

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**Date**

Report Title:

Update on the Executive Response to the Scrutiny Review of Haringey's Green Open SpacesReport of: **Assistant Director – Recreation Services**

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress made in implementing the agreed recommendations.
- 1.2 To advise Members of the outstanding work, and the proposed remaining programme and timetable for completion.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the progress to date and the plan for 2007/8.

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3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny review recommendations were considered by the Executive in July 2005.
- 3.2 The majority of recommendations approved by the Executive were then incorporated into the Haringey Open Space Strategy Action Plan approved by the Executive in November 2005. Development of the Strategy was itself one of the major recommendations of the Executive.
- 3.3 The major focus since this date has been to improve the quality of provision in the Borough's parks and open spaces.

4. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

4.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Green Open Spaces Review. Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee April 2005.
- Executive Response to the Scrutiny Review of Haringey's Green Open Spaces 5.7.05

5. Background

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny review of Green Open Space made 24 recommendations which can be summarised under the following headings:
- Management and funding
 - Working with the community
 - Statutory planning issues
 - Biodiversity and nature conservation
 - Partnership working with Council and external service providers
 - Future work.
- 5.2 Central to the recommendations were adoption of the then draft Haringey Open Space Strategy and Action Plan which occurred in November 2005 and the use of the Green Flag national quality standard to improve the quality of parks and open spaces within the Borough.
- 5.3 In July 2006, the Council was awarded Green Flags for 7 parks, the highest number of any London borough. A target of 12 Green Flag parks has been set for 2010.
- 5.4 Subsequent to the review, substantial investment funding has been secured for parks and open spaces provided both by the Council and via external sources. An outline investment strategy has been developed for the next 5 years that covers current and proposed Green Flag sites, other open spaces and allotments.
- 5.5 The Borough is in the fortunate position of having approximately 30 Friends of Parks groups that meet on a regular basis in conjunction with Council officers. For 07/08, officers are proposing to resource a capacity building and inclusion initiative with the Friends groups, designed to develop their capacity and explore how Friends of Parks groups might be assisted to diversify their membership.
- 5.6 A number of statutory planning issues were the subject of review recommendations. The Executive chose to defer adopting recommendations when it considered the Scrutiny Panel report as the Council was at that time awaiting the report from the Enquiry Inspector for the draft UDP. This has subsequently been received and the UDP adopted. Comments in relation to the implementation of planning related issues have therefore now been incorporated within the attached Scrutiny Update.
- 5.7 Biodiversity and nature conservation recommendations have been partly addressed with the adoption of the Haringey Biodiversity Action Plan. However, other recommendations remain outstanding and these will be addressed in work programmes for 07/08.
- 5.8 The key recommendation for partnership working, also included within the Open Spaces Strategy, was to establish an Inter Departmental Forum within the Council to enable a more coordinated approach towards the management of open space. This was programmed for 06/07 but has now been revised to be implemented by June 2007.
- 5.9 The Panel recommended future reviews of allotments, backlands and private open space and that future work be undertaken on achieving Green Flag status for more of the Council's parks, ways in which parks are maintained and funded and usage of parks.
A scrutiny review of allotments has subsequently been undertaken and the recommendations for future work have been incorporated within Recreation Services business planning processes.

Appendices - 1. Scrutiny Action Plan Update