

**Meeting of the Cabinet – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Report of the Director of The Urban Environment (DUE)**

**Parks and Green Space Strategy**

**Purpose of Report:**

1. To inform members of the background to the Parks and Green Space Strategy and to seek member approval to formally adopt the Parks and Green Space Strategy.

**Background:**

2. A Parks and Green Space Strategy is a requirement of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) (July 2002) "*Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation*". The purpose of the Strategy is to assess the existing quantity (e.g. assessing how much green space is found in the Dudley Borough), the current quality, accessibility and distribution of the borough's Parks and green spaces. The Strategy will also set open space local provision standards. One of the key objectives of the Strategy is to help inform the formulation of policy in the emerging Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS), and at the local-level, help inform the formulation of policy in Dudley Council's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF). The Strategy will have a positive role to play in helping to ensure that the Council secures appropriate financial contributions from developers towards the maintenance and enhancement of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities within the borough as part of new development proposals. This is required in circumstances where new development places an increased burden on existing publicly accessible recreational open space, and a demand for new or enhanced recreational facilities. The Strategy will also ensure that existing important and sensitive open space areas continue to remain protected from inappropriate development pressures.
3. A draft version of the Parks and Green Space Strategy was approved for consultation by the Council's Cabinet in February 2009. The draft document was then subject to a six-week formal public consultation period which ended in April 2009. Since that time, all the issues and objections which were submitted during this period have been analysed.

A copy of the Parks and Green Space Strategy is available in the Members room

4. The Parks and Green Space Strategy will provide vital information which will support robustly future external funding applications to enhance open space and sport and recreation of open spaces. The strategy will also inform future actions by the Council with regard to their own green spaces.

**Finance:**

5. The resources for completing this piece of work are being met from existing budgets identified for the production of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Parks Section of the Directorate of the Urban Environment (DUE). The majority of the work has been completed in house by officers with bespoke and specialist elements of the work being undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced practitioner consultants.

**Law:**

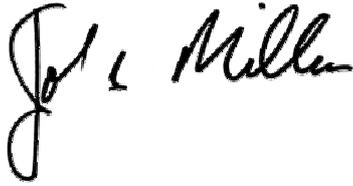
6. This piece of work is a key element of the Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) which makes up part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. The production of a Black Country Joint Core Strategy (JCS) is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In addition, section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 allows the Council to do anything that it considers is likely to promote or improve the economy or environment in the Borough.

**Equality Impact:**

7. The content of this report complies with the Council's Policy on Equality and Diversity. The Strategy seeks to ensure that the Borough's population has equal accessibility to good quality parks and open spaces promoting accessibility for all including children and young people.

**Recommendation:**

8. The Cabinet is recommended to adopt the final version of the Council's Parks and Green Space Strategy document which has been placed in the Members Room.



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**List of related background papers which have been placed in the Members Room:**

- Statement of Consultation for Dudley Council Draft Parks and Green Space Strategy (February 2009).
- Summary of Consultations received to Dudley Council's Draft Parks and Green Space Strategy document (February 2009) and the Council's responses to the Consultations.