

AGENDA ITEM:

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Meeting	Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee (WHJCC)
Date	15 June 2005
Subject	Welsh Harp Management
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Summary	Position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) declaration, site management, Heritage Lottery Fund project and Woodfield Pavilion

Officer Contributors	Head of Environmental Services
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	West Hendon
Enclosures	Draft byelaws to be circulated separately
For decision by	Joint Committee
Function of	Executive
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	N/A

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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Joint Committee agree the proposed byelaws and refer them to the Hendon Area Environmental Sub Committee for approval, with the request that that Committee recommend the Council to approve them.
- 1.2 That the situation relating to other site management issues be noted.

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 9 March 1998, Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee, resolved to recommend to Council that LNRs be declared at the Welsh Harp, Big Wood and Totteridge Fields Nature Reserves. However, the Chief Executive's supplementary report to Council on 21 April 1998 stated amongst others that the Council should not approve the draft byelaws for the Welsh Harp LNR, and that they must be amended as necessary and resubmitted to Committee.
- 2.2 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee on 9 December 2003 - approved the proposed boundary of the LNR.
- 2.3 Hendon Area Environmental Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005 agreed the designation of a Local Nature Reserve on the Welsh Harp.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The ongoing management of the Welsh Harp contributes towards a Cleaner, Greener Borough.
- 3.2 The work also helps deliver the Corporate Plan priority: 'Improving usage and standards of greenspaces'.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 Continuing the status quo at the car park leaves the council open to further costs associated with clearing up following fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour.

5. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There will be a small cost related to closing the car park and issuing keys, this will be outweighed by the savings made in reduced vandalism.

6. LEGAL ISSUES

- 6.1 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 that uses to which people put the site to do not damage the natural features.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 7.1 The terms of reference of the Joint Committee, as set out in its Constitution, include :
“to consider and co-ordinate all the interests of recreation/leisure/maintenance/nature conservation and statutory requirements of the British Waterways Board and the Environment Agency at the Welsh Harp; with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.”

8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Local Nature Reserve and Bye-laws

- 8.1 Declaration of a Welsh Harp Local Nature Reserve was agreed by the Hendon Area Environmental Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005. The instruments of declaration have now been drawn up and are awaiting signature.
- 8.2 The draft byelaws drawn up in 1998 gave rise to issues which were not resolved at the time. Minor changes were made after the last JCC meeting and these are attached. Once these byelaws and the changes have been approved by the JCC they can be referred to the relevant body for consultation as required. The byelaws can then be referred to the Hendon Area Environmental Sub-Committee for referral to the Council in order that application may be made to the Minister for the Environment to sanction them.

Cool Oak Lane car park

- 8.2 This car park was closed after the last JCC. There have been no problems reported following the closure.

Rear of Woolmead Avenue

- 8.3 Some householders have recently extended their gardens onto the open space. The Greenspaces Section and Barnet's Property Services are dealing with this issue.

Summer Patrols

- 8.4 Street Enforcement Officers started regular weekend patrols of the Welsh Harp from the first weekend in April. These patrols were in addition to the regular weekday patrols. With effect from the 7 May 2005 the SES has conducted joint patrols with police between 1pm and 6pm on Saturdays and Sundays. The police failed to attend on 08 May due to an oversight in their Duties Office. A number of people have been stopped from having barbecues in the Welsh Harp and have been directed to the picnic area in Woodfield Park. Joint patrols will continue until the end of September 2005

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

MO:
BT:

