

	<h2>Environment Committee</h2> <h3>08 November 2016</h3>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Implementation of the Council’s Parks and Open Spaces Strategy</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Commissioning Director for Environment</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Urgent</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Key</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix 1: Draft Greenspace Capital Investment Strategy Appendix 2: Contribution to Parks and Open Spaces Strategy Action Plan</p>
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<h2>Summary</h2>
<p>The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress with the implementation of the Council’s Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.</p> <p>Officers have considered the costs of implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, together with possible sources of funding for that programme and have developed a draft capital investment programme to support implementation of the strategy.</p> <p>The draft capital investment programme to support the implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. In summary the draft programme anticipates a total investment of £105M over a 5 to 10 year period.</p> <p>It is assumed that the draft investment programme can be funded by an overall mix of 56% developer contributions, 22% grants and 22% LBB capital; leading to 78% of the total cost of the programme being funded from external sources.</p> <p>The report also updates the Committee on the development of a Natural Capital Accounting Framework for Barnet and progress with the Playing Pitch Strategy.</p>

Recommendations

1. That the Environment Committee supports and endorses the proposed capital investment programme to support the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and recommends it to Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion within the Council's capital programme, as explained in para 5.2.5 of the report.
2. That the Environment Committee recognises and supports the priority for investment/improvement assigned to the categories of sites at paragraph 1.3 to this report.
3. That the Environment Committee notes that work has commenced on the development of a Natural Capital Account for Barnet which will be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.
4. That the Environment Committee notes that work has commenced on the development of a Playing Pitch Strategy which will be reported to a the 10 January 2017 meeting of the Committee.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

1.1 The Council adopted its Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Policies in May 2016. In addition to adopting the strategy, members instructed officers to:-

- Maximise the value of external funding to support the strategy aims;
- Submit a bid as part of the Council's Capital Programme to support the aims of the strategy.

1.2 The Officers have developed a draft capital investment programme for parks and open spaces designed to maximise contributions from external funding sources and this is discussed later in this report. The report also updates the Committee on progress with implementation of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Natural Capital Accounting elements of the Strategy.

Funding and Implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

1.3 The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy creates a single framework for all aspects of greenspace investment and improvement in Barnet; including regeneration and development schemes, potential investment in Heritage Parks and Sports Hubs and the themes for investment and/or improvement. It also includes a quality/value analysis from which the following prioritisation of investment/improvements has been developed:-

Site category	Priority	Proposed actions
Low quality and high value	1	Invest in/improve sites to improve quality level and so realise greater values
High quality and high value	2	Maintain quality and value at current levels
High quality and low value	3	Enhance value level to match quality level or consider an alternative approach to the sites
Low quality and	4	Enhance quality and value or consider

low value		alternative approaches to the sites
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- 1.4 Officers have developed a draft green spaces capital investment programme to support implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. This includes resourcing of investment in/improvements to those sites identified in the strategy as being of high value but low quality, in addition to regeneration/development schemes, Heritage Parks and Sports Hubs
- 1.5 The draft green spaces capital investment programme is given at Appendix 1 to this report. In summary the draft programme anticipates a total investment of £105M over a 5 to 10 year period; it being the case that some schemes, particularly regeneration schemes, will have extended timescales for delivery.
- 1.6 Funding sources for the delivery of the draft green spaces capital investment Programme are assumed to be an overall mix of 56% developer contributions, 22% grants and 22% LBB capital, although these proportions may vary from scheme to scheme meaning that 78% of the overall total cost of the programme may be funded from external sources. A contribution of £3.50 external funding for every £1.00 invested by the Council.
- 1.7 It is proposed that the greenspaces capital investment programme will establish appropriate allocations in the Council's capital programme against which draw down of funds for specific initiatives will be requested following the development and approval of specific schemes and the make up of their funding models between the three funding sources. This process will be managed and monitored internally via the Greenspace Board and through annual update reports to the Environment Committee.
- 1.8 Environment Committee is requested to support and endorse the proposed greenspaces capital investment programme and to recommend its inclusion in the Council's capital programme to the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 1.9 The proposed greenspaces capital programme includes sufficient resources to for those sites identified in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy as being of high value but low quality. Further work needs to be undertaken regarding the other categories of sites.
- 1.10 The draft greenspaces capital investment programme is significant and the Council will need resources to oversee the necessary design work and subsequent tendering and undertaking of works in accordance with the Council's Procurement Rules. Officers are undertaking a review of the commissioning arrangements for greenspaces to ensure the availability of sufficient capability and capacity to deliver the programme. The outcome of this review will be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.
- 1.11 Whilst alternative means of funding the revenue costs of parks and open spaces are being actively investigated, given the reduction in the revenue cost envelope for greenspaces required by the MTFs ,alternative approaches will have to be investigated for those sites which make only limited contributions to the delivery of high level objectives such as health and

environmental improvement.

Natural Capital Accounting

- 1.12 Natural Capital Accounting is referenced in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and is a means of valuing the contributions of parks and open spaces. It is a technique which calculates and assigns financial values to the contributions (such as reduced costs of chronic illness by drawing more people into physical activity) that greenspaces can make to an area.
- 1.13 This 'balance sheet' approach allows the benefits from a greenspaces improvement scheme to be calculated and expressed in financial terms against its costs. It also assists in the prioritisation of greenspaces investment/improvement funding by providing a framework for assessing a financial rate of return on proposed initiatives. It will be seen from the proposed greenspaces capital investment programme that LBB capital funding is to be targeted at projects (such as artificial grass pitches) that result in income generation, leading to a positive rate of return on investment.
- 1.14 Officers are developing a Draft Natural Capital Account for Barnet in Partnership with the GLA. This is a pilot scheme which will place Barnet as a leader in the development and implementation of the technique. The Draft Natural Capital Account for Barnet will be reported to a future meeting of the Environment Committee and applied to the development of proposals for the implementation of the Parks and Open spaces Strategy.

Playing Pitch Strategy

- 1.15 The development of a Playing Pitch Strategy is a key component of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy as it quantifies the present and future need for outdoor pitch provision in the Borough. This allows proper planning for the delivery and playing of outdoor pitch sport into the future, as well as informing proposals for the development of new parks and open spaces and improvements to existing sites.
- 1.16 The Playing Pitch strategy is being developed by specialist external consultants in accordance with current Sport England Guidance. The process is being overseen by an officer Steering Committee which includes representatives of the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sports (Cricket, Football, Hockey and Rugby Union), Sport England and appropriate departments of the Council.
- 1.17 The development of the strategy to date has involved significant discussions and consultation with local sports clubs and leagues; as well as the National Governing Bodies of Sports and has resulted in the completion of the assessment of current and future supply and demand for outdoor pitches in the Borough which has been signed off by the National Governing Bodies and Sport England.
- 1.18 The consultants and Steering Committee are now working on the next stage of the process: the development, again in discussion and consultation

with sports clubs, leagues and the National Governing Bodies and Sport England, of sport and site specific proposals which, taken together, will constitute the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy for Barnet This will be reported to the 10 January 2017 meeting of the Environment for consideration, following which it will be subject to public consultation. Once completed, the Stage D draft strategy will be subject to public consultation with the outcome of that consultation being applied to inform a final Draft Playing Pitch Strategy which will be submitted to a future meeting of the Environment Committee for formal adoption.

- 1.19 The Draft Strategy will be updated to reflect the response to the consultation exercise and reported to the March meeting of the Environment Committee for adoption.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Recommendation 1** – It is recommended that the Environment Committee supports and endorses the proposed capital investment programme to support the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and recommends it to Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion within the Council’s capital programme. This will ensure that appropriate resources are in place to deliver the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy actions; whilst maximising the value of external funding to that strategy delivery.
- 2.2 **Recommendation 2** – It is recommended that the Environment Committee recognises and supports the priority for investment/improvement assigned to the categories of sites at paragraph 1.3 to this report. This will ensure effective targeting of investment in/improvements to parks and open spaces.
- 2.3 **Recommendation 3** – It is recommended that the Draft Natural Capital Account for Barnet is reported to a future meeting of the Committee. This will allow the Committee to consider the draft account and adopt a Natural Capital Account for Barnet.
- 2.4 **Recommendation 4** - It is recommended that Draft Playing Pitch Strategy is reported to the 10 January meeting of the Environment Committee. This will allow the Committee to consider the draft strategy and approve it for public consultation.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

That the Council could have considered its future investment in greenspaces within the Borough over a shorter time frame and on an individual service and/or site basis. This was considered but is not recommended as the strategy needs to support the longer term objectives of the Council and the development of the integrated greenspaces capital investment programme creates greater opportunities for external and partnership funding.

- 3.1 The above recommendations respond directly to many of the requirements of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy Action Plan: scheduled in Appendix 2 to this report.

they also contribute indirectly to the delivery of the remaining requirements of the plan.

- 3.2 In addition they address the requirement to maximise the value of external funding to be applied to the delivery of the strategy and to submit a bid for capital funding for implementation of the strategy as part of the Council's wider Capital Programme process. They also create an integrated framework for the delivery of the strategy over a realistic time frame.

- 3.3 The recommendations will also ensure that the Environment Committee is kept informed of and updated on initiatives which will contribute to the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 If the Committee is minded to agree the above recommendations:-

- The draft greenspaces capital investment programme will be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme;
- Delivery arrangements, including the greenspaces commissioning arrangements, for the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will be developed and schemes will be brought forward for approval;
- The draft Natural Capital Account for Barnet will be developed and reported to a future meeting;
- The draft Playing Pitch Strategy will be developed and reported to the 10 January meeting of the Environment Committee for consideration and approval to go to public consultation; prior to being reported to a future meeting for adoption;

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan says:-

- Barnet's Parks and Greenspaces will be amongst the best in London;

- Resident feedback consistently shows that Barnet's Park and Greenspaces are amongst its biggest assets and a strong influence for people deciding to live here;
- The Council recognises this and will continue to ensure that the Borough's Parks and Greenspaces are looked after;
- The Council will develop more innovative ways of maintaining its Parks and Greenspaces; including through greater partnerships with community groups and focus on using parks to to achieve wider public health priorities for the Borough.

5.1.2 The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy says:-

- Barnet is now the largest Borough in London by population (367,265 at the end of 2015) and is continuing to grow. The highest rates of population growth are forecast to occur around the planned development works in the west of the Borough; with over 113% growth in Golders Green and 56% in Colindale by 2030;
- Barnet Sport and Physical Activity Needs Assessment (2012) highlighted that whilst health behaviours and outcomes are more favourable in Barnet than in England as a whole, sport and physical activity rates and the use of outdoor spaces are below the national average;
- A breadth of evidence demonstrates that a more active lifestyle is essential for physical and mental wellbeing. Regular physical activity helps reduce the risk of stroke, type II diabetes, development of dementia, incidences of heart disease, cancers and high blood pressure. Physical activity supports the prevention and management of long term conditions as well as being a component of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight;
- Physical inactivity currently costs the UK economy £7.2 billion. Additional costs are incurred via the wider economy through increased sickness absence, premature death of productive individuals and increased costs for individuals and their carers;
- Within Barnet the health costs of physical inactivity currently amount to £6.7 million. This is approximately £1.9 million per 100,000 of the Borough's population. However, as measured by the Sport England Active People Survey Data (APS9 Quarter 2) 43.8% of the Borough are currently inactive and would like to do more;
- The number of people with mental health conditions is predicted to increase as the population grows. In November 2014, the Health and Wellbeing Board identified prevention of and early intervention in mental health problems as a priority. Mental health is our key priority in year one of the LHWB Strategy with partners coming together to make a positive impact for all of our residents;
- Maximise the potential of improvements to and changes in the management of open spaces where this could support improved mental wellbeing.

5.1.3 Local Plan Policy CS7 says the Council will create a greener Borough by:-

- Enhancing open spaces.....to provide improvements in overall quality and accessibility;
- Meeting increased demand for access to open space and opportunities for physical activity;
- By tackling deficiencies and underprovision.

5.1.4 Investment in and improvement of Barnet's greenspaces to support growth and wellbeing in Barnet will also result in the delivery of a range of outcomes linked to other Council strategies:-

- Growth Strategy: creating the environment for growth;
- Regeneration Strategy;
- Fit and Active Barnet Strategy;
- Community Safety Strategy;
- Entrepreneurial Barnet Strategy.

5.1.5 The residents' perception survey for Barnet shows a decline in satisfaction parks and open spaces: from 70% in 2013 to 66% in 2016. Consultation with residents undertaken as part of the development of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy shows a decline in Barnet's parks and open spaces rated 'good' or 'excellent' from 28% to 14% from 2009 to 2015.

5.1.6 It is probable that failure to address the decline in residents' satisfaction with Parks and open spaces will result in a reduction in the numbers of individuals, families and groups that visit and use parks for informal physical activity and/or organised sport. Such a reduction would have an adverse effect on the delivery of the Joint Health and wellbeing Strategy outcomes.

5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 **Finance, Value for Money and Procurement** – The draft greenspaces investment programme is designed to put into place a framework for the funding of improvements to Barnet's parks and open spaces over the next ten years. Approval of the draft investment plan will maximise the potential for the Council to attract and benefit from external funding although some Council capital will be required as partnership funding for the programme.

5.2.2 The draft programme anticipates Council capital attracting external funding of £3.50 for every £1.00 invested: equating to 78% (56% developer contributions and 22% grants) external funding and 22% Council capital funding.

5.2.3 The greenspaces investment programme will create financial allocations against which funds for specific projects will be drawn down subject to proposals and their funding packages being considered and approved by the Greenspaces Board and the appropriate committee of the Council prior to their delivery. The procurement of detailed design work and construction works will be subject to competitive tender processes in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. This prior scrutiny and approval of schemes will ensure that value for money is achieved when capital schemes

are developed and delivered.

- 5.2.4 The revenue effects of schemes will be defined and considered by the Greenspaces Board and the appropriate Committee of the Council as part of the project approval process. It is intended that schemes, once completed, will be revenue neutral, taking alternative delivery and funding mechanisms into account.
- 5.2.5 Appendix 1 provides an indicative programme of what could be achieved, subject to funding being identified, over a 10 year period; this totals £105.625m. Policy & Resources will consider a programme over a 6 year period, for the purposes of formal budget setting; that programme totals £62.297m. Detailed schemes will only progress if relevant specific funding is identified.
- 5.2.6 **Staffing** – Delivery of the greenspaces investment programme will require appropriate capacity and capability in the organisation; including within the commissioning arrangements.
- 5.2.7 **IT** – None at this time
- 5.2.8 **Sustainability** – The parks and Open Spaces Strategy and associated initiatives detailed in this report seek to protect, improve and enhance the natural environment of Barnet. The individual projects to be delivered during implementation of the strategy will be developed and delivered in accordance with both environmental and financial sustainability and outcomes.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. The key themes within the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy are:-

- Social outcomes and benefits;
- Environmental Outcomes and Benefits;
- Economic Outcomes and Benefits.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 Local authorities have a number of different statutory powers in relation to parks and open spaces, including the Public Health Act 1875 which permits the purchase and maintenance of public walks or pleasure grounds and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, which gives wide powers to provide recreational facilities. The Open Spaces Act 1906 provides that local authorities shall hold and administer open space in trust to allow the enjoyment of it by the public and shall maintain and keep the open space in a good and decent state.
- 5.4.2 The Council's Constitution (Clause 15A: Responsibility for Functions, Annexe

A) sets out the terms of reference for the Environment Committee. This includes:-

- Commissioning parks and open spaces, refuse and recycling, waste minimisation and street cleaning;
- Approve any non-statutory plan or strategy within the remit of the Committee that is not reserved to Full Council or Policy and Resources Committee;
- Approve fees and charges for those areas under the remit of the Committee.

5.4.3 Inclusion of the draft greenspaces capital investment strategy in the Council's Capital Programme is reserved to the Policy and Resources Committee and Full Council. The Constitution allocates the remaining issues dealt with in this report to the Environment Committee.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 The management of risk is undertaken on a continual basis and reported as part of the Council's Quarterly Performance regime and considered as part of the Performance and Contract Management Committee quarterly monitoring report.

5.5.2 Risks are managed through the project boards and are reviewed and revised at board meetings. The current key risk areas are:-

	Rating Criteria	1: Low	2: Medium	3: High
1.	Total investment required		X	
2.	Potential benefits	X		
3.	Return on investment	X		
4.	Level of risk	X		
5.	Political sensitivity	X		
6.	Fit with corporate objectives	X		
7.	Users/DU's impacted	X		
	Total score	8		

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The Equalities and Diversity Act, 2010 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act, 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups;
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.6.2 Relevant protected characteristics are:- age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.6.3 The purpose of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and associated initiatives described in this report is to ensure that the broad diversity of Barnet's residents and communities continue to the benefits of these community assets and that their needs and aspirations are reflected in the provision that the Council makes.

5.6.4 Agreement by the Council to the draft Greenspaces Capital Investment Programme will put into place the resources required to allow individual project and site proposals to be developed. Equalities Impact Assessments will be developed on a scheme by scheme basis so as to ensure compliance with the requirements of the 2010 Act and that the needs of the communities and groups are fully taken into account in the development of schemes.

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 The draft Parks and Open Spaces Strategy was subject to consultation between January and March 2016; the outcome of which was reported to the 12 May meeting of the Environment Committee. Individual project and site proposals for the implementation of the strategy will be consulted on during their scoping and design phases and the consultation response taken into account in finalising proposals.

5.7.2 The Draft Playing Pitch will be consulted on following initial consideration by the Environment Committee at its 10 January 2017 meeting

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Environment Committee 12 May 2016 Papers

6.2 Parks and Open Spaces Strategy for Barnet: 2016 to 2026.

6.3 Open Barnet Data Portal