

**AGENDA ITEM: 7**

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Meeting	Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee
Date	11 July 2006
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Welsh Harp Management Plan</b>
Report of	Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Summary	To report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR) byelaws and on-going site management

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Officer Contributors	Head of Environment and Transport
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	West Hendon
Enclosures	None
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 note the report .

## **2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 2.1 9 March 1998, Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee, resolved to recommend to Council that Local Nature Reserves (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 Environment Sub-Committee on 15 March 2005 agreed the designation of a Local Nature Reserve on the Welsh Harp.
- 2.4 Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 agreed draft byelaws.

## **3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The ongoing management of the Welsh Harp contributes towards a Clean, Green and Safe borough, as described in the Corporate Plan 2006/07 – 2009/10.

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 None in the context of this report.

## **5. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

## **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 to ensure that use of the site does not result in any damage to its 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 The draft byelaws agreed at the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee of 15 June 2005 have been approved informally by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). They have now been cleared to go before the Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee for referral to the Council in order that application may be made to the Minister for the Environment to sanction them.
- 8.2 The launch event for the Local Nature Reserve took place as part of the Welsh Harp and Kingsbury Open Day, Monday 29 May 2006. This will be reported in more detail by Brent Council.

### **Security Improvements**

- 8.3 Installation of extra bollards around the car park at Woodfield Park took place in the spring. These are designed to keep unauthorised vehicles from the open space. With the introduction of the new Police safer neighbourhood teams Council Officers are reviewing with the Police the arrangements of future patrolling of the Welsh Harp.

### **Vandalism to Bird Hides**

- 8.4 The bird hides have been repeatedly vandalised over the last year. The door, doorframe, walls and shutters have all been destroyed at some point. Despite extra security measures the vandals are ever more resourceful in their attack. A perimeter fence is currently being considered to keep vandals away from the building. If the vandalism continues the existence and on going costs of the bird hides will have to be reviewed.

## **9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 The Welsh Harp Management Plan can be found on Brent Council's website: [Twww.brent.gov.uk/parks](http://www.brent.gov.uk/parks) in the biodiversity section.

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