - Catering facilities can be found on the first floor near the Paul Daisley Hall.
 - A public telephone is located in the foyer on the ground floor, opposite the Porters' Lodge

Agenda Item 2

MINUTES OF THE WELSH HARP JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE Tuesday, 19 July 2011 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: - Councillor Ashraf (Chair) (LB Brent), Councillor Hart (Vice Chair) (LB Barnet), Councillor Johnson (LB Barnet), Councillor Kataria (LB Brent), Councillor Khatri (LB Barnet), Councillor Rayner (LB Barnet), Roy Beddard (Welsh Harp Conservation Group), Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust), Liz Hall (Welsh Harp Sailing Association), Geoffrey Johnson (Woolmead Residents' Association), Harry Mackie (Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre), Molly Savage (Local Agenda 21) and Judy Shepherd (West Hendon Community Forum)

1. **Election of Chair**

RESOLVED: - that councillor Ashraf be elected Chair for the 2011-12 municipal year.

2. **Election of Vice Chair**

RESOLVED: - that councillor Hart be elected Vice-Chair for the 2011-12 municipal year.

3. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None declared

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 March 2011**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 March 2011 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting subject to the following amendments: -

- Minute 6 to note the explanation of why it had been difficult to get McDonalds involved in the clean-up day.

5. **Matters arising (if any)**

Use of Insecticides

With regard to Minute number 4, Clive Cohen (London Wildlife Trust) noted that Jenny Warren (Greenspaces Manager – Barnet Council) had indicated that it was not a priority of the borough of Barnet to communicate the effect to land owners of the use of insecticides. Clive Cohen advised the committee that the Crop Protection Association (CPA) produced a leaflet regarding this matter and that he had liaised with property services to ensure that copies of this leaflet were distributed to libraries and relevant properties. Clive Cohen added that he had suggested to the Crop Protection Association that they contact all other councils to propose a similar plan of action.

Bank at former youth sailing base site

The Chair noted that it was suggested at the previous meeting under 'Any Other Business' that Barratt Homes be invited to attend the next meeting of the committee with regard to the issue of the poor condition of the bank at the former youth sailing base site. The Chair queried whether this had been raised with Barratt Homes. Councillor Julie Johnson provided a brief update on this matter, noting in particular that the marketing suite at the site had now been completed. She suggested that Barratt Homes may have wished to wait until the building of the suite was finished before improving the bank; however, they were not at present making the best of the bank. Councillor Julie Johnson added that she had understood that the bank would be planted up with appropriate plants after the build was complete. Roy Beddard (Welsh Harp Conservation Group) advised that further information was required from the planning department regarding the relevant conditions agreed and emphasised that it was important that the bank be replanted once the marketing suite was removed. Jenny Warren advised that she would follow up this issue and would explore the possibility of whether an interim measure could be applied whilst the marketing suite was in place. She added that she would contact Natural England for assistance. Following further discussion, it was agreed that Barratt Homes be invited to attend the next meeting of the committee. Councillor Hugh Rayner suggested that a Barratt Homes should be advised of the specific issues on which the committee would like further information. The Chair requested that any specific questions that the committee would like to put to Barratt Homes be emailed to him at cllr.javaid.ashraf@brent.gov.uk.

Environmental Impact Survey / contamination of waterways

Referring to the paragraph on the Dollis Valley Green Walk Project, also located under 'any other business', a member of the committee noted that at the previous meeting it had been suggested that an environmental impact survey be conducted. This suggestion had followed the announcement that treatment to invasive species and maintenance work would be carried out to the brook. It was subsequently queried if there was any update available on this issue. Councillor Hart advised that he believed this issue related to the concern that effluence flowing into the brook higher upstream from built up areas was nourishing weeds which were causing considerable problems in the brook. Councillor Julie Johnson added that there had been a similar issue in the recent past due to incorrectly connected washing machines. Clive Cohen noted that this issue had been investigated a number of years ago with waterways between Totteridge in Barnet and the Welsh Harp being tested. It had been found that 32 different ponds, lakes and waterways had been contaminated with effluence on route to the Welsh Harp. Clive Cohen emphasised that this contamination had to be stopped at source. Following further discussion it was agreed that it should be ascertained whether testing of waterways still took place and if so, whether the results were publically available. It was noted that this could be checked with Neal Hider of the Environment Agency.

Treatment of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam

Turning to the subject of stem injections, briefly referred to at Minute number 4, Clive Cohen suggested that with regard to treatment of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam, flailing should take place prior to flowering in order to ensure that there was no risk of pesticides/insecticides getting in to the food chain. Jenny Warren advised that the local authority was legally required to treat Japanese Knotweed and that stem injection had been deemed the most efficient way to do

this. Flailing would not be affective as it only took a single rhizome for the plant to spread. With regard to Himalayan Balsam, this needed to be pulled up before it produced seeds.

Mayor's Priority Parks Project – Update

The Chair noted that The London Borough of Barnet had won the London Mayor's priority parks project and had been awarded £400,000. He further asserted that whilst it was not directly within the committees remit it might prove useful as background information to have an update at the next meeting on how this money would be applied.

RESOLVED: -

- i. that Barratt Homes be invited to attend the next meeting of the committee with regard to the bank at the former Youth Sailing Base site.
- ii. that it be ascertained via Neal Hider, whether testing of waterways still took place and if so, whether the results were publically available.
- iii. that further information regarding how the funds awarded to Barnet Council via the London Mayor's priority parks project were applied be provided to the committee

6. Welsh Harp Management Plan (Brent)

Leslie Williams introduced a report updating the committee on the progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan was jointly managed by the three main local land-holding organisations: Brent Council, British Waterways and the London Borough of Barnet.

Leslie Williams advised that a review was due of the administration charges and the river Brent catchment managerial process. Leslie Williams invited any comments of either of these issues and noted that any comments that the committee might have would be fed in to the review.

Turning to the issue of the Parks Warden service, Leslie Williams advised that this service had been significantly reduced as part of the recent reorganisation of Brent Council and was now reliant of the slightly increased number of mobile wardens. The mobile wardens worked in two shifts and there was a maximum of two wardens on patrol at any one time. It was anticipated that up to three agency staff could be employed during the peak months of usage of parks and open spaces, from August to October. Additional training would be provided to the grounds maintenance team to allow them to take over some of the tasks of the wardens. The grounds maintenance team would visit the Welsh Harp at regular intervals.

The committee was advised that summary information regarding the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for the Welsh Harp could be obtained from the Biodiversity Action Report System (BARS) website, which was the online system for national reporting of BAPs. Brent was currently looking at treating Japanese Knotweed with herbicide and action was also planned with regard to Giant Hogweed, which was not harmful to wildlife but could represent a public health issue as it produced a sap which could damage skin.

Leslie Williams concluded his report by noting that Brent Council had recently obtained a small sum via a 106 agreement for use in the Welsh Harp area for flood alleviation.

During discussion the committee raised several issues as follows: -

- Clive Cohen noted that Barnet and Brent council's employed different approaches to the treatment of Japanese Knotweed and queried why the approaches were not co-ordinated. Leslie Williams advised that the two councils did liaise with each other but each council would select the most appropriate option for its circumstances. Councillor Julie Johnson queried if joint meetings still took place to discuss the management plan. Leslie Williams advised that the councils liaised informally with each other often by email and telephone. Jenny Warren advised that details regarding the contactors used for instance were regularly exchanged; however, it was difficult to meet face to face on a regular basis as the stakeholder group encompassed five different organisations.
- Councillor Hugh Rayner queried the impact that the reduction of park wardens would have on the enforcement of the bylaw, under which holding barbeques in the Welsh Harp area was prohibited. Leslie Williams advised that after a period of circa eight years, this bylaw was just now in its final stage of approval. Park Wardens would be empowered to enforce these bylaws by issuing tickets and they could call the police for assistance if necessary. Councillor Julia Johnson advised that in order to address a lack of park wardens in Barnet during the summer months, discussions had been held with the safer neighbourhood teams which had resulted in the provision of police/community officer presence in the Welsh Harp. It was agreed that Councillor Dhiraj Kataria would liaise with other Welsh Harp Councillors and Barnet Councillor Julia Johnson to pursue a similar approach. A further query was raised regarding the adequacy of the signage provided regarding barbeques. Following further discussion and the assertions of a number of different opinions on the subject, it was agreed that a report summarising the signage options, budget implications and recommendations be presented to the committee at the meeting following the next.
- Councillor Julie Johnson queried who could check if people fishing in the area had an appropriate license. Roy Beddard advised that the Environment Agency issued rod licenses; however, it could be very difficult to catch people systematically fishing without a license. It was important that fishing restrictions were enforced as it created significant disturbance to birds nesting at the waterside. Clive Cohen noted that in other areas a 'friends of' organisation had been formed and via that group, a scheme initiated whereby voluntary rangers walked the area and reported any wrongdoings observed. Councillor Julia Johnson advised that the possibility of setting up a 'friends of' organisation had been explored with the Welsh Harp Community Association. She further noted that there had previously been a booklet made available by Barnet Council which outlined the requirements for setting up such an organisation and which provided helpful advice including from where funding could be obtained. Jenny Warren advised that the leaflet referred to by Councillor Julie Johnson was in the process of being updated.

RESOLVED: - that a report summarising the signage options, budget implications and recommendations be presented to the committee at the meeting following the next.

7. **Report from the London Borough of Barnet**

Jenny Warren presented a report updating the committee on Barnet council's position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and on-going site management. The committee heard that there was an on-going maintenance requirement for several Willow trees sited to the rear of Dehar Crescent. Before work could proceed on these trees, it had been necessary to obtain the consent of Natural England. The committee was referred to Appendix A of the report, at which a schedule for Tree Management Works (Welsh Harp area 4b) was included, alongside a consent letter from Natural England. The committee was advised that the work on the trees to the rear of Dehar Crescent had since been completed.

Turning to the subject of Barnet Council's Japanese Knotweed Control Programme, it was reported that following an annual inspection in April 2011, one area of new infestation had been located. There were also significant areas populated by Giant Hogweed. The weed control programme for invasive species would continue, and further control measures in the Welsh Harp would be carried out. The committee was informed that the Environment Agency had at present delayed this programme of works, pending the completion of further training by the contractor employed. It was hoped that this delay would not cause the window of opportunity for treatment of these plants to be missed.

Jenny Warren drew the committee's attention to 9.1.3 of the report, highlighting that the Welsh Harp Working Group had not met for over six months. Consequently, it was felt that a review of the group and its ability to commit and deliver should be considered. The organisations which comprised the group were the London Borough of Barnet, the London Borough of Brent, British Waterways, the Welsh Harp Conservationists and the Welsh Harp Sailing Association.

In concluding her report to the committee, Jenny Warren advised that a number of changes to the infrastructure at Welsh Harp had taken place. Three new ranger litter bins and two new wooden sleeper benches had been installed along the main footpath from Brent to Cool Oak Lane and one dog bin had been removed from the west Hendon side of the Welsh Harp. A low metal vehicle barrier had also been installed to the car park entrance of Woodfield Park in April 2011 to help reduce the amount of fly tipping which was occurring in the car park. The committee further heard that in response to the increase in litter during the summer months, weekend litter patrols had commenced. A Health and Safety officer would be conducting an inspection of the Welsh Harp site with respect to Blue Green Algae, whilst installing signage around the water edge.

During discussion, several members referred to the issue waterways/bodies of water within the Welsh Harp area becoming hyper-eutrophic due to chemicals/substances from residential areas washing/flowing into them. Clive Cohen highlighted that there was a leaflet available from the Environment Agency which provided information on misconnected appliances and suggested that this information be distributed to residents. Councillor Hugh Rayner noted that many people would not know if their appliances were misconnected. Leslie Williams

informed the committee that a previous investigation into the number of misconnections in an area had found thirty misconnections out of four hundred properties. Unfortunately, such investigation took considerable time to complete. He further noted that from 1st October 2011, the liability for private sewers would be transferred to the water companies. Jenny Warren explained that the responsibility for identifying misconnections lay either with the general public or the Environment Agency; however, water companies would be responsible for the outflow from a property and so their co-operation would be required in order to trace the source of contamination. Unfortunately, these agencies could not compel an individual to fix a misconnection and so the council was required for the purposes of enforcement. Jenny Warren added that despite the difficulties outlined above, attempts to tackle this problem had been quite successful. She further noted that Thames Water had a team dedicated to this task and the Environment Agency had completed a significant piece of related work. Following this discussion, it was agreed that Clive Cohen would arrange for copies of the leaflets to be forwarded to the clerk for distribution to the committee.

Several queries were raised regarding the tree management programme. Jenny Warren advised that Barnet Council had completed a survey of its parks and this included the nature reserve. The Welsh Harp was a site of special scientific interest (or triple S site) and that tree maintenance took place biannually. Roy Beddard emphasised that in order to maintain the triple S rating it was important that a wide range of habitats were maintained in the Welsh Harp. Geoffrey Johnson (Woolmead Residents' Association) queried about the maintenance of trees in Woolmead Avenue. Councillor Julie Johnson advised that she understood it to be a site on a maintenance cycle of five years. Roy Beddard explained that the trees on that site were maintained by the Welsh Harp Conservation Group (WHCG) and maintenance had last taken place three to four years ago. If funding was available, the WHCG would arrange for further maintenance work in the future. In response to a query, Councillor Julie Johnson confirmed that she believed that the council should be responsible for maintenance of the trees at this site and added that she would explore this issue further.

Leslie Williams agreed that he would try to find a large map of the Welsh Harp area for future meetings of the committee.

With reference to the table included at Appendix A to the report, the Chair commented that it would be useful for a date for completion of the works to be included.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted.

8. Planning Issues (if any)

A report was tabled by Tom Wyld, Senior Planning Officer, Barnet Council, providing an update on the West Hendon Regeneration. The report noted that Barratt Metropolitan LLP (BMLLP) had indicated that they would submit an application to the planning department to vary the existing Outline Planning Application (W13937/04). The changes proposed were in relation to phasing, car parking and affordable housing. The planning application had not yet been submitted and the application

would be subject to consultation, including with all organisations that attend the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 9 November 2011.

10. Any Other Urgent Business

Cool Oak Lane Bridge

A member of the committee informed the meeting that there had been considerable problems caused by Lorries using the Cool Oak Lane Bridge in the Welsh Harp Area. These Lorries were using the bridge on route to a site which was manufacturing low grad compost. The materials being carried by these uncovered Lorries was being distributed in the form of dust all over the road and surrounding area during transit. Jenny Warren advised that it was illegal for a lorry carrying such material to do so uncovered. It was suggested that any further complaints regarding this matter be forwarded to Barnet Council.

West Hendon Allotment Society

RESOLVED: - that West Hendon Allotment Society be invited to make an application to join the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

CLLR ASHRAF
Chair

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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Forum Application Form

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| Organisation: | West Hendon Allotment Society..... |
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Please outline your organisation's interest in the Welsh Harp:

The Welsh Harp is a very special place. The West Hendon Allotments cover a substantial amount of land to the north and help to extend the area that can be enjoyed by wildlife – birds, foxes, mice etc.

We expect to become self-managing in the near future and would hope to forge stronger links with the local community.

We also hope that we can contribute to keeping the area special by being a buffer against inappropriate development.

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| Meeting | Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee |
| Date | 9 November 2011 |
| Subject | Welsh Harp Management Plan |
| Report of | Interim Director Environment, Planning & Regeneration |
| Summary | To report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and on-going site management. |

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| Officer Contributors | Jenny Warren, Greenspaces Services Manager |
| Status (public or exempt) | Public |
| Wards affected | West Hendon |
| Enclosures | Appendix One – Dollis Valley Greenwalk project overview Appendix Two – Welsh Harp planting scheme |
| For decision by | Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee |
| Function of | Executive |
| Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate) | N/A |

Contact for further information: Jenny Warren, Greenspaces Services Manager, 020 8359 7803.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 23 March 2011 – approved the proposed boundary of the Local Nature Reserve.
- 2.2 Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005 agreed the designation of a Local Nature Reserve on the Welsh Harp.
- 2.3 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 agreed draft byelaws.
- 2.4 Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee on 5 September 2006 and Cabinet on 16 October 2006 endorsed the draft byelaws for formal approval by full Council on 7 November 2006.
- 2.5 Council formally endorsed the draft byelaws on 7 November 2007.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The Welsh Harp is a key greenspace in the London Borough of Barnet that serves both visitors and wildlife. The Welsh Harp and its management contributes to the corporate priority to “protect and enhance our natural and built environment so that the borough is clean and green” and in turn working towards continuing to make Barnet a successful London suburb.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

5.1 Parks and Open Spaces benefit all sectors of the community by improving the local environment. Maintenance is carried out according to the management plan and takes into account requests from residents, users and Members. Improvements are made, wherever possible, to ensure equal access for all users.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

6.1 Any costs incurred from the programmes and initiatives will be met within existing Environment, Planning and Regeneration budgets.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

7.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to safeguard, protect and enhance sites of special scientific interest. The Local Authority has the power under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to acquire, declare and manage nature reserves. However, English Nature must be consulted by the Authority in the use of the powers given by section 21. The 1949 Act states that a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) must be managed in

such a way to ensure that use of the site does not result in any damage to its natural features.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 8.1 The Council's Constitution Part 2 Article 11.02 Joint Arrangements, (a) The Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more Local Authorities and/or their Executives to exercise functions which are not Executive functions in any of the participating authorities, or advise the Council. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a Joint Committee with these other Local Authorities.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1. Current ongoing management issues

- 9.1.1 Nothing to report

9.2 West Hendon Regeneration

9.2.1 West Hendon Masterplan Review

It was reported at the previously WHJCC on 19 July 2011 that Barratt Metropolitan LLP (BM LLP) were, due to viability issues pursuing a Section 73 application which would maintain the existing masterplan approach whilst amending the phasing, car parking ratio and level of affordable housing. Further investigations into this option have demonstrated to BM LLP that with the changes proposed there would remain a significant funding gap that could not be closed with a S73 application.

- 9.2.2 As a result a Masterplan Review process has been started with Allies and Morrison (architects) being employed to readdress the approach to the West Hendon Estate to try to find an approach that would close this remaining Viability gap. Weekly Meetings have begun between BM LLP, the Council, Allies and Morrison and other technical consultants to progress this review which if successful will result in a new planning application to take forward the regeneration of the Estate.

- 9.2.3 Statutory consultee involvement (including TFL, Natural England and British Waterways) is being organised at an early stage of the process (first meetings week of 24 Oct). Wider pre-application consultations will take place prior to submission of any application.

9.2.4 Planting to the Bank of the Welsh Harp

The planting to the bank of the temporary sales centre (former youth sailing base site) was conditioned to be completed prior to the end of the 1st planting season following the temporary approval. Planting in accordance with the attached scheme (Appendix 2) will be taking place in November 2011.

- 9.2.5 The design approach to the planting scheme focuses upon improving the environmental value of the edge of the Welsh Harp. In particular this approach seeks to benefit the waterfowl that are key in the SSSI designation. Furthermore the planting scheme is intended to provide a mature element to the vegetation forming the future 8m wide buffer strip to the edge of the Welsh Harp as required by the existing Outline approval. A condition has been attached to the temporary use of the site which requires the completion of the 8m planted buffer strip upon the cessation of the use on site.

9.3 Dollis Valley Greenwalk

- 9.3.1 The Dollis Brook is a tributary to the Welsh Harp Reservoir and any works that are carried out upstream in the Dollis Valley Greenwalk may impact the site positively or negatively.
- 9.3.2 The Dollis Valley Greenwalk was successful in obtaining an award of £400,000 from the Mayors Help a London Park scheme, which is due to be completed by March 2012. This project has seen a number of improvements throughout the length of the walk and drawn in additional funds from Walk London and TfL of £280,000.
- 9.3.3 Three key objectives were identified to improve access, bio-diversity and facilities throughout the walk and a series of works identified to achieve these. The table contained in Appendix One details an overview of the project. The main beneficial impacts from the project for the Welsh Harp is the eradication of invasive species and improvement of water quality through the selective reduction of vegetation along the corridor. The improvement of signage along the corridor identifies the Capital Ring walking route that passes through the Welsh Harp and the site itself as a location to visit.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan can be found on Brent Council's website: www.brent.gov.uk/parks in the biodiversity section.

Legal –

CFO –

DVGW Key Activity Programme of Work

ACTIVITY

| Objective | Item | Description of Works | Location | Methodology/reasoning |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| One - Access/Use | Signage | Enhance signage to improve information, way mark the route and provide an identity with new: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directional finger posts & way markers • Map information boards • De-cluttering of instructional signage and replacement with new where appropriate | Along entire Route | To improve access and provide consistent information it is essential to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark out the route with Way markers and directional posts. Old directional signage is to be replaced with new wooden carved signs. • Provide new maps of the route to replace old and missing. • Remove and replace instructional signs, de-clutter and simplify range of signage |
| | Footpaths and cycling | Improve the condition of existing footpaths and increase safety for all users | Footpaths where cycling is permitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brook Farm • Brent Park • Brookside Walk | All footpaths were inspected and prioritised depending on their condition and greatest need. By utilising TfL and GLA funds it was possible to maximise the length of footpaths that could be repaired/replaced as part of this project. Approx 80% of the footpaths require some level of intervention, however all but one of the highest |

DVGW Key Activity Programme of Work

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| | | | Footpaths where cycling is not permitted: • Windsor Open Space | priority areas have been able to be addressed as part of this project. The remaining priority area is between Dollis Road and Fursby Avenue which is in such poor repair it requires complete replacement. Due to the extent and complexity of the work required there is insufficient funding available within the project to include this section. |
| | Entrances | Treatment at entrances to provide: • Access improvements • Enhanced landscaping • Fencing &/or bollards Number of locations delivered subject to funding | Identified priority locations: • Laurel Way (south side), • Tillingham Way (north side) • Holden Road, • Totteridge lane (north side), • Dollis Road | All entrances were assessed and five priority sites were identified to improve access, safety concerns and the appeal of the entrance. Entrances to be improved by rolling out a standard design solution: • Installation of new wooden fencing or bollards • Removal of overgrown vegetation • Provision of consolidated signage |
| | Bridges | Repairs, refurbishment and replacement to upgrade and improve safety including: • New handrails • Structural repairs • Surface treatment • Widening to improve access | Along entire route | All bridges have been inspected and the entire bridge network requires some degree of works. The work will range from complete replacement to health and safety works and improvements including new handrails and repaired uneven surfaces. |

DVGW Key Activity Programme of Work

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|-------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Two- Bio-diversity | Woodland and vegetation management | Identify woodland and vegetation requiring treatment, replacement and enhancement | Entire route. Selected areas for scrub clearance | Areas of vegetation to be removed to improve access to the river for both light and users. Bio-diversity improvements. Locations to be confirmed, once costed and detailed proposals put out to consultation. |
| | Pond improvements/development | Creation of new seasonal pond | Windsor Open Space | To assist in alleviating localised rain water flooding of footpath and improve bio-diversity. |
| | | Improvements to decoy pond to improve water quality and bio-diversity | Brent Park | The pond water is stagnant and sits well below the bank line. Improvements to the lake to be carried out to improve water quality and appearance. Including landscaping. |
| Three - Facilities | Seating and Litter bins | Improvements to existing provision including additional and replacements | Selected locations along route | Additional and replacement bins and seats in response to requests, identified areas of deficiency and existing poor quality. Provision of standard bins currently used and introduction of wooden benches. |
| | Play | Provision of new playground equipment to enhance existing play areas | Riverside Walk Windsor Open Space | Enhancement of the two existing play areas including replacement equipment. Type of new equipment provided will be subject to consultation with local residents. |

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Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee

9 November 2011

Report from the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Welsh Harp Management Plan

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents progress on the Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan. The Management Plan is jointly managed by the three main local land-holding organisations: Brent Council, British Waterways, and the London Borough of Barnet.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the Report.

3.0 Detail

Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan

- 3.1 The Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir Management Plan is available on the internet at the Brent Council website www.Brent.gov.uk/parks
- 3.2 Updated information has been incorporated into a working draft of the Management Plan but further work is required to update the work recommendations for each zone.
- 3.3 A digital map of the management zones has been is in preparation; and a draft is attached to the Agenda. Some of the detail of the sub-zones has been omitted.

- 3.4 Water pollution. The issue of misconnections was raised at the last meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee. While responsibility for some sections of private sewers was transferred to the water companies from 1 October 2011 (see water / sewerage company websites for information), most misconnections are expected to remain on the private land upstream of the water company's direct responsibility.
- 3.5 Blue-green algae: The Environment Agency reported evidence of blue-green algae downstream of the Welsh Harp on 8 August 2011; and this followed reports from the Reservoir itself on 1 June 2011. The Environment Agency will be reporting separately on the Agenda for other issues.

Management works

- 3.6 Water weed issues: The Welsh Harp Sailing Association have been leading on the problem of excessive water weed on the Reservoir.
- 3.7 Japanese Knotweed: Comment was made at the previous meeting of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on differences in the techniques for the control of Japanese Knotweed, as applied by Barnet and Brent Councils. While there will be differences due to the practicalities of individual projects; in relation to the application technique, the most recent advice from British Waterways and from the regulatory agencies (Natural England), and the Environment Agency is that those agencies would not approve the foliar (spray) application of herbicide within the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). Stem injection is the preferred method. Stem injection has been used during recent years by Barnet Council to treat Japanese Knotweed at the Reservoir. Brent Council, the Environment Agency and the Welsh Harp Conservation Group have recently arranged for a contractor to undertake control of Japanese Knotweed within and near to the SSSI at Neasden Recreation Ground using stem injection. Follow up-work is due in 2012.
- 3.8 Information on the habitats of the Brent Reservoir is available on the Brent Biodiversity Action Plan on the Biodiversity Action Reporting System) website which is the online system for national reporting of Biodiversity Action Plans: see <http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk/>
- Information for Barnet can also be accessed on the same site.
- 3.9 Maintenance of the Heritage Lottery Fund award project continues.

Events / Other

- 3.10 Brent Council Sports Service and Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre: The Healthy Walks Programme continues to March 2012. Walks meet at the Welsh Harp Open Space car park, Birchen Grove, every Thursday (except on Bank / Public Holidays) from 10am-11am. The walks are 'low to moderate' in pace. For details contact Brent Council Sports Service, tel: 020 8937 3707, www. Brent.gov.uk/sports
- 3.11 Capital Ring: Stocks of the leaflets are available from Barnet, and Brent Councils.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None specific, but some of the priorities identified in the Management Plan will require additional resources and decisions by, as appropriate, Brent Council, Barnet Council or British Waterways, if they are to be implemented in the future. For Brent Council Sports and Parks Service, the Welsh Harp Management Plan is implemented and improvements programmed via the Council's Corporate Strategy, service strategies and operational plans. Thus implementation is partially dependent upon revenue and capital budgets for grounds maintenance and for parks management. The Sports and Parks Service pursues other sources of finance and opportunities for partnership working that may become available.
- 4.2 Financial implications of restructuring proposals are detailed in other Council reports.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, land owners or occupiers are required to give notice to and consult with Natural England where they wish to carry out, or cause or permit to be carried out any operation in an area of land that is of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features (this requirement applies to operations within a SSSI, and to operations outside the SSSI that may affect the features of interest); and Natural England will issue consent, issue consent with conditions or refuse consent. CROW (and section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) places a duty on all public bodies to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the site.
- 5.2 It is good practice for land owners or occupiers to produce Management Plans for the SSSI, which when approved by Natural England, enable the carrying out of the works specified in the Management Plan. This can reduce the administrative work inherent in obtaining consent for individual items of management work.

5.3 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires that from 1 October 2006 all public authorities in England and Wales have a general duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications.

6.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared in relation to the proposals for the restructuring of the Warden Service.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

7.1 None specific.

8.0 Environmental Implications

8.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan co-ordinates environmental works in the Reservoir area.

Background Papers

Dated correspondence and other documents referred to in the Report including:

Brent Reservoir / Welsh Harp Management Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Completion Form: Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee: Welsh Harp Reservoir Management Plan: 20 January 2005. Form dated 06b.01.2005.

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Leslie Williams, Strategy and Service Development Officer, Sports and Parks Service, Environment and Neighbourhood Services, Brent Council, Brent House, 349-357 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ
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