

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: Primrose Hill
REPORT TITLE Primrose Hill Deputation – Response	
REPORT OF Director of Public Safety	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee	DATE 10 th July 2023
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This report provides an update on the response to the deputation relating to Anti-Social (ASB) concerns at Primrose Hill Park which was presented to the Culture & Environment Scrutiny on 16 May 2023.</p> <p>It provides a breakdown of the key issues outlined in the Deputation and the response of the Community Safety Service, Royal Parks Constabulary, Royal Parks and the Metropolitan Police Service.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>The following documents have been used in the preparation of this report:</p> <p>Royal Parks Constabulary should be providing a report which will be submitted together.</p> <p>Contact Officer:</p> <p>Patrick Coulson, Community Safety Manager 5 Pancras Square, London NC1 4AG Patrick.coulson2@camden.gov.uk</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report</p>	

Signed:



Date: 19/06/2023

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the response to the deputation relating to Anti-Social Behaviour concerns presented by representatives of the Primrose Hill area at the Culture & Environment Committee.

2. Overview

- 2.1 The Deputation sets out a number of concerns raised by residents in the Primrose Hill area. Stating that reported crime and Anti-Social Behaviour is not easily compiled, meaning the full picture of criminal activity taking place in and around Primrose Hill Park is not accurate. Further noting that Primrose Hill Park is the only Royal Park in a residential area that is left open and unattended at night times. Residents feel as though the area has become a hotspot for crime and Anti-Social Behaviour, especially in dry or warm weather. The Deputation highlights that when the Park is not being patrolled, there is a gap in accountability which puts the public at risk if they enter the park after dark. Residents feel as though there is little information about the risks due to a lack of formal information sharing processes between the Metropolitan Police Service, Royal Parks Constabulary, Royal Parks, and the Community Safety Service. The Council understands and recognises the fear amongst residents, acknowledging the reference made to the impacts these concerns have on elderly and vulnerable residents situated close to Primrose Hill Park on Oldfield Sheltered Housing Estate.

3. Partnership Working

- 3.1 It is recognised that the Deputation highlighted a number of concerns about the effectiveness of the partnership between the Royal Parks Constabulary, the Metropolitan Police Service, and Royal Parks. The Community Safety Service are working closely with the partners to coordinate and drive activity as a collective to address the issues raised in the Deputation. Royal Parks Constabulary and the Metropolitan Police are invited to the 4-weekly Partnership Tasking meetings where Primrose Hill Park has been discussed frequently and an action plan was established. Work remains ongoing to strengthen the partnership between the Royal Parks Constabulary, the Metropolitan Police Service and Royal Parks, with the Community Safety Service and the Borough Command Unit working closely to ensure an intelligence-led approach is taken when dealing with concerns in and around Primrose Hill.
- 3.2 The Deputation makes a clear and reasonable case for a stronger link between the Parks Police, Safer Neighbourhood Panel, and Ward Panel Councillors. A formal invitation to the Parks Forum is to be sent to the Safer Neighbourhood Panel Chair and local Ward Councillors to increase levels of transparency and accountability. The Royal Parks Constabulary agrees to provide an annual

presentation at the Primrose Hill Safer Neighbourhood Panel, while periodic requests can be made by the Safer Neighbourhood Panel Chair to Royal Park Constabulary and the Borough Command Unit to provide updates as required. The Community Safety Service will continue to be represented at the Safer Neighbourhood Panel for Primrose Hill and have a visible presence in the area.

- 3.3 The Community Safety Service and the Police are reviewing the annual Summer Violence Plans to ensure that Primrose Hill Park is flagged as a hotspot and forms a significant part of the Borough Summer Planning Programme, particularly in relation to unlicensed music events. Officers from the Primrose Hill Neighbourhood Policing Team have submitted a bid for additional resources over the summer months to support the limited capacity of the Royal Parks Constabulary. Camden's Community Safety Manager has been working with Cllr Burrage to explore the possibility of using funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to pay for dedicated uniformed presence on weekends over the summer months from the Community Presence Team.
- 3.4 Overall, the Deputation makes a strong case for improved and more formal information sharing. The Deputation states that there is little consistent and timely information sharing covering park-related incidents with other Primrose Hill partners and the public. There have been changes made recently to the Serious Incident Protocol owned by the Borough Command Unit and the Council with a more enhanced focus on information sharing and support for communities affected. The Protocol sets out the roles, responsibilities and actions taken by the Council and partner organisations in the event of critical incident, or any type of serious violence, to ensure there are agreed arrangements and processes in place.
- 3.5 The Community Safety Service along with the Royal Parks Constabulary, the Metropolitan Police Service and Royal Parks will continue to review the Deputation, highlighting any new actions the partnership can take forward.

4. Royal Parks Constabulary

- 4.1 Primacy for Primrose Hill sits with the local Central North Borough Command Unit, with a similar arrangement for Richmond and Greenwich Park. Royal Parks Operation Command Unit share a Senior Leadership Team with Westminster Police and are be considered as an additional permanent unit sharing the Central North Borough Command Unit's territory. Royal Parks Constabulary operate in Primrose Hill Park between the hours of 0700–2300hrs Monday to Sunday, including Bank Holidays. Royal Park Officers commonly patrol the park, respond to 999 calls in all other Central London Royal Parks, and perform other dedicated tasks. Royal Parks Constabulary deal with minor

investigations and pass on serious offences to Camden's Borough Command Unit. Royal Parks Operating Command Unit have significant additional public order demand such as Ceremonial Military events, plus large and small-scale public events such as British Summertime Concerts and Winter Wonderland. During the hours of 2300-0700, Central North Borough Command Unit assume sole responsibility for Primrose Hill Park.

- 4.2 Each Royal Park across London has a designated Park Officer performing a similar role to that of Ward based Safer Neighbourhood designated officers. They hold regular meetings with public panels of park users. The Safer Parks Panels are open to all park users, not just Primrose Hill Residents. They are designed to be representative of all park users and stakeholders. Therefore, they can be attended by Ward Members and the Chair of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel should they wish. Royal Parks Constabulary Officers can attend Primrose Ward Panel Meetings occasionally to provide updates and answer any questions. Resources are deployed according to demand at regular Tasking meetings chaired by a Royal Parks Operation Command Police Inspector. The Royal Parks attend these meetings and work closely with the police. Over the last two years, Primrose Hill area has had a significant proportion of resources, especially on the weekends.
- 4.3 The Metropolitan Police Service are focused on Community Resolution for minor offending and have created a bespoke application for Royal Park Constabulary Officers to use on their hand-held devices. This application allows Royal Parks Officers to report minor offences for a Breach of Park Regulations and the details of the committing individuals are held for 12 months. A repeat offender can be summonsed to court if and where appropriate, with serial offenders subject to Community Protection Notices or Warnings.

5. Metropolitan Police Borough Command Unit

- 5.1. As an iconic Central London open space, Primrose Hill is an attractive location for gatherings in warm weather. There have, on occasions, been large-scale Unlicensed Music Events. The Metropolitan Police Service has responded to such events with deployments and dispersals. Occasionally, groups gathered on Primrose Hill enjoying the viewpoint can present as hostile when the park is closing in the evening. This can be challenging to manage for the Royal Parks Constabulary and in these instances, they contact the Central North Duty Officer for advice.
- 5.2 A small number of local residents are repeat callers to the Police, which normally happens outside of the Royal Parks Constabulary operating hours. The majority of these reports are concerning smaller scale incidents such as small gatherings of people playing music or setting off fireworks. The Royal Parks Constabulary respond to these reports. Overall, Primrose Hill remains a

comparatively low crime area when examined against surrounding suburban London. The majority of incidents that occur are best described as noise or environmental. However, there are occasions where more serious incidents do take place.

- 5.3 Royal Park Constabulary have supported Megenta in closing Primrose Hill for the past two years. This tasking return from Officers present in the park reveals that whilst incidents do occur, they are often low level and relatively low in numbers, largely concentrated in the summer months. However, there are exceptions to this. The level of dedicated resources applied to reports of anti-social behaviour in Primrose Hill Park is proportionate to reports made by residents. Royal Parks Constabulary and the Metropolitan Police Service will continue committing to challenging anti-social behaviour in the Primrose Hill area. Following the announcement from Royal Parks that they are installing permanent gates on the park, the number of reports from residents has lowered considerably.

6. The Royal Parks Report

- 6.1 Following a consultation, and an engagement survey, Royal Parks formally announced their decision to install gates on Primrose Hill to facilitate closers where necessary. The Council welcomes the well-founded decision to install gates as it has provided residents of the Primrose Hill area with some certainty moving forward.
- 6.2 The Council will continue in its commitment to liaise with the Royal Parks to support the next stage of the installation of gates to ensure that the process is completed within a time frame developed by Royal Parks.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The Council recognises the importance of the issues outlined in the Deputation and the concern felt by the Culture & Environment Scrutiny Members and seeks to take actions forward to mitigate against concerns.
- 7.2 The decision made by Royal Parks is an important step towards addressing the concerns raised by residents relating to the park being left unattended at times and the risk this poses to park goers. The Council will continue to support further conversations around this and review the situation for any other actions to be taken forward.
- 7.3 An action has been taken to clarify and improve the relationship and intelligence sharing between the Royal Parks Constabulary and the Borough Command Unit to ensure formal procedures are put in place to mitigate against issues raised in the Deputation.

- 7.4 Invitations are to be sent to members and the Safer Neighbourhood Panel Chair to attend existing park forums to improve levels of transparency and accountability.
- 7.5 The Community Safety Service will continue reviewing the Serious Incident Protocol with the Borough Command Unit to ensure members and communities are informed of serious incidents and the response.

Briefing Ends