

Report for: Cabinet Member decision – 19 March 2021

Item number: N/A

Title: Application by Krank Events Ltd to hire Finsbury Park for two consecutive food and music festival weekends in August 2021

Report

Authorised by: Mark Stevens, Assistant Director Direct Services

Lead Officer: Sarah Jones, Events & Partnerships Manager
sarah.jones@haringey.gov.uk, 020 8489 5699

Ward(s) affected: Harringay Ward

Report for Key/

Non-Key Decision: Non-Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 This report seeks a determination of an application made by Krank Events Ltd to hire Finsbury Park in August 2021 in order to stage two 'large' food and music festivals, over two consecutive weekends (Saturday and Sunday).
- 1.2 The Application is required to be determined pursuant to the Council's Outdoor Events Policy (the Policy), which was approved by Cabinet on 17th December 2013, and implemented on 7th January 2014.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

Not applicable.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Equalities & Leisure is recommended to:
- (a) Consider, and take account of, the comments received from recognised stakeholders of Finsbury Park in response to the event notification being sent as part of the decision-making process (attached as Appendix 2).
 - (b) Authorise the Director – Environment & Neighbourhoods, to approve conditional, in-principle agreement to hire Finsbury Park to the event promoter for the events and dates detailed in this report as set out in paragraph 6.4, BUT also (1) subject to the events being permissible under the then prevailing government legislation and guidance in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, and (2) with the agreement of the Council's Interim Director of Public Health.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 Under the terms of the Policy, applications of the type detailed in this report are required to be determined with the prior agreement of the Cabinet Member.
- 4.2 If authority is given, then officers will give in-principle agreement to the Applicant for the event application to progress. The events will then be subject to lengthy discussions with relevant authorities - including Licensing and Public Health - before final approval is given.
- 4.3 The rejection of the Application would have implications for the Parks & Leisure Service budget and reduce the opportunity for reinvestment into Finsbury Park (the Park). It would also mean that the wider cultural and economic benefits to the borough are lost.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 In adopting the Policy, the Council established its commitment to using the Park to host events. Accordingly, the only other alternative option which could be considered would be to reject the application. That option was rejected, on the grounds that the events did not fall within any of the grounds set out in paragraph 5.3 of the Policy for automatic refusal.

6. Background information

- 6.1 In January 2014, the Council adopted the Policy to recognise the value and benefit that a varied, and well-managed, outdoor events programme can offer the residents of Haringey.
- 6.2 The Policy assists the decision-making process behind building a sustainable and varied programme of events. It also seeks to protect the community and the parks and open space infrastructure and minimise or mitigate any negative impacts which events may cause.
- 6.3 Some of these restrictions as set out at paragraph 5.2.2 of the Policy specifically relate to the Park to ensure a balance of income generation and that of continued public use of the Park through the busiest summer months is achieved. These restrictions include, but are not limited to, the following:
- *“Major scale events [more than 10,000 attendance] will be ordinarily limited to 5 per year, save where there is demonstrable community support for additional events*
 - *Duration of major scale events will be of 1 – 3 days per event*
 - *No major scale events will take place during the school summer holidays”*

A major event is classified within the Policy as those having ‘*more than 10,000 attendance*’. The proposed events detailed within this report are classed as ‘large’ events, as the expected attendance will be 6,000 per day.

- 6.4 In July 2020, the Council received an application from Krank Events Ltd (the Applicant) to hire the Park to stage four days of food and music festivals, to be held over two consecutive weekends in August 2021 – 7th and 8th, and 14th & 15th August, with up to 6,000 attendees each day.
- 6.5 The Policy details the approval process for determining applications. Paragraph 5.2.3. of the Policy requires prior authority for the event to be given by the Cabinet Member as a non-key decision before officers give in-principle agreement whenever the following criteria applies:
- *“Event lasts more than 2 days with 5,000 or more in attendance”*
 - *“Organiser occupies a site for more than 14 days including setup and take down periods”.*
- 6.6 The criteria detailed above apply to this Application, hence this referral to the Cabinet Member.
- 6.7 Public events have been taking place in Finsbury Park since it first opened in 1869. In recent years, Finsbury Park has been the prime location for many international music acts, playing to large audiences within the open arena of the Park. This includes the first open-air symphony concert of the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 1948.
- 6.8 The Applicant has a successful history of organising events in the Park since the first 2-day music festival held in 2018. They then repeated their event in 2019 and had gained permission to host an event in 2020, but this was subsequently cancelled due to the pandemic.
- 6.9 In 2018 and 2019, the events included Sink the Pink, an LGBTQ-led event with pop music, dancers and performers, and DJ-led music playing predominantly house, drum and base and funk.
- 6.10 It is standard commercial practice that, once a park hire application has been submitted by the Applicant and initially accepted by the Council, tickets go on sale subject to Cabinet Member approval or contract being in place. The Applicant does this at its own risk.
- 6.11 Due consideration as to the effects these events could have on the Park, park users and local residents has been given, with detailed plans in place to ensure public access is maintained to the Park and all Council-managed facilities, whilst ensuring the events provide increased recreational enjoyment within the Park environment.
- 6.12 The Applicant has applied to hire a small section of the carriageway and surrounding grassland to the north of Finsbury Park for both weekends of events.
- 6.13 The location provides the perfect space for the street-party style festival to take place. Much of the heavy infrastructure such as the stage and footfall, takes place on the carriageway, causing minimal damage to grass areas. It also means that vehicles involved in the build, break and supplies for the event have ease of

access from the Endymion Road vehicle entrance, through to the event space, with minimal need to cross grass.

- 6.14 The site location to the north of the Park and the fact that large Plane trees overhang the site, helps contain any sound emanating. In the two years of previous operation, only a very small number of noise complaints have been received.
- 6.15 The majority of visitors to the event travel on foot or by underground, exiting at Manor House Tube Station. This provides ease of access into the event arena which is located a few metres within the Park's Manor House gate. Egress from the event takes place in the same way, meaning that the majority of visitors do not pass residential properties.
- 6.16 The event space is designed to hold up to 6,000 attendees, all infrastructure and staff. The Applicant's premises licence specifies that it can hold regulated music events of up to 4 in the Park, each year.
- 6.17 The total area used for these two weekends of events equates to approximately 1% of the Park. The remaining 99% of the Park, and all other facilities, remain open to the public at all times.
- 6.18 The areas used for quieter, informal recreational activity including all formally laid out horticultural spaces such as the Mackenzie Gardens remain open and accessible to the public while these events take place.
- 6.19 Visits to the Park continue while these events take place, by ensuring that all public facilities managed by the Council, including the ball courts, play areas, cafes and lake remain open.
- 6.20 During the build and break, thoroughfares are kept open to park users to transgress the Park north to south, east to west.
- 6.21 As part of the carriageway and pavement is encased within the event area, the Applicant installs trackway along grass areas where the path is unavailable. This is done so easy access is maintained.
- 6.22 The Applicant's premises licence (which will regulate the multi-weekend events in August) requires that all music and supplies of alcohol ceases at 9.30pm on Sunday in consideration of the start of the working week, and 10pm on Saturday.

Consultation Exercise

- 6.23 As part of the approval process, the Policy stipulates the need for consultation on the applications to take place. Paragraph 5.1.6. of the Policy states, *"Consultation will involve all stakeholders, including Friends Groups, Area Parks Managers, Ward Councillors, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability and the members of the Haringey Safety Advisory Group. Other consultees may be added where appropriate to the specific park or open space"*.
- 6.24 In discharging the requirement to consult, officers sent details of the Application to 38 external stakeholder groups by e-mail dated 14 January 2021. Details of

the list of consultees appears at Appendix 1 to the report. Stakeholders include: local resident associations, Hackney and Islington Council officers, park user groups and leaseholders; Councillors from 6 adjoining wards including those in Hackney and Islington; internal Council stakeholders including licensing and emergency planning; and statutory bodies including the Metropolitan Police and London Fire Brigade. All stakeholders were given 10 working days to respond.

- 6.25 Of the list of consultees, three asked for further information on the Application, which once supplied, didn't result in any comments being received. Only the stakeholders below (and highlighted in green at Appendix 1) provided responses:

- (a) The Council's Licensing Team
- (b) Hermitage New River Association

- 6.26 The comments are set out in full at Appendix 2. However, they can be summarised in the main as being matters around events in a pandemic; the timing of the events during the school summer holidays; and park user accessibility around the event site.

- 6.27 Officer responses to the comments are as follows:

The Council's Licensing Team

Issues raised: events in a pandemic.

As regards the points made on the pandemic, it is accepted that this presents a very real and significant threat as to whether or not the events proposed by the Applicant for 2021 will be able to go ahead in their current form. It is for that reason why Recommendation 3.1(b) is drafted in the way it is.

Hermitage New River Association

Issues raised: timing of event during school summer holidays; accessibility of park users.

As regards the concern of the event timed during the school summer holidays, the Outdoor Events Policy states that '*No major scale events will take place during the school summer holidays*'. A major event is classified within the Policy as those having '*more than 10,000 attendance*'. The proposed events detailed within this report are classed as 'large' events, as the expected attendance will be 6,000 per day.

As regards to accessibility for park users, the event organiser in the past has laid trackway along the perimeter of the site fencing so that anyone who would normally walk on the hard surface of the carriageway or pavement, doesn't have to traverse over grass. This has worked well in the past, and the Applicant will be required to put this in place again for 2021.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1 Hosting large and major events within the Park contributes to supporting the local economy, developing the cultural offer in the borough and provides an opportunity for local people to enjoy these types of events with minimal travel.

- 7.2 The recommendations made will contribute to policy and practice primarily in relation to the Place section of the Borough Plan. This was adopted by the Council on 12 February 2019 and sets out priorities for Haringey.
- 7.3 'Place' within the Borough Plan commits to 'A place with strong, resilient and connected communities where people can lead active and healthy lives in an environment that is safe, clean and green.'
- 7.4 This can specifically be seen in Outcomes 9 and 11 as follows:

Outcome 9: A healthier, active and greener place

a) protect and improve parks, open space, and green space promoting community use:

- continue with partners to invest in our parks with over £15 million of improvements planned over the next five years, including new playgrounds and sports facilities;
- promote the use of our parks for a wide range of events and activities, including more community use.

Outcome 11: A culturally engaged place

a) Foster strong and diverse cultural activities:

- support a range of events in the borough, from sport at White Hart Lane and music festivals in our parks, through to activities in our libraries and community-led arts and culture in venues across the borough;
- safeguard and strengthen the borough's cultural heritage by effectively managing, investing in and encouraging access to our heritage assets, museums and libraries;
- protect and promote creative and cultural activity and infrastructure that enables people to gain skills and employment in creative industries and increase investment into the borough;
- support cultural organisations to attract more people to their offer so that there are more opportunities for everyone to connect to the arts and culture in the borough;
- celebrate what is distinctive about Haringey so that our residents are inspired to take part in the great culture on their doorstep and attract visitors from across London and beyond to join us.

- 7.5 The recommendations made, will also contribute directly to the 'Economy' outcomes detailed in the Borough Plan: 'a growing economy which provides opportunities for all our residents and supports our businesses to thrive', through an increase in spend in local businesses, by those attending events; use of local suppliers; and providing job creation for local people.

8. The Open Spaces Act 1906

- 8.1 The income generated from these events is for the benefit of the Park itself, and is fundamental to keeping it open as a viable facility.
- 8.2 All income generated through events specifically held in the Park, will be spent in the Park as required under the Open Spaces Act 1906 (the Act). In the first

instance, this will assist with all management and maintenance costs associated with running the Park. Any surplus event income derived will be used to make improvements to the Park's infrastructure as set out in the Outdoor Events Policy at 8.2.5.

8.3 The above said, the Cabinet Member is made aware of the fact that the Council does have a statutory duty under the Act as trustee to hold the land comprising the Park on trust for the public. As such, in coming to a view on the Recommendations contained in the report, account has to be taken of the existence and impact of all material circumstances which arise from a decision to grant in principle approval for the events to take place prior to the Cabinet Member coming to a settled view.

8.4 Officers have set out the concerns from objectors and how they can be overcome, at the sub-paragraphs under 6.27 above. These responses also take into consideration the outcome of the EqIA at Appendix 3.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

9.1 Chief Finance Officer (including procurement)

This information is exempt and is attached as Part B of this report.

9.2 Legal

9.2.1 The Interim Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and makes the following comments.

9.2.2 The law which governs the Council's powers to hire the Park in these circumstances was settled in a High Court challenge for judicial review brought by the Friends of Finsbury Park (the Friends) against the decision to permit the application to stage Wireless 2016 in the Park.

9.2.3 In summary, the judge ruled that the provisions of section 44 of the Public Health Amendment Act 1890; The Ministry of Housing and Local Government Provisional Order Confirmation (Greater London Parks and Open Spaces) Act 1967 and section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 – all of which govern the ability to permit entertainment in open spaces such as the Park – “*creates different powers for different places subject to different limitations*”. Accordingly, the judge went on to rule that “*s145 of the 1972 Act, of itself and standing alone, provides the Council with the necessary power to permit Wireless 2016 to take place in the Park*”.

9.2.4 The significance of that ruling, was that the restriction placed on the amount of the Park which could be enclosed or set apart to facilitate the event, and the duration for such enclosure as prescribed under the 1890 and 1967 Acts – “*one acre or one tenth of the [Park] whichever is greater*” / “*12 days in any one year, nor four [six in London] consecutive days on any one occasion*” – simply did not apply.

- 9.2.5 The Friends then appealed to the Court of Appeal. However, the appeal was dismissed on 16th November 2017, with all three judges ruling that the High Court judge had correctly identified what the legal power position was.
- 9.2.6 The Friends then sought permission to appeal to the Supreme Court. However, that application was dismissed on 26th June 2018 on the grounds that it “does not raise an arguable point of law”.

The Current Applications

- 9.2.7 During the course of the hearing in the Court of Appeal, the Friends and the Open Spaces Society introduced new representations not made in the High Court, concerning the fact that the Council holds the Park on trust for the enjoyment by the public as an open space pursuant to section 10 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 (the 1906 Act).
- 9.2.8 The Council conceded that the 1906 Act did apply. Accordingly, in coming to a view on the Recommendations contained in this report, the Cabinet Member is required to consider whether in light of the duty held under the 1906 Act, it would still be reasonable to exercise the power under section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, to close off part of the Park to facilitate events applied for. In so saying, the attendance at music and dance events is itself recreational, and therefore within the statutory trust.
- 9.2.9 Any decision reached by the Cabinet Member is required to be one which is balanced, rational and in the interests of all park users in terms of an overall assessment of the benefits and detriments of public recreation in relation to different sections or user groups within the community. The analysis of the objections to the events, the comments made by officers on those objections, and the outcome of the EqlA are key to aiding the Cabinet Member in the decision-making process.

9.3 Equality

- 9.3.1 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
 - foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not;
 - the three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status apply to the first part of the duty.
- 9.3.2 An equality impact assessment was completed to accompany the decision in December 2013 to adopt Haringey’s Outdoor Events Policy, which governs the assessment of event applications to Finsbury Park. The policy does not permit events where the sole purpose is as a religious act of worship. The impact assessment acknowledged that this restriction could have the effect of

discouraging religious or belief organisations from using the park for major worship-based events. However, it reasoned that this restriction could be justified because such religious/belief-based events by their very nature could exclude others who don't share that religion/belief from attending the event or using the park more generally.

- 9.3.3 The Council's Events Policy ensures that event providers operate in accordance with the Equality Act and do not discriminate against groups who share a protected characteristic.
- 9.3.4 The Policy aims to strike a balance between ensuring that the parks, such as Finsbury Park, can be used as a community asset for all groups to access for the majority of the year, against the need to generate income from hosting large and major events and for these to contribute to the borough's cultural and leisure offer.
- 9.3.5 An equality impact assessment has been completed to accompany the Krank Events Ltd's Application and can be found in Appendix 3. The Assessment explores impact on residents in the immediate wards surrounding Finsbury Park: Stroud Green (LB Haringey), Harringay (LB Haringey), Brownswood (LB Hackney), and Finsbury Park (LB Islington) as well as groups who shared protected characteristics.
- 9.3.6 The Assessment identifies that children, women with children and people with disabilities will be, to a limited extent, impacted negatively by the proposal, as they are more likely to use the park. However, this needs to be balanced against the identified benefits for the community, improving equality of opportunities and fostering good relations. The Council is taking a number of actions to mitigate the negative impact on specific groups with protected characteristics arising from the events.
- 9.3.7 The Council is committed to working with event organisers to reduce the effects of noise from events on all residents living near the park and will enforce the individual conditions that accompany the event's permission including those related to reducing disruption, number of days (including set up) and maximum event space.

10. Use of Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – List of Finsbury Park stakeholders who were consulted
- 10.2 Appendix 2 – Finsbury Park stakeholders' full responses to park hire applications
- 10.3 Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment: Applications by Krank Events Ltd to hire Finsbury Park for two consecutive food and music weekends in August 2021
- 10.4 Part B – Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

11. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 Haringey Outdoor Events Policy -

<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s48887/OEP%20-%20CLEARED%20COVERING%20REPORT.pdf>