

Decision Maker: ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

**FOR PRE-DECISION SCUTINY BY THE ENVIRONMENT
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: 24th November 2015

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **Parks, Greenspace, Countryside, Events & Activities
Strategies**

Contact Officer: Dan Jones, Assistant Director Streetscene and Greenspace
Tel: 020 8464 3333 E-mail: dan.jones@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Nigel Davies

Ward: Borough-wide

1. Reason for report

The Authority has recently commissioned its parks and greenspace service to The Landscape Group, (TLG). As a component of the contract variation that enabled this, TLG are required to authorise and develop a number of strategic plans for scrutiny by the PDS; that will ultimately create policies for this Committee.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Environment PDS Committee:

2.1 **Consider the two draft strategies and provide comment and/or amendments.**

That the Environment Portfolio Holder

2.2 **Considers and reviews the 'Parks, Greenspace and Countryside Strategy document, and subject to amendment; authorises its publication as a policy; and,**

2.3 **Considers and reviews the Events and Activities Strategy document, and subject to amendment; authorises its publication as a policy.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: New Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Excellent Council Quality Environment Safer Bromley:
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Parks and Greenspace
 4. Total current budget for this head: £4.5m
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2015/16
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): n/a
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: n/a
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All Borough residents, businesses and visitors
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: n/a

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 From June 8th 2015, the former Parks and Greenspace service was commissioned to The Landscape Group (TLG), to provide a wholly managed undertaking for the Authority. As a component of the variation which permitted this, TLG was required to provide a number of strategic documents for consideration by the Environment PDS Committee; which if endorsed, would become policy for the Council's portfolio.
- 3.2 Two strategies, covering Parks, Greenspace & Countryside, and Events & Activities, have been produced to accord with the agreed timeframes within the Variation. Further strategic plans encompassing Countryside & Woodlands, Play, Sports and Grant Funding will likewise be presented to the PDS early in 2016.
- 3.3 Members' views and authorisation to publish, are sought on the following:

Parks, Greenspace & Countryside Strategy

- 3.4 This document covers all areas of the TLG landholding management responsibility, including urban parks, countryside, woodlands and statutorily listed natural locations, heritage sites, water bodies, playgrounds, Environmental Education, Sports facilities (within parks), allotments, stakeholders (particularly the Friends movement), grounds maintenance and cemeteries & burials. Arboricultural works remain the responsibility of the Council's client team.
- 3.5 TLG established a working group to oversee the drafting of this document and almost fifty separate individuals and organisations – who are stakeholders of the service, were invited to comment on the emerging Strategy. Nearly two hundred separate observations were made; which were evaluated by the working group – and where viable and appropriate, included within the revisions.

The draft document is provided at Appendix A.

Events and Activities Strategy

- 3.6 This document sets out the policy for events and activities in the London Borough of Bromley's parks, countryside, recreation grounds and other suitable sites for the period November 2015 to April 2019 (the duration of the current commissioned service) – subject to annual review.
- 3.7 In order to increase visitor experience, provide an enhanced schedule of activities and promote further interest in Bromley's greenspace, TLG will not only continue to respond to direct requests for hire by third party providers, but will also seek to identify and deliver appropriate new events and activities that will demonstrably add to the existing portfolio of requests for hire. This will increase the income from events and accordingly reduce the overall cost of the park management service as a whole.
- 3.8 The strategy sets out parameters regarding the suitability of sites and seeks approval by Ward Members where conflicting or contentious activities are concerned. In addition clear charging criteria are created.

The draft document is provided at Appendix B.

- 3.9 Members of the ENV PDS are invited to make comments and/or propose changes to the two documents. Once any alterations suggested by the PDS are reviewed and any alterations made, the final documents will be made available on the Authority's and TLG's web pages for the public to view.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Parks, Greenspace and Countryside Strategy and the Events & Activities Strategy are two new core documents to be reviewed by this Committee; and subject to endorsement will become policy. Further reports will be brought to the PDS in February 2016 that underscore additional proposed strategic plans.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Parks, Greenspace and Countryside Strategy will be delivered by TLG within the overall agreed budget. Any specific schemes that require additional resources will have individual delivery plans and will be agreed annually.
- 5.2 The Events & Activities Strategy sets out the principles for charging (or non-charging) for events and hire of park land. A schedule of charges will be created annually and made available on the Authority's web pages, and attached as a separate page to the event hire documentation to promoters.
- 5.3 It should be noted that any income generated that exceeds £45k above the baseline income in any one year, the net contribution after deducting costs will be shared between LB Bromley and TLG in equal shares as set out in the variation agreement.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal and Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	n/a

Attachments:-

Appendix A: Parks Greenspace and Countryside Strategy

Appendix B: Events and Activities Strategy