

30 August 2012

Green Space Strategy

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor Anthony Harris – Leisure and Culture

Executive Summary:

At its meeting held on the 28 February 2012, the former Community Services Panel considered the final report and recommendations of the Working Group appointed by the Panel to consider future Green Space Strategy in the Borough. The Panel resolved that the conclusions and recommendations of the Green Spaces Working Group be approved and forwarded to Cabinet for consideration and that the Panel consider a report before August 2012 detailing Cabinet's response to the Working Group's recommendations.

The Working Group's report was presented to Cabinet on 4 April 2012. Cabinet resolved that the report be noted and that the Portfolio Holder's response to the Panel's report be received at the next Cabinet meeting.

The draft strategy is being considered by Cabinet in September 2012 and it is therefore appropriate the Panel consider the draft strategy at its prior meeting in August 2012. The draft Cabinet report on the Green Space Strategy is attached (**Appendix A**).

The Working Group's report identified 8 priorities with up to 37 individual recommendations on how these priorities could be achieved for inclusion within the strategy. The attached table (**Appendix B**) identifies where the individual recommendations have been reflected within the Strategy Document.

Reason for scrutiny:

To present the draft Green Space Strategy for consideration by the Community Services and Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel to ensure the working group's recommendations are contained within that document.

Recommendations:

That:

The Panel considers the draft Green Space Strategy and agrees any comments or recommendations to Cabinet that it wishes to make.

Background papers:

- Green Space Strategy Report (Cabinet) 2006
- Green Space Strategy Report (Communities Scrutiny and Performance Panel) 2011

Resource and legal considerations:

Please see attached draft Cabinet report.

Citizen impact:

Extensive consultation with local residents, community organisations and key partners undertaken as part of the Green Space Strategy development and through site specific surveys has identified Walsall's green assets as a key priority in both usage and ongoing investment and improvement.

Walsall Green Space Services have played a leading role, recognised locally and nationally, in achieving high levels of community involvement and empowerment in the borough's parks and green spaces. The continuation of this service directed by a second Green Space Strategy is vital to the national and local 'Big Society Agenda'

Environmental impact:

Parks and green spaces have been recognised as contributing greatly to the health, well being and quality of life of those who live and work within the borough. The Green Space Service is a key contributor to the council's high profile and successful delivery of its clean, green and safe neighbourhood agenda.

Performance management:

The Green Space Strategy is linked to both Directorate and Service Plans ensuring that there is a continual review of performance.

The achievement of Green Flag Awards, introduction of GreenSTAT, installation of electronic visitor counters and the introduction of the Real Time Inspection Programme will continue to provide a wealth of management information to assess the continued improvement of the service and allow the setting of tangible and challenging performance measures and bench marks.

Equality Implications:


Please see attached draft Cabinet report.

Consultation:

Please see attached draft Cabinet report.

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