

**Report for:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee 12 October 2017

**Item number:**

**Title:** Update on implementation of recommendations of Scrutiny Review on Community Safety in Parks

**Report authorised by:** Stephen McDonnell, Interim Director Commercial & Operations

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**Ward(s) affected:** All wards

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** N/A

## **1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 During the Spring of 2016 a Review of Community Safety in Parks was carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a number of recommendations were made.
- 1.2 On 18 October 2016, the Cabinet agreed a set of actions in response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations and this report provides an update on the actions agreed by Cabinet as of October 2017 (see Appendix 1).

## **2. Cabinet Member introductions**

- 2.1 In October 2016 the Council welcomed the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a positive contribution to addressing the safety needs of the local community while using parks.
- 2.2 At that same meeting the Council agreed a number of actions to implement the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Review of Safety in Parks.
- 2.2 Haringey parks are well used. Millions of visits are made each year and on the whole park users feel safe when doing so. However, we do recognise that there are continuing issues with antisocial behaviour and street drinking in our parks.
- 2.3 Implementation of the Committee's recommendations has assisted the Council in ensuring that key issues of safety in parks continues to see improvements for residents and park users.

## **3. Recommendations**

3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the achievements made in implementing their recommendations (attached as Appendix 3)



#### 4. Reasons for decision

4.1 N/a

#### 5. Alternative options considered

5.1 N/a

#### 6. Background information

6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee review into Community Safety in Parks was established to: 'To consider and make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet for improvements that can be made by the Council and its partners on how they address both crime and fear of crime in parks.'

6.2 The review was set up following concerns raised with Members regarding community safety in the aftermath of two incidents that took place in parks. The review looked at how it could be addressed effectively within current resource constraints so that residents feel safer when using them.

6.3 It was expected that the cost of implementing the agreed recommendations of this review could be contained within the existing Parks revenue and capital funding allocations. The major costs would be for signage and traffic review. It is estimated that this could result in expenditure of up to £50,000. However, the bulk of this cost relates to the renewal of signage and this is a cost the council would have been incurring over the next three years to update the signage in line with the new Haringey branding.

#### 7. Update on recommendations

7.1 The current position regarding the Committee's recommendations are contained in full in Appendix 3. The following summarises these key actions and achievements.

7.2 Recommendation 1 – Recorded crime since the spring of 2016 has not significantly changed.

7.3 Recommendation 2 – Signage has been reviewed and with the exception of a few much older signs, all red branded signs and green and orange branded signs include the non-emergency 101 and emergency 999 numbers. A programme of replacements has commenced and will continue over the next

three years. An accessibility audit has recently been undertaken in Finsbury Park to inform how we can make the park more accessible. This will include recommendations about how we improve signage for those with specific disabilities.

- 7.4 Recommendation 3 – The Police have not had the resources to establish a dedicated regular parks special team in the way envisaged at the time of the original review. However, the police have been able to arrange additional patrols of Finsbury Park by special constables on an ad-hoc basis and this is continuing. Additional enforcement action has been taken by the council's enforcement teams, in particular they have undertaken enforcement action to deal with issues of dumped household rubbish in Hartington and Brunswick Park and undertaken a large operation to deal with the significant problem of rough sleeping that had developed at the Paddock.
- 7.5 Recommendation 4 – A review of vehicular access during events in Finsbury Park has been concluded and implemented. Throughout this year clear segregation of traffic in the park has been maintained and all large vehicles are now escorted through the park. All traffic movements are suspended during the periods when children are travelling to and from school. Work continues to be done on what changes to the parking arrangements should be.
- 7.6 Recommendation 5 – Following discussion with the Cabinet Member, friend's groups and ward councillors it was agreed that further work on this recommendation was required before trials could be undertaken. It is anticipated that the trials would now take place from Summer 2018 onwards.
- 7.7 Recommendation 6 – Preparatory work has commenced on the possibility of introducing Public Spaces Protection Orders in six locations across the borough. This work is being taken forward as part of a wider piece of enforcement action to ensure the council has sufficient powers to tackle issues such as street drinking and unauthorised camping (e.g. tents being erected in parks).
- 7.8 Recommendation 7 – In partnership with Keep Britain Tidy two pilots in Finsbury Park have been undertaken over the summer. The pilots sort to explore ways of encouraging people to put their litter in bins and to inform them of the cost of them dropping litter in the parks. Trials of higher capacity bins are about to start and external funding is being sort to undertake further trials of bin sensors and information provision as part of a wider strategy on littering and bin provision in the parks.
- 7.9 Recommendation 8 – The community payback scheme is now up and running within the borough and is being used across a number of sites. Where it has been used in parks it has first been discussed and agreed with the Friends Group.
- 7.10 Recommendation 9 – The council has a really strong relationship with the Friends network in the borough. The Parks Service is currently supporting the establishment of new friend's groups at Chapmans Green, Bounds Green Slips and Brunswick Open Space. The council is also working in partnership with more established groups such as the Friends of Priory Park to progress their aspirations of restoring the St Paul's fountain in their park. Likewise, the

council is working with the friends of Stationers Park to progress the refurbishment of the children's playground in the park. Officer regularly attend the Park Forum meetings in order to provide feedback and respond to concerns raised.

## **8. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

8.1 The recommendations and the responses made will contribute to policy and practice primarily in relation to Priority 3 of the Corporate Plan: 'A clean, well maintained and safe borough where people are proud to live and work.'

8.2 Objective 2 of Priority 3 is: 'To make our streets, parks and estates clean, well maintained and safe.'

## **9. Statutory Officers comments - Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities**

### **9.1 Finance and Procurement**

The cost of implementing the recommendations arising from this review will be met from existing approved revenue and capital budgets.

### **9.2 Legal**

The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and comments as follows:

Under Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 ("LGA"), the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to make reports or recommendations to Cabinet on matters which affect the Council's area or the inhabitants of its area. This report complies with Cabinet's duty under section 9FE of the LGA to respond to the report of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016 indicating what action the Cabinet proposes to take.

There are no legal implications arising from the responses to the recommendations, save in relation to the response to recommendation 6.

It should be noted in relation to the response to recommendation 6 that in accordance with sections 59 (2) and (3) of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) can be implemented to impose restrictions on the consumption of alcohol in parks where such consumption is, or is likely to be, detrimental to the local community's quality of life. Evidence of the detrimental effect or the likelihood of such an effect, would be required before an order could be made. Evidence would also be necessary that the detrimental effect is likely to be of a persistent or continuing nature, so as to make the activity of drinking alcohol unreasonable, thus justifying the restrictions imposed by the PSPO.

### **9.3 Equality**

The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The recommendations aim to increase the safety of all park users and the recommendation 'further work be undertaken to develop Friends of park groups where they do not currently exist' provides an opportunity to help foster good relations between people.

## **10. Use of appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix 1 - Responses and update on progress with the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Community Safety in Parks.

## **11. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

- a. Report of Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Community Safety in Parks  
<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/documents/s86883/Comm%20Safe%20in%20Parks%20Cov%20Rep%202.pdf>