

**Report for:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee 17 October 2016

**Item number:** 8

**Title:** Annual update on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of Finsbury Park Events

**Report authorised by:** Stephen McDonnell  
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**Ward(s) affected:** Harringay Ward and Stroud Green Ward

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

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 Over the summer of 2015 a Review of Finsbury Park Events was carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a number of recommendations were made (detailed in Appendix 1).
- 1.2 In March 2016 an update on recommendations was presented to the Committee.
- 1.3 One year on this report now provides an update on actions that were agreed by Cabinet on 15 December 2015 (attached as Appendix 1) in response to implementing the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations.

**2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

- 2.1 In December 2015 the Council welcomed the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a positive contribution to addressing the needs of the local community, while major events are held in Finsbury Park.
- 2.2 At that same meeting the Council agreed a number of actions to implement the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of Finsbury Park Events.
- 2.3 As the major events season for 2016 draws to a close I note the progress made by officers and Members to implement the Committee's recommendations.
- 2.4 Implementaion of the Committee's recommendations has since seen a positive outcome in the way events are been managed, resulting in effects on residents being reduced and less complaints received.
- 2.5 Over £400k of improvements were implemented in Finsbury Park in 2015/16, subsidised through event income. This included the refurbishment of the ball

courts, installation of low level lighting illuminating the pathways to the track and gym from Manor House and Endymion Road gates, and investment in machinery to improve park maintenance.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the achievements made in implementing their recommendations (attached as Appendix 1).

### **4. Reasons for decision**

- 4.1 n/a

### **5. Alternative options considered**

- 5.1 n/a

### **6. Background information**

- 6.1 Haringey's Outdoor Events Policy was introduced in January 2014 and since then the council has worked closely with statutory bodies, stakeholders and partners to ensure that together we successfully implement the Policy, especially in regard to major events taking place within Finsbury Park.

- 6.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee review into Events in Finsbury Park was established:

(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 of 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; community engagement;

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

### **7. Judicial Review Update**

- 7.1 In March this year the Friends of Finsbury Park launched a judicial review against the Council citing a number of areas in which the Council didn't have the authority to hire out Finsbury Park for the Wireless Festival, and that it had made errors in the decision making process. Specifically being:

- (a) the Council had acted unlawfully in granting Festival Republic permission to hire Finsbury Park to host the Wireless Festival, citing the Greater London Parks and Open Spaces Act 1967, which limits the number of days the park could be used for enclosed events, and a limited area that an authority could hire to event promoters;
  - (b) the consultation in which the Council engaged with the Friends of Finsbury Park in regards to the Wireless Festival was unlawful and didn't provide sufficient time or required documentation for the Friends to respond accordingly;
  - (c) the decision to authorise Festival Republic's park hire application was a 'key' decision and hence the Council failed to follow its own constitutional procedure;
  - (d) attendance numbers for the proposed Wireless Festival exceeded those stated in the current Finsbury Park Management Plan and as such shouldn't be allowed.
- 7.2 After hearing evidence from both the Council's and the Friends of Finsbury Park's legal teams over two days, Mr Justice Supperstone dismissed the action brought by the Friends and ruled in favour of the Council in all four points.
- 7.3 The Judge stated that the Council is empowered to hire Finsbury Park for an unlimited number of days and is able to determine how much of the park can be hired, in pursuant of section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 which confers broad, freestanding powers on local authorities.
- 7.4 The ten days given for stakeholders to respond to event consultation was sufficient.
- 7.5 That the park hire application decision of 18 March 2016 was not a 'key' decision as it was neither a decision which was likely to result in the Council making savings, significant or otherwise, and nor was it one likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in two or more wards of the borough.
- 7.6 The limits on attendance numbers as set out in the Finsbury Park Management Plan were superseded by the introduction of the Outdoor Events Policy that sets out specific controls regarding events proposed in Finsbury Park.
- 8. Update on recommendations**
- 8.1 The current position regarding the Committee's recommendations are contained in full in Appendix 1. The following summarises these key actions and achievements.
- 8.2 Recommendation 1 and 4 - A communications plan has been developed which details how information about events is communicated to residents, businesses and stakeholders, across the three boroughs.

- 8.3 Recommendation 1 – A leaflet providing information on events, income generation and how people can contribute to decisions on income spend was distributed to approximately 13,000 residents, businesses and stakeholders in March. Now that the 2016 events season is coming to an end a further leaflet will be produced with the aim of being circulated by the end of October. This will include a round-up of summer events, projects planned and income spent.
- 8.4 Recommendation 2 – A number of frequently asked questions on events has been developed and is now available to view on the Council’s website. These will be reviewed twice a year in March and October.
- 8.5 Recommendation 3 – A single stakeholder group is currently running in its old format. New arrangements for the recommended two separate groups are now likely to be introduced for 2017 events following the scheduled meetings of this current group in October and November 2016.
- 8.6 Recommendation 4 – Detailed information for Wireless 2016 was shared in a number of ways including being posted on the websites of Haringey, Hackney and Islington councils; email distribution lists and via a number of other communication channels including social media.
- 8.7 All confirmed events for Finsbury Park are included online within the council’s What’s On guide.
- 8.8 Recommendation 5 & 6 – Complaints regarding noise and vibration received during this year’s Festival were down nearly 50% on last year, and down 76% on 2014 indicating that the new measures introduced to lessen the noise effects on residents, worked.

<b>Number of noise / vibration complaints received</b>		
<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
170	85	40

- 8.9 These measures included the introduction of extra sound buffering for Stage 3 to reduce noise emissions, and the use of new noise monitoring equipment and software enabling acoustic engineers to identify and isolate individual frequencies causing the most irritant to residents during the event, and adjust them accordingly.
- 8.10 Recommendation 7 – The way in which complaints were logged and responded to was streamlined for 2016. Event and contact information was greatly publicised by all three councils, through various resources. Complaints received during the event were down by nearly 50% overall on the previous year, and down over 80% on 2014 indicating that potential for issues were reduced and that explanatory information was made readily available to residents through a number of channels.

<b>Number of complaints received overall</b>		
<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
216	117	60

- 8.11 Council customer services advisors answered phone calls and responded to emails received over the three festival days, adhering to council standards. They were based in the Event Control along with all other agencies, enabling complaint resolutions to be achieved in an effective and timely manner.
- 8.12 Recommendation 8 – Detailed discussions took place at the Safety Advisory Group meetings reviewing security and stewarding arrangements for the Wireless Festival. These resulted in security numbers being increased, provided by multiple companies all with a specific zone to patrol.
- 8.13 Dog patrols took place in the external perimeter moat, watch towers introduced and CCTV used. Visibility of security was increased to act as a deterrent.
- 8.14 Council officers took part in steward briefings and the number of stewards placed in side roads off Seven Sisters Road was increased from 2 to 4.
- 8.15 A robust three stage entry system was introduced, with multiple tiers of security added, to design out the opportunity for gate rushing. Located in the same position as 2015, tin shield was used to encase the entire area, rather than heras fencing, resulting in a stronger and more secure entry point.
- 8.16 Recommendation 9 – This is due to be considered for implementation next year. Due process will follow including consultation with local residents.
- 8.17 Recommendation 10 – Plans detailing the build and break were developed as specified in the park hire agreement.
- 8.18 Hackney Council was commissioned by Festival Republic to carry out the cleansing of the event area and side roads, as specified in the Premises Licence.
- 8.19 Recommendation 11 – A recovery plan was implemented immediately after Festival Republic moved off site and the area handed back to the Council. A full programme of grass restoration commenced including the de-compaction of the ground through verti draining (ground breaking), over seeding and top soiling.
- 8.20 Tarmacing works to some damaged areas commenced within days of Festival Republic moving off site and were completed within two weeks.
- 8.21 Recommendation 12 – This has been implemented in full.
- 8.22 Recommendation 13 – Discussions with Festival Republic resulted in much smaller, low key booths being used as Tobacco stalls at last year’s September Slamming event and this year’s Wireless Festival as shown in the images below.



**Tobacco kiosk: Wireless Festival 2015**



**Tobacco kiosk: Slammin' 2015**



**Tobacco kiosk: Wireless 2016**

- 8.23 Recommendation 14 – Research is continuing into developing a 3-5 year programme of events for Finsbury Park, and a procurement exercise will commence before the end of the municipal year.
- 8.24 Recommendation 15 – Local charity MIND in Haringey was provided with the opportunity to engage with event goers to promote mental health awareness and fundraise during this year's Wireless Festival. Volunteers from the Manor House Development Trust participated in the council's event host scheme, providing information and local knowledge to event goers.
- 8.25 It is worth noting that there was a considerable drop in reported crime during Wireless 2016 compared to the previous two years, with a decrease of 50% compared to 2015 and 66% from 2014.

<b>Incidents reported to the police</b>		
<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
160	110	50

## **9. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- 9.1 Implementations of recommendations 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'.
- 9.2 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'
- 9.3 The section on tobacco also provides links to Key Priority 2 of Haringey's Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 'Increasing healthy life expectancy'.
- 9.4 The Medium Term Financial Plan sets out an increase of £600,000 of income during the period up to March 2018. This income target goes towards the core Parks Service budget. All money raised in excess of the MTFs saving target is ring fenced back to the Parks budget to maintain and improve parks in the borough.

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

### **10.1 Finance and Procurement**

It is expected that implementing the agreed recommendations can be contained within existing budgets. If this subsequently proves not to be the case then funding will need to be identified before the recommended actions can take place.

### **10.2 Legal**

The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and confirms that no specific legal implications arise in relation to this report.

### **10.3 Equality**

- (i) 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.
- (ii) Haringey's Outdoor Events Policy was agreed by Cabinet in December 2013. 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.

- (iii) 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.
- (iv) 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 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.
- (v) To support this, a number of the Scrutiny 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.

## 11. Use of Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Responses and updates to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report recommendations.

## 12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- a. Report of Overview and Scrutiny Committee –Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project - [http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/\\$CoverReportFinsburyParkEventsScrutinyProject2.docx.pdf](http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/$CoverReportFinsburyParkEventsScrutinyProject2.docx.pdf)
- b. Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project: Appendix 1, 1a and 1b - [http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/\\$Appendix1FinalProjectReportwithAp1aandAp1b.docx.pdf](http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/$Appendix1FinalProjectReportwithAp1aandAp1b.docx.pdf)
- c. Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project: Appendix 1c - <http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/Appendix1cFinsburyParkEventsScrutinyProject.pdf>
- d. Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project: Appendix 1d - <http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/Appendix1dTofRFinsburyParkEventsStakeholderGroup2.pdf>
- e. Finsbury Park Events Scrutiny Project: Appendix 2 - [http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/\\$Appendix2Recommendations.docx.pdf](http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000128/M00007372/AI00046533/$Appendix2Recommendations.docx.pdf)



- f. Haringey's Outdoor Events Policy -  
<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/Published/C00000118/M00006442/AI00035723/OEPCLEAREDCOVERINGREPORT.pdf>
- g. Haringey's Health and Wellbeing strategy 2015 – 2018 -  
[http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/final\\_-\\_health\\_and\\_wellbeing\\_strategy\\_2015-18\\_0.pdf](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/final_-_health_and_wellbeing_strategy_2015-18_0.pdf)