

Report for: Cabinet

Item number: 7

Title: Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project

Report authorised by: Bernie Ryan – Assistant Director, Corporate Governance

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Ward(s) affected: Harringay Ward; Stroud Green Ward

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Non Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Under the agreed terms of reference, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) can assist the Council and the Cabinet in its budgetary and policy framework through conducting in-depth analysis of local policy issues and can make recommendations for service development or improvement. The Committee may:
- (a) Review the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
 - (b) Conduct research to assist in specific investigations. This may involve surveys, focus groups, public meetings and/or site visits;
 - (c) Make reports and recommendations, on issues affecting the authority's area, or its inhabitants, to Full Council, its Committees or Sub-Committees, the Executive, or to other appropriate external bodies.
- 1.2 In this context the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on 27 July 2015, agreed to set up a review to reflect on and understand the impact of recent large events that have taken place in Finsbury Park, such as the Wireless Festival. Further information about the scope of the review is outlined in paragraph 6 and **Appendix 1a**.
- 1.3 The final report, attached at **Appendix 1** details the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Cabinet:

- (a) Note the Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project final report, attached at **Appendix 1**; and
- (b) Note the recommendations contained in the final report set out at **Appendix 2**.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 Haringey Council's Outdoor Events Policy came into effect in 2014, with subsequent large scale events taking place in Finsbury Park. The Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project was set up to reflect on, learn lessons from, and understand the impact of these events.
- 4.2 One of the main reasons for carrying out this review was in response to public order concerns, particularly around attempts to break in to the site relating to the Wireless Festival in July 2015. The recommendations contained in this report address these concerns. In addition the recommendations address issues in relation to noise, complaint management, communication, stakeholder engagement and look at how adverse effects can be further mitigated.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Evidence for this review was gathered in a variety of ways. This included interviews with witnesses, site visits and consideration of written evidence, including analysis of an online survey. This approach is outlined in more detail below (par 6.2 – 6.3) and in section 7 of the main report (**Appendix 1**). Alternative options were not considered as this approach enabled the Committee to address the terms of reference set for the project.

6. Background information

6.1 The Terms of Reference for the project were:

- (a) To understand the impact of recent events held in Finsbury Park to gain a greater understanding of the budget context for parks – including the income and where this money is spent – and how this is balanced against the impact on local people and businesses.
- (b) To consider the position of Finsbury Park as a major London park contributing to city-wide events.
- (c) To reflect on recent large events that have taken place in Finsbury Park, with particular focus on the following:

- Planning and organisation
- Facilities
- Policing, security and crowd control
- Noise and complaints
- Transport, ingress and egress
- Damage and arrangements for remediation; and
- Community engagement

(d) In light of the above, to make recommendations to the Council and its partners for improvements in the arrangements for future events that are consistent with the aims and objectives of Haringey's Outdoor Events Policy and that seek to minimise any potential adverse effects on the park.

6.2 During August and September 2015 the Committee went on site visits and gathered evidence from a range of stakeholders, including: Members of the Finsbury Park Events Stakeholder Group; the Safety Advisory Group (SAG); Transport for London; event promoters; and Ward Councillors and Officers from Haringey, Hackney and Islington. A list of witnesses interviewed as part of the review can be found at **Appendix 1b**.

6.3 In addition, the Committee launched a "Call for Evidence" on 28 July 2015 to encourage written submissions from the public, organisations, businesses and other interested parties. This was open until 28 August 2015. The responses reflect the themes outlined below (par 6.4) and a full analysis of the survey can be found at **Appendix 1c**.

6.4 A number of themes emerged from the Committee's project work, especillay concerning the need to increase transparency around income raised from events, and how it is spent, stakeholder engagement, compliant management, communication, and looking at how adverse effects can be further mitigated. These are outlined in more detail in sections 8 – 17 of the main report (**Appendix 1**).

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1 In agreeing a tight and focused scope, consideration was given to how this scrutiny review could contribute to strategic outcomes.

7.2 The recommendations outlined in the main body of the report will, if taken forward, contribute to policy and practice primarily in relation to Priority 3 of the Corporate Plan – "*A clean, well maintained and safe borough where people are proud to live and work*". In addition, there are links to the Corporate Plan in relation to:

- Priority 1 – “*Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life...*”
- Priority 2 – “*Enable all adults to live healthy, long and fulfilling lives*”
- Priority 4 - “*Drive growth and employment from which everyone can benefit*”

7.3 The section on tobacco also provides links to Key Priority 2 of Haringey’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy in “increasing healthy life expectancy.

8. **Statutory Officers Comments**

Finance

- 8.1 The costs of undertaking this scrutiny review have been contained within existing budgets.
- 8.2 It is expected that the majority of recommendations could be enacted with minimal financial impact to the Council, however before Cabinet could agree to implement the recommendations it will be necessary to ensure that the cost of doing so is known and budgeted for. Therefore if there is a budgetary impact of recommendations such as limiting the size, nature or timing of events or providing a discount scheme for local residents, then funding will need to be identified before the recommendation could be agreed.

Legal

- 8.3 Under Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 (“LGA”), the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to make reports or recommendations to Cabinet on matters which affect the Council’s area or the inhabitant of its area. Reports and recommendations will be presented to the next available Cabinet meeting together with an officer report where appropriate.
- 8.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee must by notice in writing require Cabinet to consider the report and recommendations and under Section 9FE of the LGA, there is a duty on Cabinet to respond to the Report, indicating what (if any) action Cabinet, proposes to take, within 2 months of receiving the report and recommendations.

Equality

- 8.5 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;

- 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.
- 8.6 Haringey's Outdoor Events Policy was agreed by Cabinet in December 2013. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes that an equality screening tool was completed in regard to the proposed policy and that the proposal had no impact on protected characteristics other than religion or belief.
- 8.7 As outlined in the main body of the report (**Appendix 1**) the Outdoor Events Policy retains provision that organisations professing a religion or a belief can hire the park like any other group, but they cannot book the park primarily for an act of worship. Whilst this could have the effect of discouraging religious or belief organisations from using the park primarily for an act of worship such as praying, such events could by their nature exclude others from attending the events or using the park more generally. Further, the policy does permit acts of workshop where incidental to the overall event, for example a convention.
- 8.8 Park users, in particular groups booking parks for events, are not monitored by protected characteristics. However, there was no evidence put forward during the review to suggest particular groups had experienced any disproportionate impact as a result of events taking place in Finsbury Park. In addition, and as outlined in the main report (**Appendix 1**) the Outdoor Events Policy aims to promote all events as inclusive to the whole community. For example, events for Friends groups are free while charges to community groups have been reduced.
- 8.9 To support this, a number of recommendations have been put forward to help foster good relations, by promoting understanding between people from different groups, by developing a mixed and diverse range of events for Finsbury Park, and by identifying opportunities that help advance equality of opportunity.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project Final Report

Appendix 1a – Project Scoping Document

Appendix 1b – Review contributors

Appendix 1c – Analysis of survey responses

Appendix 2 – Recommendations

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 Haringey Outdoor Events Policy (2014)

- 10.2 External web links have been provided in the main body of the report. Haringey Council is not responsible for the contents or reliability of linked websites and does not necessarily endorse any views expressed within them. Listings should not be taken as an endorsement of any kind. It is your responsibility to check the terms and conditions of any other web sites you may visit. We cannot guarantee that these links will work all of the time and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.