

**Decision Maker:** ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022

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

**Title:** ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES DRAFT  
PORTFOLIO PLAN

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**Chief Officer:** Colin Brand, Director of Environment & Public Protection

**Ward:** (All Wards)

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1. Reason for report

This report presents a draft Environment and Community Services Portfolio Plan for 2022/23.

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2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That PDS Committee reviews and comments on the draft plan and provides feedback to the Portfolio Holder before the final plan is published.**

## Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The services delivered by the Environment and Community Services Portfolio are used by all residents, including vulnerable adults and children. Protection is not their primary purpose but adjustments are made, as required, to ensure services are as accessible as possible and all users are safe.
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## 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 & Capital Programme
  4. Total current budget for this head: £32.3m revenue and £21.1m capital
  5. Source of funding: 2021/22 controllable revenue budget and capital programme funded by capital grants (including TfL), capital receipts and contributions from earmarked reserves
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## Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 145.4 FTEs
  2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
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## Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
  2. Call-in: Not Applicable
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## Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
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## Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Whole Borough
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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**

The following commentary provides an update on progress against all priority areas contained within the Portfolio Plan 2021/22

#### **3.1 Priority 1**

Keeping Bromley's streets clean continues to be a priority for the Council and residents alike with a well maintained streetscene relating closely to how safe residents feel and how satisfied they are with their locality. Street Cleaning teams have continued to routinely visit 3,700 footways and 2,900 carriageways to ensure they are litter free and clean, despite unprecedented challenges presented against the backdrop of a global pandemic. This cleaning regime is actively monitored and randomised quality inspections are carried out by our Neighbourhood Management team within 48 hours of an attendance being undertaken. Throughout the calendar year 2021, just under 16,000 quality inspections were carried out, with these demonstrating an average of 98% of streets meeting the acceptable standard as against the adopted standards set out in the Code of Practice on Litter and Detritus.

Public satisfaction with how clean Bromley's streetscene is remains high at around 4 in every 5 residents being satisfied in the latest survey undertaken in August 2021. In comparison to 2019/20, satisfaction with how clean local streets and town centres are has increased. The satisfaction with local area has decreased slightly but is still high at 84%.

Improvements to the streetscene have continued to be made including through multi-agency clean-ups, engaging with community and volunteer groups where COVID-19 complaint measures would allow us to support them. Street Friends have been supported wherever possible, with a total of 4,170 purple sack collections undertaken in 2021/22, up markedly from 1,859 in 2020/21.

With more residents making use of local streets for exercise during the COVID-19 pandemic and limited opportunities for wider tourism or leisure activities, there have been more reports received from the general public. The vast majority of these have been resolved within established Service Level Agreements, which are monitored each month through the Performance Management Framework.

#### **3.2 Priority 2**

Virtually zero waste continues to be sent to landfill, with the majority of Bromley's non-recyclable refuse being used to generate green energy. This significant achievement increases the sustainability of Bromley's waste management service whilst reducing the cost of disposing of waste.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions affecting every aspect of daily life, the amount and types of waste produced by residents and businesses remains significantly different to before the pandemic. The total amount of waste managed in Bromley, was at the highest in 2021/22 than it ever has been since 2016; with the tonnage of refuse being particularly high. This in turn has reduced our recycling rate, as it is a percentage of the total recyclable and non-recyclable waste collected. The increase in total waste has also caused an increase in disposal costs. Therefore, our focus for 2022/23 will be to assist residents in minimising their waste.

High staff absence by the Council's Service Provider as a result of the pandemic and the national HGV driver shortage this year did have an impact on the performance of the waste collection contract. Despite the challenging circumstances, the impact was kept to a minimum

due to the efforts of our front line workforce to ensure that all scheduled collections and services operated as normal.

WasteWorks, our real time customer reporting system, has been further developed enabling residents to be sent updates on container deliveries and missed collections, access collection schedules in one place, report a missed collections, subscribe to the Green Garden Waste Service, order recycling boxes and offer feedback.

The Green Garden Waste Collection Service has continued to grow. The Direct Debit system was successfully implemented making it even easier for residents to sign up to the service each year.

An interactive education programme was developed for schools. Recycling Heroes was launched to teach students all there is to know about recycling and waste minimisation and encourage them to pass this message onto the adults in their lives. With a revised target to become carbon neutral as a council in 2027 and as one of London's leading boroughs for recycling, Bromley aims to encourage a new generation to become the next environmental leaders and help make Bromley even greener. This programme was shortlisted for a National Recycling Award.

### 3.3 Priority 3

Bromley's parks and open spaces have always made the borough a great place in to live and work. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the essential value of Bromley's parks, countryside, access to nature and greenspaces, with these local natural assets being used more than ever, resulting in more public awareness of what Bromley Parks have to offer, while also emphasising their crucial role in health and wellbeing.

Following COVID-19 guidelines, the majority of parks maintenance tasks including grass cutting, planting, winter pruning and highway verge maintenance have been completed by the Parks Management Service Provider without much delay. 95% of the inspections by the Neighbourhood Management Team demonstrate how these tasks have been completed to an acceptable service standard.

In addition to the work of our Service Providers, the Council has 52 active Friends of Parks Groups with over 3,500 members who have contributed where COVID-19 compliant measures have allowed, providing valued voluntary work. Virtual Training and Friends Group interaction has been able to continue as expected during a pandemic period, with an increase of 2,000 online hours in 2021/22 compared with 2020/21.

The pandemic also had an impact on events including markets and outdoor organised sports held in the borough's parks which were still under restriction during spring 2021 due to government guidelines; this also affected the BEECHE outdoor education programme. New technological innovations have continued to allow online environmental education sessions which have been provided virtually since October 2020. This included online packages for parents who have continued to home school, or been restricted to intermittent isolation.

The Council continues to work to ensure its parks and greenspaces are a safe place to enjoy its variety of wide greenspaces and existing playground and sports facility infrastructure mindful of the increase in use. The health and safety of Bromley's residents and park users has also been emphasised, with the Council's parks security partner aiming to reduce antisocial behaviour while still raising awareness through signage and regular communication to the public and stakeholders of the relevant government guidelines which have remained in place. The service continues to ensure regulatory measures are adopted when required and as a result a

professional dog walking licencing scheme was introduced in January 2021, alongside the free dog bag Tikspac Initiative to encourage dog walkers to take home their pet waste, and the installation of a Trim Trail course at Whitehall Recreation Ground in 2021 to encourage outdoor exercise. We have remained in close liaison with the Police and Designing Out Crime to tackle specific antisocial behaviour offences – including dealing with unauthorised access to green spaces and unlicensed events and gatherings.

Over the last 12 months, a public consultation and stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken to assist with the development of the Open Space Strategy 2021 - 2031 to formulate the Council's approach to conserving and enhancing its natural assets for the health and wellbeing of our Park visitors and make the most of the environmental benefits that these open spaces provide. The development of Implementation Action Plans will establish Management Plans identifying individual site developments across the life time of the strategy. Alongside this, the redrafting of Bromley's Biodiversity Plan has been undertaken working in partnership with key stakeholder groups, one of which being the upcoming celebration of a 5 year partnership with RSPB.

A number of community led projects in the borough's greenspaces completed during the pandemic period include the Kingsmeadow Play Improvement Project which introduced a new play and recreation area created to provide traditional play values for a wider range age group combined with imaginative features; the Locksbottom Cricket Pitch improvement works provide a professional venue and site facility for this organised sport; the ongoing Heritage and Preservation works at the Scadbury Moated Manor meant we were able to continue with our Annual Open Day In August 2021; and we were also able to celebrate the fundraising and procurement achievements involved in the delivery of the boroughs Community Cycle Track and Hub at Hoblingwell Wood Recreation Ground with construction commencing in February 2022.

The Council has introduced a new street tree planting programme as part of its *treemendous* planting initiative with an investment of £1.35 million to plant a forest of street trees across the Borough.

The *treemendous* tree planting initiative will see 5000 more trees planted over the next four years, underlining Bromley's position as having the most street trees of any London borough. As well as helping to make streets more visually attractive, the newly planted trees also support the Council's goal to reach net zero emissions by 2027.

### 3.4 **Priority 4**

While highway and street lighting maintenance are key services, the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 lockdown has resulted in a shortage of raw materials, and social distancing requirements have continued to have an impact on how the Service Provider can operate safely. This resulted in delays to some of our larger projects. Levels of service for most service areas have remained at an acceptable levels during this time, with improvement plans being agreed with the Service Provider for any areas of concern.

The remaining planned footway and carriageway resurfacing schemes have been completed, and outstanding Traffic schemes are also being implemented within the agreed timescales. A boroughwide condition survey of all roads will assist in preparing future maintenance programmes.

Following Executive approval the final investment project to convert all remaining street lights in residential areas and shopping areas to low energy LED has commenced, with completion due in June 2022.

Utility companies have continued to play catch-up since lockdown restrictions were eased, and permits have been processed as required. The quality of works have also been monitored with defects and fixed penalty noticed being issued when justified.

As the Lead Local Flood Authority the team have been successful in working with residents and developers in the Seymour Drive area to alleviate serious flooding to properties in this road. We've also been working with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to identify other flood risk areas in the borough.

Four of our nine gritters have been replaced with Low Emission Zone (LEZ) compliant vehicles, and further replacements have been included in the capital programme.

### 3.5 Priority 5

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic Bromley has installed improved transport infrastructure to support residents make safe and healthy journeys, with eight new zebra crossings being installed (six of these are tiger crossings that allow cyclists to also cross), a major safety scheme in Orpington, improved cycle routes in Orpington, Shortlands and Crystal Palace and the trialling of School Streets in the Borough. Bromley currently has over 90 schools with an accredited School Travel Plan, with 42 of these being at a Gold level and 34 at Silver level, which is among the very best across London.

Despite the challenges, cycle training has continued for children and adults, along with promotional events to support cycling by residents, including Dr Bike. Road safety education programmes continue to target vulnerable road users and road safety improvements are targeted at collision cluster sites where investment will maximise the number of casualties prevented. A record low number of people were killed or seriously injured on the Borough's roads in 2020, which saw a 28% reduction in Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) casualties, from 107 to 77 casualties. This welcome reduction is perhaps partly explained by the effects of the 'lockdown' but is obviously very good news and something to build on. The record low numbers also follow the long-term downward decline over the last 10-15 years of recorded KSIs in Bromley. The numbers of KSI casualties have reduced by 69 or 47.5% from 2010 when compared with 2020, one of the highest reductions in London. Casualty data for 2020 also shows that Bromley has one of the lowest casualty rates in London, with 95 KSI per billion vehicle miles.

Managing parking across the Borough has been challenging in the last year as a result of the pandemic; behaviours of motorists have changed and these trends are still being established. Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) have been steadily issued over the year with normal Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) patrol levels mostly being achieved to help keep traffic flowing and parking space available. CEOs were actively patrolling to identify Disabled Badges being misused, with a number of successful cases being prosecuted at court and the badges removed from circulation.

Bromley Council adopted the powers to enforce Moving Traffic Contraventions (MTCs) such as box junctions and banned turns, with 13 cameras installed in September and October 2021 to enforce such offences. Enforcement of these restrictions will help to reduce congestion on the roads and in turn help to reduce pollution levels; a 14 day warning period was given to motorists for all new cameras across the Borough before any PCNs were issued.

Bromley has seen a small increase in the demand for residents parking permits and visitor vouchers, but less use of public car parks. These new trends are being monitored and analysed to determine any future tariffs that may be implemented to ensure that the car park meets the need of those who are using it. To help encourage the use of car parks, officers have installed

Amazon and Inpost Lockers in a handful of car parks which will convenience the public as well as producing a small income to the Council.

### 3.6 Priority 6

#### **Air Quality**

The 2020 Annual Status Report shows that the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> objective of 40 µg m<sup>-3</sup> was not exceeded at any of the 10 monitoring locations in the borough in 2020. This is the lowest number of annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances in all years since 2010.

The lowest annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentration in 2020 was monitored at Harwood Avenue, with a value of 21.4 µg m<sup>-3</sup>. The highest annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentration in 2020 was monitored at Elmers End Road, with a value of 39.5 µg m<sup>-3</sup>. This site in the London Borough of Bromley has reported the highest NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in all years since 2010. The 2020 annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentration at Elmers End Road is the lowest measured at this site since 2011 with a consistent fall in NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations over the last 4 years. It is now below the Air Quality objective of 40 µg m<sup>-3</sup>. A localised solution to further improve air quality at Elmers End Road for has been put forward for consideration and remains an action point (Theme 5 point 18 and 19) in the Bromley Air Quality Action Plan for 2020-2025.

#### **Carbon Management**

##### **Schools Decarbonisation Programme:**

Working with our colleagues in Education, the Carbon Management Team developed a decarbonisation programme for the Council's maintained schools, involving energy monitoring equipment and educational resource development. In the spirit of the government's build back better agenda, the programme has also accessed two government kick-starter employment grants. The programme represents a first in London: it has combined innovation, education, local employment, pathways to decarbonisation and funding opportunities.

##### **Green Recovery Working Group:**

The Carbon Management Team has set up and developed the Green Recovery Working Group to reconsider current departmental working arrangements and how the Council can deliver decarbonisation projects across its services, feeding into the Council's Net Zero 2027 target. It will also explore avenues to decarbonise the borough's emissions through supply chain engagement, public engagement and community projects. There is representation from all departments across the council. The group will continue to refine and develop action plans through multiple sub-groups such as transport emissions and housing emissions.

##### **Woodlands:**

The Woodlands Establishment board is progressing at pace with the Woodlands Establishment project. Over 100 green spaces and sites were appraised across the borough, with four sites being identified to take forward as possible areas for establishment. The sum of these areas is in the region of 22 hectares in total. Bromley have been successful in its application to the Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG), which is Forestry Commission grant funding. This grant will enable access to further funding for planting and maintenance.

##### **Staff Conference:**

The Carbon Management Team held a conference with over 350 staff in attendance during the COP26 Climate Week. The event was a huge success with the Team receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback and some useful staff ideas and suggestions for projects to investigate in earnest.

### **Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy:**

The Carbon Management Team lead on researching and writing the Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, in collaboration with other colleagues in the Council and consultants from the Energy Saving Trust. Approved at the ECS PDS meeting in November 2021, the strategy covers both organisational and area-wide electrification of road transport in Bromley. Work to deliver a 'Residential Charging Pilot' is now well underway, as part of the strategy.

### **Library of Things:**

In March 2022 the Library of Things is set to open in the Glades, where shoppers will be able to borrow a range of household items, often associated with a 'one off' job (e.g. camping equipment, tools, pressure washers), meaning costly purchases and the associated environmental impact could be avoided. The initial set-up costs have been funded from the Council's *Carbon Offset Fund*, with the *Library of Things* hiring kiosk being hosted by *Greener and Cleaner Bromley*.

### **Streetlighting:**

Phase two of the LED street lighting upgrade (including dimming and photocells) was completed in 2021. This project - initiated and progressed by the Carbon Management Team - utilised interest free carbon/energy reduction funding. The scheme has achieved significant carbon, energy and cost savings.

### **Draft Portfolio Plan 2022/23**

- 3.6 **Appendix 1** sets out the draft Environment and Community Services Portfolio Plan for the 2022/23 financial year. There are 5 priority areas identified within the draft plan. Committee is invited to comment on the proposed plan and suggest any changes it considers appropriate.

The Plan uses the recently developed Corporate Template which is aligned to the ambitions of Making Bromley Even Better.

### **Priorities**

- 3.7 **Priority 1: Keep our Streets Clean.** Satisfaction with the street environment has a significant impact on residents' confidence in the Council. We need to ensure that we deliver an approach that supports consistent street care, ensuring that people are happy to live in, work in and visit our Borough. We need to focus on promoting behaviour change, working with community and volunteer groups and taking appropriate action to ensure the street environment meets local needs.
- 3.8 **Priority 2: Minimise Waste and Maximise Recycling.** Reducing the amount of waste generated is not only better for the environment but also minimises disposal costs. Bromley's recycling performance remains high compared with other London boroughs. Last year, with more people at home we recycled more but there was also a significant increase in non-recyclable refuse increasing costs of waste management. Therefore, we will continue to work with residents and local businesses to waste less and recycle more, and, provide a high-quality waste service that is financially and environmentally sustainable.
- 3.9 **Priority 3: Enhance Bromley's Parks and Green Spaces.** We need to conserve and enhance Bromley's parks and green spaces through the Fully Managed Parks Service to deliver our new ten-year Open Space Strategy which supports biodiversity, enhances our air quality and improves the health and wellbeing of our residents and visitors. We will work in partnership with the volunteer community and our Service Provider, idverde to deliver vibrant green spaces that people want to visit.

3.10 **Priority 4: Maintain our Transport Infrastructure and Public Realm.** Satisfaction with the condition of roads and pavements is important to residents, so we need to maintain their condition. Utility works can cause disruption and congestion unless this activity is coordinated and inspected by the Council to protect the Council’s asset. In addition to providing Winter Services, localised flooding is likely to become more frequent and problematic and we will support the delivery of practical inter-agency solutions.

3.11 **Priority 5: Improve Travel, Transport and Parking.** Rising numbers of cars as the number of residents and households increases leads to congestion, parking issues and a reduction in air quality. Lack of connectivity and investment in transport prevents access to opportunities and services. We will seek to address these issues by promoting sustainable, safe and active travel, improving our road network, lobbying for improved public transport and managing on and off-street parking to balance the needs of motorists, residents and businesses.

3.12 **Priority 6: Overarching Portfolio Themes.**

Both the Council’s Net Zero Carbon Action Plan and Air Quality Action Plan are included as overarching portfolio themes given their strategic importance. The theme directly supports the Council’s focus “To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley’s residents”.

Whilst many of the performance indicators within priorities 1 to 5 either directly or indirectly support one or both the Council’s Net Zero Carbon Action Plan and Air Quality Action Plan, the overarching Priority 6 themes section recognises the overarching and strategic importance of both plans for the Portfolio, the Council and the Borough as a whole. In recognition of their importance, both the Council’s Net Zero Carbon Action Plan and Air Quality Action Plan have their own separate long-term plans and progress in achieving the aims of these plans and the action taken will be separately outlined at least annually to the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee as part of the scrutiny process.

**4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

4.1 Services delivered as part of the Environment and Community Services Portfolio affect the daily lives of all Bromley residents and tend to be universal in nature - rather than being directed at particular groups within our community. Where vulnerable adults or children may be affected by service delivery, the issues would be covered in the relevant report and not in this business management overview.

**5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The activities in this report reflect the Council’s priorities and aims as set out in:
- [Making Bromley Even Better \(corporate strategy\) | London Borough of Bromley](#)
  - Plans and Policies as specifically referenced within each Priority area of the Portfolio Plan.

<b>Non-Applicable Sections:</b>	Financial, Personnel, Legal, Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	<a href="#">Environment PDS Committee agendas and minutes</a>  <a href="#">Environment and Community Services 2020/21 Portfolio Plan</a>  <a href="#">Environment and Community Services 2021/22 Portfolio Plan</a>

	<p><a href="#"><u>Making Bromley Even Better (corporate strategy)   London Borough of Bromley</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Air Quality Action Plan</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Net Zero Carbon Strategy - Report Number ES19094</u></a></p>
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