

Environment Committee Public Questions/Comments– 11 September 2017

Qn No	Item Number	Raised by	Question Raised	Answer
1	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Robin Bishop Chair, The Barnet Society	1.4 (ii) - Is the Tree Team the same as Greenspaces & Street Scene, or does it include planners, arboricultural officers and/or others? Contact details would be important.	<p>The Tree team is a team of arboricultural specialists who are part of the Greenspaces Team within the Commissioning Group. The Greenspaces Team were part of Street Scene, however, following the decision at the Environment Committee on 15 March 2017 the team was transferred into the Environment Commissioning Group.</p> <p>The Trees and Landscape team is a team within the Planning Service as stated in 1.4 of Executive Summary of the policy document.</p>
2	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Mary O'Connor	A replacement for a tree that is removed may take a lifetime to match the size of the tree removed. So why is there no intention to undertake a formal consultation of this Draft Barnet Tree Policy?	<p>The Tree Policy is a service delivery policy which brings together the Council's current processes and policies into a single document in order to ensure a consistent approach to the management of trees in the borough.</p> <p>As this document does not introduce any new management approaches there is no need to consult.</p> <p>Tree felling is always a last resort after all other options have been exhausted.</p>

3	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Robin Bishop Chair, The Barnet Society	<i>Will the Action Plan be developed to include proposals for specific areas? And will local groups be consulted at an early stage, and their initiatives and input welcomed? (Current areas of interest in Chipping Barnet, for example, include the proposed High Street improvements, the A1000/Underhill/Fairfield Way junction widening, and Barnet Vale.)</i>	<p>The high level action plan will not include specific locations. As each action is taken forward detailed implementation plans will be produced. For example a planting plan would include a review of specific areas for planting and the proposed planting.</p> <p>Local stakeholder groups such as Residents' Associations and Friends of Parks (where these exist) could be engaged to inform specific planting programmes (for example in town centre planting and planting in parks).</p> <p>Once the policy has been adopted and the delivery of the action plan commences we will engage with the key stakeholder groups where appropriate.</p>
4	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Mary O'Connor	<p>This Barnet Tree Policy, while having much of value, would appear to have not considered residents. There must be able to be a system whereby when tree surveys are completed in a ward that each tree to have work can be identified and reasons given for the planned work. This would give residents the chance to understand why such action is necessary or investigate whether other options are feasible. Why has this tree policy not considered that residents may have an opinion? Could</p>	<p>The Tree Policy outlines our approach to tree management and as set out in 2.17 of the policy the Tree Team will publish the schedule of works on the Barnet Open Data Portal.</p> <p>The Tree Team employs qualified and experienced arboriculturists to manage the Borough's trees. Barnet also employs professional specialist contractors to carry out</p>

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			there sometimes be an alternative action that can be taken?	<p>the work identified.</p> <p>The Tree Team are responsible for managing 30,000 street trees and over 200 parks which are surveyed every three years with any required works identified as part of the survey are generally completed within the same financial year. If each identified action was to be put through a secondary layer of options appraisal it would affect the delivery of the cyclical programme. If a resident wishes to contact the Tree Team to discuss a specific tree then they can do so by emailing parks@barnet.gov.uk.</p>
5	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Mary O'Connor	<p>"The council takes a proactive approach to publicise tree works. Appropriate signage is used to raise awareness of tree removal giving five days notice." As a resident I do not consider that a proactive approach! Some of the trees that are removed have been there for a lifetime and then someone goes away for a week to find on return that a tree they have admired / appreciated through the seasons for years is suddenly gone. It would appear that whoever wrote the policy has no understanding of the impact the removal of a tree can have to a resident. And once gone it is irreplaceable. Can a more informative system be employed? A laminated notice placed on the tree for a month giving the reason for the tree to be removed as well as a link to</p>	<p>A five day notice period is in line with other London boroughs' practice and has worked well in Barnet for a number years. Therefore we do not feel it is necessary to alter this process. Any resident that has concerns about a specific tree can contact us by emailing parks@barnet.gov.uk.</p>

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			some on-line data, or something similar must be possible. Can Barnet Council consider do this?	
6	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Mary O'Connor	Why is it necessary to leave some tree pits for nearly three years before planting a replacement?	The planting of trees is undertaken on a three year cycle on the same basis as surveys and works. Therefore some tree pits will remain vacant before a replacement tree is planted. Individual planting in the vacant pits would not be commensurate with the planting cycle and the efficient utilisation of finite resources.
7	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Mary O'Connor	How decides the species of tree to replace one that is removed? Why is a tree not replaced with a similar type?	<p>Trees are usually replaced with a similar tree species. However, if the tree removed was a species no longer considered suitable for the site, a more conducive species will be identified. Tree nurseries produce a huge range of tree species to choose from for urban tree planting. Much of our ageing and dying street trees were planted in the 1960's when there were very limited number of trees available.</p> <p>Planting is carefully considered throughout the year by our Tree Team, checked and authorised by the Trees and Woodlands Manager and follows the principles of British Standard 8545 Trees, from nursery to independence in the landscape (2014).</p>

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8	8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Mary O'Connor	The Bound Rubber Crumb that has just started being used around street trees is also much more pedestrian friendly than asphalt. Why does Bound Rubber Crumb not replace asphalt entirely when Barnet does a pavement replacement?	Using Bound Rubber Crumb instead of asphalt on all pavements would not be economically viable or provide value for money to Barnet residents. The Council uses Bound Rubber Crumb on pavements only where there is a specific engineering requirement for this material (for example around Street Trees).
9	9 - Draft Mayors Transport Strategy	Mary O'Connor	In your response to the Mayors Transport Strategy you have, " <i>the final MTS should consider in greater detail the potential of green and open spaces to help deliver attractive and accessible cycle routes</i> ". Do I take it that your opinion is that footpaths like Dollis Valley Greenwalk should all be converted from a pedestrian only footpath to be an " <i>attractive and accessible cycle route</i> "?	<p>Our draft response to the Mayors' Transport Strategy is not Barnet's final position on the document, but is a summary/discussion paper on the main themes from a Barnet perspective.</p> <p>Our initial view is that parks and open spaces have potential to deliver attractive and accessible cycle routes. However, we recognise that some locations may not be suitable and some may require improvements to manage potential conflicts with other users of the space.</p> <p>The response does not intend to explicitly advocate that all footpaths in parks and open spaces be converted from pedestrian only footpaths to alternate types of cycle or mixed use routes.</p> <p>Instead, the response suggests that the final MTS could better consider the role parks and</p>

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				open spaces might play in delivering cycle routes and help foster better cycle networks in London. As a borough with a large number of parks and open spaces, Barnet would benefit from greater clarity on this topic from the Mayor in the final MTS.
10	9 - Draft Mayors Transport Strategy	Mary O'Connor	Why is Barnet advocating this? Has you not given any thought to the impact this will have on pedestrians and the areas that paths like this pass through? Will this mean that you advocate the lightning of current dark corridors for wildlife?	<p>As stated in the previous response, this report does not intend to explicitly advocate this position. In this document, Barnet has not committed to any specific policy position.</p> <p>Provision of lighting is a matter that would need to consider all relevant issues, just as would be the case in relation to paths used by pedestrians.</p>
11	9 - Draft Mayors Transport Strategy	Mary O'Connor	Inactivity is a health problem. But Councils could do much to provide infrastructure to improve this. As journey share in Barnet is 26% by pedestrians to 1% by cyclists, should not priority be given to pedestrians having safe, attractive and accessible pedestrian paths?	<p>We agree that good infrastructure is needed for pedestrians, as well as for cyclists. Many pavements and off road paths in the borough are already available to pedestrians, but facilities for potential cyclists on roads are limited.</p> <p>We recognise the value of our footpaths and are making a considerable investment to our footpath asset via a dedicated footway repair service.</p>

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12	9 - Draft Mayors Transport Strategy	Mary O'Connor	Do you want to turn our Parks and Open Spaces into transport corridors? Have you considered that the crossing points of roads will be dangerous points for cyclists?	<p>We have not adopted a policy to turn our parks and open spaces into transport corridors, but may wish to investigate how we can better accommodate sustainable modes of travel in our parks and open spaces in the future.</p> <p>Cycling on road or crossing roads between stretches of off-road path clearly involves interaction with road traffic in a way that cycling in parks does not. Pedestrians have to contend with similar issues.</p> <p>The needs of cyclists crossing roads will differ from those of pedestrians and different treatment of crossing points on roads may be appropriate in different circumstances.</p>
13	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	In the Lip Annual spending is, " New / improved cycle route provision - provisionally delivery of bridge replacements Lovers Walk and/or Oakdene Park" for £180,000. Why are these bridge replacements considered necessary when all they require is a little maintenance?	<p>The deck of the Lovers Walk arched bridge is deteriorating and needs to be replaced. Users have also complained that the humped surface becomes slippery in winter. The other wooden bridge has suffered from repeated vandalism and extensive refurbishment work would be needed to extend its life by only a few years.</p> <p>Replacing the bridges with new metal bridges is a cost effective solution that will address these issues, ensuring future maintenance costs are kept low. It also provides an opportunity to widen both bridges to better cater for both pedestrians and cyclists using the routes.</p>

14	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	Lovers' Walk Bridge is on Lovers' Walk which is pedestrian-only. While the approach on the Finchley side requires being made less steep, the bridge itself is sound. Have you looked up the records of when it was built and how special timbers were used for longevity?	<p>Lovers Walk is a public footpath, but this part of the path passes through the park and forms part of the shared cycle and walking route through the park. This permitted use is in addition to rights that the public have to use the footpath as a pedestrian.</p> <p>As noted above the profile of the bridge is part of the reason it needs to be replaced.</p> <p>A detailed response regarding the condition of the bridges has previously been provided via the Finchley and Golders Green residents forum in March and October 2015 (Question 9 - https://barnetintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s22437/Updated%20Issues%20List%20-%2025%20March%202015.pdf)</p> <p>Question 4 - https://barnetintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s26829/Finchley%20and%20Golders%20Green%20-%20Issues%20list%20with%20responses.pdf</p>
15	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	At the next bridge downstream of this, the oak tree near it has recently been "trimmed" which is not a usual occurrence in a nature conservation area. Why has this become necessary? Is this tree suffering from having a wide asphalt path placed around it or has this been done in preparation for bridge building works?	<p>This work was identified as part of West Finchley cyclical survey which looks at parks and open spaces trees as well as street trees.</p> <p>This work was carried out for public safety reasons (due to decay of the branches). The work was not related to the proposed bridge works.</p>

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16	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	The spindles of the bridge required replacement. A rather basic repair has recently been done to make it safe. But why not just repair it properly? Who wants a new bridge and the disruption building it will cause? Admittedly it was carried out a few years ago now, but a survey showed both of these bridges just required a little maintenance. The new path is not compliant here. What is planned?	See above and previous responses via the Finchley and Golders Green Area Committee. The work required to the bridges is more extensive than just a little minor maintenance. The bridge replacement also allows the bridges to be widened.
17	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	Kingfishers and Grey Wagtails breed along the brook. How will they be protected?	The works will be completed outside of the breeding season and we propose to phase the works and complete one bridge at a time. Our teams will also inspect the area before works start in order to keep disruption to a minimum.
18	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	Have you considered all the other users of these bridges - the children who like to play Poo sticks or imagine a Troll under the bridge, the aesthetics of these bridges compared with your planned replacement, how they contributes to slowing down cyclists and how they contributes to being part of the attractiveness of the area? Or is it the occasional cyclists who takes priority over the greater number of pedestrians?	As noted above the intention is to widen the bridges to improve the experience for all users.
19	12 - Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor	With the occasional cyclists along these paths, it is evident that this path could not cater for many more before it becomes uncomfortable for everyone. When it was built, trees like Hawthorne were removed in order to widen the path. How do Barnet intend for this route to be able to cater for any increased use?	The path has previously been widened to allow it to accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians. Widening of the bridges is also currently planned and therefore any increased use should be accommodated.

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Item No	Public Comment Request
12 - Local Implementation Plan	Dennis Pepper
8 – Draft Barnet Tree Policy 9 - Draft Mayors Transport Strategy 12 Local Implementation Plan	Mary O'Connor
8 - Draft Barnet Tree Policy	Robin Bishop Chair, The Barnet Society

Public Comment and Ward Members (3 minutes per comment)