



Haringey Council

Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet 22 April 2008

Report Title: **Haringey's Parkforce – Open Space Supervision**

Report of: **Director of Adult, Culture & Community Services**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key Decision**

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose a 'model' to guide Haringey open space supervision through a more innovative partnership led approach aimed at maximising supervision and presence in Haringey's open space.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member Leisure, Culture and Lifelong Learning

2.1 The provision of good quality, accessible and well used open space is clearly a feature of our Greenest Borough and Wellbeing priorities and ambitions.

2.2 The Council, and partners, have made and continue to make significant investment in the physical infrastructure. We must now build upon this investment and sustain these improvements by ensuring that we have effective supervision of our parks and open spaces.

2.3 I believe that the partnership approach and model proposed in this report will create a 'Parkforce' that unites interest, combines resources, increases open space supervision and meets resident expectations.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the proposed Haringey Parkforce 'Model' is approved in principle.

3.2 That Recreation Services proceed with consultation on the proposed 'Model' and development plan as set out in this report.

3.3 That a further report, drawing together consultation findings and establishing an implementation and resource plan is brought back to Cabinet in July 2008.

3.4 That the current Parks Constabulary Service is dissolved.

Report Authorised by: **Director of Adult, Culture & Community Services**
Mun Thong Phung

Contact Officer: **Don Lawson, Parks Manager**

Phone: 020 8489 5612 Email: don.lawson@haringey.gov.uk

4. Chief Financial Officer Comments

- 4.1 This report proposes the introduction of the Haringey Parkforce model and indicates that improved value for money/efficiency savings can be achieved by implementing this model, particularly through closer workings with partners such as the Metropolitan Police Service. Recreation Business Unit's PBPR 2008/09 to 2010/11 contains a full year efficiency savings target of £200k (2009/10) to be achieved from the review and restructuring of the existing Parks Constabulary Service.
- 4.2 It is intended to present a further report to Cabinet in July 2008 drawing together consultation findings and establishing an implementation delivery plan. This report should clearly detail the costs of the existing and proposed structures, indicate what the on-going full year saving is compared to approved budget provision and whether it achieves the savings target.

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 5.1 The Head of Legal Services notes the contents of the report. The proposals involving the deletion of the Parks Constabulary Service, the restructuring and potential redundancies should be the subject of consultation with staff, their union representatives and effected bodies. The report suggests that this will be done.
- 5.2 The actual deletion of the Service and the restructuring should be undertaken in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures concerning organisational change, redundancy and redeployment.
- 5.3 The Head of Legal Services should be kept updated on progress of the proposed Model for parks management, and consulted on any future developments in the Model and development plan.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 6.1 Parks Need Parkforce – CABE Space publication
<http://www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/1256.pdf>

7. Strategic Implications

- 7.1 Protecting and Improving the Natural Environment is an integral part of Haringey's Greenest Borough Strategy (draft), which is also reflected in the Local Area Agreement priorities and targets. Establishing more effective open space supervision is a key component to realising these aspirations.
- 7.2 Similarly, the use of our parks through the provision of good quality, accessible and well supervised facilities and activities will make a significant contribution to our Wellbeing and Quality of Life priorities, and in particular increasing participation in sport and physical activity.

- 7.3 Parkforce was launched by CABI Space (Commission for Architecture and Built Environment) in September 2005. The initiative sets out to bring public perceptions about park staffing and supervision right up to date and to challenge and support public authorities to reinvent and take an innovative approach to the way they manage parks.
- 7.4 The Haringey Friends of Parks Forum are supportive of a review and expressed concerns over current limitations. Essentially they would like to see more on site supervisory presence in our parks and open spaces.
- 7.5 Improving on site supervision and engagement is essential to sustain the recent investment in parks regeneration and encourage more people to enjoy using their parks. There needs to be overall co-ordination and engagement to ensure our open space is achieving the optimum presence from a range of services and agencies in the delivery of Haringey's Parkforce.
- 7.6 It is proposed that the Parkforce 'Model' is based upon current Area Assembly /Ward areas to engage services and partners through the developing Area Based Working approach to local service delivery (see appendix 4 – Proposed Parkforce Areas and appendix 5 Proposed Haringey Parkforce 'Model').

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Haringey's Parkforce model sets out to harness the wide variety of existing funded activity including statutory policing associated with parks and open spaces and thus maximise value for money through partner engagement and contribution.
- 8.2 Implementation of the 'Model' will be resourced from redirecting existing Parks revenue funding, securing ongoing support through the new Local Area Agreement, and aligning partner resources.
- 8.3 The Council is seeking to redirect revenue subsidy of £300k (£230k Parks Constabulary, £35k British Trust for Conservation Volunteers [BTCV], £35k Finsbury Park Development post), whilst also achieving an efficiency saving of £200k, together with securing an ongoing annual £130k support from the LAA (including existing Pump Priming Grant). The following table summarises the funding provision:

| Current Activity | Source | Amount (£) |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Parks Constabulary (Core funding for Parks patrolling) | Parks revenue | £430k |
| Parks Constabulary efficiency savings | Parks revenue | -£200k |
| BTCV Railway Fields Operation (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) | Parks revenue | £35k |
| Finsbury Park Development post | Parks revenue | £35k |
| BTCV Outreach | NRF (ABG) | £100k |
| Community engagement/involvement | NRF/LAA (Pump Priming Grant) | £30k |
| Redirected subsidy | | £430k |

The following is a breakdown of the proposed subsidy and funding redirection as identified above (£430k) and where applicable, the additional hours this funding is projected to generate:

| Proposed Activity | Amount (£) | FTE |
|---|-------------------|------------|
| 5x Area Outreach/Coordinators | £125k | 9,360hrs |
| Safer Neighbourhood Teams | £ 75k | 2 FTE* |
| Gate locking 15 Parks and Open Spaces | £ 25k | n/a |
| Onsite Supervision (Based on £20k per employee, 36hr week) | £175k | 17,784hrs |
| Community involvement/engagement | £30k | n/a |
| Total | £430k | |

*The full cost is £44.3k p/a per Police Constable. The local authority contribution per PC is £37.5k p/a and must be for a two year contract. The MPS pay the remaining £6.8k per PC p/a.

- 8.4 Additional revenue resources have also been sought in relation to capital bids for Markfield, Noel Park, Belmont and Paignton, in the current Budget Setting/ Business Planning process.
- 8.5 In addition to the above and as part of the budget setting process, the Council approved at January 2008 full council £200k (£100k 2009/10 and £100k 2010/11) of efficiency savings in the area of Grounds Maintenance.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 See paragraph 5 for comments of Head of Legal Services.

10. Equalities Implications

- 10.1 Increasing use of parks by all sectors of the community is a key outcome of the Parkforce 'Model'.
- 10.2 The proposed Parkforce 'Model' is based upon current Area Assembly /Ward area engagement with users.
- 10.3 Increasing engagement with users and non users including black, ethnic minority groups is a key focus of Parkforce which we aim to achieve via the LAA pump priming grant and proposed Parkforce Community Wardens.
- 10.4 Consultation on the proposed 'Model' with key services (Safer Communities Unit) and agencies (Metropolitan Police) will establish training and support mechanisms for onsite staff to recognise suspect behaviour of potential perpetrators and know how to support, report and refer on any victims.
- 10.5 We will continue to work with the Metropolitan Police to design out and try to eliminate potential crime locations which will result in increased use by women and young people.

- 10.6 Dedicated onsite staff and increased presence has shown to improve the safety of people using parks. The proposed Parkforce 'Model' seeks to establish cross service and agency interaction resulting in several avenues for engagement with differing sectors of the community.
- 10.7 All equality implications will be considered throughout the course of the consultation and presented with the Parkforce 'Model' report back to Cabinet in July 2008. Consideration of equalities Issues will continue throughout the consultation process and an Equalities Impact Assessment will be presented with the final report.

11. Staffing Implications

- 11.1 Clearly the proposals contained in this report have significant implications for current staff in the Parks Constabulary (11 staff + 2 vacancies).
- 11.2 In line with Council policy, the desired outcome will be to redeploy affected staff. Opportunities for redeployment will be explored throughout the consultation with relevant agencies and services.
- 11.3 Clearly formal consultation will be initiated, with staff and Trade Union representatives, and the lead in time of 12 months will enable full consideration of the proposals and potential redeployment, redundancy and/or alternative employment options.

12. Consultation

- 12.1 Although initial consultation has been undertaken with staff, Haringey Friends of Parks Forum, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), Safer Communities Unit and Neighbourhood Management, it is essential that further consultation is undertaken on the proposed 'Model' to ensure buy in and final shaping of the 'Model' before sign off by Cabinet (see Appendix 1 – Consultation and Development) in July 2008.
- 12.2 Meetings with the Haringey MPS has enabled the council to receive an in principle agreement to work with Haringey in the provision of additional Safer Neighbourhood Team officers based in Finsbury Park however deployable to other parks and open space crime hotspots and/or joint park enforcement operations with other existing SNTs. They have also offered a commitment to working with the Council to enhance existing protocols in line with the Parkforce 'Model'. The Haringey MPS are committed to crime intervention and tackling crime hotspots based on intelligence gathered through area working, this is a key objective of the Haringey Parkforce 'Model'.
- 12.3 **Head of Safer Communities Unit Comments**
The Senior Management Team of Haringey Police have been contacted and confirm that all crime incidents occurring in Haringey Parks which are reported to them will be responded to and dealt with accordingly.
- 12.4 **Head of Neighbourhood Management Comments**

Neighbourhood Management work with Parks Service and Haringey Friends of Parks at a local area level through our seven Neighbourhood areas to provide support for effective community engagement and problem solving across Haringey. This has been a particularly effective role model for area based working. Area Based Working Pilots are now based in five Neighbourhoods:

- Tottenham and Seven Sisters Neighbourhood;
- Northumberland Park and White Hart Lane Neighbourhood;
- West Green and Bruce Grove Neighbourhood;
- Haringay and St Ann's
- Wood Green Neighbourhood;

Area Based Working contributes to the achievement of local community priorities and priorities set by Council Services partner agencies as well as the Safer Neighbourhood Ward Panels.

Officers are currently drafting a report on proposals for borough wide Area Based Working for Members' consideration (April 2008). This report will need to address and link with the key issues concerned with aligning area working in delivering the Parkforce initiative.

13. Background

13.1 Parkforce Campaign

13.1.1 The Parkforce campaign was launched on 7th September 2005. CABE Space's main objective of the campaign is to see on site staff dedicated to caring for every significant urban park in England during daylight hours.

13.1.2 The campaign sets out a pledge for all Local Authorities to sign up to. The campaign is set at two levels:

1. At Local Authority level

- Recognise the value of on site staff in every significant park during daylight hours
- Committed to developing and customising people development
- See Parkforce as an integral part of wider neighbourhood management teams.

2. At Service/Park level

- Make parks safe, clean and beautiful
- Contribute to health and wellbeing of local people
- Contribute to quality of natural environment
- Welcome visitors and help them learn about their park
- Teamwork and pride.

13.1.3 Parkforce is a campaign to celebrate the role that park supervision and presence – from grounds maintenance staff to neighbourhood wardens and Safer Neighbourhood Teams, café staff to volunteers - play in the success of local communities. CABE Space wants to bring public perceptions about park staffing, supervision and presence right up to date and to challenge and support innovative ways of increasing presence in parks.

13.1.4 Without visible figures of authority and/or presence, our parks and open spaces can feel uncared for and intimidating. A recent research report showed that 39 per cent of women feel unsafe in London's open spaces. 89 per cent of them said that more staff would make them feel safer.

Within Haringey the percentage of park users who feel unsafe to very unsafe is reducing and are as follows:

- 2003 – 21%
- 2005 – 20%
- 2006 – 21%
- 2007 – 15%

In essence well used open space goes 'hand in hand' with good quality well supervised open space.

13.2 National Context

13.2.1 Cleaner Safer Green Communities has produced guidance on 'How to Create Quality Parks and Open Spaces'. The guidance says the Government will collaborate with local and national partners to lead success and realise our vision of a renaissance for green spaces. A strategic approach needs to be backed up with a good understanding and use of the powers, tools and good practice available for their long-term care. Together, we can achieve these by focusing action in the following ten key areas:

1. Strong local leadership and partnerships.
2. A good understanding of local needs and opportunities.
3. Engaged and empowered communities.
4. Better use of resources – money, powers and skills for the job.
5. Accountability and performance monitoring.
6. Creating high quality spaces that are well designed, fit for purpose and sustainable.
7. Managing and maintaining spaces to higher standards, and encouraging innovation.
8. Encouraging and promoting innovative uses of parks and green spaces.
9. Combating anti-social behaviour in green spaces.
10. Using good practice – getting the best from guidance, powers, programmes and good practice.

Parkforce is fundamental to achieving the outcomes in these ten key areas within Haringey's parks and open spaces.

13.3 Local Context

The Parkforce initiative has strong links with the delivery of both Council and partner priorities:

- Council Plan:
 - Greenest Borough
 - Cleaner, Greener, Safer
 - Delivering Excellent Services

- Lifetime Wellbeing
- Community Strategy:
 - Environmentally sustainable future
 - Healthier people with a better quality of life
 - People and Customer Focused
- Local Area Agreement Priority and Targets:
 - Increasing Green Flags (12)/ Pennants (7) by 2010
 - User satisfaction (from 72% to 77% - MORI) by 2010
 - Physical activity participation (4% improvement from 22.9% to 26.9%) by 2010
 - Community Safety (reduce PSA1 crimes borough-wide by 12.6%) by 2009/10.

13.4 Sustaining Investment

13.4.1 In the past 5 years, Parks have been the recipient of much needed funding which has helped energise a renaissance in green spaces, in Haringey this investment has been over £13 million. Along with infrastructure investment is the need for protection to ensure sustainable and valued open space. Additional revenue funding is limited and the Service has developed a 'model' that it believes will provide value for money and flexibility in the provision of increased parks staffing, volunteering, and partner support.

13.5 Evidence for Review

13.5.1 The Haringey Parks Constabulary (HPC) was launched in November 2002 following the success of a pilot scheme of limited patrols in Finsbury Park. The HPC incorporated the existing Dog Patrol service which continues to provide night security for Council properties. The establishment of the HPC included a Head of Parks Constabulary (Inspector), a Sergeant and ten Constables. The core costs for operating the HPC are £430k.

13.5.2 Since inception of the HPC the enforcement sector has moved on considerably with the development of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT). The SNT's cover the Borough's 19 wards and each team consists of a Sergeant, 2-4 PC's and 3-5 PCSO's. This in itself reflects the need to review provision of a limited Parks Constabulary enforcement presence in Haringey's parks.

13.5.3 Further evidence supporting the need for an alternative and review of existing arrangements is as follows:

- As a result of 24 hour cover (funded mainly from Council building patrols and alarm response) the HPC has limitations due to the shift pattern it has to operate to deliver this proportion of the service. This results in inefficient and limited parks presence during core park user times.
- A secondary police team, such as a Parks Constabulary, creates opportunity for deflection, poor cross boundary working and lack of ownership.
- The Council and Metropolitan Police have invested resources into the establishment of area based neighbourhood working. The proposed

Haringey's Parkforce 'Model' aligns with this approach in delivery of cross cutting educational and engagement activities with services and agencies.

- The Parks Service main consultative network – The Haringey's Friends of Parks Forum and Friends Groups, are supportive of this review and have expressed their concerns regarding the limitations of the Parks Constabulary service. They also would like more on site supervisory presence in our parks and open spaces.

13.5.4 The following table shows a decrease in HPC patrol hours, incident responses and the fear of crime in Haringey's Parks over the last three years.

| Year | Patrol Hours ¹ | Incidents ² | Fear of Crime ³ |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2005 | 6,342.64 | 587 | 20% |
| 2006 | 5,114.00 | 355 | 21% |
| 2007 | 4,616.00 | 251 | 15% |

¹ December 2007 patrol hours excluded

² Incidents for November 2007 (28-2005, 24-2006) and December 2007 (19 – 2005, 10 2006) excluded

³ Percentage of park users who feel unsafe to very unsafe source KMC Annual Park User Survey

14. Proposed Parkforce 'Model'

14.1 The Haringey Parkforce 'Model' (see appendix 2) will seek to harness cross service and agency responsibility and resources through coordinated partnership arrangements/agreements with the following key ingredients and action:

- **Enforcement** – Strengthen the relationship and enforcement role with and through the Metropolitan Police.
- **Supervision** – Increase on site presence through the Parks operational structure and working, with enhanced staff roles and volume, and more flexible working.
- **Activities and Programming** – Develop the relationship with British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) to lead, develop and coordinate match funded activity programmes, in partnership with other local agencies and operators.
- **Community Involvement** – Work with the 'Parks Friends Forum' to develop and launch a Parkforce Community Wardens scheme in line with the Council's existing successful Community Wardens, to encourage and provide support to organised local volunteering activity.
- **Area Based Working** – Work with Urban Environment and Neighbourhood Management to ensure local engagement, cooperation and coordination. The Parks Client and Customer Services Manager will lead on the development, management and monitoring of related agreements /protocols /charters across the 'model'.

14.2 It is proposed that the Parkforce 'Model' is developed geographically across 5 areas, linked to the current Area Assembly/ Ward footprint (see appendix 4). The proposed alignment is based on volumes of Haringey owned/managed open space, existing Park Services management areas and deprivation indices.

- 14.3 Some public open space sites are owned/ managed by other agencies, and thus officers propose to seek commitment to the 'model's' approach from Alexandra Park and Palace Trust (Alexandra Park), Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (Tottenham Marshes) and Corporation of London (Highgate Wood).
- 14.4 At a local level the 'Enforcement' element will be supported by the Metropolitan Police through the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT), whilst the Supervision, Community Involvement and Activities/ Programming components will be directly and/or indirectly managed by Recreation Services.
- 14.5 The proposed Parkforce 'Model' will seek to establish:
- 5 BTCV Outreach Officers (9,360hrs) – each Outreach Officer responsible for Parkforce activity and programming in parks for their assigned area.
 - A cross borough funded Safer Neighbourhood Team, based in Finsbury Park, by funding minimum of 2 Police Constables and provision of depot facilities.
 - Establishment of additional front line capacity (17,784hrs) through parks operational staff – trained and equipped, with time to engage with users, Friends Groups and Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Appendix 5 provides a detailed description of the proposed 'Parkforce 'Model' for consultation. Appendix 3 provides an overview of the proposed Parkforce structure and an area example is provided below:

Parkforce – Area 3

- Neighbourhoods - West Green and Bruce Grove
- Tottenham and Seven Sisters
- Significant Open Spaces – Downhills, Lordship, Down Lane, Belmont, Markfield, Paignton, Hartington.
- Enforcement – 6x SNT (1x sergeant, 2x PCs, 3x PCSOs)
- Supervision – 10x Parks Operatives (including Parkforce Ambassadors)
- Activity / Programming – 1x BTCV outreach worker
- Community Involvement – 8x Parks Friends groups.

- 14.6 The following table provides a summary of the current and proposed hours/posts of full time equivalent personnel associated with open space presence.

Table 3:

| Service/ Agency/ Partner – 'Model' Component | Comment | Area | | | | | Total |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| LBH Parks Operatives – Supervision | Current hrs for ground mtce | 27,022 | 30,843 | 21,322 | 10,749 | 7,427 | 97,363 |
| | Proposed additional hrs | 3,557 | 4,446 | 6,225 | 3,556 | 0 | 17,784 |
| MPS SNT** - Enforcement | Current no.s | 42 | 35 | 26 | 12 | 0 | 115 |
| | Proposed additional no.s | | | | | *2 | 2 |
| Parks Constabulary – Enforcement and Supervision | Current hrs available for LBH Parks^ | 3201 | 3031 | 2190 | 676 | 7750 | 16,848 |
| BTCV - Activities / Programming | Current/proposed allocation of hrs | 1,872 | 1,872 | 1,872 | 1,872 | 1,872 | 9,360 |
| Friends Groups^^ - Community | | 10 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 32 |
| Key: Font – Current allocation Font – Proposed allocation *Flexible resource based in Finsbury Park able to be deployed across all of the boroughs open space. **Each team comprises of: 1xSergeant; 2xPolice Constables; 3xPCSOs, except BWF where an additional 2 PC's exist. ^Includes 9 FTE hours, excludes Prop. Services and Alexandra Park estimated across the Parkforce Areas based on actual patrol hours ^^LBH open space and other open space provider (Highgate Wood, Alexandra Park, Crouch End Open Space etc) i.e. all borough Friends Groups | | | | | | | |

15. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 15.1 Improved and effective open space supervision can only be achieved through real and sustained partnership working; it cannot be delivered by a single service or agency.
- 15.2 The current Parks Constabulary has served a purpose, and has been successful in reducing the fear of crime in our parks, and open spaces. However in recent years the Metropolitan Police have invested heavily in local community policing, and local opinion has shifted to the need for greater on site supervisory presence.
- 15.3 The Parkforce 'model' seeks to maximise onsite supervision/presence and harness the activities in open space, including the investment into Metropolitan Police community policing, under one umbrella to ensure best use of community resources.
- 15.4 Thus it is recommended that:
- The proposed 'Parkforce' model is endorsed, and that further consultation is undertaken on its development and resourcing.
 - That revenue resources are redirected in line with the above.
 - The existing Parks Constabulary is dissolved.

16. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

16.1 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Consultation and Development Plan

Appendix 2 – Parkforce Model - Strategic

Appendix 3 - Parkforce Model - Operational

Appendix 4 – Parkforce Areas.

Appendix 5 – Proposed Haringey Parkforce ‘Model’