

Meeting of the Cabinet – 11th February, 2009

Report of The Director of the Urban Environment

Parks and Green Spaces Strategy

Purpose of Report

1. To inform members of the work ongoing on the Borough's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.
2. To seek member approval for Officers to use the draft Parks and Green Spaces Strategy as a basis for consultation.

Background

3. A green spaces strategy is a requirement of Planning Policy Guidance note 17 "Planning for Open Space sport and recreation". The development of the Parks and Green Spaces strategy will enable the Council to set priorities for future physical improvements within parks and other publicly accessible green spaces, building on the current liveability project.
4. The strategy will also demonstrate the geographic spread of parks and green spaces provision across the Borough. This will feed into the core strategy which will set the policy framework for the provision and protection of parks and green spaces across the Black Country and Dudley Borough. The Core Strategy is part of the planning policy framework for the Borough and will be the document upon which decisions are made about individual planning applications and development proposals.
5. This work will enable specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in areas across the Borough. The strategy will set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the areas. Local standards should include:
 - i. quantitative elements (how much new provision may be needed);
 - ii. a qualitative component (against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities); and
 - iii. accessibility (including distance thresholds and consideration of the cost of using a facility).

This work is being prepared in conjunction with the core strategy and the findings will be fed into the core strategy in preparation for its submission later in 2009.

6. It is a requirement in Planning Policy Guidance 17 that when undertaking such strategies, public consultation on the draft is undertaken. A first draft of the emerging strategy is available in the Members room and on the Committee Management Information System (CMIS) and this will form the basis of the consultation document. Officers will be finalising the document, taking into account consultation and seeking cabinet approval for the final document in June 2009.

Finance

7. The resources for completing this piece of work are being met from existing budgets identified for the production of the Local Development Framework and the Parks division of the Directorate of the Urban Environment. The majority of the work is being completed in house by officers with bespoke and specialist elements of the work being undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced practitioner consultants.

Law

8. This piece of work is a key element of the Joint Core Strategy which makes up part of the Local Development Framework for the Borough. The production of a Core Strategy 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.

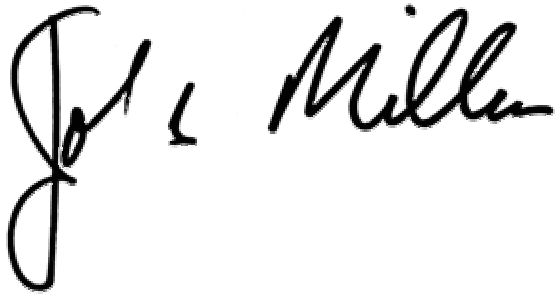
Equality Impact

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

Recommendation

It is recommended that:-

- Members note the work being undertaken on the Borough's Green Spaces Strategy.
- Members approve the draft Green Spaces Strategy as a basis for consultation.



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J. B. MILLAR – DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

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List of Background Papers

Planning Policy Guidance note 17 “Planning for Open Space sport and recreation”.