

OFFICER DELEGATED DECISION 29 JULY 2021

Report title: Partnership Board for Hillside Gardens Park

Wards: Streatham Hill

Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture: Councillor Sonia Winifred

Report Authorised by: Bayo Dosunmu: Strategic Director for Resident Services

Contact for enquiries: Kevin Crook, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods, 020 7926 8973
kcrook@lambeth.gov.uk

REPORT SUMMARY

Streatham Hill Ward is poorly provided for in terms of public open space, with only Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden – both relatively small sites. As such these represent vitally important community assets, and both are jointly championed by a very active Friends group.

This report recommends creating a partnership board to enable greater community involvement in the strategic direction and management of both these green spaces.

FINANCE SUMMARY

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Hillside Gardens Park Partnership Board be created during 2021 to oversee the strategic and operational management of Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden.
2. That the Hillside Gardens Park Partnership Board Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, are approved.

1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Hillside Gardens Park is a relatively small site at 3.71 acres and is the only formal park within Streatham Hill ward, which has a population of 16,000. The site is Lambeth's 28th largest area of public open space and contains a good range of facilities, including public toilets, a play area, an outdoor gym, six tennis courts, two Multi-Use Games Areas, a dog-free picnic area, a community garden and a Stay and Play centre. In 2018 officers were successful in securing £0.5m of planning gain funding to benefit Hillside Gardens Park through £400,000 of capital funding and partial allocation of a new Park Attendant.
- 1.2 Palace Road Nature Garden is the other area of public open space within the ward. It is 1.66 acres in size and a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. It has benefitted recently from external grant-funding secured by the Friends and planning gain funding secured by Lambeth.
- 1.3 During 2020 and 2021 concerns were voiced by the Friends over the way the capital works in Hillside Gardens park were being managed, which culminated in a formal complaint being submitted to Lambeth. In addition, serious issues were occurring between volunteers working at Palace Road Nature Garden.
- 1.4 When the Council launched its Co-operative Parks Programme, Hillside Gardens Park was one of the sites where active interest was shown by the local community in managing the park. Although this programme was wound down, the Council remains committed to facilitating increased community oversight and management of local green spaces. Partnership Boards have now been created for Brockwell Park, Ruskin Park and Larkhall Park and have proved successful on a number of counts, including improving relationships, trust and transparency, as well as streamlining decision-making processes.
- 1.5 During a meeting held between officers, the Friends and Cllr Winifred on 22 April, the creation of a Partnership Board was suggested and agreed as a positive way of enhancing the joint working relationship.

2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

- 2.1 It is proposed to create a new Partnership Board, to cover the management of both Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden, as both sites are represented by a single Friends group. In order to keep the name manageable, it is proposed that the Board is called the Hillside Gardens Park Partnership Board (HGPPB).
- 2.2 The aim would be to ensure representation on the Board by all key stakeholders, and to hold meetings in public. The proposed membership is:
 - One ward councillor from Streatham Hill or its successor ward(s), with others attending or deputising as required
 - 2 x Lambeth officers from Parks and Leisure Services
 - 2 x Friends' representatives
 - Hitherfield Primary School and Children's Centre
 - Palace Road Tenants' and Residents' Association
 - Hillside Gardens/Redhill Court Tenants' and Residents' Association
 - Hillside Gardens Park Community Growers
 - Young Person's representative (if possible).

- 2.3 The Board would be chaired by the nominated ward councillor and initially would meet virtually on a quarterly basis.
- 2.4 The Partnership Board would be responsible for making strategic and operational management recommendations to the Council relating to Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden and would operate to the Terms of Reference included as Appendix 1. The Board would be able to make decisions affecting both sites providing they were within existing resource limitations.
- 2.5 Any contractual decisions, or those with financial implications for Lambeth, would be subject to a separate decision report and the Council’s formal decision-making process. This is reflected in the board’s proposed Terms of Reference.

3. FINANCE

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The Board would not be able to make decisions with budgetary implications, unless funding was already in place.

4. LEGAL AND DEMOCRACY

- 4.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with the power to do anything that individuals generally may do. The Council may exercise this power for, or otherwise than for, the benefit of the authority, its area, or persons resident or present in its area. This general power is limited by any restrictions in any existing or future legislation.
- 4.2 The Council’s Constitution requires that issues of an important or sensitive nature will be published on the Council’s website for five clear days prior to the decision being taken (Constitution, Part 2, Section 3), where this is required by the Cabinet Member or Director concerned. It is suggested that this proposed decision is published on Officer Decisions in the interests of transparency. Any representations received during this period must be considered by the decision-maker before the decision is taken.

5. CONSULTATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

- 5.1 The Friends group representing both affected sites and ward councillors have been consulted and are fully supportive of the proposed Board.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The main risks that impede on the successful creation and operation of the Partnership Board are:

Table 1 – Risk Register

Item	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Score	Control Measures
1	Unrealistic expectations are created	2	1	2 (Low)	There is already an existing relationship with the Friends, and they understand the resource limitations within the service. Ward councillors and council officers will need to manage

					expectations, perhaps from other stakeholders
2	Staffing capacity issues impact effectiveness to adequately support Board	2	1	2 (Low)	The new Community Engagement team within Environment & Streetscene has increased capacity for this sort of engagement work
3	The Board is not representative of the local community	1	1	1 (Low)	The Board will include a ward councillor and representatives from key stakeholder groups. Meetings will be open to the public and the Board will be able to add new groups to its membership
4	The Board creates a close relationship where the Friends feel uncomfortable challenging the Council over any issues	2	1	2 (Low)	Based on experience with other Boards this does not happen, and it is understood that there will be occasions when Friends need to set out a position on their website which expresses concern about a council decision or intention

Key

Likelihood	Very Likely = 4	Likely = 3	Unlikely = 2	Very Unlikely = 1
Impact	Major = 8	Serious = 4	Significant = 2	Minor = 1

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An online EIA was completed on 29 April 2021 and approved by the Director for Environment and Streetscene on 5 May 2021. The potential for discrimination against any of the protected characteristics is negligible. This report only recommends improvements to the strategic management of the park; and the creation of a transparent board, with councillors and community representatives will help reduce the risk of any decisions which could result in discrimination. Any major decisions will still need to go through Lambeth's standard decision-making processes.
- 7.2 The sites have a significant role to play locally in terms of social value – quality open space and access to nature is hugely important for the health and wellbeing of local residents, particularly those with no gardens. Community representation on a new board will help ensure the park is meeting the needs of all residents and encouraging greater usage.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 8.1 Experience from other Partnership Boards is that giving the local community a structured voice helps highlight community safety issues and provide an additional forum to discuss resolution. Officers work closely with Public Protection colleagues to progress solutions to community safety issues.

9. ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental

- 9.1 None, the creation of a Partnership Board will not directly affect the environmental impact of managing the park.

Health

- 9.2 The Board will help meet the priorities of the *Health and Wellbeing Strategy* through improving the management of the park and community involvement, which should translate to increased use.

Corporate Parenting

- 9.3 None.

Staffing and accommodation

- 9.4 None.

Responsible Procurement

Good Quality Jobs with Fair Pay and Decent Working Conditions

- 9.5 Not applicable.

Quality Apprenticeships, targeted Employment for Lambeth residents and Lambeth Priority Group

- 9.6 Not applicable.

Reduce Emissions: Lambeth Council has a commitment to being Zero Carbon by 2030

- 9.7 Not applicable.

Single Use Plastics

- 9.8 Not applicable.

Positive Health and Wellbeing

- 9.9 Not applicable.

Other Offers (Innovation)

- 9.10 Our Partnership Board model represents an innovative way to manage public open space.

10. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 10.1 The table below details the stages and deadlines for implementing the recommendations:

Activity	Proposed Date
Publication on Decisions online	21 July 2021
Officer Decision	July 2021
Creation of Partnership Board	September 2021

Audit Trail				
Name and Position/Title	Lambeth Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in paragraph:
Councillor Sonia Winifred	Cabinet Member for Equalities and Culture	03.06.21	07.06.21	Approved
Councillor Liz Atkins	Ward Councillor for Streatham Hill	11.05.21	-	
Councillor Rezina Chowdhury	Ward Councillor for Streatham Hill	11.05.21	-	
Councillor Iain Simpson	Ward Councillor for Streatham Hill	11.05.21	11.05.21	Throughout
Bayo Dosunmu, Strategic Director	Resident Services	15.07.21	15.07.21	Cleared
Venetia Reid-Baptiste, Director of Environment and Streetscene	Resident Services	27.05.21	13.07.21	Cleared
Dave Corby, Programme Manager Community Engagement	Resident Services	14.07.21	15.07.21	ToR
Andrew Pavlou, Legal Services	Legal and Governance	19.05.21	21.05.21	4
Wayne Chandai, Democratic Services	Legal and Governance	17.05.21	19.05.21	4
Ian Ross, Head of Parks and Leisure Services	Resident Services	04.05.21	05.05.21	-
External				
Tom Stanbury, Chair	Friends of Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Garden	27.04.21	06.07.21	

Report History	
Original discussion with Cabinet Member	22.04.21
Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	No
Date first appeared on forward plan	Not applicable
Key decision reasons	4. Not applicable
Background information	None
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference for Hillside Gardens Park Partnership Board Appendix 2 – Equalities Impact Assessment

APPROVAL BY OFFICER IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHEME OF DELEGATION

I confirm I have consulted Finance, Legal, Democratic Services and the Procurement Board, and taken account of their advice and comments in completing the report for approval:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Post: Kevin Crook, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods

I approve the above recommendations:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Post: Bayo Dosunmu, Strategic Director for Resident Services

Any declarations of interest (or exemptions granted): none.

Any conflicts of interest: none.

Any dispensations: none.