

Appendix 2

Parks Scrutiny Project – Conclusions and recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, responses to recommendations

Overall comments on the report				
The Council welcome this report and the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and recognise it as a positive contribution to improving the management of parks and open space in the borough.				
	Recommendation	Response (Agreed / Not agreed / Partially agreed)	Who and when	March 2019 Update
1.	That the Parks Service engage further with Friends groups to ensure they have a clear guide to the structure of the Parks Service and have a named contact for each area of responsibility	Agreed	Head of Commissioning & Client Services Completed June 2018	Completed and has been further developed to identify a lead project officer for each park in the Borough.
2.	That the Council's formal position be, subject to the provision of suitable additional funding and the setting of service standards at an appropriate level, to support the making of parks into a statutory service	Partially agreed In 2016 the DCLG completed a review of parks to which there was the largest public response to any review the department had undertaken. The conclusion of the review based on the evidence they received was that statutory status for parks would not provide the protection from budget reductions that the public sought. There were many examples of other statutory services that had suffered severe cuts equal or greater than those experienced in parks. The council's own response to the review stated that whilst some areas may benefit from	Head of Commissioning & Client Services During 2019 following the publication of new national standards.	We await the publication of any new standards.

		<p>parcs being made a statutory service, Haringey felt that this may impose restrictions on who the council partners with and may hinder some of its plans to manage the parks in Haringey.</p> <p>The government's response to the review was to establish a cross departmental Parks Action Group. During a recent update on their work at the LGA Parks Seminar the action group indicated that they are working to produce Parks and Open Space Standards that will include a:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark for total provision of parks and green spaces; • Target for the percentage of parks and green spaces that meets a quality standard; • Target for the percentage of parks and green spaces that are protected for the future; • Mechanism to assess Local Authority performance against these targets; • Identify support routes to improvement. <p>Further information will be available during 2019 on the proposed standards.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that once the</p>		
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		new standards are published that they are reviewed and considered as part of the wider work on the new Parks & Open Spaces Strategy.		
3.	That it is acknowledged that the current level of revenue funding for the Parks Service is insufficient to maintain parks and open spaces to an acceptable standard and risks causing long term damage to our parks and open spaces and that it therefore is increased.	<p>Partially Agreed</p> <p>Over the last seven years the Parks Service has had to adapt to a leaner staffing structure, drive out efficiencies in its operation and generate new income from a wide variety of sources. This issue should be further considered as part of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy development as this will identify priorities for investment over the life of the strategy. In part this recommendation is linked to recommendation 2.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning & Client Services</p> <p>July 2018 – October 2019</p>	<p>In 2018/19 changes to the Park Project team has resulted in the addition of five officers representing a self-funding investment of £290k.</p> <p>An additional £270k of income is being invested in new operational staffing resources during 2019/20</p> <p>This includes a new two-person mobile horticultural team, a fourth three person litter team. In Finsbury Park three new gardeners, a new dedicated manager, two new park rangers and three seasonal Park Keepers.</p>
4.	That an explicit commitment be made to maximise the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for parks and open spaces and that all of the cost of maintaining facilities developed using such funding should also come from the	<p>Partially Agreed</p> <p>In June 2016 and then confirmed in October 2017 Cabinet made a commitment that CIL would be spent on items that are in the Capital</p>	Assistant Director Planning	Ongoing exploration of both the opportunities to use Council CIL and to work with residents to use the Neighbourhood portion of CIL to make local

	CIL	Programme. Some of this will be parks and open space projects however CIL needs to fund a variety of infrastructure to support growth and it cannot be confirmed at this time that parks and open spaces can be prioritised. When CIL does fund parks and open space projects the funding from maintenance can also come from CIL.		improvements.
5.	That every effort be made to maximise capital funding from external sources but that any match funding required for capital works or projects should come from wider capital programme funding rather than specifically from the budget for the Parks Service	Agreed In the council's 10 year capital strategy, funding has been allocated across three work streams: Active Life in Parks, Parks Asset Management and Parkland Walk Bridges. Wherever possible these funds and other external sources of funding, such as Section 106 or events income, are used to secure additional external funding. We will not use the operational budget as match funding for capital projects.	Head of Commissioning & Client Services In place and ongoing	Completed. None of the operational budget is used for match funding. This is an issue directly related to HLF type funding bids. The HLF are about to announce their new funding streams, we do not know what their approach to capitalising future management costs will be. This will need to be considered on a case by case basis for any parks that apply for funding from HLF.
6.	That the Council state its aspiration to have a dedicated member of staff in all parks of sufficient size to warrant this and that this be included in its vision for the service within the forthcoming Parks	Partially Agreed There are already dedicated staff members based in Finsbury Park, Lordship Recreation Ground and	Head of Commissioning & Client Services and Head of Operations. Ongoing	This will be considered as part of the Parks and Green Space Strategy work.

	Strategy	Markfield Park. The permanent staffing includes 3 parks apprentice posts. The upcoming Parks & Open Spaces Strategy may well include this aspiration for our larger parks. The establishment of any further dedicated staff will be subject to securing additional sustainable income or growth in the parks revenue budget. In part this recommendation is linked to recommendation 3.		
7.	That Green Flag status should be sought for all of the boroughs parks that are considered able to achieve it	<p>Agreed</p> <p>With financial investment and support, including establishment of local friends groups, it is possible that the number of green flags could be increased from 22 to 30 over time. Keep Britain Tidy are considering establishing a Borough Award and application for this could be considered if it's introduced in the future. There is a link here to the work the national Parks Action Group are doing identified under recommendation 2.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning & Client Services and Head of Operations.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Following the unprecedented level of inspection by Keep Britain Tidy in 2018, the councils focus is now on retaining the current 22 green flags.</p> <p>Each of the 22 parks will have a full inspection this year.</p> <p>The Parks and Green Space Strategy will explore future aspirations.</p>
8.	That, in respect of litter in parks, the development of pilot schemes aimed to reduce levels be welcomed and the Panel kept informed of progress	<p>Agreed</p> <p>During 2017 Haringey took part in a Keep Britain Tidy trial to explore ways of encouraging people to change their behaviour and not drop litter when they were in the park. The evaluation of this works shows that part of any</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning & Client Services and Head of Operations.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>A six-month trial of "Smart Bins" was conducted in Finsbury Park and at other park sites in the borough.</p> <p>The trial although completed successfully the cost of the bins proved not</p>

		<p>litter reduction strategy needs to be about engaging with the public about the impact of their littering.</p> <p>The second pilot project which is based on the installation of smart self-compacting bins commenced on 30th May 2018 for a six-month trial in Finsbury Park.</p> <p>Further pilots, such of the removal of all bins in a park, are being considered based on evidence of work currently being undertaken by Keep Britain Tidy.</p>		<p>viable in the long run. New bin styles are being explored with the Friends Forum as part of the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy development.</p> <p>In 2018/19 new trials of large capacity bins will take place in Finsbury Park and a trail of bins at exits only will take place.</p>
9.	<p>That levels of litter in parks be monitored closely to ensure that recent changes to waste and recycling arrangements do not impact adversely on them and that information in respect of this be included in regular performance information submitted to the Panel</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Monitoring of litter is undertaken regularly by Parks Staff and an overall hygiene score is produced for parks each month.</p> <p>Any incidents of fly tipping will be dealt with by the council's enforcement teams and appropriate action taken.</p>	<p>Head of Community Safety and Enforcement and Head of Commissioning & Client Services</p> <p>In place and ongoing</p>	<p>No discernible impact has been identified during 2018. However, this may have been masked by the very hot and long summer which brought many more people out into parks. Despite more littering taking place hygiene standards were maintained above target. Target 55% against 62.9% YTD.</p> <p>A fourth mobile hygiene team is being added for 2019. Which should improve performance further. The Park Keeper team in Finsbury Park is</p>

				also being expanded.
10.	That the wider benefits of parks are emphasised strongly within the new Parks Strategy and reflected in outcome specifications and that it be developed in collaboration with the Health and Well-Being board in order that health and well-being issues are fully taken into account	<p>Agreed</p> <p>A new Parks & Open Spaces strategy will be developed over the next 12 -18 months in collaboration with Friends, residents, Business and Partners. Input will also be sought from colleagues across the council and will seek to fully quantify the role Parks and Open Spaces make to life and health in the borough. We will be working with the Health and Well-Being Board to provide input into the new strategy's development.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning & Client Services</p> <p>July 2018 – October 2019</p>	<p>Progress on the strategy's development has been delayed due to the unprecedented level of inspections by Keep Britain Tidy in relation to Green Flag. However, we remain on track to complete a draft document for Cabinet to consider in Qtr4 2019/20.</p>
11.	That the Parks Strategy be developed utilising values calculated using the Natural Capital Accounting model	<p>Agreed</p> <p>A natural capital account has been developed for the whole of London which includes specific figures for Haringey. Officers are in discussion with colleagues at GLA to learn from their experience and see how the Natural Capital Accounting model can help to make the case for investment in Parks by a whole range of services.</p>	<p>Head of Commissioning & Client Services</p> <p>July 2018 – October 2019</p>	<p>This will be part of the new Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.</p>
12.	That, in view of the significant contribution that they make to delivering long-term health and well-being benefits, a percentage of the Public Health budget be earmarked for the maintenance and development of parks and open spaces	<p>Not agreed</p> <p>Although the public health grant is currently fully committed, we do recognise the significant contribution that parks and open spaces make to delivering long-term health and well-</p>	<p>Director of Public Health</p>	<p>The situation with regards to funding remains the same. However, the service remains ready to engage with any Public Health lead initiatives in parks to increase the activity level</p>

		being benefits and public health staff support numerous activities promoting their use. Examples are the Haringey Walks campaign (with better walks signage, led walks, nature walks, and a walk weekend 14th July); the Weekend of Play (April 20-22) which encouraged community groups to have a small play event in a park/open space; and health promotion at numerous parks events. Public health staff have also supported funding bids related to the use of parks and open spaces.		of the population.
13.	That where parts of the local transport infrastructure for walkers and cyclists pass through parks and open spaces, LIP funding be used for their development and maintenance	Partially Agreed The LIP funding process is subject to the criteria set by TFL and therefore, where it is possible to do so, the Parks service will work with Planning to identify opportunities either through the LIP or other TFL funding opportunities. A good example of such a collaboration is on the Quietways projects where TFL investment will deliver lighting to key routes in Finsbury Park.	Head of Commissioning & Client Services and Assistant Director - Planning Ongoing	Works to progress the Quietway 10 and the Cycle Future Route 2 in and around Finsbury Park continue. Where other opportunities arise we will seek to secure funding into parks.
14.	That the Council commit to a programme of putting all of the borough's designated parks and green open spaces under a Fields in Trust covenant and that this includes a clear timetable for completion	Partially Agreed Whilst in principle such a proposal is to be supported, the practical and financial implications of such a proposal are substantial.	Head of Commissioning & Client Services July 2018 – June 2020	Progress has commenced on this item and meetings held with Fields in Trust. Officers have started to gather the required

		<p>Of a total of 58 parks and opens spaces in the borough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 are protected either as QE2 fields or King George memorial parks. • The majority of sites have protection either as Metropolitan Open Land, Significant Open Land, Local Nature Reserve, Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) or as Ancient Woodland. <p>From our initial review of records we have identified one Local Park and nine Small Local Parks and Open spaces that do not benefit from any form of additional designation protection.</p> <p>Fields in Trust do not charge to dedicate a park in perpetuity but there are officer costs in the council for Parks, Property and Legal Services. These costs equate to around £3,000 per location, regardless of size of the space. The cost of putting all parks under a Fields in Trust Covenant would be in the region of £150,000 and be a full time job for one officer for a year.</p> <p>A more prudent approach would be to consider the 10 unprotected sites as a</p>		<p>information for the first ten parks.</p>
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		priority for protection under a Fields in Trust Covenant over the next two years and for further consideration be given to the remaining parks as part of the development of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.		
15.	That, when considering planning applications on land abutting parks and open spaces, planning officers negotiate with developers to ensure that developments are sympathetic to their surroundings through measures such as limiting shadowing, greening the façade of buildings and developing a “buffer zone” on land directly adjacent	Agreed These matters are already considered when planning applications are determined.	Assistant Director of Planning	Ongoing
16.	That a report on the implications of the ring fencing of income from events in parks to the specific parks and open spaces in which they take place, including the details of the full financial impact, be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and included within the Committee’s work plan for 2018/19	Agreed The Council has recently completed an exercise to calculate the cost of running Finsbury Park and identify all income generated by the park. The impact of the court ruling will have no significant impact on the overall parks budget. A full report will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course.	Head of Commissioning & Client Services	To be completed in 2019/20.