

Decision Maker: Environment Portfolio Holder

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by Environment PDS Committee on

Date: 16th April 2013

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO PLAN 2013/16

Contact Officer: Gavin Moore, Head of Strategy Development & Services
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Chief Officer: Nigel Davies, Executive Director of Environment and Community Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

The attached Appendix sets out the draft Environment Portfolio Plan for 2013/16.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Environment Portfolio Holder:

- 2.1 **Endorses the aims, activities and outcome measures proposed in the attached draft Portfolio Plan, taking into consideration the budget for 2013/14 which has already been agreed; and**
- 2.2 **Delegates the setting of detailed service outcome expectations for 2013/14 to the Executive Director of Environment and Community Services, in consultation with the Environment Portfolio Holder and the Chairman of the Environment PDS Committee.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Environment Portfolio Revenue Budget & LIP funding
 4. Total current budget for this head: £31m and £5.6m
 5. Source of funding: Revenue budget for 2013/14 and 2013/14 LIP funding agreed by TfL
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 193 fte
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Environment Portfolio Plan sets out the desired outcomes, priority aims and specific activities for the Portfolio, together with summarised descriptions of associated performance measures. The draft Plan for 2013/16 is attached as an appendix. The Plan is also designed to allow tracking of performance over time; however 2012/13 year-end performance data is unavailable at the time of drafting the report. A report will therefore be presented to the June 2013 meeting of the Environment PDS Committee, setting out whether the outcomes expected for 2012/13 were achieved and how performance compares with previous years.
- 3.2 The Portfolio Plan seeks to facilitate:
- Accountability for the achievement of planned activities and service outcomes for 2012/13
 - Understanding of the Portfolio's objectives for 2013/16
 - Agreement around priority activities and expected service outcomes for 2013/16
- 3.3 The broad approach recommended for this year's Plan is that of consistency with the priorities of the 2012/15 Portfolio Plan, taking into account of any variations in the Environment Portfolio's remit. The Council is currently implementing a change in departmental structures which may in time have an impact on Portfolio responsibilities; any changes which impact on the Portfolio Plan will be reported to Members.
- Two specific issues are highlighted:
- Census information shows that car ownership in the borough increased by 4.9% over the period 2001-2011, in line with population growth. This has been reflected in the key Issues identified for Outcome 5, Improving Transportation
 - The Council has decided to give priority to building a case for an extension of the Docklands Light Railway into the borough; this is also reflected in Outcome 5
- 3.4 Ideally future service outcome expectations should be set in the light of past performance. As 2012/13 performance data is not yet available, it is proposed that the setting of detailed expectations for 2013/14 is delegated to the Executive Director of Environment and Community Services. The Director would first consult the Environment Portfolio Holder and the Chairman of the Environment PDS Committee. Any significant changes to previously agreed expectations would be reported to the Committee at its June meeting and set in the context of past performance data.
- 3.5 The PDS Committee will then receive an update on progress in implementing the Plan in November 2013, as part of its role in scrutinising the Executive.
- 3.6 The Portfolio Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Council's performance management strategy. This is one of the Council's eight corporate Foundation Strategies which have been identified as being the key building blocks on which to grow and improve the authority to be 'excellent in the eyes of local people'.
- 3.7 The contents of the Plan are determined entirely by the Council itself. A range of local and nationally agreed performance measures are used to assess whether we are achieving our Building a Better Bromley (BBB) service outcomes. Portfolio Holders are identified by the strategy as having responsibility for ensuring the creation and delivery of their Portfolio Plans; setting the vision and identifying priorities for their service remit. The respective PDS committees provide wider views before those plans are agreed, and then hold the Portfolio Holder and officers to account for performance and delivery of the final plans.

- 3.8 The Committee will be aware of the continuing prominence given to environmental issues and the need to take action on this locally. These issues affect not just the Environment Portfolio, but also the Council corporately.
- 3.9 The Environment PDS Committee has previously expressed its support for the use of the Portfolio Plan to provide a clear statement of Portfolio priorities for the benefit of the public and staff. In particular, the Committee has asked that the Plan provide a yardstick to measure achievement against objectives that could be used by the public and Members to hold the Portfolio Holder and the Environmental Services Department accountable. The Committee has emphasised the need for benchmarking so that it can assess the performance of the Portfolio, and judge the value for money delivered by the services offered.
- 3.10 The recommended priorities for the Plan are summarised in Section 4 below, together with background on their significance as the key outcomes which should be sought in 2013/16.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Improving the street scene

The quality of the street scene (including street cleaning and graffiti reduction) continues to be of major importance to local people. Residents have consistently identified “clean streets” as one of their most important priorities (alongside health and levels of crime) in making Bromley a pleasant place to live. Public expectations of the quality of these services continue to rise, and Members have emphasised the need to sustain the standards of road sweeping taking account of available resources. The Council is also seeking to expand the Street Friends scheme.

4.2 Minimising waste, and increasing recycling and composting

Over 440 kg (980 lbs) of waste per household was collected in Bromley during 2011/12. Levels of waste have significantly declined in recent years, but this needs to continue being reduced for both environmental and financial reasons. The Council has made a priority commitment to its Recycling and Composting for All policy borough-wide, aiming to divert even more waste from landfill. The Council is also committed to improving facilities for producing energy and fertiliser from organic waste.

4.3 Enhancing Bromley’s parks and green spaces

There is continuing recognition of the importance of high quality green spaces to the character of the borough. Residents appreciate the importance of a continuing programme of improvements to the borough’s parks and green spaces, and this priority is reflected in the number of active Friends of Parks Groups. The Council is committed to expanding this scheme.

4.4 Securing our transport infrastructure

Road and pavement repairs are cited as a key issue by many residents. Bromley has a good reputation in responding to snowfall, and this needs to continue. Effective controls on utilities are essential to ensure good standards of work and to minimise traffic delays.

4.5 Improving transportation

Traffic congestion, and the need to improve journey times, continues to be a major issue. Businesses are concerned about the effect on the local economy, and many local people believe tackling congestion should be a priority. The Council seeks to achieve this aim through better highway design and tackling delays at key junctions. The Council has successfully promoted school travel plans, seeking to reduce congestion at peak times. Road safety is

another key priority and here again partnership with schools is important. The Council will continue to lobby for an extension of the Docklands Light Railway network into the borough.

4.6 Customer services and cross-cutting themes

A range of cross-cutting services support improved delivery across the Portfolio, for example in customer focus, communications, performance management, and depot & fleet management. In addition, the Council's parking services are an important customer service for both motorists and residents.

4.7 The Council's overall objectives, as set out in Building a Better Bromley, are:

- Safer Communities
- A Quality Environment
- Vibrant and Thriving Town Centres
- Supporting Independence
- Ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to achieve their potential
- An Excellent Council

4.8 The objectives recommended for the Environment Portfolio Plan support these overall objectives, predominantly in working towards a quality environment.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The priorities, as set out in this report will be delivered within the resources identified in the Portfolio budget for 2013/14, including LIP funding from TfL, together with any further external funding that can be secured.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel, Legal implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Environment Portfolio Plan 2011/14 http://sharepoint.bromley.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?Cid=127&MId=3746&Ver=4 Environment Portfolio Plan 2012/15 http://sharepoint.bromley.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=10832