
Decision Maker: **ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Environment & Community Services PDS Committee on:

Date: **9th September 2020**

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: **DRAFT OPEN SPACE STRATEGY 2021 - 2031**

Contact Officer: Peter McCready, Assistant Director – Environment
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Chief Officer: Colin Brand, Director of Environment and Public Protection

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 To provide a draft strategic document, setting out the principles and broad direction for the future of the Portfolio's landholding in parks, greenspace, recreation grounds, countryside, woodland, cemeteries and allotments for the next 10 years.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Environment and Community Services PDS is recommended to:

2.1 **Review and comment on the Draft Open Space Strategy 2021 – 2031**

The Portfolio Holder is recommended to:

2.2 **Agree to undertake a Consultation with Stakeholders identified within the Draft Open Space Strategy.**

2.3 **Receive results of the consultation and approve at the November PDS Committee Meeting an Open Space Strategy Policy.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Included in the Draft Open Space Strategy document is the advancement of greenspace for the benefits of health, well-being and enjoyment of both current and future generations. It also covers the improvement of open space play area and play equipment facilities to contain disabled access and the inclusion of the more vulnerable. This portfolio also seeks to enhance, promote and expand the outdoor classroom element of educational offering across the Borough for a variety of ages, backgrounds and abilities.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Excellent Council Quality Environment Safe Bromley Healthy Bromley
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs:N/A
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Parks Management and Grounds Maintenance
 4. Total current budget for this head: £4.6m
 5. Source of funding: Controllable Revenue Budget 2020/21. Grant funding applications
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Personnel

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

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance:
 2. Call-in: N/A
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Provision of the Draft Open Space Strategy 2021 – 2031 document is a contractual requirement under the over-arching Parks Management and Grounds Maintenance contact that was procured under Lot 4 during 2018/9; and which commenced April 2019.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The Draft Open Space Strategy 2021 – 2031 analyses the portfolio of greenspace, covering both formal and informal parks, recreation grounds, countryside sites and woodlands. Accordingly, it affects all customers, including specifically residents, businesses, visitors and tourists.
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Ward Councillor Views

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

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 The Council's Grounds Maintenance and Parks Management contractor, (idverde) is required within its contract, (2019 – 2027) to produce an Open Space Strategy document for the period 2021 – 2031. This draft strategy document covers formal and informal parks and greenspace, countryside and woodland sites. It looks at all 168 sites within the Portfolio.
- 3.2 The Draft Open Space Strategy is attached as an Appendix to this report. The final draft version with photographs and graphics has been made available online for the PDS meeting. Subject to approval, and designation as policy, this can then be made publicly available. A period of consultation will give opportunity to share with partner organisations and importantly, Friends Groups, to inform the outcome of establishing the policy which will be presented to the ECS PDS Committee for final approval in the autumn of 2020.
- 3.3 The document identifies all the Borough's greenspace sites with proposals to enhance the 'green offer', improve landscape quality and mix; and ensure the Borough's open spaces remain vibrant and meaningful. Similarly, it also seeks to advance such greenspace for the benefits of health and well-being, tourism, and to enhance the Borough's town centres and shopping areas, whilst also aligning with the Council's Building a Better Bromley and the 2020 Regeneration Strategy.
- 3.4 Within the Draft Strategy are three phases of project delivery – these are identified within appropriate time bands. The first phase covers the period up to 2024, the second until 2027, and the final phase on to 2031. The first phase highlights in some detail such projects; which decreases in detail towards 2031. This is intentional as both national and local strategies, will of necessity need to change and morph to reflect user needs and aspirations towards the end of the ten-year period. Supporting the key line projects, are a host of identified sites where smaller, although still significant improvements can be made.
- 3.5 The scope of the Draft Open Space Strategy is such that it will require a multi-disciplinary approach for project delivery – with appropriate experts, including Council officers', consultants, existing and other contractors all being involved.

4. SUSTAINABILITY / IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 4.1 The Draft Open Space Strategy has been designed to ensure the following sustainability features are incorporated throughout the duration of the contract with no Council cost implication:
- Investing in a Closed Loop Recycling System
 - Carbon Reduction Initiatives
 - Managing Wellbeing and Resident health using green areas
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
 - Glyphosate Reduction: Foam Stream Application as preferred herbicide method

5. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 5.1 Included in the Draft Open Space Strategy document is the advancement of greenspace for the benefits of health, well-being and enjoyment of both current and future generations. It also covers the improvement of open space play area and play equipment facilities to contain disabled access and the inclusion of the more vulnerable. This portfolio also seeks to enhance, promote and expand the outdoor

classroom element of educational offering across the Borough for a variety of ages, backgrounds and abilities which also includes the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) aspect of the contract in the following areas:

- Outdoor classroom and Forest School activities aimed specifically at children with autism.
- Home education delivery through child visits, specifically children identified with SEND.
- School partnerships resulting in group visits within schools for children with a combination of special behavioural and learning needs on a weekly basis.
- Increased promotion and use of the Bromley Environmental Education Centre at High Ems (BEECHE).

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Draft Open Space Strategy 2021 -2031 supersedes the previous Parks Strategy document, which covered the period 2015 – 2019. Following confirmation from the Portfolio Holder and Member's comments at the November PDS Committee meeting, this would be approved as policy for the Council following stakeholder consultation.
- 6.2 The "Building a Better Bromley" objective of being an Excellent Council refers to the Council's intention to provide efficient and effective services and value for money to our residents. For the objective of maintaining a 'Quality Environment', the implementation of these services through this policy helps to 'sustain a clean, green and tidy environment through value-for-money services provided to a consistently high standard'.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly as a result of the adoption of the Draft Strategy as policy. However, many of the projects and proposals will have cost implications when they are separately considered. These schemes would be subject to external grant identification and funding.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There is no legal requirement to acquire or maintain land, (to any specific standard) although where it is accessible to the public, then it must demonstrate adherence to the Occupiers Liability Act 1982. Where land contains wildlife, it is protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and equally many greenspace sites have statutory responsibilities placed upon them.

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Many of the proposals outlined in the Draft Open Space Strategy, will require the correct use of the Council's Procurement procedure to ensure that consultants, contractors and providers are exposed to fair and transparent tendering or quotation.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Report No. ES18082 Award of Contracts for waste disposal, waste collection, street environment and parks management & ground maintenance