

	<p><b>Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee</b></p> <p><b>29 November 2016</b></p>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Welsh Harp Management Plan</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Street Scene Director
<b>Wards</b>	West Hendon
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	None
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	Tracy Sawyer, <a href="mailto:Tracy.sawyer@barnet.gov.uk">Tracy.sawyer@barnet.gov.uk</a> 0208 359 7824

<b>Summary</b>
To update the committee regarding the on-going site management issues and report the position on the Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

<b>Recommendations</b>
That the committee consider and note the contents of this report and to invite the committee to make comments on the contents of the report.

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 The Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee comprises of British Waterways, Brent Council, Welsh Harp Conservation Group, Welsh Harp Sailing Association and Barnet Council. The committee is a consultative committee only and meets on a quarterly basis.

1.2 The committee is invited to note and make comments on the on-going site management issues during this quarter as follows:

### 1.3 Illegal encampments

The borough continues to be experiencing illegal encampments, especially with a particular location in the Welsh Harp. This area is located behind the Allotment off Cool Oak Lane. The area has been subjected to repeated incursions. Details of all the encampments to date have been stated in the table below.

Name of Park	Month	Number of individuals
Welsh Harp	January 2016	0
Welsh Harp	February 2016	0
Welsh Harp	March 2016	0
Welsh Harp	April 2016	0
Welsh Harp	May 2016	13
Welsh Harp	June 2016	0
Welsh Harp	July 2016	0
Welsh Harp	August 2016	0
Welsh Harp	September 2016	0
Welsh Harp	October 2016	8
Total to date		21

The Council continues to work closely with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team to move on illegal encampments which also includes wider authorities such as the UK Border Agency. The area is monitored regularly with swift action taken to remove the encampments. No further encampments have been found.

Possible options to prevent the number of encampments that are both costly to the Council and damaging to the local environment have been discussed at previous committees. It was decided that no further action was required.

### 1.4 Japanese Knotweed / Hogweed Control Programme.

A new two year contract commenced in early July 2016, this is to follow on from the previous three year programme that has seen a significant reduction in the presence of knotweed throughout the site.

A full survey of the site was carried out and treatment of the knotweed has been completed via stem injection.

### 1.5 Litter

In the low season (winter) the area is litter picked and the bins are emptied twice a week, and in the high season (summer) the frequency increases to four times a week. There are occasional action days on the site which includes litter picking by local volunteers in the accessible areas. A survey of the number and condition of the litter bins has been carried out, this identified existing bins which need replacing and areas where newly installed bins are required. A new contract is being written to supply and install litter bins within Barnet parks and open spaces, once the contract is awarded this will allow new litter bins to be installed within all Barnet parks including the Welsh Harp.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The terms of reference of the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee include that it considers and co-ordinates all the interests of recreation, leisure, maintenance and nature conservation with the object of protecting the Welsh Harp Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 None

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

The committee note the actions being implemented as set out under section one.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Councils Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 identifies as one of its Corporate Priorities that Barnet's parks and open spaces will be amongst the best in London. The need to develop more innovative ways of maintaining its parks and green spaces, including through greater partnerships with community groups and focus on using parks to achieve wider public health priorities for the borough.

### **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 Any costs incurred from the programmes and initiatives will be met within the existing Street Scene budget.

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

## 5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 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.

5.3.2 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 Reservoir and surrounding open land as a unique environment for both recreation and wildlife conservation”.

5.3.3 Barnet’s Constitution – Article 8 – Joint Arrangements- states at paragraph 8.01a) that the Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more Local Authorities. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a Joint Committee with these Local Authorities.

## 5.5 Risk Management

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

## 5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 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.

The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to **have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into

day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

5.7.1 The Consultative Committee continues to meet on a quarterly basis, the committee comprises of the land owners, legislative bodies, and third sector volunteer groups who work within the reserve to deliver positive outcomes.

## **5.8 Insight**

5.8.1 None

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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