
SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Thursday, 12th September, 2019 at 10.30 am

(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

B Anderson (Chair)	-	Adel and Wharfedale;
J Akhtar	-	Little London and Woodhouse;
J Bentley	-	Weetwood;
A Blackburn	-	Farnley and Wortley;
D Collins	-	Horsforth;
A Gabriel	-	Beeston and Holbeck;
P Grahame	-	Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
A Khan	-	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;
P Gruen	-	Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
M Harland	-	Kippax and Methley;
N Sharpe	-	Temple Newsam;
K Brooks	-	Little London and Woodhouse;
T Smith	-	Pudsey;

Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded

Principal Scrutiny Adviser:
Angela Brogden
Tel: (0113) 37 88661

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded). (* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).	
2			EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC 1. To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows: No exempt items have been identified.	

3		LATE ITEMS To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration. (The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)	
4		DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13-16 of the Members' Code of Conduct.	
5		APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.	
6		MINUTES - 11 JULY 2019 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2019.	1 - 6
7		CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE - UPDATE To receive a report from the Head of Democratic Services presenting an update surrounding the function and work priorities of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.	7 - 12
8		PARKING STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT To receive a report from the Director of City Development and Director of Communities and Environment in response to the Board's request to discuss the wider context for city centre parking strategy in terms of impacts on parking in the city centre "fringe" areas and inner communities with respect to concerns about "overspill" parking and driver behaviours.	13 - 20

9		CONSULTATION ON LEEDS PARKS AND GREEN SPACES STRATEGY TO 2030 To receive a report from the Director of Communities and Environment outlining proposals for a public consultation on developing a Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy for the period 2020 to 2030.	21 - 106
10		WORK SCHEDULE To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2019/20 municipal year.	107 - 132
11		DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING Thursday, 17 October 2019 at 10:30am (pre meeting for all Board Members at 10:00am) THIRD PARTY RECORDING Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts on the front of this agenda. Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title. b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.	

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 11TH JULY, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Bentley,
A Blackburn, D Collins, P Grahame,
A Khan, P Gruen, M Harland, N Sharpe,
K Brooks, T Smith and D Ragan

97 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

98 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

99 Late Items

There were no late items.

100 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

101 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Gabriel. Councillor D Ragan attended as substitute.

102 Minutes - 13 June 2019

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held 13th June 2019, be agreed as a correct record.

CHAIRS COMMENT

The Chair thanked Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, for all of her work and wished her well in her new post.

103 Scrutiny Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling of Domestic Waste - Directors Response and Draft Waste Strategy for Leeds

The report of the Director of Communities and Environment set out the responses to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) inquiry into the kerbside collection of recycling and domestic waste.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 12th September, 2019

A copy of the draft waste strategy for Leeds was appended to the report.

The following were in attendance:

- James Rogers, Director Communities and Environment
- Councillor Rafique, Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles
- John Woolmer, Deputy Chief Officer Waste Management
- Polly Cooke, Executive Programme Manager
- Amy Dickinson, Service Manager Environmental Services
- Laura Driver, Customer Access Development Manager

Members' attention was brought to the recommendations which were outlined in the submitted report.

In addition, the Service Manager Environmental Services and Customer Access Development Manager, provided the Board with a presentation detailing work which had taken place between the Refuse Service and Customer Access, to produce information which would be accessible on the Council website when it goes live. Members were provided with a demonstration on how residents would view bin collection issues.

The Scrutiny Board considered the responses to the recommendations, and discussion focused on issues including the following:

Recommendation 1

- Clarity was sought regarding community waste disposal and storage systems. Officers confirmed that any community facilities would be implemented in full consultation with ward members to ensure the best solution is provided.

Recommendation 3

- A query was raised in relation to council departments being aware of the timescales for receiving the money for resources from the government. Members noted that upon implementation of the waste strategy, officers intended to lobby the government.

Recommendation 4

- A Member expressed that the context of the draft waste strategy was to state an ambition rather than outline a strategy for change. The Board was advised that the strategy provided a 2 year proposal; the Director of Communities and Environment clarified that although funding streams were somewhat unclear at present, the draft strategy outlines the proposed direction.
- Clarity was sought in regard to the conversion of gas supply from methane to hydrogen. Officers confirmed this has been subject to testing nationally and is deemed to be a safe alternative.
- In response to a query in regard to the 'city conversation' and for clarity regarding those who have been consulted with. The Board was advised that the conversation is in its early states. Officers confirmed

this specific information listing consultees so far will be provided to the Board. The Board suggested consultation through Community Committees, with community forums in addition to the wider public.

- The Board questioned the extent of focus on waste prevention, with particular reference to reducing food waste. The Board acknowledged that this waste stream in Leeds does not go to landfill unlike some other authorities and welcomes the focus on programmed waste prevention education so far.

Recommendation 6

- Clarity was sought on the new Crew Chargehand post; officers confirmed that recruitment was soon to take place following approval of the post. Those staff would receive the relevant in-cab training.

Recommendation 8

- Members queried the delayed rollout of the use of in-cab technology, in response, it was explained that there is specific focus to ensure that the technology will be maximised.

Recommendation 11

- A Member queried the provision in place to ensure that emergency TRO's are carried out in a timely fashion, and in response, officers confirmed suitable sites are currently being reviewed and that further progress information, would be provided to the Principal Scrutiny Advisor.

On conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked those in attendance for their contributions and hard work.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the Directors response to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling of Domestic Waste
- b) Noted the information contained within the submitted report and the appended City Waste Strategy
- c) Requested that the views of the Scrutiny Board regarding the draft waste strategy be provided verbally by officers as an update to Executive Board report on the 24th July 2019

104 Leeds Anti Social Behaviour Team Review

The report of the Director of Communities and Environment set out the progress with the LASBT review, and the recommendations agreed at the Executive Board meeting held 26th June 2019.

A copy of the Executive Board report 26 June 2019, and the ASB strategy was appended to the Agenda.

The following were in attendance:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 12th September, 2019

- James Rogers, Director Communities and Environment
- Paul Money, Chief Officer, Safer Leeds
- Harvinder Saimbhi, Head of Operational Delivery ASB & Scrutiny Services
- David Longthorpe, Head of Housing Management
- Councillor Coupar, Executive Member for Communities

The Executive Member for Communities, thanked the Board for their work in terms of LASBT arrangements.

The following was discussed:

- *Community MARAC'S*. Members queried the involvement of elected members due to the GDPR aspects relating to tasking meetings. The Executive Member for Communities, agreed to raise the issue of Member involvement, and would look at arrangements in how information is shared between the police and ward members.
- *Triage of referrals*. Members requested that contact details be provided to elected members.
- *Graffiti*. The Board was advised of the focus in the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy on environmental harm which includes graffiti and vandalism.
- *Mediation*. Members noted this service would be free of cost to those who are deemed to require the use of mediation intervention by LASBT.

Members commended Officers for their work, prompt responses and service.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the progress made since the initial consultation with the Board
- b) Noted the information contained within the submitted report, and the appended ASB Strategy and Executive Board report
- c) Requested that the information outlined in the minutes, be provided as requested

105 Financial Health - Out-Turn Report 2018/19

The report of the Head of Democratic Services provided the Board with financial information relating to the budget out-turn for 2019/20.

An adapted copy of the Executive Board Report 26 June 2019, was appended to the report.

The following were in attendance:

- Neil Evans, Director Resources and Housing
- James Rogers, Director of Communities and Environment
- Michael Everitt, Head of Finance
- Kevin Mulvaney, Head of Finance
- Bhupinder Chana, Head of Finance

The Director of Resources and Housing noted an overspend of 600k in relation to the cost of maintenance of council buildings. The Director of Communities and Environment added there was a directorate underspend of 400k.

Members discussed a number of matters including:

- *Disrepair cases*. In response to a query in regard to overspending, Members heard there are a number of active litigation agencies in the city centre. Improving speed in responding and dealing with back-logged cases remains a focus.
- *Universal Credit (UC)*. Members sought clarity on how UC is impacting rental income, and were informed financial provision had been pre-planned. Resources have also been allocated to support tenants with the transition to managing their own rent payment.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

Noted the outturn summary for the financial year 2018/19

106 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's schedule for the 2019/20 municipal year. Copies of the draft work schedule and the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held 16th May 2019 and 26 June 2019 were appended to the report.

Members discussed the items scheduled for September meeting.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the matters outlined in the report and raised during the meeting
- b) Noted the Executive Board minutes
- c) Agreed the overall work schedule

107 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 12th September 2019 at 10.30 am (with a pre-meeting for all Board members at 10.00 am)

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Report of Head of Democratic Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 12 September 2019

Subject: Climate Emergency Advisory Committee – update

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	☐ Yes ☒ No
Has consultation been carried out?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes ☒ No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Scrutiny Board with a further update surrounding the function and work priorities of the Council's Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

2. Background information

- 2.1 In March 2019, Full Council passed a resolution declaring a Climate Emergency; Executive Board in April also considered the implications of this resolution. In May 2019, the Leader of Council reviewed the Executive arrangements for the authority to reflect the Council's policy objectives in this area, and thus the Climate Change Advisory Committee was established.
- 2.2 The membership of this Committee includes Councillors B Anderson, J Bentley, D Blackburn, N Buckley, A Garthwaite, K Groves, J Illingworth, M Midgley, L Mulherin, M Shahzad, P Wadsworth, N Walshaw (Chair) and P Wray.
- 2.3 The first meeting of the Climate Change Advisory Committee was held on 2nd July 2019. The terms of reference relating to the function of the Committee were approved during this meeting (see Appendix 1). However, a decision was also made during this meeting to change the name of the Committee to the 'Climate Emergency Advisory Committee'.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee attended the initial meeting of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board in recognition that the Executive functions surrounding climate change and sustainable energy and carbon reduction fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Board. However, it was noted at that stage that the Committee was yet to formally meet and so it was agreed that a further update surrounding the work priorities of the Committee would be considered during the Scrutiny Board's September meeting.
- 3.2 During its first meeting on 2nd July 2019, the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee approved a forward plan of the content of its forthcoming meetings as follows:

Meeting Date	Proposed Topic	Cabinet Member
25 th September	Transport/ Active Travel Fleet/ Grey Fleet	Cllr Mulherin/ Cllr Charlwood Cllr Lewis
23 rd October	Planning Buildings, including corporate buildings and housing Presentation on December's Executive Board report	Cllr Mulherin Cllr Coupar/ Cllr Lewis
13 th January	Biodiversity Food	
10 th March	Annual Report for Full Council	

- 3.3 The Committee also agreed to hold a number of working groups outside of the formal meetings in relation to the following areas:

Transport

This group will focus on the challenges facing active transport in the city and consider how the vision for the city should develop. It is intended that the group will look at areas of the city where connectivity by active travel could be improved as well as looking at good practise.

Planning (including buildings and energy)

This group will initially focus on Planning. Specifically, the group aims to:

1. Identify short term opportunities to maximise carbon reductions and improve environmental sustainability via existing planning policies (i.e. core strategy, site allocation plan, etc).
2. Identify short term priorities to strengthen planning policies within the existing regional/national policy framework.

3. Identify priorities which can only be achieved by influencing regional/national policies and develop specific asks of the region/national government.

Biodiversity and Food

This working group will consider current operational practises that are in place across the council and their impact on biodiversity, with the aim of identifying immediate opportunities to improve the biodiversity within the district. This group will also start to look at the longer term vision for the city in terms of biodiversity.

- 3.4 An invitation has been extended to the Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee; Executive Board Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development and relevant senior officers to attend today's meeting to address any further queries from Board Members.

4. Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 This report provides the opportunity to engage with the Scrutiny Board in relation to the function and work priorities of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 There are no equality and diversity, or cohesion and integration implications as a result of this report.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 In March 2019, Full Council passed a resolution declaring a Climate Emergency and the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee was established to reflect the Council's policy objectives in this area.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 The role and priorities of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee will support the work that the council needs to undertake to meet its targets as part of the Climate Emergency declaration.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no specific implications as a result of this report.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal implications as a result of this report.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 This report has no specific risk management implications.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 At the request of the Scrutiny Board, this report provides a further update surrounding the function and work priorities of the Council's Climate Emergency Advisory Committee.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

An advisory Committee¹ authorised to consider and make recommendations regarding climate change and sustainability and in particular

1.) To advise the Council in relation to functions which are²

- specified as being non executive functions or
- being local choice functions, are reserved to the Council; and

and to report annually to full council; and

2.) *To advise the Executive in relation to functions which are²*

- *specified as being executive functions, or*
- *being local choice functions, are not reserved to the Council, or*
- *are functions which are not specified as being either non executive functions or local choice functions and by default are executive functions*

¹ Appointed by the Council in accordance with Section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

² In accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as from time to time amended.

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Report of Director of City Development and Director of Communities and Environment

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 12 September 2019

Subject: PARKING STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT

Are specific electoral wards affected?	☐ Yes	☒ No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Has consultation been carried out?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	☐ Yes	☒ No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary

1. Main Issues

- This report responds to a request from the Board to discuss the wider context for city centre parking strategy in terms of impacts on parking in the city centre “fringe” areas and inner communities with respect to concerns about “overspill” parking and driver behaviours.
- The report provides a high level overview of city centre parking provision within the context of planning policy, the transport strategy for Leeds and the operation of city centre parks. It goes on to outline the general approach to the management of on-street parking in those areas surrounding the city centre and outside the main city centre controlled parking management area.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The implementation of parking policies and management of parking relates to the Outcome: Move around a well-planned city easily; Sustainable Infrastructure: Improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability; and Sustainable Infrastructure: Improving air quality, reducing pollution and noise.

3. Resource Implications

- There are no specific implications to this report. Clearly the exercise of parking management on-street and the operation of car parks has cost implications both capital in relation to new schemes and revenue for the administration of regulations.

Recommendations

Members of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) are requested to note and consider the contents of this report.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides a general background to the parking strategy position for the city centre and actions and approach towards managing parking outside the core area in the city centre fringe and inner community areas.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The provision of adequate and appropriate levels of car parking within the city centre is an important part of the overall provision for travel to the city centre for business, leisure and residents. As well as the transport and planning strategies and policies this is also reflected in the role the travel planning plays for existing and new developments in actively managing travel choices and parking demand.
- 2.2 Parking strategy also relates closely to the choice, demand and use of public transport and other non-car travel based travel modes and a part in contributing to the achievement of sustainable balance between travel mode, place making and the impacts on the environment – air quality and climate change especially.
- 2.3 Set against the parking arrangements in the city centre there has been an increasing trend for those commuters who aren't switching away from cars to the alternative for their parking to overspill beyond the city centre into the adjacent areas posing questions for traffic management and regulation. In residential areas this parking can cause nuisance, anti-social behaviour and loss of amenity to residents.
- 2.4 Members of this Board in considering their workplan for 2019/20 considered this matter at their June meeting and have requested the opportunity to discuss and consider these more community specific aspects of parking outwith the boundary of the city centre in terms of *"Car Parking – current strategic position, how this supports climate change, implementation and enforcement of TRO's (and ref to the previous waste inquiry)"*.
- 2.5 This report therefore starts with a brief overview of parking strategy and then focuses on the matters of parking management, traffic regulation and enforcement in the inner city areas bounding the city centre having regard to how parking overspill and parking nuisance issues are addressed as the basis for a discussion with Board Members.

3. Main issues

City centre parking policy position

- 3.1 Leeds Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted January 2016) forms the principal statement of parking policy across the city in line with the adopted Core Strategy (Nov 2014).
- 3.2 Policy T1 of the Core Strategy includes the use of parking policies to control the use and supply of car parking across the city, specifically to support wider transport strategy objectives for sustainable travel and in limiting the supply of commuter parking within areas of high public transport accessibility, such as the city centre.
- 3.3 The SPD sets out how parking is used to support the growth of the economy by ensuring the provision of an appropriate quantity, quality and type of parking, while at the same time allowing for the efficient movement of goods and people through the reduction of road congestion and supporting more sustainable modes of travel. It also aims to support local communities by ensuring that parking does not cause local amenity problems for residents.
- 3.4 The SPD includes sections on the management of parking in the city centre, parking provision in new developments, park and ride and the respective roles of on and off-street parking within the strategy.
- 3.5 Within the city centre, the SPD maintains control of parking provision, particularly for commuters, by limiting the number of spaces provided with new developments and limiting the growth in new permanent public commuter parking to 500 spaces over the Plan period.
- 3.6 The SPD makes reference to the use of parking controls and Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to control on-street parking. TROs are the legal tools used to facilitate the use of double yellow lines, pay and display bays etc. Specifically, it states that within the Fringe parking zone around the edge of the city centre on-street restrictions should aim to control on-street commuter parking, particularly where it proves to be a problem.
- 3.7 Within the city centre, the bulk of off-street parking is associated with developments (customer, residential or private non-residential parking) leaving around 13,800 public off-street spaces (March 2019). Of these, just under 1,000 are short stay with a maximum duration of 5 hours. A further 5,100 are priced to encourage short stay use, although there is evidence that commuter parking remains significant within these locations due to the use of contract parking or annual permits. 2,300 are on cleared sites and are subject to the cleared sites commuter parking policy, with number of spaces being reduced over time.
- 3.8 Changes in the demand for public off-street car parking in the city centre are monitored regularly, with spot surveys taking place twice a year covering the majority of off-street public car parks. These show the permanent car parks have a peak occupancy of just under 85% (Mar 2019) on weekdays and 55% on Saturdays. The cleared site car parks with temporary permissions are more heavily used on weekdays with several approaching 100% occupancy, though Saturday usage is lower than the permanent sites. These surveys only provide a snapshot of usage and there is evidence from the past three years that September usage has been higher than March, nevertheless, notwithstanding the increases in costs, parking levels in recent years have been higher than for a number of years indicating an upswing in demand since the economic downturn.

Demand for parking

- 3.9 There are two key future trends that will impact upon demand for parking in Leeds city centre. A general growth in longer distance commuting (already 37% of city centre workers live outside Leeds District) and the opposing growth in city centre living. The 2011 census shows that 44% of employed city centre residents work in the city centre, and the Core Strategy is planning for an additional 10,200 city centre dwellings by 2028 (of which 1,275 have been delivered up to April 2017). On the basis of the 2011 census data, this could deliver over 6,000 new city centre workers who would simply walk to work.
- 3.10 The strategy for the city centre is to cater for longer distance commuting by the provision of park and ride and expanded rail capacity. The Temple Green and Elland Rd park and ride sites provide 1,800 spaces between them. A further 2,650 spaces are to be delivered through the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP), with work already started on expanding Elland Rd and construction of the Stourton site to commence later in 2019.
- 3.11 Suburban rail station parking is being expanded, with over 400 spaces delivered at Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge and a further 2,000 planned through the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund (WYPTF) across West Yorkshire. In addition, the rail industry is planning for significant growth into Leeds during the am peak: 50% extra seats on TransPennine Express by 2019 and capacity provided for 40% more passengers on Northern services by 2022 (with the majority delivered by 2019). As of autumn 2018 the number of seats on trains arriving at Leeds during the morning peak period had risen by 19% since 2011 exceeding the growth in passengers over the same period.

City centre parking management and pricing

- 3.12 The cost of parking all day within the city centre has risen markedly in recent years from 'on the door' average charges of around £9 in 2011-13 to over £13 in 2019 in the public off street car parks that allow all day usage. However, it is not known what proportion of drivers actually pay these rates due to having contract parking or an arrangement to park at their place of work. Charges in Council run spaces are far cheaper, with daily charges starting at 2.60 in the outer areas rising to 8.00 in the City centre. The Council only runs about a third of the spaces in the City so our impact on the overall prices in the City is limited.
- 3.13 The area covered by on street parking charges has expanded over the years and it now runs from Woodhouse Moor in the north to Holbeck in the south and east-west from Quarry Hill to West Street. There are some issues with commuter parking in these boundary areas especially at the hospitals. It is not thought likely that our charging policies are responsible for this. The commuter parking that is available in these areas is already full from Monday -Friday so there is no spare capacity. Lower prices would presumably lead to more demand which would increase problems in the area. It is also the case that a significant number of drivers will not pay for parking on principle and will seek to find a free space even if it is some distance from their destination. This means that any area within walking distance of the City centre will be popular if there are no restrictions.
- 3.14 Parking Services is currently responsible for the administration and enforcement of 146 Residents Permit Zones located throughout the Leeds city region in district towns, local suburbs and on the periphery of the city centre. A zone can include just one street or up to whole estates and the majority of permits are issued free of charge. The residents' permits are renewed over a 3 year cycle and there are approximately 32,000 permits in issue at any one time. Residents are encouraged

to apply for permits using the Council's on-line system. Zones are often in force at different times depending on when commuter vehicle parking affects residents and the zones are patrolled and enforced by Council Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) who have the authority to issue penalty charge notices (PCN).

- 3.15 It should be noted that the powers available to Parking Services are limited in law with no enforcement powers outside of the Traffic Regulation Orders. For example enforcement against pavement parking or parking on green space cannot take place without a specific TRO.

Traffic Management and Regulation

- 3.16 As a consequence of the some or all of the parking implications detailed in the report, parking patterns and demands in some area change on a regular basis. It is known that some drivers do and will continue to park on the fringes of the City and walking the last mile or two of their journey to avoid a parking charge. Therefore as and when this parking starts to create a concern (to the detriment of local residential and business needs) within local neighbourhood, Traffic Engineering are often asked to investigate with a view to provide intervention measures. Whilst a more proactive approach might seem desirable it is important to note that regulations can also often cause unwanted issues in some communities.
- 3.17 Every area which raises such issues generating a request that suggests a Traffic Regulation Order and where initial observations supports some form of intervention is recorded and added to a review list which is then considered during the annual capital programme process. At the end of each year and when the Traffic Management Capital budget is known, the list is reviewed and schemes are subsequently prioritised against the benefit they may provide using an established framework, with the first priority afforded to improving road safety. It is the case some areas where a scheme is merited may sit on this list for some time pending budget availability, although where practical opportunities to combine and package measures where feasible to increase budget efficiency.
- 3.18 With respect to the promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order the promotion of these do have to follow the processes laid down in statute for the preparation and making of such Orders. This can lead to often result in the timeline for this process from conception to completion on the ground taking between 9 to 12 months, depending in part on the level of support a proposal enjoys and more importantly the number and complexity of any objections received. Observing the sometimes objections will need to be worked through to seek compromise solutions. Occasionally this might require a new Order to be prepared.
- 3.19 The costs to promote and implement these forms of Traffic Regulation Order scheme can vary in scale and size with costs varying from c£8,000 to more comprehensive area reviews which can cost in excess of £35,000. It should be noted that when smaller areas of concern are identified and a scheme is implemented to address the concerns, this can often result in the parking displacing to other locations, which previously didn't experience parking problems and the circle for intervention continues. Again it can be challenging to define an appropriate boundary for scheme proposals.
- 3.20 In addition to the above there is an ongoing concern and issues within the refuse collection and cleansing services associated with poor parking behaviour which restricts or even obstructs vehicle passage and ability to complete the refuse collection in some areas. In these circumstances the Traffic Engineering service will continue to support these services as these situations and location arise and are

identified, through the promotion of appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders. Officers within Traffic Engineering will continue to offer assistance in the future to help combat this ongoing concern. Detailed dialogue and engagement between the Directorates and services involved to monitor and respond to issues will be maintained.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 There are no specific consultation and engagement implications pertaining to this report. Transport strategy and planning policies have been the subject of separate engagements associated with their adoption. More specific consultations are undertaken with respect to individual schemes including the development of Traffic Regulation Orders and other relevant parking management activities.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 An EDCI is not required for this report. Appropriate EDCI screenings / assessments are undertaken in the course of project development and reporting.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The implementation of parking policies and management of parking relates to the Outcome: Move around a well-planned city easily; Sustainable Infrastructure: Improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability; and Sustainable Infrastructure: Improving air quality, reducing pollution and noise.
- 4.3.2 Parking strategy can support the city economy, place making and vibrant city centre and encourage a balanced approach to making travel choices between alternative travel modes. The strategy approach seeks to balance the need for adequate supply of parking with the investment and provision of travel choices modes and the wider needs of the city.
- 4.3.3 Priority: Health and wellbeing - Supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles. Reducing health inequalities and improving the health of the poorest the fastest. KPIs Children who are a healthy weight at age 11. Percentage of physically active adults. Negative if it discouraged walking and cycling.
- 4.3.4 Parking policy and operation also has a key part to play in the wider ambitions of aims of transport strategy in the city and the West Yorkshire Transport Strategy as part of policy and goals which support sustainable travel choices and the effective management of transport networks for positive economic, environmental and health and well being outcomes.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.5 The effective management of parking within the city centre is recognised both in transport and spatial planning terms as a key part of long term strategy and as a key part of policy for achieving a more sustainable and lower carbon approach to transport provision in the future. It also sits alongside measures to promote alternative travel public transport and active travel modes for journeys to the city centre.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no specific implications to this report. Clearly the exercise of parking management on-street and the operation of car parks has cost implications both capital in relation to new schemes and revenue for the administration of regulations.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 There are no specific legal or access to information implications arising from this report which is for Members' information and consideration only.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 There are no specific risk management implications. The report details some of the operational and other issues that may arise associated with parking in and around the city centre.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This report is intended to provide the basis for Members' further consideration of concerns about city centre related parking over-spilling into fringe areas and the communities of the inner areas and set out the basis for investigating and responding to these issues. It provides an overview of the strategic situation and the position of the operational services involved in providing for regulation and management of parking.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Members of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) are requested to note and consider the contents of this report.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Report of Director of Communities and Environment

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 12th September 2019

Subject: Consultation on Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy to 2030

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	☐ Yes ☒ No
Has consultation been carried out?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes ☒ No

Summary

1. Main issues

- Leeds City Council's current Parks and Green Spaces Strategy is due for renewal in 2020.
- This report outlines plans for a public consultation on developing the next strategy (a plan for how the Parks and Countryside Service will manage public green space in Leeds) to 2030.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The Best Council Plan will be integral to the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, with common themes including; Safe, Strong Communities, Health and Wellbeing, Child Friendly City, Age-Friendly Leeds, Culture, Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Infrastructure.

3. Resource Implications

- The resource implications for the consultation process and production of the strategy include staff time, venue hire for consultation events and design time for publicity materials and related documents, which will be met within existing revenue budgets.

Recommendations

It is requested that Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Review, and provide feedback on, the 'Towards a Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2020 – 2030' document, including the proposed consultation questions and emerging themes described in there.
- b) Review the consultation plan and methodology outlined below (in 3.2) so that the consultation on the future of public parks and green spaces can commence, and the strategy can be completed by end 2020.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report outlines proposals for a public consultation on developing a Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (a plan for how the Parks and Countryside Service will manage public green space in Leeds) for the period 2020 to 2030.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The current Parks and Green Spaces Strategy for Leeds (see Appendix 1) was adopted by the council's executive board and published in 2009 for the time period to 2020. It was based around the following themes:
 - Places for people: *To engage the community in promoting parks and green spaces as accessible places for everyone to experience and enjoy*
 - Quality places: *To provide good quality parks and green spaces that are well managed and provide a range of attractive facilities*
 - Sustaining the green realm: *To plan for the development of new, and to protect existing parks and green spaces that will offer lasting social, cultural and environmental benefits for the people of Leeds*
 - Creating a healthier city: *To promote parks and green spaces as places to improve health and well-being and prevent disease through exercise, relaxation, and contemplation*
 - An enabler for regeneration: *To promote liveability and the economic benefits of quality parks and green space provision as an integral part of major regeneration*
- 2.2 The key aims of the strategy, as set out in the accompanying executive board report (in 2009), were as follows:
 - For all community parks to meet the Green Flag standard for field based assessment
 - To develop an investment strategy
 - To establish a parks and green spaces forum
 - To develop a city centre park
- 2.3 National research undertaken by HLF in 2014 and 2016 showed a link between councils with parks and green spaces strategies and local parks being in a good and improving condition. As a result, they recommend that all councils have such a strategy in place.
- 2.4 Given that the current strategy is due for renewal, and there is evidence of the benefits of having a strategy, it is proposed that the development of a new strategy

for the management Leeds parks and green spaces over the next 10 years is begun.

3. Main issues

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This report is accompanied by a public consultation document entitled '*Towards a Leeds Parks and Green Strategy 2020 – 2030*' (see Appendix 2).

3.1.2 The purpose of the '*Towards a...*' document is the development of a vision for the future of Leeds City Council owned and managed public parks and green spaces beyond 2020, and a strategy for how best to deliver that vision over the next 10 years.

3.1.3 The document has been produced by Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside service (the lead agency for the management of public parks and green space in the city).

3.1.4 The strategy needs to reflect the views of residents and visitors to Leeds, so that the council can ensure it provides a service that meets the needs of all our communities, now and in the future. The consultation process outlined below, and described in the accompanying '*Towards a...*' document, will facilitate that.

3.1.5 The aim of this report is to get feedback on the proposed public consultation process, and on the emerging themes that have been identified as an initial discussion point for use in the consultation process.

3.2 Consultation

3.2.1 Approach to consultation

3.2.2 Both the University of Leeds and the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum have offered to assist the council in undertaking the consultation for the strategy:

- University of Leeds have been partners with the Parks and Countryside Service for 4 years, undertaking a range of research projects into parks, including their past, present and future. They are national leaders in park research and have secured funding to run a large-scale public event at the City Museum as part of the national Festival of Social Science in November. The event is aimed at educating and inspiring people about parks in Leeds and consulting them on the future of their parks – a perfect opportunity to collate public opinion on local parks for the strategy.
- Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum is a voluntary, community network of organisations and individuals dedicated to protecting, promoting and enhancing public green spaces in Leeds. They have over 90 members from organisations such as *Friends* and *In Bloom* groups, Resident's Associations and local environmental charities. Members are knowledgeable, experienced and enthusiastic about public green space, and the committee, are keen to support the development of the new strategy.

3.2.3 The consultation process will involve a 3-pronged approach involving using the results of the 2016 residents survey, an online questionnaire and face to face consultation at public and stakeholder events, meetings, conferences and workshops.

- Residents' Survey: In 2016 the University of Leeds, in partnership with the Parks and Countryside Service, undertook a large-scale survey of Leeds residents' use of, and attitudes to, parks in the city. The results of this survey, which received nearly 6,500 responses, will feed into the strategy.
- Consultation events: The proposed consultation process going forward will involve a range of opportunities for the general public and stakeholders to have a say in the future of public parks and green spaces at events, public meetings and workshops around the city.
- Online questionnaire: People who would like to have a say in the strategy, but who are unable to attend one of the face to face events, will be able to respond to the questions online.

3.2.4 Questions

3.2.5 Through the consultation process, members of the public and stakeholders will be asked a short series of questions enabling them to express their opinions on public parks and green spaces in Leeds in general, along with an opportunity to comment on some key themes identified (which are listed below). The proposed questions are provided in the '*Towards a...*' document accompanying this report.

3.2.6 Draft consultation methodology and timeline

3.2.7 It is proposed that consultation with both the general public and key stakeholders takes place between September 2019 and February 2020.

3.2.8 Key stakeholders include community committees and ward members, volunteer groups like 'Friends of', Parks and Countryside staff, other Leeds City Council services like Active Leeds and Children's, and partner organisations (like Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum, RSPB, Middleton Bike Hub and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust).

3.2.9 The proposed timeline for the development of the strategy is set out below:

Action	Date
Report to Scrutiny	12 September 2019
Consult Parks and Countryside Management Team	13 September 2019
Consult Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum committee	16 September 2019
Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum members consultation event	17 October 2019
Parks and Countryside Staff Briefings	October 2019
Large-scale public consultation event at City Museum with University of Leeds	9 November 2019
Consulting key internal stakeholders including Environment Subcommittee and other LCC services like Active Lifestyles, Visit Leeds, Public Health, Environmental Action.	November 2019 - February 2020
Consulting key external stakeholders such as partners Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Middleton Bike Hub, Groundwork, Gotts Park Golf CIC.	November 2019 - February 2020

Action	Date
Public consultation outreach to community committees and other community organisations to ensure a wide range of audiences are reached including children and young people, older people, people with disabilities, people from ethnic minority backgrounds etc.	November 2019 - February 2020
Collating responses and pulling out key themes/patterns/representative comments from consultation	September 2019 - April 2020
Composing first draft of strategy document Update report to Scrutiny	July - September 2020
Consultation on draft strategy with key stakeholders - Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum, Ward Members and relevant Leeds City Council staff.	Oct-20
Strategy goes to Leeds City Council, Executive Board for approval	Dec-20
Publication of final strategy document	Dec-20

3.3 Emerging themes

3.3.1 As outlined in the attached document, based on Leeds City Council's experience of delivering Parks and Countryside services and the last strategy alongside communities, and our understanding of local and national research and policy around public green space, it is proposed that the strategy for 2020 – 2030 focuses on the following themes:

- Community
- Quality
- Environment
- Health and wellbeing
- Equality of opportunity
- Sustainability
- Culture

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 This report outlines proposals for a public consultation on the future of Leeds Parks and Green Spaces in autumn-winter 2019 – 20. In addition to taking into account the comments of the 6,400 people who responded to the 2016 residents' survey, the consultation process aims to engage at least 500 people in the next, more detailed and focussed stages of the consultation process.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 Equality and diversity, cohesion and integration will be key to the consultation process which aims to engage a significant number of representatives from all the communities of Leeds. As well as publicising the consultation as widely as possible, and listening to all responses, this will involve undertaking outreach to groups that can be harder to reach by attending meetings such as Leeds Older People's Forum, Leeds Disability Hub and the Leeds Youth Council.
- 4.2.2 Furthermore, in the consultation document, it is proposed that Equality of Opportunity is one of 7 key themes for the strategy to focus on, so that due consideration is given to the service provided for all the diverse communities of Leeds over the next 10 years.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The Best Council Plan will feed in to the development of the Parks and Green Spaces strategy with common themes including; Safe, Strong Communities, Health and Wellbeing, Child Friendly City, Age-Friendly Leeds, Culture, Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Infrastructure – the key links are explained alongside the themes in the '*Towards a...*' document. In terms of specific outcomes identified in the Best Council Plan, the strategy should contribute to enabling everyone in Leeds to; 'Enjoy happy, healthy, active lives' and 'Enjoy greater access to green spaces, leisure and the arts'.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 Parks and green spaces currently contribute, in a range of ways, to mitigating the potential impacts of climate change from carbon storage to flood alleviation as well as providing habitats for wildlife. There is opportunity, as part of a strategy going forward, to intensify action by planting more trees and woodlands, developing alternative approaches to managing grassland and generally adopting a more environmentally sustainable approach to managing parks and green spaces. As outlined in the '*Towards a...*' document, it is proposed that the environment, including combatting the 'Climate Emergency,' is a key priority going forward.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Resource implications of the consultation process and production of the strategy include staff time, venue hire for consultation events and design time for publicity materials and the final strategy document. Costs will be incurred in the financial year 2019-20 and 2020-21 and will be met within existing revenue budgets.
- 4.4.2 The consultation process will help identify peoples' perceptions of the city's parks and green spaces and ensure that Leeds City Council is providing a service that local residents and visitors use and value.
- 4.4.3 Longer term, having a strategy for local parks and green spaces should improve value for money by helping identify priorities and the best way to allocate resources to public green space in Leeds going forward.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 Data protection law will be a consideration when collating responses to the consultation. In all cases personal data will only be used for the purposes it was gathered for, and will be kept secure and destroyed when no longer required.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 The risks of undertaking this consultation process overall are minimal as any problems or issues that are likely to arise (such as the proposed themes not being in line with public opinion) will be taken into consideration as part of the consultation and fed into the final strategy.
- 4.6.2 There is a risk of a data protection breach which will be managed by following data protection law.
- 4.6.3 The timescales for delivery of the next strategy for the end of 2020 are fairly tight but if we stick to the schedule provided above, should be manageable.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 To ensure Leeds is the 'Best City for Parks and Green Spaces', it is important that a strategy is developed as part of a coherent and focussed approach to green space management. This document, and the accompanying 'Towards a Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2020 – 2030,' outline the stages of development for a strategy to 2030, including a consultation plan, timescales and emerging themes for people to comment on.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 It is requested that Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):
- Review, and provide feedback on, the 'Towards a Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy 2020 – 2030' document, including the consultation questions and the emerging themes listed above (in 3.3).
 - Review the consultation plan and methodology outlined above (in 3.2) so that the consultation on the future of public parks and green spaces can commence, and the strategy can be completed by end 2020.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 'Towards a Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, 2020 – 2030' is provided with this report (see Appendix 2).
- 7.2 The current Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (to 2020) is also provided (see Appendix 1).

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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A Parks and Green Space Strategy for Leeds



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A Parks and Green Space Strategy for Leeds

Foreword

In recent years, Leeds has become one of the most vibrant and successful cities in the UK. Leeds is recognised as the regional capital of the Yorkshire and Humberside region and has been hugely successful in encouraging business to invest here. It is also crucially important that Leeds is seen as an attractive place to live, visit and work, and our parks and green spaces are a key factor in achieving this.

We all need places for relaxation and escape, for exercise and recreation, and our parks and green space provide this. They also help to build a sense of community. This is why they always score at the top of what people regard as important, whether they live in Leeds or are just visiting.

The development of the Parks and Green Space Strategy has already helped raise the profile, and the parks renaissance programme has seen an extra £3.7 million invested over 2005 to 2008. We all know however, that there is still a huge amount of work to do and we are therefore delighted to publish this Strategy.

We all need places for relaxation and escape, for exercise and recreation, and our parks and green space provide this.



Key Themes

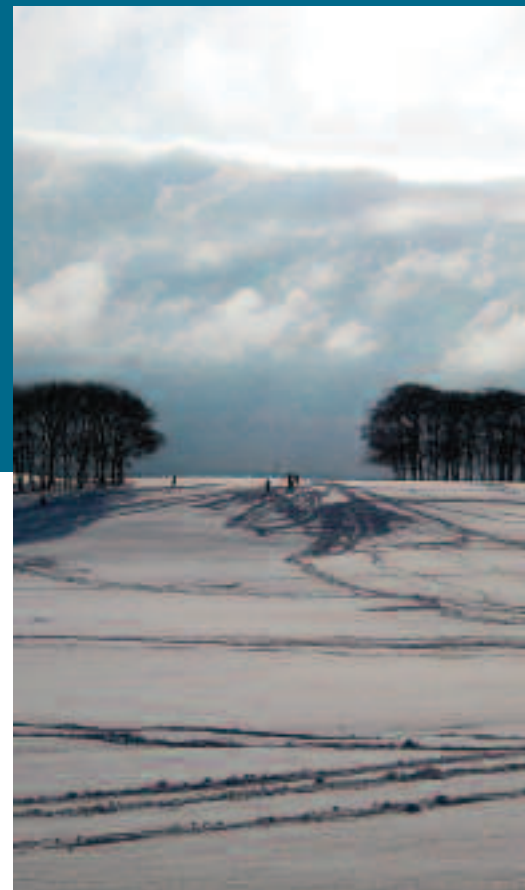
This Strategy sets out the key priorities to 2020 in achieving a vision where quality, accessible parks and green spaces are at the heart of the community, designed to meet the needs of everyone who lives, works, visits or invests in Leeds, both now and in the future.

The Strategy is centred on the following themes and key aims:

- 1. Places for People:** To engage the community in promoting parks and green spaces as accessible places for everyone to experience and enjoy
- 2. Quality Places:** To provide good quality parks and green spaces that are well managed and provide a range of attractive facilities
- 3. Sustaining the Green Realm:** To plan for the development of new, and to protect existing parks and green spaces that will offer lasting social, cultural and environmental benefits for the people of Leeds
- 4. Creating a Healthier City:** To promote parks and green spaces as places to improve health and well-being and prevent disease through physical activity, play, relaxation, and contemplation
- 5. An Enabler for Regeneration:** To promote liveability and the economic benefits of quality parks and green space provision as an integral part of major regeneration projects
- 6. Delivering the Strategy:** To engage partners in supporting and delivering the Parks and Green Space Strategy

The themes set out the overriding aims of the strategy, but are not exclusive or self-contained. There are also broader strands that cut across each theme, for example biodiversity which is about the sustainable management of the living environment, which in turn enhances the physical and mental well-being of people's lives.

It is important to recognise that there is a considerable amount of work that is ongoing in sustaining and delivering improvements to parks and green space. This strategy seeks to acknowledge this, but also importantly identify key challenges and priorities in addressing them that will require specific commitments from the Council as the lead agency in this sector.





Introduction

For a number of years now the council has been committed to the strategic management of its parks and green spaces, and this document is a chance to outline the achievements so far and put in place a way of ensuring that the key aims and objectives can be met.

The Strategy looks at the contribution made to priorities nationally and locally, and how it fits within the Leeds Cultural Strategy. Early on, the different types of parks and green space are set out so that this is clearly understood. We carried out a considerable amount of consultation during the development of the Strategy and this is summarised along with key issues raised

The heart of this document focuses on the themes and key aims of the Strategy supported by a set of key proposals. Where possible, examples have been set out to illustrate how an approach could be adopted elsewhere.

The aims and key proposals form a framework for the action plan setting key priorities and timescales for delivery. The action plan will be regularly reviewed and updated as the Strategy is implemented.



Policy Context

A Brief History Of Parks

Difficult living and working conditions in highly built up areas accompanied by increased alcohol consumption prompted Richard Slaney (MP for Shrewsbury) in 1833 to call for a Select Committee to consider 'open spaces .. as public walks .. to promote the health and comfort of the inhabitants..... public walks would not only promote the health and morality of the people, but would be beneficial to the wealth of the country.' The first municipal park was laid out in Birkenhead by Joseph Paxton in 1845.

Many other public parks were adapted from former private estates acquired by local authorities. Roundhay Park, Temple Newsam Estate and Lotherton Hall Estate are good examples of this in Leeds. The 1930s and 40s saw emphasis on 'fit to fight' and the provision of recreation and sports grounds.

Spatial planning policy in the 1960s contributed to many examples of poorly configured areas of green space that had limited recreational value. During the 1980s and 1990s, Parks, as a non-statutory service, were targeted for cost savings and Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) contracts that only considered grounds maintenance. This meant that resources for parks infrastructure such as buildings, paths and benches were diverted elsewhere. Management activity was focused on implementing the CCT legislation and managing contracts and specifications.



Issues that prompted Richard Slaney to call for more parks are relevant today in many urban areas and particularly within city centres.



Policy in the late 1990's and early 21st Century on affordable housing and the development of city centre living space has resulted in dwellings with little or no gardens. In one sense we have turned full circle and issues that prompted Richard Slaney to call for more parks are relevant today in many urban areas, and particular within city centres.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is at the forefront of organisations championing the improvement of the UK's parks and have committed £250 million through its Urban Parks Programme. This programme to invest in parks is the start of a long journey to rectify the 30 years of steady decline in capital and revenue funding. Leeds has especially benefited from £8.2 million HLF money that was invested into Roundhay Park and £5.5 million into the restoration of Kirkstall Abbey and the Estate. Currently there are planned bids for Beckett's Street Cemetery and Middleton Park.

The Urban Parks Forum conducted a national public parks assessment in 2001, and noted that there were some 27,000 parks covering 143,000 hectares with around £630 million being spent on their upkeep annually. However it noted that there had been dramatic cuts in revenue expenditure, estimated cumulatively at £1.3 billion over a 20 year period to 1999.

Following the final report of the Urban Green Spaces taskforce, 'Green Spaces, Better Places' and the government response in 2002, 'Living Places, Cleaner, Safer, Greener,' CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) Space was established.

Since 2003, CABE Space has been gathering evidence that demonstrates how green spaces can offer lasting economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits. They have also highlighted many issues including the need for workforce development and an increase in skills profiles, the need for site based staff, attitudes to risk, how quality parks can influence behaviour and the need for evidence based performance management. This has seen an increase in the national profile and importance of parks and green space, however, many of the funding issues remain.

National Priorities

National priorities, including those reflected in the Local Government Performance Framework, can be summarised as follows:

Raising standards for all **children and young people** and enabling every child to achieve his or her potential

Creating **healthier communities** where people have healthier lifestyles and where health inequalities for all age groups are reduced

Encouraging **sustainable communities**, that is communities that have the right conditions for increasing employment and wealth and improving the quality, cleanliness and safety of local areas

Developing **safer and stronger communities**

Meeting local **transport** needs more effectively

The objectives of the Vision for Leeds are focussed around 8 themes.

- **Cultural life** - a city with a vibrant and distinctive cultural life
- **Enterprise and the economy** - promoting Leeds as the regional capital
- **Environment city** - a reputation for environmental excellence
- **Harmonious communities** - a rich mix of cultures and communities
- **Health and wellbeing** - creating a healthy city
- **Learning** - a leading centre of learning, knowledge and research
- **A modern transport system** - safe, sustainable and effective transport - meeting people's need to get about while affecting the environment as little as possible
- **Thriving places** - a place of many parts

Local Priorities

The Leeds Initiative is the City's strategic partnership and published the Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020, the Leeds Community Strategy, setting out the following 3 aims:

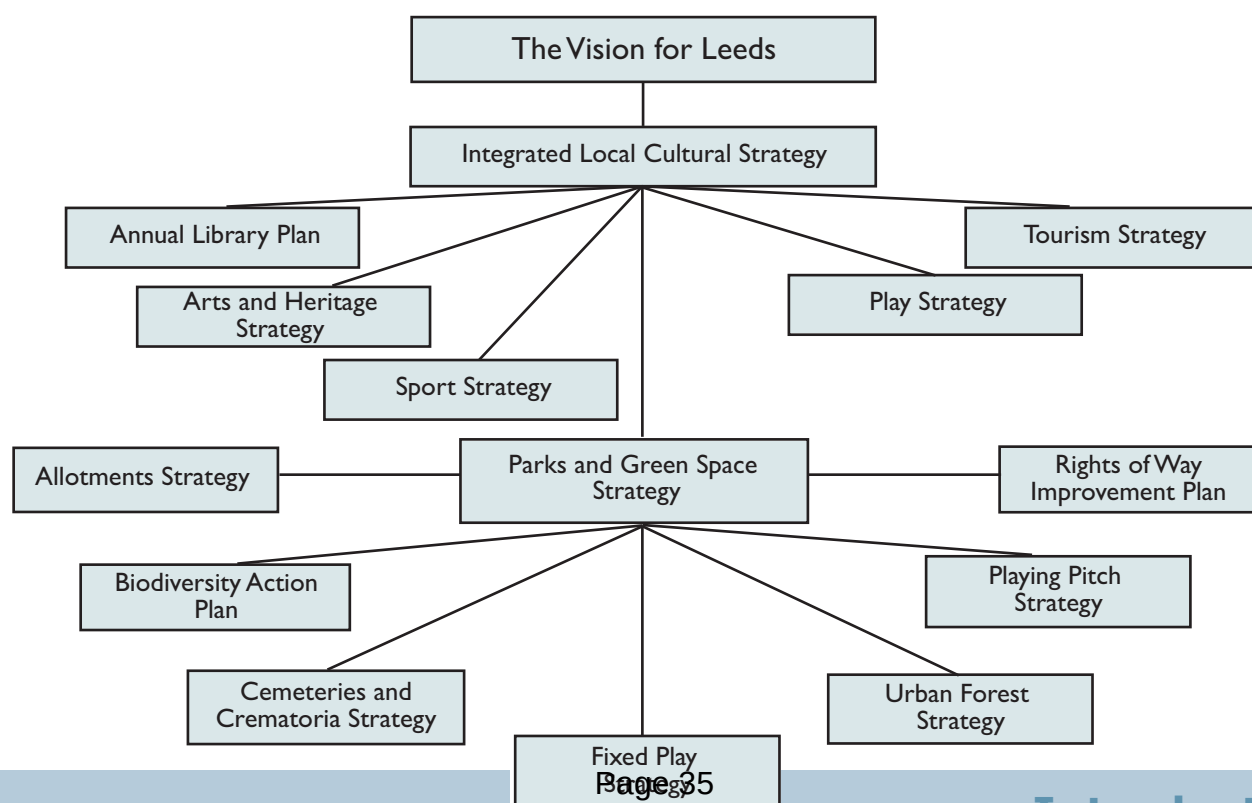
Going up a league as a city - making Leeds an internationally competitive city - the best place in the country to live, work and learn, with a high quality of life for everyone

Narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged people and communities and the rest of the city

Developing Leeds' role as the regional capital - contributing to the national economy as a competitive European city, supporting and supported by a region that is becoming increasingly prosperous

Cultural Strategy Links

The Parks and Green Space Strategy links to the local Cultural Strategy and in turn there are key plans and strategies that are linked to the Parks and Green Space Strategy as illustrated below.





Parks and Green Space: Type, Distribution and Access

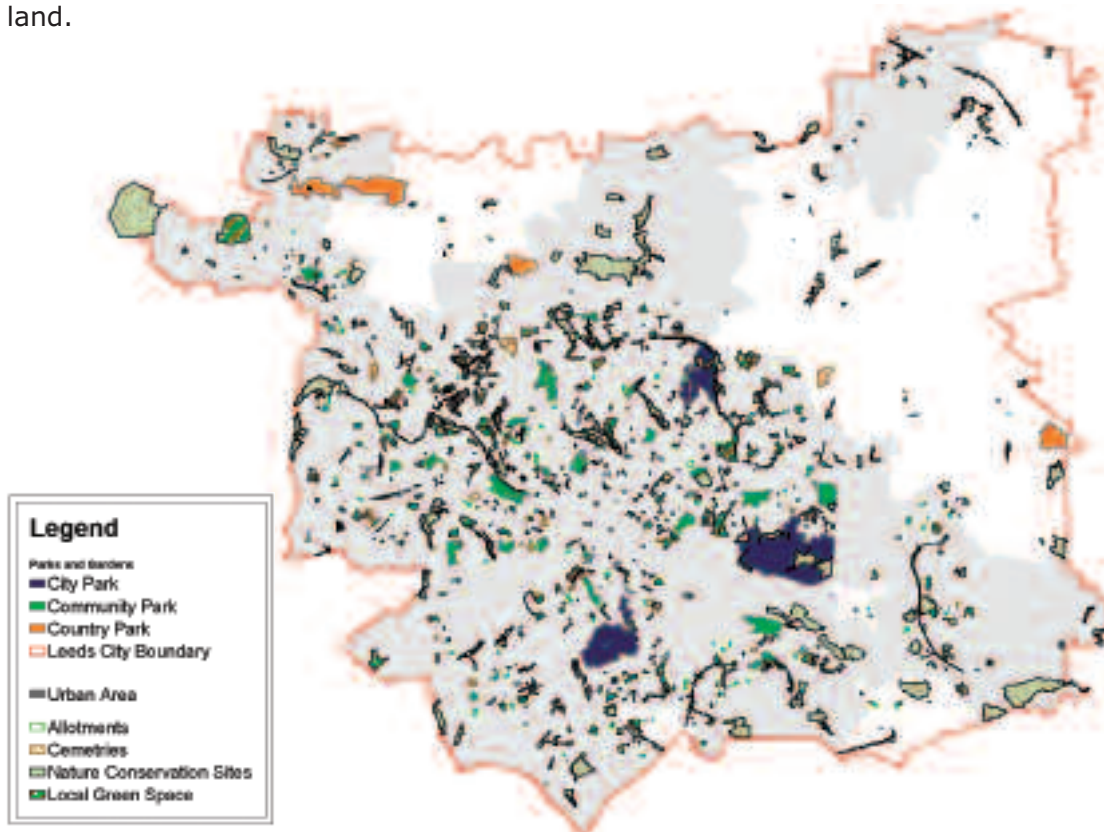
What do we mean by Parks and Green Space?

This Strategy mainly considers land owned by Leeds City Council and which is available for public access, although it does recognise the importance of green belt land as part of the landscape, often accessible via the public rights of way network. Similarly, private gardens can, and do provide areas for relaxation, places for children to play and opportunities for exercise. Appendix 1: Parks and Green Space Typology on page 56 provides a detailed definition and description.

Parks and Green Space Distribution

The diagram below provides an illustration of parks and green space distribution in Leeds.

The analysis and table of figures presented in Appendix 2: Analysis of Parks and Green Space Distribution, relates to publicly managed parks and green space, with the exception of the public rights of way network and some nature conservation sites which may be on private land.





Quality and Accessibility

During the development of the Parks and Green Space Strategy the importance of assessing quality was identified as an issue. The Green Flag Award Scheme represents the national standard for parks and green spaces across England and Wales, and in 2004 the Parks and Countryside Service devised a programme to assess 146 of its sites on a rolling 3 year programme against these standards. This involved a commitment to train over 50 Green Flag judges from within the Service to conduct judging for the award scheme at other Local Authority sites and to use this knowledge and experience to conduct assessments in Leeds' parks.

The Green Flag Award Scheme

The award scheme is primarily focussed on managing and promoting parks and green spaces for the benefit of users and is assessed on the following criteria:

The Green Flag Award Scheme represents the national standard for parks and green spaces across England and Wales

A welcoming place	how to create a sense that people are positively welcomed in the park
Healthy, safe & secure	how best to ensure that the park is a safe & healthy environment for all users
Clean & well maintained	what people can expect in terms of cleanliness, facilities & maintenance
Sustainability	how a park can be managed in environmentally sensitive ways
Conservation & heritage	the value of conservation & care of historical heritage
Community involvement	ways of encouraging community participation and acknowledging the community's role in a parks success
Marketing Management	methods of promoting a park successfully how to reflect all of the above in a coherent & accessible management plan or Strategy and ensure it is implemented

Assessments Using the Green Flag Criteria

The award criteria are applicable to a range of sites, including parks, cemeteries, nature areas and woodland. An audit has been carried out of sites which could be considered appropriate for Green Flag assessment, and a 3 year programme of assessment established against the Green Flag criteria.

The following table summarises parks and green spaces managed by Leeds City Council.

Category	Number
City Park	4
Country Park	3
Community Park	73
Recreation Grounds	91
Local green space	370
Cemeteries, Disused Churchyards & other Burial Grounds	75
Natural and semi-natural green spaces	322

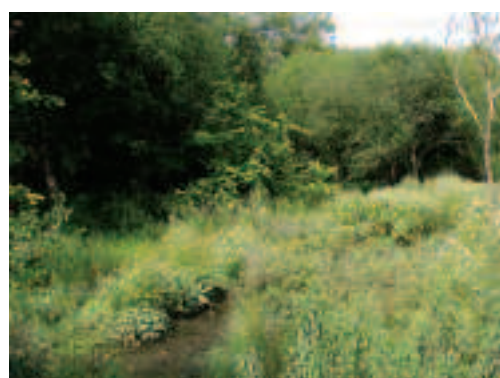
Targets and Results

The % of Parks and Countryside sites assessed that meet the Green Flag Standard:

Year	Target	Result
2004/05	10%	10.8%
2005/06	12%	13.0%
2006/07	14%	15.6%
2007/08	17%	17.0%
2008/09	19%	
2009/10	21%	
2010/11	23%	

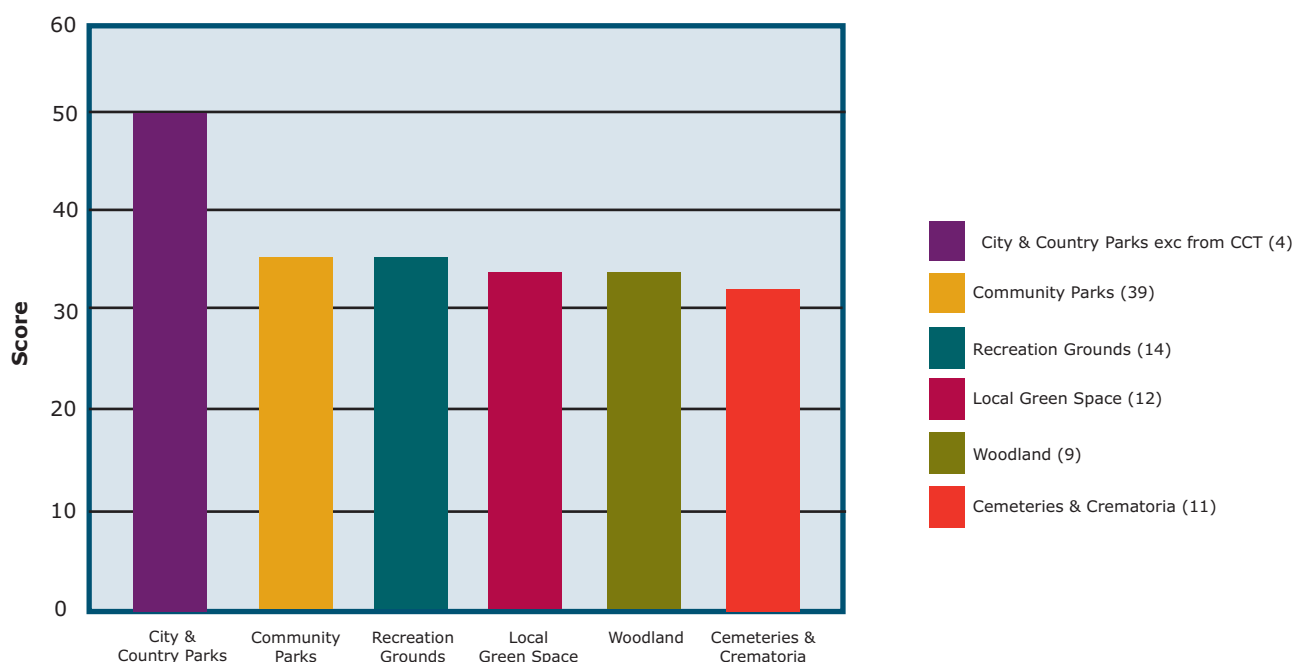
The assessment approach is used as a local performance indicator that is published in the Leeds Local Area Agreement and the above table indicates available targets and results.

The Green Flag Standard recognises good quality, well-managed parks and green space. It should not be regarded as a standard where only a few prestige sites can hope to achieve it. In this context, the results in 2004/05 and 2005/06, whilst exceeding the target, underline the issues prevalent in our parks as the majority of sites fall below the standard. The following analysis therefore considers the Green Flag assessments in more detail.

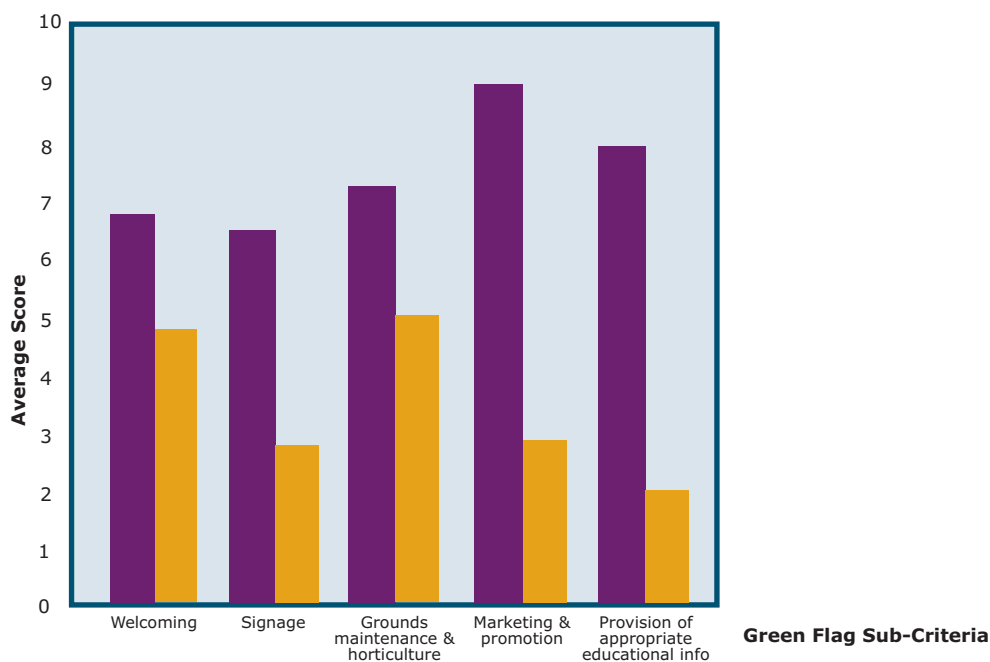


Average Score from 2004 and 2005 Green Flag assessments

This graph using the 2004 and 2005 assessment is particularly interesting in that it not only highlights differences in standard between types of green space, but also shows how major parks, not subject to Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) in the 1980s and 1990s compare to community parks that were part of CCT. In general the major parks achieve the standard (a score of 49), whereas community parks are well below the standard on average. One of the key reasons for this, is that non-CCT parks continued to have on site staff based at them throughout CCT, thus retaining the sense of pride and skills required to sustain standards.



Issues Identified in Community Parks from 2004 and 2005 Green Flag assessments





By looking at some of the Green Flag criteria in more detail, it is possible to illustrate that many of the issues in community parks are concerned with what makes them attractive places to visit, such as being welcoming, signage, marketing and promotion and educational information. These were not normally items which would have been included in Compulsory Competitive Tendering grounds maintenance contracts, and therefore were not capable of having any attention or resources spent on them.

Analysis of Parks and Green Space Catchment and Usage

The Leeds Regeneration Plan 2005 - 2008 identified that around 150,000 people in Leeds (almost 20% of the population) live in areas officially rated as among the most deprived in the country. Many of these are in the inner-city areas, but there are also pockets of deprived neighbourhoods in the outer areas. These areas suffer high levels of unemployment, low income, poor housing, poor health, family breakdown, low educational achievement and high crime rates. A key factor in regenerating these areas will be access to good quality parks and green spaces where there are a range of facilities and activities, which are in a safe environment for all the community.

A survey asking about parks usage was conducted in 2004 and 2005 to 30,000 households, targeting adults and a further 4,500 targeting children and young people. A third survey conducted in 2006 means that around 100,000 households have been surveyed over a 3 year period. The survey asks respondents to identify which park they normally visit, how they get there, and what they think about their local park. This provides valuable information on parks that are the most popular and resident's ideas on how their parks can be improved.

Visits	2005	2004
Use a park	86%	92%
Visit daily	18%	15%
Visit once or twice a week	37%	35%
Time spent 30 mins to 1 hour	42%	42%
Time spent 1 to 2 hours	34%	35%

This table demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of Leeds residents visit a local park during the year, with 55% of respondents in 2005 indicating that they visit daily, or once or twice each week. From the data, most people spend time at the park, rather than passing through as 76% stay from between 30 minutes and 2 hours. If the visit profile above is extrapolated to the Leeds population as a whole, this represents nearly 60 million visits to parks each year.

Based on an average assessment of the 2004 and 2005 surveys, Roundhay Park is the most visited park in Leeds by some margin, followed by Woodhouse Moor then Temple Newsam Estate. Pudsey Park and Horsforth Hall Park in terms of visits actually are more popular than Golden Acre Park. This demonstrates the value of community parks as they are often visited more frequently than City/Country Parks. A table setting out visits is in Appendix 4: Visits to Parks in Leeds on page 61.

Reason to Visit

For adults surveyed the reason to visit is indicated below. This highlights the importance of parks and green spaces to the health, wellbeing and obesity agendas.

Reason to visit	No. of visits	
	2005	2004
To exercise	30.6 million	21.5 million
To contemplate/relax	24.8 million	19.5 million
To take children to play	22.8 million	20.0 million

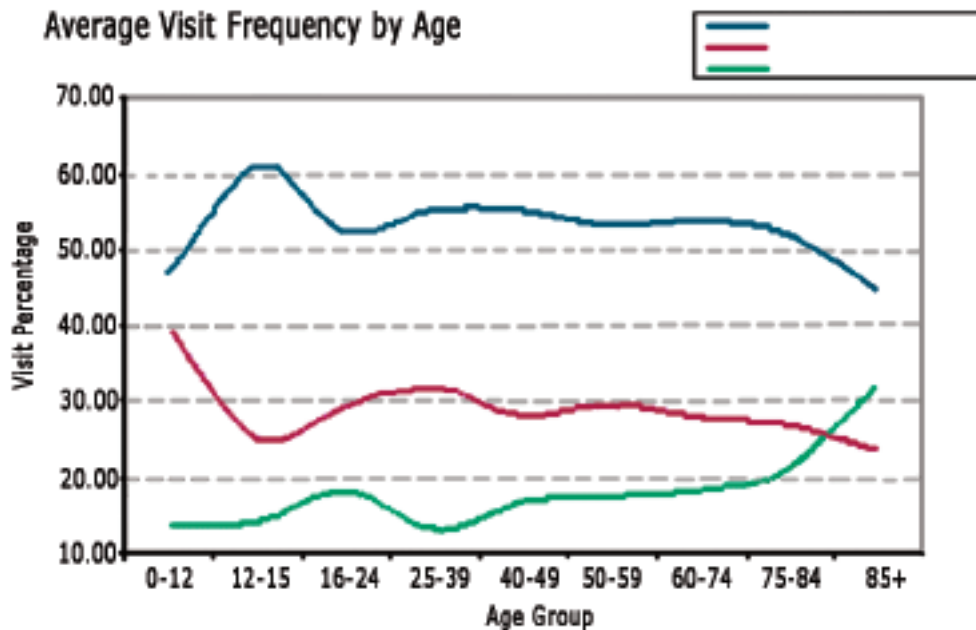
Young people's reasons for visiting parks and green spaces

Young people, aged 12 to 17 mainly visit for the following reasons.

Reason to visit	No. of visits	
	2005	2004
To exercise	2.9 million	1.3 million
Play sport/games	2.6 million	2.1 million
Meet friends	2.5 million	2.2 million



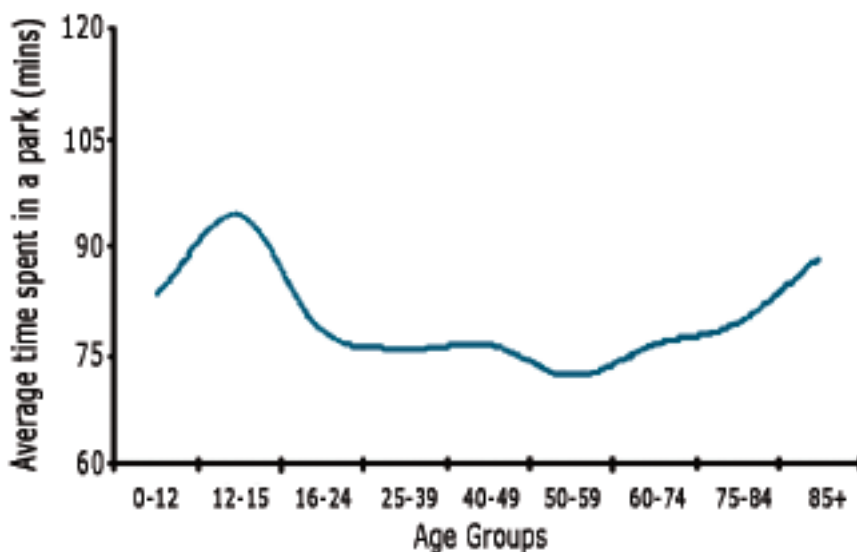
Age Profile of Visitors



On closer examination by age, a greater percentage of 12-15 year olds visit the park more regularly than in any other age group. There is a dip in visit frequency for the 16-24 age group before a fairly consistent visit profile until people reach 75 years and older.

Duration of Visit

Average Time spent in a park

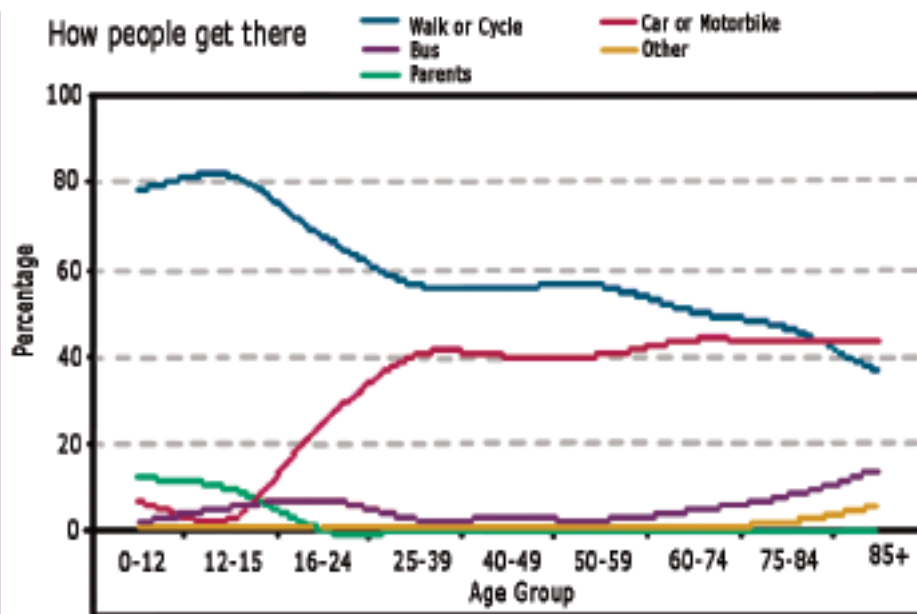
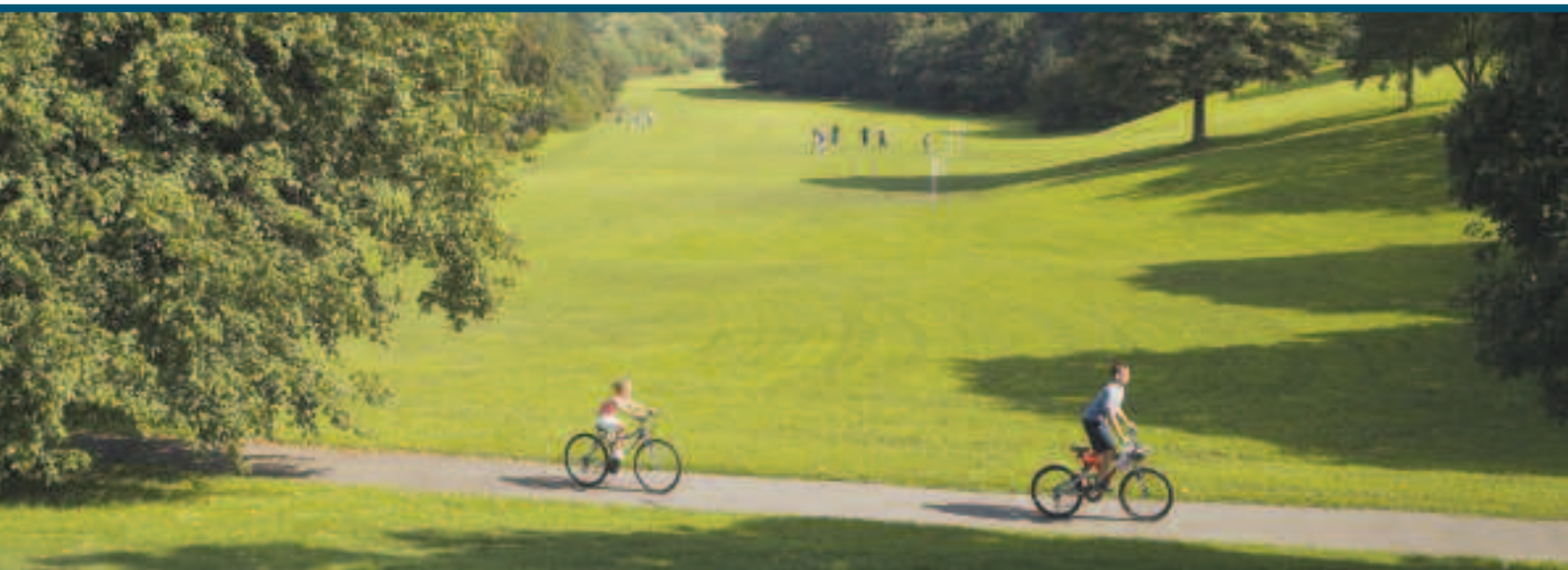


People in the 12-15 age bracket spend most time at the park when they visit. There is a steady decline in time spent when visiting as people get older, particularly noticeable in the 50-59 age bracket. It is however interesting to note that the time spent when a visit takes place increases as people reach old age, particularly from 75 years and older.

How People Get There

Transport method	2005	2004
Walk	54%	53%
Car	38%	43%
Bus	4%	4%
Cycle	3%	3%

This table demonstrates that well over half of people either walk or cycle to the park they normally visit.



Whilst it may not be a surprise that a higher proportion of young people get there by walking or cycling, it is interesting to note that from around age 50, the proportion of older people who choose to walk starts to decline quite rapidly.

Ethnicity

The resident surveys enabled respondents to indicate ethnic origin and some analysis was conducted. Whilst a higher proportion of certain ethnic groups visit certain parks, the issues identified are universal regardless of ethnicity.

Assessment of Need Against Provision

The asset register of publicly accessible land for recreation and conservation along with the resident surveys and Green Flag assessments make an important contribution to the assessment of need against provision. Once completed the PPG 17 audit and needs assessment, will provide a comprehensive parks and green space map of the city, including a quality assessment based on the Green Flag Standard, and consultation results that demonstrate the value to the local community. This process will also reveal areas of deficiency where quality green space is not accessible, as well as being used to inform planning policy.

Whilst a higher proportion of certain ethnic groups visit certain parks, the issues identified are universal regardless of ethnicity.

The map below illustrates access to parks and green spaces in the catchment area of the lowest 10% of deprived areas.



Consultation - What you told us

In 2003 'Towards a Parks and Green Space Strategy' was published. This was a consultation document which set out the main issues in relation to parks and green spaces within the Leeds metropolitan boundary. The purpose of this document was to determine whether the right issues were identified, whether there were other issues which needed to be included and what thoughts people had on how these issues should be addressed.

In May 2004 a consultation event was held at The Venue (Leeds College of Music) to allow stakeholders / partners to further discuss their thoughts on issues facing the parks and green spaces of Leeds. There was an opportunity to listen to the speakers and to participate in a question and answer session with the panel.

Over the summer of 2004, a series of focus group sessions were held with various groups where contact through other means was limited. These included 'friends of' groups, environmental groups, sports groups, black, minority and ethnic groups, women's groups and disabled groups.

In 2005 the results from the above consultation were used in a series of stakeholder workshops which focused around each of the five emerging themes:

- **Places for People**
- **Quality Places**
- **Sustaining the Green Realm**
- **Creating a Healthier City**
- **Supporting Regeneration**



The purpose of these sessions was to look at the emerging objectives to be addressed in the Strategy and to identify specific actions to achieve them. After this extensive consultation, work began on writing the Strategy and when the five themes had been developed, further stakeholder workshops were held in 2006 to look at each of the themes individually. This process was building on the workshops held the previous summer, as well as looking at developing the action plan which would act as a delivery tool for the Strategy.

Following on from the launch of the draft Parks and Green Space Strategy for Leeds in December 2006, a seminar was held at the Town Hall in February 2007 to discuss the priorities and the five emerging themes set out in the Strategy (see appendix 1 for summary of the discussion).

The development of the Strategy has also been informed by the residents survey sent to adults, young people and children which over three years has reached 103,000 people. The analysis of the results has given an extensive picture of what Leeds residents think of their local parks and green spaces and has already been used as an evidence base to access funding and target improvements.

What you like about parks

Our City Parks and Country Parks are well liked. They are clean, with a good range of facilities, horticultural features and good levels of information and are well signed. Some comments that were made during consultation include:

"All aspects of Temple Newsam create a gem of an open space - I could not live in the area if I couldn't escape the urban sprawl so easily."

"Golden Acre is a quite outstanding park, and obviously highly valued, both by local residents and those from further afield."

This comment sums up the overall picture across Leeds with the main issues to be addressed on infrastructure in some Community Parks, Recreation Grounds and Local Green Space.

"Large parks and open spaces are generally very good. Local facilities 'badly' need attention"

What you don't like about parks

Toilet facilities need to be better, information and signage need improving, the quality of facilities overall needs to be improved and there are issues over control of dogs and dog fouling. A comment during consultation:

"Generally local parks are of good standards, and we use many of them. Unfortunately, the toilet facilities are not good in many of them, and small children often need them. The only other problem sometimes found is the amount of dog mess."



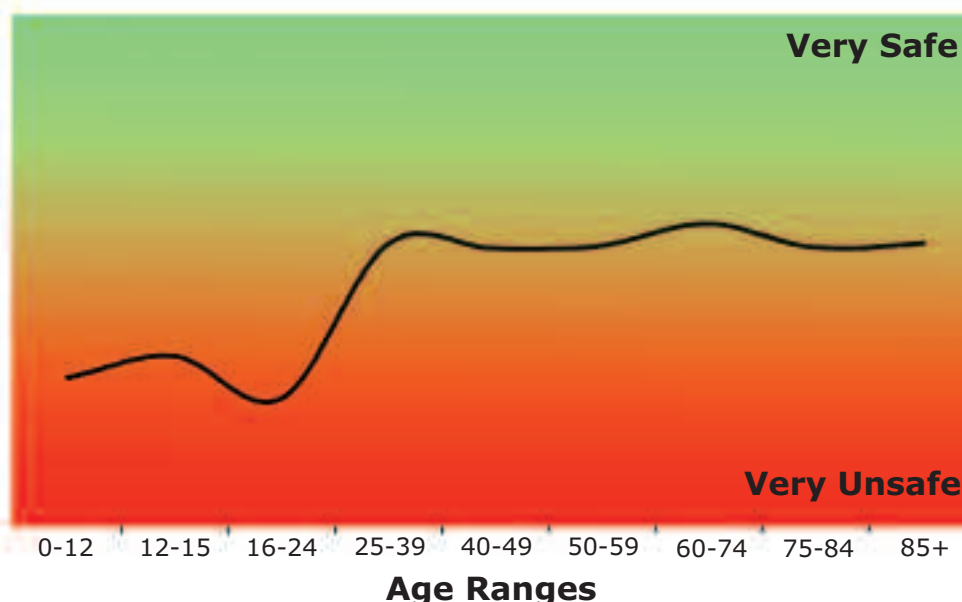
There were also many comments made about parks needing more of a staff presence on site, which would not only make park users feel reassured, but such resources could deal with day to day issues that occur such as graffiti, broken glass and litter. The need for investment, particularly in community parks is also clear where paths, fences, benches and shrubs are in need of replacement.

Do you feel safe?

	Adults		Young People	
	2005	2004	2005	2004
Very safe, Safe or Never thought about it	83%	81%	76%	68%
Unsafe or Very unsafe	17%	19%	24%	32%

The data highlighted in this table indicates that over 80% of adults who visit a park or green space do not regard safety as an issue. However, there remains an issue with those who do indicate they feel 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe.' Perhaps it is more significant that more young people feel 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe,' although the data in 2005 reveals fewer people than in 2004 feel this way. The main reason stated is often fear of intimidation from other youths.

Perception of Safety in Parks



The above graph illustrates the issue in relation to age. In the age groups 12-15 the most common reason stated for feeling unsafe was lighting, albeit by 8% of the group. In the 16-24 age group the most common reason for the lowest safety perception was stated as 'gangs', stated by 54% of this group.

The data indicates that over 80% of adults who visit a park or green space do not regard safety as an issue.



Why you don't go at all

Although most people who responded said they did visit a park or green space, there were some people who stated they didn't. There were various reasons given for why people didn't visit, which are outlined below. These figures are based on 400 responses to the 2004 survey.

- **Feel unsafe (nearly 25% of reasons given)**
- **Too far away (over 20%)**
- **No time (nearly 16%)**
- **Don't have children or dogs (nearly 11%)**
- **Cleanliness, unattractive or unsuitable (nearly 9%)**
- **Dog control / mess (nearly 6%)**

This comment sums up what a lot of people feel about safety:

"I am afraid to use any park alone while I am alone. It is some years since I walked through the park and felt intimidated by groups congregating there - no doubt they were harmless, but I felt uneasy."

Access to suitable parks or green space remains an issue, particularly locating something suitable within walking distance.

Overall, many people who don't use parks are older - more than 40% are over 60.

Young People

In terms of satisfaction ratings, 'toilets' scored the lowest followed by 'facilities,' 'disabled facilities,' 'lighting,' and 'signage'. In general ratings are higher for 'city' and 'country' parks, with real issues identified in community parks, recreation grounds and local green space.

Other facilities or services young people would like

This table summarises responses young people volunteered to a question 'What other facilities or services would you like to see in your park or open space specific to your needs?'

Facilities/Services	Percentage
Toilets	43%
Sports pitches, kickabout areas	20%
Skateparks	14%
Cycling facilities	7%
Tennis	7%
Basketball	5%





Perhaps the question may have contributed to the responses, but 'toilets' were the most popular choice. It is worth noting that over 23% of young people indicate that the length of time visited is over 2 hours. Many of the other facilities indicated are in line with the City Council's Fixed Play Strategy which recognised the need for more facilities for young people. Since the Strategy was developed we have built 18 skate parks and 25 teen zones in Leeds.

When asked about joining the 'Friends of the Park' scheme 47% of the 617 respondents in 2004 stated they would be interested in joining a group.



Children

We sent surveys to 2,500 children aged 5 to 11 and almost 50% responded. Results from the 2005 survey:

- **Over half thought the park they visit looks 'good', with only 7% thinking it looks bad**
- **42% thought play equipment was 'good' with 15% bad**
- **Just over a third thought safety was 'good', with over 16% thinking it was 'bad'**

Although the vast majority of children stated that they did visit a park, around 3% stated they didn't, with the main reasons as follows:

- **Cleanliness/Vandalism**
- **Too far away**
- **Unsafe**





Older People

As a direct result of comments received during the consultation period for the draft version of this document a focus group session was held with the Older People's Reference Group. The main requirements highlighted by this group in relation to parks and green spaces are:

- **site based gardeners (as staff presence acts as a deterrent to vandals)**
- **better access for older and disabled people**
- **more recreational facilities for older people (these currently target the young)**
- **more comfortable seating for older people**
- **clean accessible toilet facilities.**
- **more litter bins including those used for dog waste**
- **more notices by entrances to parks.**
- **better transport links and support to get to local parks as well as the main parks such as Roundhay Park**
- **better advertising of big events such as summer music festivals**
- **protection of smaller green spaces, including cemeteries. more green space in the city centre**



Challenges

The strategy has involved many stakeholders in a number of events along with a wide reaching resident survey and assessment against the Green Flag standard. The themes themselves are suggestive of the key challenges faced and the following section sets this out in more detail.

1. Places for People

Putting people first. This about telling people what is on offer and that in many cases it is free, and also about looking at quality facilities that enhance visitor experience, and where there is a cost, to provide value for money. Fundamentally it is about marketing parks and green spaces more effectively. The lack of staff presence in many parks also remains a problem.

2. Quality Places

Improving the condition of parks and green spaces. This is particularly true of community parks, which receive a large number of visits from local people. Areas of concern relate to features that make a park or green space worthwhile to visit. The decline in horticultural skills has been identified as a national issue and this is also true in Leeds.

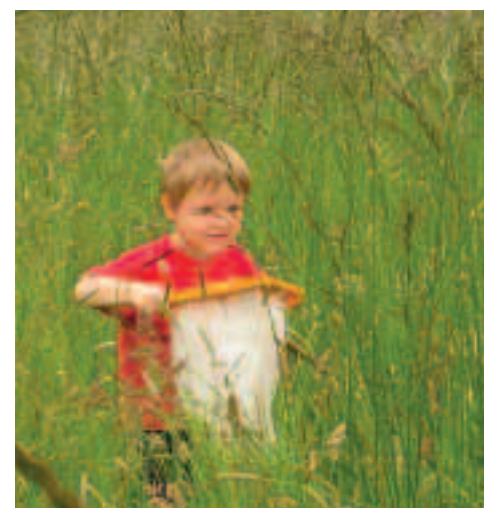
3. Sustaining the Green Realm

Access to quality green space. This is a particular issue in areas of deprivation where often there is a lack of quantity as well as quality, for which a green space audit and needs assessment will provide further information. Access to burial space is also an issue which needs a long term resolution.

The importance of parks and green space in adapting to climate change. With hotter summers and more frequent extreme weather events predicted, parks and green space can play an important role in adapting to climate change and reducing the effects of surface water run-off, particularly in dense urban environments.

4. Creating a Healthier City

People need to be more healthy. Parks and green spaces provide opportunity for freely accessible physical activity, primarily walking, that have proven benefits to health. Parks and green space should be at the forefront of thinking to introduce people to physical activity of a broad nature from participation in formal sport to informal recreation.





5. An Enabler for Regeneration

Increasing the quantity of parks and green space in the City Centre. Despite the huge investment by developers in the city centre, the amount and quality of green space has not kept pace. This is a particular challenge given that many of the dwellings do not have gardens and therefore access to green space should be addressed to ensure the sustainability and attractiveness of city centre living for a diverse range of prospective residents, visitors and workers.

Increasing the quality and where necessary, quantity of parks and green space in regeneration areas. These include West Leeds Gateway (of which West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways initiative encompasses this), EASEL, Aire Valley, Beeston Hill and Holbeck.



Introduction to Parks and Green Space Strategy Themes

Six key themes have emerged during the process to provide a context and describe the importance of parks and green spaces to our communities. Each theme considers how issues can be addressed by setting clear objectives and desired outcomes. Principally, the themes provide a framework for an action plan setting out how key partners and stakeholders can help implement the Strategy.

The themes are as follows:

1. **Places for People**
2. **Quality Places**
3. **Sustaining the Green Realm**
4. **Creating a Healthier City**
5. **Supporting Regeneration**
6. **Delivering the Strategy**

Where relevant, links to the Green Flag Standard are made to highlight how the Strategy addresses these criteria.

The key proposals around the 6 themes form a framework for the action plan which indicates actions and timescale.





Theme 1. Places for people



Theme 1 Places for People

The aim of this theme is: To engage the community in promoting parks and green spaces as accessible places for everyone to experience and enjoy

- 1.1** Parks and green spaces are places for people. For people to visit, to relax in, for recreation, and for the community to come together for events and activities.
- 1.2** The assessments carried out against the Green Flag Standard thus far have revealed issues with regard to visitor experience, particularly at community parks. These include signage, the provision of interpretative and educational information, along with well maintained paths and benches, and clear sightlines, which is a key issue in accessing parks and green spaces. The household survey also revealed some issues about factors influencing visitor experience. The comments below, which were provided in response to the household survey illustrate some of the issues.

"More information and signage is needed. Our parks need to be cleaner, have more toilets, and have good places to eat."

"Paths need repairing, better seating, bins and a new café; they need to look good to give pleasure to the public."

Proposal 1: We will consult with the community to ensure our parks and green spaces have appropriate information and facilities that make them good places to visit

- 1.3** It is important that as our parks and green space develop and improve, and provide a richer visitor experience, that people are made aware of what is on offer and do not base their



Links to the Green Flag Standard

A Welcoming Place

The overall impression for any member of the community approaching and entering the park or green space should be positive and inviting, regardless of the purpose for which they are visiting.

Healthy, Safe and Secure

The park or green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Relevant issues must be addressed in management plans and implemented on the ground. New issues that arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately

Clean and Well Maintained

For aesthetic as well as Health and Safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed

Community Involvement

Management should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community who represent as many park or green space user groups as possible.

Marketing

A marketing Strategy in place, in practice and regularly reviewed, as well as good provision of information to users about management strategies, activities, features and ways to get involved. The park or green space should be promoted as a community resource.



Theme 1. Places for people

understanding on past perceptions. Marketing is therefore a key element of successful implementation of this Strategy.

- 1.4** Use of the internet is increasing. In October 2000, 40% of adults had accessed the internet in the previous 3 months, by October 2005 this was 65% of adults. Implementing electronic government (IEG) is a national priority, and providing information and access to booking and payments on-line is likely to become increasingly important for parks and green space users during the life of this Strategy.

Proposal 2: We will aim to increase awareness and provide information and opportunities to access services

- 1.5** Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act means that each local authority should take account of the community safety dimension in all of its work. The Council has developed the 'ParksWatch' service whereby staff on patrol monitor the activities of visitors as well as working with the Leeds Community Safety partnership (including the Police) on a number of operations. The number of site based gardeners has increased. A number of facilities have been developed for young people which act as diversionary activities.

Proposal 3: We will work with partners in developing facilities and action to promote community safety in our parks and green spaces

- 1.6** Parks and green spaces can provide a valuable resource for education, covering many subjects for all ages and abilities. They can provide outdoor classrooms for schools, colleges and universities and opportunities for work-based training.

Proposal 4: We will promote parks and green space as places for education and learning

- 1.7** Parks and green spaces are increasingly being recognised as spaces for events and activities. This can vary from large events such as 'Party in the Park' attracting 60,000 visitors, to small events organised by the community. During 2005, 600 events and activities took place in Leeds parks and green spaces, providing the opportunity to build stronger, more cohesive communities. It should also be recognised that some parks in Leeds represent regional tourism destinations, and therefore marketing should consider the opportunities that they bring in the context of both the Cultural and Tourism Strategies.
- 1.8** The importance of managing events and activities is also important to ensure public safety and compliance with licensing regulations. As well as the opportunities and benefits that events and activities bring, there are also challenges to





Theme 1. Places for people

ensure that parks and green spaces have staff available at weekends and therefore, traditional working patterns and practices need to be reviewed. An example of where the Parks and Countryside Service has adapted to develop a visitor services function is at Roundhay Park.

Proposal 5: We will promote and support well managed events and activities

Proposal 6: We will promote City and Country parks as visitor attractions, attracting people to Leeds as a place to visit, live, work and do business

Theme 1 example (a) Roundhay Park

In the past, the management emphasis at Roundhay Park was primarily directed towards the maintenance of the physical assets. The introduction of the visitor and retail function has seen the development of educational initiatives, retail opportunities, and event management, giving a much more holistic approach to the advancement of the visitor experience.

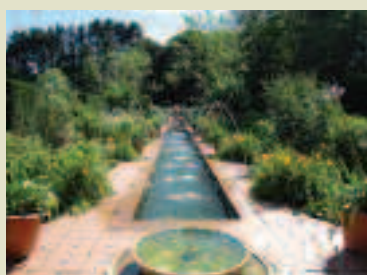


A Visitor and Retail Manager leads a team of staff dedicated to making each and every visit to Roundhay Park an enjoyable and enriching experience. The Visitor Manager works closely with schools to deliver high class educational projects for visiting school parties, alongside a comprehensive programme of educational activities targeted at all sections of the community. Improved accessibility is also a key theme and the introduction of free mobility scooters has greatly increased access to the park. Communication and information has improved dramatically with the introduction of leaflets, new signage and regular engagement with local groups. The development of a dedicated visitor centre in 2007 will further enhance this function.

Retail opportunities have been actively pursued including the provision of improved catering facilities and the development of better public facilities, both directly delivered and in conjunction with partners from the private sector. Examples include the introduction of a road train to move people around the park and improvements to Lakeside Café.

Safety and security is another key theme and the introduction of a park ranger service has been a great success. The park is now staffed from early morning to dusk, 365 days per year, with publicised phone contacts on all park signage to ensure easy access to this service.

Event management has been developed to ensure Roundhay Park is a safe and welcoming environment for a full range of both community and commercial events ranging from sponsored walks through to major pop concerts. The Visitor and Retail Team take a very pro-active role in ensuring each and every event is well organised and well run.





Theme 1. Places for people

- 1.9** Two key national priorities have already been highlighted, namely developing safer and stronger communities and encouraging sustainable communities. Local parks and green space are vital in achieving these priorities. Community engagement is vital because it is important to understand the needs of the community and to aspire to match that with provision. It is also important because of the opportunities for the community to get involved in contributing to the development of their local green space.
- 1.10** People need to get involved - whether in a voluntary capacity or as part of a local 'friends of' group. We learned from the household surveys that 26% of adults in 2004 indicated that they would consider becoming a member of a 'friends of' group representing 119 sites, and in 2005 this was again 26% (over 1,300 people) representing 142 sites. The majority of people interested (53%) were aged 25-49, with 12% aged 18 - 24 with the remaining 35% aged 50 or over. There was also considerable interest shown by young people in becoming a 'friends of' member - from the 2004 survey, nearly 47% expressed an interest in representing 87 sites. The participation of 'friends of' groups and volunteers is vital as can be shown by the fact that countryside rangers and tree wardens are working with 63 Groups making up a total of 871 volunteers working 4,396 volunteer days within the Parks and Countryside Service each year.
- 1.11** It is important that 'friends of' groups are properly constituted, and promote mutual respect between parks and green space professionals who have overall management responsibility, and members of each group. Often groups are formed in response to specific issues and then they develop into working in partnership to deliver improvements. There are many opportunities for volunteers to undertake projects or deal with some of the basic problems, but this cannot replace the role of the management function to ensure maintenance standards and that health and safety considerations are upheld.
- 1.12** There are organisations actively involved in caring for the environment with education and community involvement being key elements in their work. Many of these organisations actively utilise volunteers and also receive grant aid to support this work. They include Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) (Fairburn Ings), Middleton Equestrian Centre and British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). A more detailed description is provided in Appendix 3: Organisations that receive grant aid from Leeds City Council on page 60.



Proposal 7: We will guide and influence public agencies, private landowners and community groups to work within the parameters of the Parks and Green Space Strategy



Theme 1 example (b)

Springfield Park

SPRINGFIELD PLACE

SPRINGFIELD ROAD

SPRINGFIELD AVENUE

PRESENT BERBERIS HEDGE
ENHANCED WITH
IVY, SMOKE
AND HOLLY

WILDFLOWER MEADOW
1st YEAR CORNFIELD
ANNUALS
2nd YEAR CLOVER, DAISY
KNAPWEED

WET MEADOW
PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE
MEADOWSWEET
RAGGED ROBIN
LADY'S SMOCK

HEDGE ENHANCEMENTS
INCREASE SPECIES DIVERSITY
BY PLANTING:
CRABAPPLE, HAZEL, FIELD MAPLE

BULB PLANTING
ALONG WEST EDGE

PICNIC TABLES / SEATING

PATH
APPROX 1.2m WIDE
SURFACED

INTERPRETATION
SCULPTURES / INFORMATION
BOARDS AT ENTRANCES

Springhead Mills

SPRINGFIELD PARK
TO LEISURE CENTRE

Page 56



Theme 1. Places for people

- 1.14** The rewards are expressed very well in the following extract from correspondence from a Morley resident:

I thought I would take the time to write to you, thanking you for the beautiful park in Morley. I can remember times as a young boy before I started school, sitting on the park benches with my grandmother, in glorious sunshine looking at all the immaculately tendered flower beds, the fresh green grass, the trees, and other people sitting on the grass with picnics. They are fantastic memories. I never thought I would see the parks looking so splendid again, that is, until recently.

I feel that my children will now have those memories, as I take them through the park, and sit with them on the same bench as my grandmother did with me. I feel so proud when work colleagues comment on how they have recently been to Morley and can't believe how nice the parks are, right in the centre of town. I just wanted to make sure that the people who have worked so hard to create the parks, know that their efforts are greatly appreciated. You are a credit to Leeds, and I want you to know, that if some mindless yob throws litter on the grass, or someone lets their dog foul the area, most of us are as annoyed as yourselves, so please don't lose patience.

Thank you all very much for what you have done to our town, you should be very proud at what you have helped to create.



Summary of Proposals for Theme 1: Places for People

Strategic aim: To engage the community in promoting parks and green spaces as accessible places for everyone to experience and enjoy

- 1** We will consult with the community to ensure our parks and green spaces have appropriate information and facilities that make them good places to visit
- 2** We will aim to increase awareness and provide information and opportunities to access services
- 3** We will work with partners in developing facilities and action to promote community safety in our parks and green spaces
- 4** We will promote parks and green space as places for education and learning
- 5** We will promote and support well managed events and activities
- 6** We will promote City and Country parks as visitor attractions, attracting people to Leeds as a place to visit, live, work and do business
- 7** We will guide and influence public agencies, private landowners and community groups to work within the parameters of the Parks and Green Space Strategy
- 8** We will engage with communities and encourage and enable people to get involved in developing our parks and green space



Theme 2 Quality Places

The aim of this theme is: To provide good quality parks and green spaces that are well managed and provide a range of attractive facilities

- 2.1** Delivering quality is not only about dealing with day to day issues, but is also about the long term improvement and development of the quality of parks and green spaces through a sustained programme of capital investment. Providing a quality service also requires a workforce that has the range of skills to meet the changing needs of users, and for Community Parks this includes site based gardeners. The management of parks and green spaces is about both long term and day to day management of resources and operations to deliver quality places for people to use.
- 2.2** Like most other Parks authorities one of our key issues is the need for capital investment and sustained revenue funding. The Best Value Review of the Parks and Countryside Service in December 2001 explored comparisons between Leeds and Core Cities¹ in terms of the direct cost of maintenance of Community Parks. The comparison showed that the average spend per hectare for Leeds was £1,874 compared to a mean of the other Core Cities of £6,500. On this basis, extrapolating the Service's net revenue budget of approximately £15million would mean that in order to fall in line with the average for the Core Cities the net budget would need to be £53.5million.
- 2.3** In Leeds, before Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) in 1988, there were around 1,000 frontline staff in the Parks and Countryside Service doing many skilled and traditional gardening jobs. The CCT era from 1988 to 1998 saw a reduction in the number of skilled staff to around 370. The impact in financial terms of this reduction is around £11million annually in staff costs alone.



Links to the Green Flag Standard

Healthy, Safe and Secure

The park or green space must be a healthy, safe and secure place for all members of the community to use. Relevant issues must be addressed in management plans and implemented on the ground. New issues that arise must be addressed promptly and appropriately

Clean and Well Maintained

For aesthetic as well as Health and Safety reasons, issues of cleanliness and maintenance must be adequately addressed

Management

A management plan or strategy in place which reflects the aspirations of Local Agenda 21 and clearly and adequately addresses all relevant aspects of the park or green space's management. The plan must be actively implemented and regularly reviewed. Financially sound management of the park or green space must also be demonstrated.

Proposal 9: We will develop an investment strategy to maximise opportunity for sustained investment in our parks and green space

- 2.4** There are particular issues with regard to the provision and maintenance of bowling greens and facilities. These include distribution and usage of facilities, access to bowling greens and facilities, quality of facilities, management arrangements and the level of subsidy.

Proposal 10: We will develop an outdoor bowls strategy to seek ways to promote and manage bowls facilities in a sustainable way

- 2.5** Badly designed, neglected areas of green space can often become a target for anti-social behaviour, concerns over safety, and a spiral of decline. However, research by CABE Space2 has highlighted that good quality design and management can transform areas into popular community spaces. Some of the issues of anti-social behaviour are still apparent in parks and green spaces in Leeds. One comment sums up the feelings of many people in the 2005 survey:

“Due to the increase in vandalism over the years and the lack of park wardens parks have become no go areas for young women, toddlers and pensioners. They have been taken over by thugs, vandals and druggies.”

- 2.6** The above comment is fairly typical. Many people who visit parks feel that these areas are neglected, and because of the lack of site based staff, issues such as dealing with litter, graffiti and vandalism do not get attended to straight away. This in turn can lead to an escalation of anti-social behaviour and creating areas where people do not feel safe to go. The CABE Space 'Parkforce' campaign which commenced in 2005 aims to see on-site staff caring for every significant English urban park during daylight hours.

- 2.7** Leeds was one of the first authorities to back the Parkforce campaign and the Service is pursuing funding for on site gardeners. Following the Parkforce campaign, there are 32 gardeners in place at 36 sites. There are also 21 sites that have been identified that need a gardener. Appendix 5: Site based gardeners on page 62 provides more information.

Proposal 11: We will aspire to a site based gardener at all our community parks to improve quality and promote a greater feeling of safety



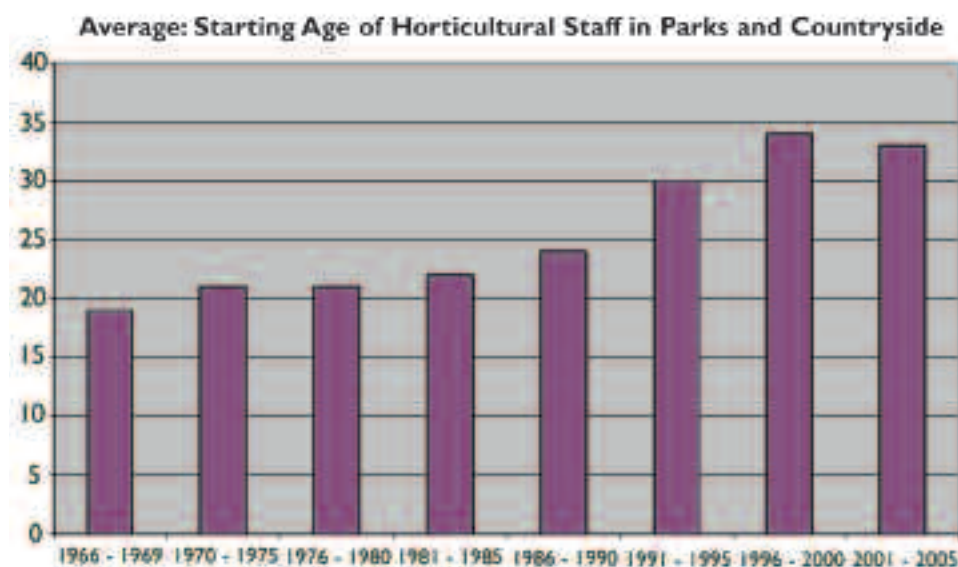


Theme 2. Quality Places

- 2.8** So, what does the current workforce profile look like? This table profiles age of horticultural staff assessed in September 2006.

Age Group	Percentage
19 or under	1.2%
20-29	14.5%
30-39	20.9%
40-49	32.7%
50-59	22.9%
60+	7.8%

- 2.9** Nearly two-thirds of staff are over the age of 40, with only 1.2% of staff aged 19 or under and 15.7% of staff up to the age of 29. This is in partly due to the fact that since 1980 the age of new starters has risen considerably as illustrated in the graph below.



- 2.10** The loss of key 'green' skills is not unique to Leeds, and organisations like CABI Space, the Royal Horticultural Society and Green Space are also highlighting these issues on the national stage. A number of initiatives are already underway and for Leeds this will mean attracting more people to consider a career relating to parks and green space, or for our existing staff to improve their skills. In association with regional colleges offering courses in horticulture and environment, an initiative to attract people who have changed career and now wish to work in horticulture is underway and this will provide an opportunity to experience working in public parks and green spaces. A further project with Park Lane College is underway to enable existing staff within the Parks and Countryside Service to improve their skills, by offering a range of educational courses from Level 2 to Foundation Degree. The Service is also working in partnership with education colleagues on the following project.

A number of initiatives are already underway and for Leeds this will mean attracting more people to consider a career relating to parks and green space.

Proposal 12: We will seek to enable people equipped with the skills and training to lead and manage the implementation of the Parks and Green Space Strategy

Theme 2, example (a) Kinaesthetic Learning Project

Kinaesthetic means learning through hands on experience, rather than more traditional school lessons and enables those who may marginally underachieve to maximise their potential and to re-engage with education. Following the Tomlinson report, the Government has recognised the need to maximise this potential in young people, especially with those who do not learn well in the classroom environment. The Government intends that this recognition will result in all school children being offered the opportunity of taking a vocational diploma course from 2013; however in Leeds, due to the partnership between the Parks and Countryside Service and South Leeds City Learning Centre, with Joseph Priestley College and partner schools, this opportunity has already been provided for schools in the South Leeds schools partnership. It is planned that this experience will be used to inform and develop the city-wide provision anticipated in 2009.



The current model employs the two-year route as previously reported and enables young (14 year old) kinaesthetic learners to achieve either an Edexcel Level Two BTEC First Certificate or Diploma in Countryside and Environment or Horticulture. These awards are the equivalent of either 2 or 4 GCSEs at Grade A-C respectively. The model is now in place and running successfully with 26 learners who carry out practical work within the Service whilst also undertaking theoretical learning within a Virtual Learning Environment. In the first year students spend 1 day a week based at Temple Newsam Park and the second year of the course is based at Middleton Park. At these sites they learn from carrying out a range of horticultural related tasks as well as engaging in a development of their academic knowledge of the environment.

2.11 Within the Parks and Countryside Service there are also issues with regard to representation of women, black and minority ethnic and disabled employees as the following table illustrates.

Employee Type	Percentage
Female	14.15
Black and minority ethnic	1.7%
Disabled	5.0%

2.12 Some of the barriers to employment within the Parks and Countryside Service include the perception that the job is about handling large machinery. Working hours could also be a barrier, for example early start times, which may not fit in with work / life balance or family and domestic responsibilities. Also in some cultures, gardening is seen as a menial manual job with no career prospects. There are of course a whole range of employment opportunities within the Service that need promoting as positive career options.



Theme 2. Quality Places

2.13 The Service has been working with partners from horticultural and green space organisations to discuss the key challenges relating to parks and green space with the objective of raising the profile of the Service nationally whilst also increasing local awareness of both the Service and the career opportunities available.

Activities include:

- Chelsea Garden 2004 and 2006 - both projects sought to promote local authority horticulture and green skills receiving sponsorship from local developers.
- Award finalists in 2006 for three Horticulture Week awards and the CABESpace Parkforce Awards.

2.14 There is a commitment by national government to increase the quality of parks and green spaces via the Public Service Agreement (PSA) process. The liveability section of PSA8 states that 'by the end of 2008, to increase to 60% the proportion of local authority districts with at least one park or green space that meets Green Flag Award standards.'

2.15 In Leeds this standard has already been met, and as at 2006, there were Green Flag awards for Golden Acre Park, Lotherton Estate, Roundhay Park, Temple Newsam Estate and Pudsey Park. There is an intention to submit Chevin Forest Park and Kirkstall Abbey Estate for Green Flag in 2007. The National Audit Office report on 'Enhancing Urban Green Space,' highlighted the risk that in the short term the Green Flag Award scheme may actually widen the gap by making good parks better by diverting already scarce resources away from poorer parks. This has not been the case in Leeds, and there is no intention to submit any further parks or green spaces for the award, unless specific funding streams require it.

2.16 The Green Flag assessment programme is discussed in the introductory section of the document, and to accompany this, a Leeds Quality Parks Standard is being introduced during 2006 to recognise those parks that meet the Green Flag standard, but will not be put forward for the award itself. This will include a logo and flag as illustrated that will be visible at parks that have met the standard for the field based assessment. As at 2006, Calverly Park, Chevin Forest Park, Manston Park, Meanwood Park, Micklefield Park, Scatcherd Park, Westroyd Park, Western Flatts Park, and Wharfemeadows are Leeds Quality Parks.

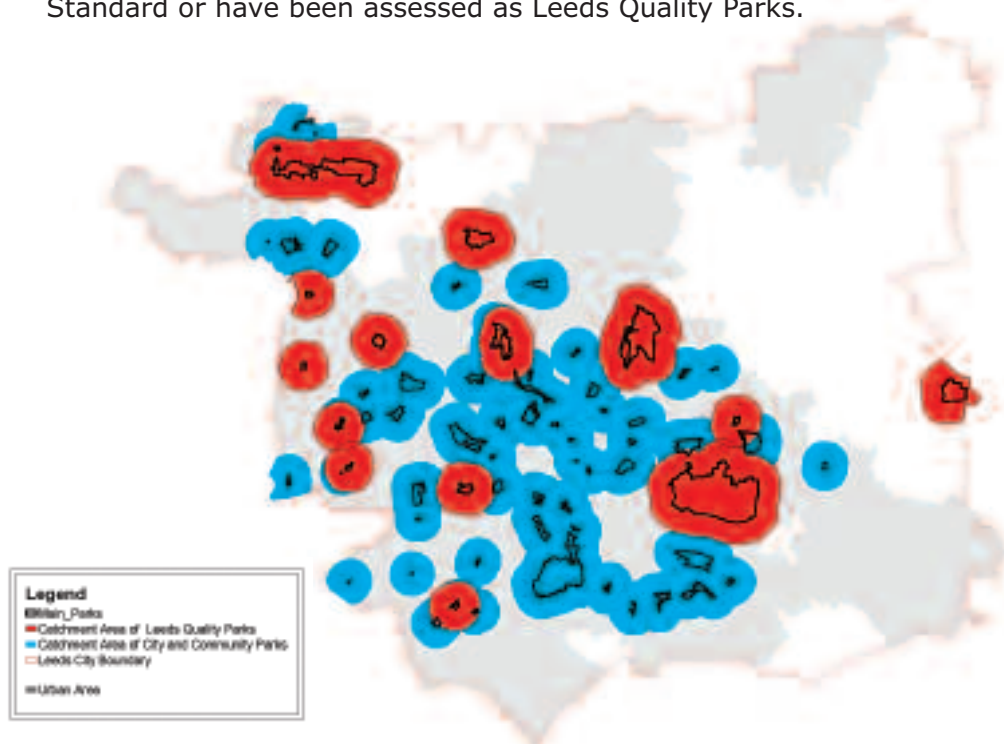


Proposal 13: We will aim to improve all our parks and green spaces as measured against the Green Flag standard for field based assessment

Proposal 14: We will aspire to achieve all our community parks to meet the Green Flag standard for field based assessment by 2020



- 2.17** The map below illustrates general access to community parks and those in red are parks which have achieved either the Green Flag Standard or have been assessed as Leeds Quality Parks.



- 2.18** As indicated within the Green Flag assessment process, a management plan is also an important element in delivering quality places. It is important that any management plan is appropriate and relevant to the site in question, is embedded within the aims of the Parks and Green Space Strategy and is communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Summary of Proposals for Theme 2: Quality Places

Strategic aim: To provide good quality parks and green spaces that are well managed and provide a range of attractive facilities

9 We will develop an investment strategy to maximise opportunity for sustained investment in our parks and green space

10 We will develop an outdoor bowls strategy to seek ways to promote and manage bowls facilities in a sustainable way

11 We will aspire to a site based gardener at all our community parks to improve quality and promote a greater feeling of safety

12 We will seek to enable people equipped with the skills and training to lead and manage the implementation of the Parks and Green Space Strategy

13 We will aim to improve all our parks and green spaces as measured against the Green Flag standard for field based assessment

14 We will aspire to achieve all our community parks to meet the Green Flag standard for field based assessment by 2020



Theme 3 Sustaining the Green Realm

The Aim of this Theme is: To plan for the development of new, and to protect existing parks and green spaces that will offer lasting social, cultural and environmental benefits for the people of Leeds

- 3.1** A decision taken during the development of this Strategy was to market test 'streetscene' verges and incidental areas around council housing. Land with recreation or conservation value was excluded from this process and any land that met the following criteria was transferred to the ownership of one service within the Council:
- Where there are recreational facilities e.g. playing pitch, bowling green or playground
 - It is a 'pocket park'
 - Where there is recreational potential if managed appropriately and for example involves local community groups or partner organisations
 - It is a woodland area
 - It is a nature conservation site
- 3.2** Although seemingly an internal process, managing land as described above as a single green estate does have many benefits in terms of developing use for recreation by working with the community.



Links to the Green Flag Standard

Sustainability

Methods used in maintaining the park or green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound, relying on best practices available according to current knowledge. Management should be aware of the range of techniques available to them, and demonstrate that informed choices have been made and are regularly reviewed.

Conservation and Heritage

Particular attention should be paid to the conservation and appropriate management of natural features, wildlife and fauna, landscape, buildings and structural features.



Theme 3. Sustaining the Green Realm

3.3 An important consideration in the preparation of a Strategy for the future management of green space in Leeds is the land use planning context at both national and local level. Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG 17), published by ODPM in 2002, states the need for Councils to:

- undertake a robust assessment of existing and future needs of the community for open space, sports and recreation facilities as detailed in a Companion Guide to PPG 17 'Assessing needs and opportunities'
- place importance on the setting of local standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities underpinned by quantitative, qualitative and accessibility considerations
- adhere to the clear guidance issued on the basis upon which planning decisions affecting playing fields should be made
- make greater use of planning obligations in new developments to secure new, improved open space, sport and recreation facilities neighbourhood area in the city



Proposal 15: We will aspire to parks and green space for recreation or conservation owned by the Council to be managed as a single green estate

3.4 Green space remains under increasing pressure from developers and there are some that would argue that parks are not untouchable. Playing pitches are still a target for development. The Playing Pitch Strategy has highlighted the need to work with Education Leeds and the Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs) on the accessibility issues with both programmes. The provision of new green space is largely opportunistic and is generally cost prohibitive as the land would have to be purchased at building land rates. This is a particular issue within the city centre where there is limited green space and a trend towards hard landscaping in favour of new green space.



3.5 The Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (Review) 2006 protects the basic green space resource and helps to ensure that its amenity and recreational value to the community is taken fully into account in considering any proposals for development. The overall objective is that all sections of the community should be able to enjoy good access to the recreational and amenity benefits of green space, irrespective of where they live.

- Policy N2 defines the hierarchy of green spaces, each with a minimum target level of provision based on accessibility to a catchment area:
- Local Amenity Space - for immediate local needs and to be provided on development sites at a standard of hectares per 50 dwellings pro-rata

The provision of green space is largely opportunistic and is generally cost prohibitive as the land would have to be purchased at building land rates

0.2

- Local Recreation Areas - providing for local informal recreational needs of older children and adults - 2.8 hectares within 400 metres of where people live
- Neighbourhood & District Parks - providing for a community as a whole
- Major City Parks
- Policy N3 resulted from a district-wide analysis of green space undertaken for the Leeds UDP (Review) 2006 which revealed 4 inner-city areas where green space is virtually absent
- Policy N4 explains the rationale we use for securing contributions, as planning obligations, from new housing developments towards green space
- Policy N5 which identifies certain sites where it is proposed that the Council and/or other agencies will aim to provide new green spaces, largely carried forward proposals from earlier Local Plans and tend to be located in the outer areas, unrelated to the Priority N3 areas

3.6 New planning legislation means that the Leeds UDP (Review) 2006 will be replaced by a new type of statutory development plan - the Local Development Framework (LDF). Like the current Leeds UDP (Review) 2006, the LDF will contain similar green space policies.

3.7 Setting out the value of green space to the community is important as parks and green space are a vital factor in fostering sustainable communities, places that people like to live in, and want to stay in.

Proposal 16: We will safeguard and improve parks, playing fields, natural green space and children's play areas

3.8 There is a clear link between quality parks and green spaces and land value. CABE Space research³ demonstrates that houses adjacent to improved green space added 5 to 7 percent premium to house prices. Good quality parks and green spaces do not only benefit people who live there - they can attract businesses and employers who recognise the benefits of the natural environment in promoting a positive and vibrant image, and they attract investors and jobs. Employees feel more relaxed and less stressed if they travel through and work within a natural environment, which in turn increases productivity and reduces sickness levels. A thriving natural environment can also bring employment and training, in areas such as nature conservation, horticulture, arboriculture, community work, environmental education and landscaping.

3.9 Parks increase the biodiversity and sustainability of urban areas, absorbing noise, providing drainage systems and



essential habitats. Leeds has a wealth of wildlife, and from the household surveys, we know that people want to see more birds, wild flowers, butterflies, trees and mammals and these species need spaces to live. The Leeds Biodiversity Action Plan has specific plans for 4 habitats and 6 species and many of our spaces are protected to help ensure that wildlife is there for the future. These include 8 local nature reserves, 116 local nature areas, and 43 sites of ecological or geological interest.

3.10 Parks and green space help counter pollution that make cities unbearable and unsustainable. They promote the feel of an ecologically sensitive city and provide havens for many birds, animals and wild flowers, and serve as the green 'lungs' for our city. In these times of climate change, parks and green spaces in densely populated cities and city centres are being seen as 'heat sinks,' which will help to alleviate high temperatures in dominant concrete surroundings. Parks and green space also play a vital role in flood risk management in terms of drainage and run-off by providing porous surfaces and water storage areas for 'sustainable urban drainage schemes' which can have dual functions for wildlife and/or recreation. The development of the Leeds Forest Strategy will provide a framework for future woodland and tree planting which will help to counter pollution by removing harmful particles and carbon dioxide from the air by 'carbon fixing' whereby trees lock up carbon as they grow, store it in maturity or within timber products, and finally release it when the wood rots or is burnt.



Proposal 17: We will use our parks and green spaces in adapting to climate change based on an understanding of which specific proposals will have the greatest impact

Proposal 18: We will encourage conservation and biodiversity to flourish within the green realm

Proposal 19: We will promote and develop green corridors for recreation, conservation and transport





Theme 3. Sustaining the Green Realm

- 3.11** Leeds City Council elected to become a Burial Authority in 1846 and since that date has established 22 Cemeteries throughout the City. In addition, since 1905, 3 crematoria have also been established. As such, the authority must provide burial and Cremation facilities for the Citizens of the Council.

Proposal 20: We will seek ways to provide and manage burial space in a sustainable way

Summary of Proposals for Theme 3: Sustaining the Green Realm

Strategic aim: To plan for, develop new and protect existing parks and green spaces that will offer lasting social, cultural and environmental benefits for the people of Leeds



15 We will aspire to parks and green space for recreation or conservation owned by the Council to be managed as a single green estate

16 We will safeguard and improve parks, playing fields, natural green space and children's play areas

17 We will use our parks and green spaces in adapting to climate change based on an understanding of which specific proposals will have the greatest impact

18 We will encourage conservation and biodiversity to flourish within the green realm

19 We will promote and develop green corridors for recreation, conservation and transport

20 We will seek ways to provide and manage burial space in a sustainable way





Theme 4. Creating a Healthier City



Theme 4 Creating a Healthier City

The Aim of this Theme is: To promote parks and green spaces as places to improve health and well-being and prevent disease through physical activity, play, relaxation and contemplation

- 4.1** It is estimated that by 2020 half of all children could be obese. Studies suggest that there is more scope to increase children's activity levels (and decrease their levels of obesity) by encouraging more outside play in green space than there is in formal sport.
- 4.2** There is increasing evidence to show that regular access to the natural environment is important for children's development by encouraging outdoor play and improving concentration and behaviour. For adults too, one in six of whom is diagnosed as suffering from anxiety or depression each year, natural space has a restorative effect, improving the ability to cope with stressful situations and improved concentration and work output. (Natural England Health Campaign).
- 4.3** This is further supported by research carried out by Bristol University for The Countryside Recreation Network in February 2005. The research demonstrated that contact with the natural world can benefit mental and physical health. Access to a quality green environment not only benefits health in preventative terms, but speeds recovery and plays a vital part in our mental well-being. The research identified that nature can be enjoyed at 3 different levels - by viewing it as from a window, by being in the presence of nearby nature, or through active participation. Our parks and green spaces provide this contact where it is needed most, in our cities, and therefore everyone benefits. Imagine what our cities would be like in the absence of trees, natural areas, wildlife, and places for recreation. This should help us realise the importance that parks and green space play in our lives, often without us being conscious of it.





Theme 4. Creating a Healthier City

- 4.4** Professor Roger Ulrich, A&M University, Texas, looked at the effects of commuting through built-up urban areas compared with driving through routes lined with greenery. He found that employees were more effective if they passed through natural scenery on their way to work and were more relaxed in the evening following a similar drive home. Just five minutes looking at a green space had an impact on the nervous system by lowering blood pressure and reducing stress. His findings support the view that green space and nature should be promoted in cities to help lessen the stresses of daily living. In the absence of green space in the city centre companies will want to relocate to places that are close to quality parks and green space or where such provision is at the heart of the development, for example at Thorp Park in East Leeds and the White Rose Office Park in South Leeds.

Proposal 21: We will promote and publicise the health and well-being benefits of parks and green spaces



Theme 4, example (a) city centre developments

Private garden spaces have been developed, with somewhere for staff to sit.

Although there are two small pocket parks, or public squares (Merrion Street Gardens and Park Square), there is a distinct lack of green recreational space within walking distance of the main apartment and office accommodation in Leeds.

There are examples where new developments are including gardens and seating areas where visitors and employees can sit and relax in the open air, Trevelyan Square just off Boar Lane is one example that provides a small garden bounded on four sides by business premises and a Hotel. A neatly maintained garden in the central square comprises of a fountain, shrubs and grass, and a small seating area. There is a similar area located at Crofts Court, just off Infirmary Street.





Theme 4. Creating a Healthier City

- 4.5** The Government white paper 'Choosing Activity' identified that the relative proportion of deaths from cancers, coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke has risen, and they now account for around two-thirds of all deaths. In both men and women and in all age groups, low educational attainment is associated with higher levels of inactivity, and the proportion of people engaging in physical activity declines with age and particularly after the age of 35. The cost of inactivity in England is estimated by the Chief Medical Officer to be £8.2 billion annually. This excludes the contribution of physical inactivity due to overweight and obesity, whose overall cost might run to £6.6-£7.4 billion per year. The World Health Organisation estimates that depression and depression-related illness will become the greatest source of ill-health by 2020. Parks and green space are therefore vitally important in addressing these issues, and access to quality sites for all is key to this.
- 4.6** The Department of Health recommendations are that adults should participate in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on at least five days per week and that all young people should participate in physical activity of at least moderate intensity for one hour a day. In 1998 nationally, only 37% of men and 25% of women met this recommendation.
- 4.7** The health agenda nationally, tends to be focused on participating in sporting activities or visiting a sport centre, however in Leeds, there are around 4 million visits to sports centres, but around 60 million resident visits to parks. The number one reason people visit is to exercise and in 2005, this represented over 30 million visits. Around 25 million visits are to contemplate or relax. The majority of people get there by healthy means - 57% either by walking or cycling.
- 4.8** Keeping active reduces the risk of death from coronary heart disease, of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and certain cancers and helps maintain health and independence in older adults. Dr William Bird4 in particular highlights the importance of walking as an accessible and effective means of moderate exercise and the following points help demonstrate this:
- Walking to parks and green spaces is an important form of exercise
 - Initiatives around getting people active (particularly in Scandinavia and Australia) have demonstrated that walking has been the most successful means of achieving this
 - Public rights of way are of key importance, but often stiles can be a real physical barrier to the elderly and there is therefore a design issue
 - As an illustration of the impact of physical activity, if 60 men, 61 years or older were encouraged to be physically active then 1 life would be saved each year as a result
 - For children, simply having access to the outdoors and informal play space can significantly increase levels of physical activity





Theme 4. Creating a Healthier City

- Safety is a greater issue for women in green space and therefore initiatives need to be aware of this

4.9 Leeds has or is developing significant partnerships supporting Childhood Obesity, Physical Activity, and also a Food Strategy. There is also an emerging supporting strategy for older people in Leeds 'Older Better,' with an ambition of a life worth living where older people are respected and included, their contributions are acknowledged and they are enabled to remain independent and enjoy good mental and physical health. This is a key focus in the Local Area Agreement in relation to the Healthier and Communities and Older People block. The role of parks and green space provision in this agenda is at an early stage, but the potential benefits to health as outlined above, are significant.

4.10 The appointment of a Physical Activity Manager in partnership with Primary Care Trusts in 2005 is leading to the development of a Physical Activity Strategy for Leeds. A key piece of work to inform the Strategy is a detailed survey of around 35,000 households in order to gauge current levels of activity, to include active living (such as household work, gardening and walking the dog) and active travel (walking and cycling), as well as sport and active recreation. The full results of the Active Places survey conducted by Sport England will be available early in 2007. The Leeds survey will be conducted in autumn 2006, and is intended to enable issues to be identified at a more local level as part of an accurate and detailed picture of physical activity throughout Leeds.

4.11 The Strategy supports active travel and recognises the opportunity that could be provided by sustainable travel routes through parks and green spaces. A good example of this is the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Initiative. The initiative has mapped out and is developing parks, countryside and public rights of way that encircle the conurbation of West Leeds with a view to joining these areas, providing route ways, information, interpretation and leaflets.



Proposal 22: We will contribute to the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan by providing sustainable transport routes in parks and green spaces

4.12 The Parks and Countryside Service developed a series of 'Health Walk' routes at Roundhay Park and Temple Newsam for people of all ages to enjoy and was launched in October 2005 to coincide with Leeds Fitness Week. Information boards detailing the walks have been put in place, as well as leaflets and markings to signify the routes. Since then the scheme has been extended to 5 community parks; Armley Park; Horsforth Hall Park; Micklefield; Western Flatts; and Woodhouse Moor, with plans underway to extend the scheme





Theme 4. Creating a Healthier City

to a number of other parks and green spaces.. In addition to this, the Ranger Service contributes towards the Health and Well Being agenda by organising various activities such as themed walks and practical tasks such as shrub clearing to encourage people to take a greater interest in their natural surroundings.

Proposal 23: We will promote the health messages of walking and seek to develop health walk routes in our parks and green spaces

Proposal 24: We will provide opportunities for active recreation within parks and green spaces

Summary of Proposals for Theme 4: Creating a Healthier City

Strategic aim: To promote parks and green spaces as places to improve health and well-being and prevent disease through physical activity, play, relaxation and contemplation

21 We will promote and publicise the health and well-being benefits of parks and green spaces

22 We will contribute to the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan by providing sustainable transport routes in parks and green spaces

23 We will promote the health messages of walking and seek to develop health walk routes in our parks and green spaces

24 We will provide opportunities for active recreation within parks and green spaces





Theme 5 Supporting Regeneration

The Aim of this Theme is: To promote liveability and the economic benefits of quality parks and green space provision as an integral part of major regeneration projects

5.1 Given the range of regeneration activity underway and future plans for further regeneration in the City, there is a real opportunity in the next few years to 'put the park first'. This should recognise the important part played by quality and accessible parks and green spaces with a range of facilities and activities which:

- attract businesses to invest
- encourage people to live in the area
- play a central role in promoting community cohesion

5.2 Redevelopment and regeneration projects offer the chance to decide whether our existing spaces meet community need, and ensure that new developments do not repeat previous mistakes. Parks and green spaces need to be planned for at the heart of the development rather than as an afterthought on a piece of otherwise unusable land. We will need to create new spaces, link existing ones together and protect what is valued and special. High quality parks and green spaces help with jobs and tourism, link communities and create an attractive place to live and work. They break down social barriers and help pull communities and people together, and make neighbourhoods better places to live. They are probably the most accessible form of community facility that any city has and this is evidenced by the surveys showing that there are over 60 million visits each year by around 90% of Leeds residents.

Redevelopment and regeneration projects offer the chance to decide whether our existing spaces meet community need and ensure that new developments do not repeat previous mistakes.



Theme 5. Supporting Regeneration

5.3 There are areas in the city that are benefiting from investment, these include:

- City centre - a major area of development
- Aire Valley - a major £250 million regeneration programme covering a large industrial area to the south east of Leeds city centre
- East and South East Leeds (EASEL) regeneration initiative - an important housing led scheme covering 1,700 hectares with a population of almost 79,000 people.
- West Leeds gateway - a regeneration scheme focusing on parts of Armley, Farnley and Wortley
- Beeston Hill and Holbeck Regeneration

5.4 Major regeneration initiatives provide the opportunity to consider green space, which often is poorly configured and has little recreation value. In these circumstances, sometimes having less green space that is of better quality and is more accessible to the whole community can be more desirable than large, low quality inaccessible areas. A further key issue is that of linkage so that areas of green space are seen as corridors for people and wildlife rather than as 'islands.' It is therefore important that emerging Area Action Plans (at a local level) place parks and green spaces at the heart of regeneration. The Parks and Countryside Service must also play a leading role in the context of Leeds Renaissance at a strategic level and there is a real need to ensure that there is more green space in the extended City Centre as well as more green links from the centre to the surrounding urban areas.

Proposal 25: We will consult with the community and seek ways to increase access to quality parks and green space in areas of deprivation





Theme 5, example (a) West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Initiative

A good example of an holistic approach to green space management in an area of the city is the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways initiative. The initiative has mapped and is developing parks, countryside and public rights of way that encircle the conurbation of West Leeds with a view to joining these areas, providing route ways, information, interpretation and leaflets. Capital works will be identified and implemented during 2007 and 2008 to further improve the linkages, and a West Leeds Country Park Officer is being appointed to work with community and volunteer groups. The West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways trail covers 20 miles and starts and finishes at Granary Wharf in Leeds City Centre. The full link through the southeast part of West Leeds conurbation involves the use of parks and green space areas as stepping stones that are linked by ginnels and roads through the residential and commercial areas.

The Aims of the initiative are to develop the West Leeds country park and green gateways to ensure:

- Suitable and sustainable green space availability
- Quality recreational areas
- Diverse wildlife habitats
- Strong community involvement

The desired outcomes are to:

- Provide an opportunity for people to improve health through physical exercise in the natural environment
- Increase the number and variety of plants and wildlife
- Enhance environmental education opportunities
- Support regeneration, making the area a more attractive place to live, work and invest

The initiative has involved wide consultation with 66 community groups and organisations and highlights the purpose and function of a range of sites and routes, including private land and considers related issues of access and importance of effective linkage between key sites. It also highlights heritage features such as Kirkstall Abbey, nature reserves such as at Rodley, semi-natural ancient woodlands and wildflower meadows rich in flora and fauna, urban parks such as Calverley Park and the Leeds Liverpool canal and river Aire.





Theme 5. Supporting Regeneration

Proposal 26: We will promote access to parks and green space by seeking to expand the West Leeds Country Parks and Green Gateways initiative to other areas of the city

- 5.5** John Ruskin, the Victorian artist, writer and social critic stated that 'the measure of any great civilisation is in its cities, and a measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and its squares'. A survey of city centre living in Leeds conducted in 2005 by the School of Geography, University of Leeds found that 60% of residents are 30 or under, only 5 residents were under 18 and only 11 over the age of 60. The most common reason stated which would make residents leave the city centre was 'lack of green space' - 200 out of 500 respondents rated this as 'very important' and a total of 73% 'very important' or 'quite important.' Other reasons included 'having children,' 'inadequate living space' and 'lack of convenient shops.'



Proposal 27: We will aspire to developing a city centre park during the life of this strategy

Proposal 28: We will aspire to increase access to green space within the core city centre area

- 5.6** Green space is also valuable to people who work in urban areas. Whilst not located in city centre areas, Arlington Business Parks have demonstrated the value of a brand designed around green space, which command city centre rental values, and the White Rose Office Park in Leeds is a good example of this. Green space needs to be recognised as a positive benefit within commercial city centre development, whereas in the recent past the focus on design is often on the building and not necessarily on the green space around it.



- 5.7** There is clear evidence to support the case that good quality parks and green spaces make a positive impact on economic regeneration. This includes research by CABE Space, research conducted in the USA as well as work conducted locally as part of developing the Strategy. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- There is increased expenditure enjoyed by local businesses as a consequence of the attraction of greater numbers of people
- Raised property prices that accompany a valued amenity
- Park and green space improvements have brought a sense of renewal and confidence to the prospects of the local area
- There are commercial benefits that go along with open space provision, in terms of creating an environment which is attractive to buyers
- Improvements to green space can attract tourists and new business





Theme 5. Supporting Regeneration

- They are an important quality-of-life factor for businesses choosing where to locate facilities and for well-educated individuals choosing a place to live
- They offer recreational opportunities for at risk youth, low-income children, and low-income families
- In Leeds, parks and green space are regarded as important but in need of improvement
- As an illustration of the health benefits, it is estimated that a park in a major town has a £4.4 million annual benefit to the economy as a whole, and £910,000 to the NHS; a 3Km foot path has a £1 million benefit to the economy and £210,000 benefit to the NHS

5.8 There is also evidence however that where parks and green space are allowed to deteriorate, this can have a negative impact on economic regeneration.



Theme 5, example (b) green space on top of buildings 'Rooftop Parks'

One of the pressures experienced by a thriving and prosperous city is the value of land and space within its city boundary. The inclusion of recreational green space is often given little regard and its value to the community is underestimated. Development land will always command a premium in the city centre but there are alternative ways to green the city and provide green recreational space. One example in Leeds is located on the 5th floor of the Leeds General Infirmary, originally designed for use by patients and their families, the rooftop garden provides an opportunity to relax and meet with friends and family in a space where the calming influence of plants and gardens can be experienced.



An example of more elaborate proportions is proposed for a development in south Bristol, where a warehouse conversion proposes to provide its new tenants with an outdoor running track, barbecue area and garden, on the 1 acre roof. Another famous example is the Kensington Roof Garden, which is a sizeable rooftop garden with streams, ducks, fountains, planting and recreational areas.

Theme 5, example (c) 'The Big Dig' in Boston

'The Big Dig' in Boston, USA is a linear park on top of a major highway.

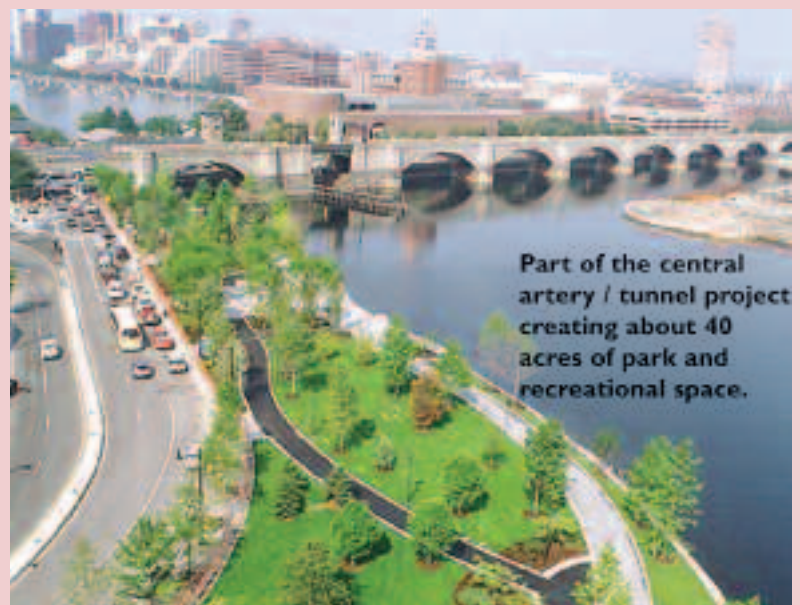
In the late 1950s a major new arterial road network was opened in Boston Massachusetts, hailed as the solution to traffic congestion it cut a swathe across the City at a time when the value of green space and city parks was perceived of little consequence.

Just over 20 years later in 1972 the debate regarding this arterial route centred around the impact it had on the city and suggestions were made that it should be buried, releasing the land above for other uses.

It took a further 20 years to develop a series of plans and visions, all culminating in an initiative that become known as 'The Big Dig.' In 1990 the Secretary of State, George Schultz approved the construction of the underground highways and that if acceptable, open space and development balance should be created over the 'Big Dig.'

This was one of the first examples where linked linear green space would be created in a Public-Private Partnership through a detailed consultation exercise with user groups. More than 350 people took part in two public events called Creative Community Conversations about the future of the parks that would be developed above the 'Big Dig.'

The Project reached substantial completion on January 13th, 2006. Finish work on the Big Dig and surface restoration will continue until spring 2006. Construction of the parks will continue into mid-2007, with the project creating more than 120 hectares (300 acres) of landscaped and restored open space, including over 45 parks and major public plazas.





Theme 5. Supporting Regeneration

Proposal 29: We will promote the economic value of good quality parks and green space

Proposal 30: We will develop the concept of parks as community hubs

Summary of Proposals for Theme 5: Supporting Regeneration

Strategic aim: To promote liveability and the economic benefits of quality parks and green space provision as an integral part of major regeneration projects

25 We will consult with the community and seek ways to increase access to quality parks and green space in areas of deprivation

26 We will promote access to parks and green space by seeking to expand the West Leeds Country Parks and Green Gateways initiative to other areas of the city

27 We will aspire to developing a city centre park during the life of this strategy

28 We will aspire to increase access to green space within the core city centre area

29 We will promote the economic value of good quality parks and green space

30 We will develop the concept of parks as community hubs





Theme 6. Delivering the Strategy



Theme 6: Delivering the Strategy

The Aim of this Theme is: To engage partners in supporting and delivering the Parks and Green Space Strategy

6.1 Delivering the Strategy will take a concerted, committed effort by the Council and a range of partners. Partner organisations are hugely important to the process as they can help to access funding, promote the use of parks and green space, develop and harness the commitments of volunteers and contribute to the management of parks and green space. Potential partners include:

- Major funding organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Green Leeds etc.
- Local businesses
- 'Friends of' and other community groups
- The Education sector
- Voluntary organisations
- Environmental organisations
- The Health sector
- The West Yorkshire Police
- The Leeds Initiative and District Partnerships

6.2 In many cases organisations already carry out a huge range of activities that contribute to parks and green space issues in Leeds. The development and delivery of the Parks and Green Space Strategy for Leeds is therefore an opportunity to promote and manage the activity of all partner organisations in a co-ordinated way.

Proposal 31: We will establish a parks and green space forum that will meet annually to consider progress on the strategy

Summary of Proposals for Theme 6 Delivering the Strategy

Strategic aim: To engage partners in supporting and delivering the Parks and Green Space Strategy

31 We will establish a parks and green space forum that will meet annually to consider progress on the strategy



Strategic Framework and Action Plan

Proposal	Action	Timescale ¹
1 Places for People	To engage the community in promoting parks and green spaces as accessible places for everyone to experience and enjoy	
1. We will consult with the community to ensure our parks and green spaces have appropriate information and facilities that make them good places to visit	* Produce a consultation plan that sets out guidelines to ensure inclusive consultation and involvement in parks and green space development	Short Term
2. We will aim to increase awareness and provide information and opportunities for everyone to access services	* Develop a Marketing and Communication Strategy for parks and green spaces * Develop web content to maximise the use of the internet as an information resource and to enable requests and bookings for services * Achieve and sustain level 4 and level 5 of the equality standard	Short Term Short Term Medium Term
3. We will work with partners in developing facilities and action to promote community safety in our parks and green spaces	* Monitor and review site based gardeners and report success against the target of all community parks having a site based gardener * Evaluate increasing the role and scale of 'Parks Watch' * Review staff working patterns to target staff presence at time of peak visitor occupancy * Develop a system and associated cost/benefit analysis to calculate cost and impact of anti-social behaviour against alternative preventative measures	Short Term Short Term Medium Term Medium Term
4. We will promote parks and green space as places for education and learning	* Promote parks and green spaces as learning environments / outdoor classrooms * Develop the kinaesthetic learning programme * Develop a signage and interpretation plan and implement * Develop respect for parks and green spaces * Improve play facilities through implementing the Fixed Play Strategy	Short Term Short Term Short Term Medium Term Short Term
5. We will promote and support well managed events and activities	* Establish clear processes for event application and management * Encourage and promote events that bring communities together and promote social cohesion * Ensure information about events is made available	Short Term Short Term Short Term
6. We will promote City and Country parks as visitor attractions, attracting people to Leeds as a place to visit, live, work and do business	* Achieve and sustain Green Flag awards at the following sites: o Chevin Forest Park o Golden Acre o Lotherton Hall Estate o Temple Newsam Estate o Roundhay Park o Kirkstall Abbey o Pudsey Park o Parks that require Green Flag status to fulfil funding requirements * Promote City and Country parks as an integral part of the Tourism Strategy	* Short Term * Short Term



7. We will guide and influence public agencies, private landowners and community groups to work within the parameters of the Parks and Green Space Strategy	* Promote partnership working to complement initiatives * To establish agreed protocols, including design, for any initiatives undertaken within the public green realm * Providing an opportunity for private business to realise Corporate Social Responsibility and analyse outcomes * Organise resources around priorities set out in the Strategy	Short Term Medium Term Medium Term
8. We will engage with communities and encourage and enable people to get involved in developing our parks and green space	* Develop a model of community involvement and engagement, to include the following: - o sustain community consultation via postal questionnaires and access to on-line surveys; - o establish and maintain a volunteer database - o encourage and support a network of sustainable 'friends of' and volunteer groups which are formally constituted and follow best practice guidance, including induction training and continuous development - o develop and support the formation of 'Young Friends' groups. - o source funding for a network of Recreational Rangers whose role is to work with friends, young people and volunteers	Medium Term o Short Term o Short Term o Medium Term o Medium Term o Medium Term
2.0 Quality Places	To provide good quality parks and green spaces that are well managed and provide a range of attractive facilities	
9. We will develop an investment strategy through our asset management plan to maximise opportunity for sustained investment in our parks and green space	* Develop an investment strategy that will take account of the following: - o utilising capital receipts - o developing commercial opportunities - o borrowing against projected income - o utilising external funds where relevant - o based on the Green Flag standard as a performance measure * Develop an investment strategy for Fixed Play * Develop an investment strategy for Playing Pitches	Short Term Short Term Short Term
10. We will seek to prioritise our revenue funding to focus on management of quality places for recreation and conservation	* Review budget allocation and priorities for parks and green spaces	Long Term
11. We will develop a series of strategies that fulfil the aims of the Parks and Green Space Strategy	* Develop an outdoor bowls strategy that seeks to address the following: - o Analysis of supply and demand - o Management arrangements - o Financially sustainable provision - o Promoting access * Review and develop a playing pitch strategy * Review and develop a fixed play strategy * Develop an allotments strategy	Short Term Short Term Short Term Short Term



12. We will facilitate a workforce equipped with the skills and knowledge to lead and manage the implementation of the Parks and Green Space Strategy	* Promote parks and green space as an attractive career option * Target 'career changers' to consider parks and green space opportunities * Continue to ensure appropriate learning and development mechanisms are in place * Increase workforce diversity by encouraging more people from under-represented groups	Short Term Short Term Short Term Short Term
13. We will aim to improve all our parks and green spaces as measured against the Green Flag standard for field based assessment	* Monitor progress against the Performance Indicator included in the Leeds Local Area Agreement, namely 'the % of P&C sites that meet the Green Flag Standard'	Short Term
14. We will aspire to achieve all our community parks to meet the Green Flag standard for field based assessment by 2020	* Monitor and review success by incorporating a sub-indicator to measure success linked to investment strategy * Establish a continued programme of investment in community parks * Establish management plans appropriate to the site	Short Term Short Term Long Term
3.0 Sustaining the Green Realm	To plan for the development of new, and to protect existing parks and green spaces that will offer lasting social, cultural and environmental benefits for the people of Leeds	
15. We will aspire to the Council's parks and green space for recreation or conservation, to be managed as a single green estate	* Undertake PPG 17 Green Space audit and needs assessment and implement findings * Ensure that externally procured services relating to the green realm reflect and encompass the objectives of the strategy	Short Term Medium Term
16. We will conserve and improve parks, playing fields, natural green space and woodland	* Develop the 'Leeds Quality Parks' standard based on Green Flag site assessment * Establish and maintain a quality assessment approach to local green space in line with the Green Flag Standard * Assess the impact of applying the Accessible Natural Green Space Targets (ANGST) criteria * Promote access to parks and green space as a 'dawn to dusk' service * Agree mechanism of distribution of S106 monies within a strategic approach	Short Term Medium Term Medium Term Medium Term Short Term
17. We will use our parks and green spaces as an important resource in adapting to climate change	* Commission research to measure the impact of the green infrastructure in adapting to climate change * Promote biodiversity as a systemic contribution towards dealing with Climate Change	Short Term Short Term
18. We will encourage conservation and biodiversity to flourish in appropriate areas within the green realm	* Implement the Leeds Biodiversity Action Plan * Support the sustainable management of 'in bloom' initiatives	Medium Term Short Term
19. We will promote and develop green corridors for recreation, conservation and sustainable transport	* Establish links with the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Initiative concept	Long Term



20. We will seek ways to provide and manage burial space in a sustainable way	* Implement the policy adopted at Executive Board in December 2008 to establish a preference for smaller locally based cemetery sites combined with the extension, where possible, of existing sites.	Short Term
4.0 Creating a Healthier City	To promote parks and green spaces as places to improve health and well-being and prevent disease through exercise, relaxation, and contemplation	
21. We will promote and publicise the health and well-being benefits of parks and green spaces	* Establish links with the Physical Activity Strategy and other strategies such as the Food Strategy, Childhood Obesity Strategy and Older People's Strategy	Short Term
	* Promote allotments for healthy eating, recreation, exercise and links with education	Medium Term
	* Promote the health benefits of trees and woodland through implementation of the Leeds Forest Strategy	Short Term
	* Promote the value of conservation work for volunteers as a form of physical activity	Short Term
	* Develop and implement the Allotments Strategy	Short Term
22. We will contribute to the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan by providing sustainable transport routes in parks and green spaces	* Implement the rights of way improvement plan to include the use of the public rights of way network to promote accessible walking, cycling and horse riding	Medium Term
	* Develop cycling routes, including safer routes to schools	Long Term
23. We will promote the health messages of walking in our parks and green spaces	* Develop a network of clearly marked routes for all abilities, promoting walking, running and cycling for health and well-being	Short Term
	* Increase the number of people participating in walking as a form of physical activity	Medium Term
24. We will provide opportunities for active recreation within parks and green spaces	* Maintain links with sport development	Short Term
	* Improve playing pitch facilities through implementing the Playing Pitch Strategy	Short Term
	* Develop facilities within green spaces to promote active recreation	Short Term
5.0 An enabler for Regeneration	To promote liveability and the economic benefits of quality parks and green space provision as an integral part of major regeneration projects	
25. We will aspire to developing a city centre park during the life of this strategy	* In principle proposals to develop a City Centre park	Medium Term
26. We will aspire to increase access to green space within the core city centre area	* Review planning guidance on 'open space' designation to include reference to green space	Medium Term
	* Review thresholds on developer contributions	Medium Term
	* Increase 'family friendly', development of 'non adult' space within the city centre area	Medium Term
	* Examine feasibility of innovative green space provision e.g. green walls	Medium Term



27. We will consult with the community and seek ways to increase access to quality parks and green space in areas of deprivation	* Ensure Area Action Plans recognise green space deficiency and provide opportunity for suitable provision * Use major regeneration initiatives to identify opportunities to put access to quality parks and green spaces as an integral part of sustainable living	Medium Term Medium Term
28. We will promote access to parks and green space by seeking to expand the West Leeds Country Parks and Green Gateways initiative to other areas of the city	* Review opportunities for developing the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways concept: - o East and South East Leeds - Wyke Beck, West/East links - o Meanwood Valley - o South Leeds - o North West Leeds	Long Term
29. We will promote the economic value of good quality parks and green space	* Promote parks and green spaces as a vital part of the cultural and tourism offer, an incentive for the relocation of businesses and therefore an important part of economic regeneration	Medium Term
30. We will develop the concept of parks as community hubs	* Opportunity to build leisure/community facilities in parks	Long Term
6.0 Delivering the Strategy	To engage partners in supporting and delivering the Parks and Green Space Strategy	
31. We will establish a parks and green space forum that will meet annually to consider progress on the strategy	* Establish a Parks and Green Space stakeholder forum to review progress on the Strategy annually	Short Term

1 Short Term 1 to 2 years, Medium Term - 3 to 5 years, Long Term - 6 years +

TOWARDS A LEEDS PARKS & GREEN SPACES STRATEGY 2020 – 2030

Consultation Document September 2019





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Introduction

The purpose of this consultation document is the development of a vision for the future of Leeds City Council owned and managed public parks and green spaces beyond 2020, and a strategy for how to deliver it over the next 10 years.

It has been produced by Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside Service (the lead agency for the management of public parks and green space in the city).

We would like the strategy to reflect the views of residents and visitors to Leeds, so that we can provide a service that meets the needs of all our communities now and in the future - this document will help us to do that.

Timescales

The public consultation process will take place September 2019 to February 2020.

Aims of the strategy

The aims of the strategy are:

- To identify a clear and simple vision for the public parks and green spaces in Leeds.
- To identify clear priorities for the next 10 years so that Leeds City Council can target limited resources effectively.
- To produce an action plan for delivery.

Background – Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside Service

Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside Service manages almost 4,000 hectares of public parks and green space. This 'green space' includes:

- 7 major parks (e.g. Roundhay, Golden Acre and Temple Newsam) – all Green Flag award winners
- 63 community parks (e.g. Cross Flatts Park, Horsforth Hall Park)
- 95 recreation grounds
- 97 allotment sites
- 819 km of public rights of way
- 156 nature conservation sites (including woodlands).
- 24 cemeteries and 3 crematoria





The facilities provided on parks and countryside sites include:

- 174 playgrounds
- 500 sports facilities including bowling greens, golf courses, tennis courts, football and cricket pitches.
- 29 outdoor gyms
- 3 zoos (at Tropical World, Lotherton Hall and Pudsey Park)
- A rare-breeds visitor farm
- Visitor centres and cafés
- 24 skate parks
- 5 shops
- Specialist gardens and plant collections (e.g. at Golden Acre and Temple Newsam)

We also run The Arium, a nursery which produces over 3 million plants for the city each year.

Visits – Leeds parks are very well used, as evidenced by the residents' surveys that were undertaken in 2006, 2009 and, most recently in 2016. The Leeds Parks Survey Report, undertaken by University of Leeds in 2016 revealed the following:

- There are approximately 45 million adult visits to Leeds parks per year.
- 91% of Leeds residents visited a park in the preceding year
- The most popular park in Leeds is Roundhay which hosts over 9 million visits a year!
- Woodhouse Moor is the second most well used park in Leeds hosting over 3 million visits a year. Temple Newsam, Meanwood Park, Golden Acre Park, Middleton Park, Springhead Park, Pudsey Park, Kirkstall Abbey Park and Horsforth Hall Park all host more than 1 million visits a year.

Events:

- Leeds parks host over 650 events a year, ranging from community fun days to rock concerts, sponsored walks to bonfires.

Volunteers:

- Over 60 community volunteer groups, such as '*Friends of*', help to care for, improve and promote public green space in Leeds through a range of activities from fundraising to picking litter.
- The Parks and Countryside Service also works with over 50 '*In Bloom*' groups to beautify the city through floral displays. In 2018 Leeds city centre achieved a silver gilt in the RHS Britain in Bloom competition, and many of our more local In Bloom groups won awards too; for example, Kippax was the category winner in Yorkshire in Bloom.





- Leeds has a successful [Parks and Green Spaces Forum](#)– a network of organisations dedicated to the protection, promotion and enhancement of public green spaces in the city; and working in partnership with Leeds City Council to do so. The Forum currently has members from over 90 different local organisations.
- Nearly 1,000 corporate volunteers joined us to help improve the local environment in 2018, undertaking tasks such as pruning orchards, bulb planting, cutting back overgrown footpaths and painting playgrounds.

Delivery of the current Parks and Green Space Strategy

The current Parks and Green Space Strategy for Leeds was adopted by the council's executive board and published in 2009 for the time period to 2020. It was based around the following key themes:

- Places for people: *To engage the community in promoting parks and green spaces as accessible places for everyone to experience and enjoy*
- Quality places: *To provide good quality parks and green spaces that are well managed and provide a range of attractive facilities*
- Sustaining the green realm: *To plan for the development of new, and to protect existing parks and green spaces that will offer lasting social, cultural and environmental benefits for the people of Leeds*
- Creating a healthier city: *To promote parks and green spaces as places to improve health and well-being and prevent disease through exercise, relaxation, and contemplation*
- An enabler for regeneration: *To promote liveability and the economic benefits of quality parks and green space provision as an integral part of major regeneration*

The key aims of the strategy as set out in the accompanying Executive Board Report were as follows:

- For all community parks to meet the Green Flag standard (locally known as Leeds Quality Park or LQP) for field based assessment by 2020
- To develop an investment strategy
- To establish a parks and green spaces forum
- To develop a city centre park during the life of the strategy

Leeds Quality Park Standard

The Parks and Green Space Strategy document made reference to a £15 million net budget in Parks and Countryside when published. At this time it was hard to predict the difficult years ahead for the sector nationally as a result of a reduction in core funding from central government resulting in a decrease of over 50% in the parks budget to around £7 million in 2019/20. It would have been easy, given the circumstances, to abandon the strategy and dedicate our entire focus on meeting the financial challenges that we continue to face. However, the themes and key aims of the strategy have remained in the forefront of thinking and it is useful to reflect on the achievements that have been made.





The key focus has been on sustaining and improving parks and green spaces and, in particular, on bringing community parks up to 'Green Flag' standard. The field-based criteria are assessed in what is known as the Leeds Quality Park standard for all 63 community parks each year and a range of 81 further sites assessed every 3 years.

Despite the unprecedented fall in funding, there has been a consistent improvement in the number of parks and green spaces achieving Leeds Quality Park standard during the life of the strategy. Just 23% of community parks achieved the standard in 2006 which increased to 70% in 2018. This does mean that there remains work to do in achieving the overall aim of 100% and this will be a priority that the new strategy needs to consider.

Investment Strategy

How was this level of improvement achieved given the difficult financial position that was faced? The answer lies in developing an investment strategy that has enabled funding to improve facilities driven primarily around increasing income. Whilst the net budget fell throughout this period, gross expenditure actually increased slightly. The investment strategy was focussed on adopting a 'civic enterprise' approach whereby the council becomes more enterprising, businesses and partners more civic; and the public more engaged. There are several examples of developing this enterprising approach to maximise the financial impact of parks assets:

- Tropical World - a paid for zoo attraction within Roundhay Park. A £1.7m investment in partnership with a local philanthropists, the Ziff family, developed new theming and species along with significantly expanded café and retail facilities.
- The Arium - a new purpose built plant nursery with café, retail and play area. Opened in October 2017, with turnover for the first year of activity in this new attraction over £1.5m.
- Concessions - mainly food and drink with now £350k income annually.
- Sponsorship - working with local businesses to achieve £300k annually.
- Golden Acre Park - a partnership with a local window firm was developed to expand the café. Income up 42% compared to previous year.
- Partnership with 'Go Ape' at Temple Newsam - opened in May 2018.

This approach has enabled revenue funding for gardeners in parks to be sustained, as well as allowing us reintroduce an apprenticeship scheme which has seen 50 apprentices start working with us since 2012, many of whom have been retained in the service.

During this period capital funding of around £1 million each year has been invested in park improvements via S106 planning gain, matched where possible with other sources of external funding and an emphasis on community parks. Middleton Park received investment via the Heritage Lottery Fund which enabled it to be transformed with the outcome that it has held a Green Flag Award since completion in 2013.





Parks and Green Spaces Forum

The Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum was established in 2012 as an independent body with a stated aim of protecting, promoting and improving public green space in the city. The Forum meets quarterly for member networking, site visits and to share best practice and works closely the Parks and Countryside service to find ways to achieve shared goals such as reducing litter in parks. The Forum is becoming increasingly well-known and influential, supporting innovations such as the externally funded Leeds Parks Fund, 'Rethinking Parks' project.

City Centre Park

The absence of a city centre park was identified as an issue in the consultation on the last Parks and Green Space Strategy. Plans for the first phase of a new park located on land at the former Tetley Brewery site in South Bank Leeds were approved at Leeds City Council's Executive Board in February 2018. The park is envisaged to be approximately 3.5 hectares in size when complete, with construction work on the park due to begin in 2020. Creation of the park will be phased over the next five years.

Scope of the new strategy

The next strategy is being produced by Leeds City Council Parks and Countryside Service and, as such, will focus on how we manage local public green spaces and their components (as described above) going forward.

Subject areas themed around public green spaces that won't be addressed in detail in the strategy, because they have their own plan, or are not relevant to the strategy document, are detailed in the table below:

Subject Area	Related Document	Current Position
Sports pitches	Leeds Playing Pitch Strategy	Under development
Public rights of way	Rights of Way Improvement Plan	In place
Planning matters (such as allocation of new public green space)	Leeds Core Strategy	In place
Play	Leeds Play Strategy	In place
Parks and Countryside allotments	Allotment Management Plan	Under development
Bereavement services	50 year burial plan	In place

Although, currently, it is not our aim to cover the issues above in the upcoming Parks and Green Spaces strategy, comments on those subject areas that arise during the consultation process will be taken into consideration and shared with relevant council departments as appropriate.





Overview of relevant research findings

A range of local and national research into public use of, and opinions on public green space is useful when planning for the future. Key findings (from University of Leeds research in 2016 unless otherwise stated) are highlighted below:

Park Usage:

Parks are very popular with 91% of Leeds residents having visited a park in the preceding year and 50% visiting a park at least once a week in the summer months. It is estimated that Leeds parks host around 45 million visits a year.

Importance of parks:

88% of park users described spending time in parks as either essential, very important or fairly important to their quality of life.

Satisfaction:

Satisfaction with Leeds parks is high with 77% of park users in Leeds reporting very pleasant experiences and 90% were satisfied or very satisfied overall with their main park. Major park users were more likely than community park-users to rate their park in good or excellent condition (94% compared with 80%). 57% of users say they feel very safe using their park.

Who uses parks?

High usage of parks in Leeds is reported across the board when survey respondents are compared for gender, ethnic group, disability and age. However, people with disabilities and people aged over 75 are significantly less likely to visit a park than those without disabilities or under 75 (77% of people from these groups compared with 91% of people on average had visited a park in the last year).

Which parks are visited most often?

63% of residents in Leeds chose a local community park as their 'main' park and 37% chose a 'major city park' as their 'main' park. 94% of respondents chose a 'Leeds Quality Park' as their main park which suggests usage is linked to park quality.

Why do people visit parks?

The most popular reasons for people to visit parks are: to get some fresh air, to go for walks, to enjoy nature and wildlife, to relax and think in peace and quiet, for family outings and children's play.





Priorities for the future

The top 5 priorities for the future are; keeping parks clean, keep existing facilities open or improve them, keeping parks free to enter, events and activities in parks, tackling anti-social behaviour and crime.

When asked what aspects of parks and green spaces respondents would prefer to donate to (if they made a charitable donation), the most popular options were: wildlife habitats; keeping parks clean and tidy; children and teenagers; improving disability access; combatting anti-social behaviour and crime, and mental and physical health (UoL 2018).

Strategic Context

The strategy will also be developed in the context of national and local policy, key aspects of which are outlined below:

National policy and thinking around public green space

Recurring themes emerging from national research, planning and policy around public green space are threefold:

- There is a great deal of evidence around, and emphasis on, the importance of good quality public green space, and the benefits to health and the environment in particular.
- There is widespread acknowledgement (backed up by research) that there isn't sufficient funding to maintain all public green space to a good standard.
- There is a lot of research being undertaken (and conversation around) the best ways to ensure that parks are funded and managed in a sustainable way, so that people can continue to benefit from them in the long term.

A range of solutions to the funding gap are currently being explored, largely with Heritage Lottery funding, ranging from the almost universally approved idea of councils working more closely with communities and partners, to more controversial proposals around maximising the commercial potential of parks, and charitable fundraising.

In terms of public opinion, research by HLF and University of Leeds suggests that the most popular proposals for supplementing the funding of parks are:

- National Lottery funding
- Business sponsorship
- Funding from local developers
- Charitable donations and fundraising by volunteers
- Funding from central government





The options above all received support from over 65% respondents in the 2 surveys. Increasing charges for using park facilities (like tennis courts or car parks) is the least popular option, with support declared by only 20% respondents.

Local strategies, plans and priorities

Vision for Leeds 2011 - 2030

The Vision for Leeds, following a large scale consultation with local residents, aims to make Leeds the Best City in the UK and identifies 3 key aims that we plan to take into consideration when developing the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

- Leeds will be fair, open and welcoming – public green space is free, open to all, and used by most local residents.
- Leeds' economy will be prosperous and sustainable – people want to work and live near good quality parks (for example, property prices are higher near good quality parks).
- All of Leeds' communities will be successful – parks provide opportunities for everyone to enjoy a range of healthy activities. The majority of local survey respondents said parks were important to their quality of life. Evidence shows that mental health inequalities are lower in communities with good access to green space.

Best Council Plan

As most of the public green space in Leeds is managed by Leeds City Council, we expect the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy to reflect and support the Best Council Plan, which in turn feeds into the Vision outlined above. We believe parks and green spaces can contribute to the following priorities highlighted in the Best Council Plan:

- Health and Wellbeing – reducing health inequalities and supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles
- Inclusive Growth – supporting growth and investment, helping everyone benefit from the economy to their full potential
- Safe, Strong Communities – building thriving, resilient communities
- Culture – growing the cultural sector, ensuring that culture can be experienced by anyone, enhancing the image of Leeds through major events and attractions.
- Age-Friendly Leeds – making public spaces accessible, safe, clean and welcoming and promoting opportunities for older people to be healthy, active and included.
- Child-Friendly City – improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing, enhancing the city now and for future generations
- Sustainable Infrastructure – improving transport connections, improving air quality and reducing pollution, improving the resilience of the city's infrastructure and natural environment, reducing flooding and other risks from future climate change.





Other local strategies

We also envisage that the Parks and Green Spaces strategy will complement and support other important local strategies in Leeds such as:

- Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Leeds Children and Young Peoples' Plan
- Leeds Culture Strategy
- Leeds Core Strategy
- Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy
- Leeds Biodiversity Action Plan

Local thinking around parks

Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Forum (described above) has over 90 members from organisations such as *Friends, In Bloom*, Residents Associations and environmental charities. Every year they identify priorities to focus on, and these can be helpful for our understanding of the topics communities around parks and green spaces are interested in. Priorities they have highlighted since launch include: making green space accessible, finding funding, controlling litter and dog fouling, sharing best practice, defending threatened green space, promoting and developing green corridors, creating wildflower meadows and promoting the benefits of public green space to decision makers.

The importance of public parks and green spaces

As briefly mentioned above, there is now widespread acknowledgment that public green space is essential, particularly in urban locations, because of their contribution to the following key areas:

Health and wellbeing

The evidence for the mental and physical health benefits of spending time in green space is so convincing that it's now taken as fact. Research shows that regularly spending time in green space dramatically reduces incidence and severity of conditions that are a real concern in modern cities, such as obesity, heart disease, anxiety and depression, in people of all ages and backgrounds. In the 2015 report 'Planning a Healthy City', the Director of Public Health in Leeds stated that well-managed green space is essential for the health of the future population of Leeds.

In addition to the health benefits that simply spending time walking, or even just sitting, in a green space can bring, parks in Leeds provide a range of sports facilities and activities for those who are interested, including:

- 29 outdoor gyms
- 6 grass cricket pitches
- 7 Parkruns
- 302 football pitches (for a variety of age groups)





- 67 rugby pitches (for a variety of age groups)
- 64 bowling greens
- 24 skate parks
- 2 golf courses

Climate change control and mitigation

Parks and green spaces play a role in mitigating climate change by directly helping to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, reduce the effects of extreme weather events, and build more resilient habitats to help sustain species and food production. Trees and other vegetation remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store carbon; trees in particular help cool down urban centres and provide shade. Suitable vegetation helps address flood risks by storing and slowing down the flow of water, and providing a range of connected habitats to sustain species resilience and diversity. Green spaces also provide opportunities to use sustainable transport options such as cycling and walking safely.

An example of using green space to mitigate the effects of climate change can be found in the Wyke Beck Valley where a large scale flood alleviation scheme is currently under construction. The scheme includes slowing down the flow of water along the Wyke Beck to the River Aire, creating temporary water storage ponds at Killingbeck Fields as part of a 7 mile long green corridor and sustainable transport route in East Leeds.

Communities

Public green spaces are free and open to all (with the single exception, in Leeds, of Lotherton which is pay to enter). They are shared spaces where people of different backgrounds can meet and get to know one another. Evidence shows that the vast majority of people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds and physical abilities use parks, and that they can play a role in reducing feelings of social isolation in visitors. The research undertaken by the 2016 government inquiry into public parks (which surveyed over 13,000 people) suggested that parks play a key role in bringing communities together and providing a sense of local identity. In Leeds we are very lucky to have hundreds of volunteers helping out in parks and green spaces every year, with over 50 site based 'Friends' groups. Many people volunteer for the social benefit as well as a desire to improve their local environment.

Biodiversity

Public green spaces provide homes for much-loved wildlife from common species such as birds, to rarer, more threatened species, which include glow worms, great crested newts and harvest mice in Leeds. Local and national research shows that enjoying nature is one of the main reasons people visit public parks.

Clean air

Air pollution contributes to respiratory problems such as asthma and bronchitis and, as a large metropolitan city, it is a priority for Leeds to reduce levels of pollution in the air. Well-placed trees and shrubs can reduce the negative impact of pollution by filtering fine particles out of the air and absorbing gases such as sulphur dioxide. Green spaces offer respite from the more polluted air surrounding our roads; in fact, 'getting some fresh air' is the number one reason people give for visiting parks (UoL 2016).





Culture and heritage

Parks form a key part of the cultural backdrop of a city and its local areas. The parks in Leeds host over 650 events a year and are considered an excellent location for a range of community activities from food festivals to outdoor theatre. In August 2019, the parks hosted events for over 250,000 people (including the Ed Sheeran concerts and Leeds West Indian Carnival) – this snapshot of our parks in summer highlights the importance of parks to the city's cultural landscape.

Additionally, parks and other green spaces support a wealth of cultural and social history, such as at Temple Newsam, Kirkstall Abbey and Middleton Park (with its bell pits and historic railway).

The local economy

Public green space has been shown to benefit the local economy by attracting residents, businesses and visitors to the area (for example, Roundhay Park hosts approximately 9 million visits a year), and reducing the costs of poor health to the NHS.

A Fields in Trust study in 2018 estimated parks to have an equivalent economic value of £30.24 per person, per year based on several objective government measures of non-market goods including willingness to pay, life satisfaction and health.

The 2018 University of Leeds research suggested that businesses perceive the benefits of local parks to be; improved area attractiveness; improved employee health and wellbeing; reduced risk of flooding; tourism, and increased footfall.

The challenges

As well as acknowledging the benefits of public green space, a strategy for managing it for the next 10 years needs to address the following key challenges:

Budget

As highlighted in the HLF report 'State of UK Public Parks 2016,' there has recently been a significant national decline in core funding for parks, and this is reflected in Leeds where, as a result of central government budget cuts, our core funding has reduced by over 50% in the last 10 years. Clearly, it is a challenge to continue to manage parks to a high standard given such financial setbacks.

Improving and sustaining quality

As described in the review of delivery of the previous strategy (above) it has proved difficult to achieve our aim of getting all our community parks to Green Flag standard, and keeping them there in the context of 50% budget cuts in the last 10 years. In 2018, 70% of community parks met the standard.





Access

The 2016 University of Leeds research suggests that parks in Leeds are popular with people of all ages and backgrounds. However, there are two demographics that use parks slightly less than everyone else namely people over 75, and people with disabilities. This suggests that physical access (getting to and/or around parks) might be a problem – issues could be linked to public transport, path networks, availability of toilets and other facilities like benches.

Differential experience

Although parks are popular, and satisfaction with Leeds parks is high overall, the 2016 research suggests that experiences of parks do vary somewhat across the city.

To use the extremes by community committee as an example, the number of people saying they are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their main park varies from 64% to 98% (the average across the city is 90%) and the number of people rating their park as feeling 'very' or 'fairly' safe varies from 78% to 95% (average 91%).

Further analysis of the data suggests this is linked to park quality in the different areas, with the proportion of parks achieving LQP status ranging from 50% to 100%. Other hints as to the cause of the variations may be revealed in other sections of the Leeds Parks Survey 2016. For example anti-social behaviour and greater personal safety are *more* of a priority for respondents in those areas where satisfaction with parks is lower, whereas providing events and activities is *less* of a priority. This is definitely a subject that needs further investigation during the process of putting together the next strategy.

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour including dropping litter, dog fouling, riding motorised vehicles around parks, intimidating behaviour and other forms of crime can all be a problem in parks as they can in any public space. Although recent local research doesn't suggest this is a major problem in Leeds as a whole (for example, in 2016, 96% respondents rated their parks visits as very, or somewhat pleasant and only 1% said they felt unsafe when visiting their main park), we are aware of issues (for example litter left behind after sunny weekends) in particular locations. These have been raised by the general public and the Parks and Green Spaces Forum – and the 2016 survey did show that feelings of safety in parks varied quite widely throughout the city. The survey also showed that tackling anti-social behaviour and crime is a top 5 priority for the public as a whole, and the perceived importance of this also varies across the city.

Staff skills

The HLF study reported in 2016 suggests that the loss of core skills and expertise in parks management, horticulture, landscape design and ecology is a cause for concern nationally, and this is something we recognise locally. Furthermore, the skills required to manage parks are changing, with financial management, working with communities, being able to use modern technology such as social media, sourcing external funding and understanding how to manage parks for climate change all being much more important than they were a few years ago.





Although we have taken steps to remedy this situation by taking on apprentices year on year since 2012, finding people with the right skills and succession planning remains an ongoing challenge in managing high quality parks for the 21st century.

Emerging Themes

Based on our experience of delivering Parks and Countryside services and the last strategy, alongside communities, and our understanding of local and national research and policy around public green space as described above, it is proposed that the strategy for 2020 – 2030 focuses on the following emerging themes:

Community

Engaging communities and partners through communication, consultation, empowerment, partnerships, public events and volunteering. This ensures that the Council continues to manage parks and green spaces for local people, and also facilitates the mutual benefits that such an approach brings.

Quality

The current strategy prioritises getting all 63 community parks (which are the city's most popular, and accessible green spaces) up to Leeds Quality Park (LQP) standard, and it is proposed that this is retained as a priority going forward. LQP is based on an international measure of a good quality park called 'Green Flag' and includes fulfilling criteria like 'welcoming', 'clean and well maintained' and 'healthy, safe and secure'.

Over the last 10 years, it has become clear that residents, volunteer groups and local ward councillors all understand and support this approach, and it is backed up by research. The recent survey by University of Leeds showed that residents' favourite parks are more likely to have passed, than failed LQP, and that regular users of LQP parks report higher levels of satisfaction with them than do regular users of parks that do not achieve the LQP standard.

This approach also fits with the top 2 resident priorities for parks which were identified in the survey as: 'keeping parks clean' and 'keep existing facilities open or improve them'.

Another top 5 priority in the survey was tackling anti-social behaviour and crime in parks. Research by Cabespace showed that the quality of a local park has an impact on the behaviour of the people using it – with anti-social behaviour increasing as the quality of a park decreases, this then puts off regular users from visiting leading to a spiral of decline that we are keen to avoid.





Environment

Leeds City Council has declared a climate emergency.

Public green space has a lot to offer in terms of carbon storage, mitigating against extreme weather events, flood alleviation and building resilient habitats for wildlife and food production.

Additionally, according to the University of Leeds survey findings, 2 of the top 3 reasons people visit parks in Leeds are related to the environment – to ‘get some fresh air’ and to ‘enjoy nature’.

So, given the above, and local, national and international concerns with regards to the climate emergency, clean air and decline in biodiversity, it is proposed that managing our green spaces for the benefit of the natural environment is a priority going forward.

Health and Wellbeing

As described above, there is now a wealth of evidence demonstrating the health benefits of spending time in (or even just looking at!) the natural environment. Given current societal issues around non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity, along with mental illness such as anxiety and depression; one of the areas public green space can have the most positive impact is in the area of health. In particular, with the council’s green spaces being free to enter and locally based, there are opportunities to address health inequalities in the city through increasing visits to them, as well as boosting the health of our communities overall.

As a result, it is proposed that facilitating more visits to, and healthy activities at, parks and green spaces in Leeds should be a priority going forward.

Equality of Opportunity

For Leeds City Council, as highlighted in the ‘Best Council Plan,’ ensuring all residents of and visitors to Leeds have equal access to our services is a priority, and it is suggested that it should also be a key theme in the Parks and Green Space Strategy.

In practice, this not only means that the council works to ensure our sites are physically accessible for as many people as possible, but that they provide something for all our communities, no matter what their background, location or cultural interests.

‘Inclusive Growth’ is also a key aspect of this theme – in recent years, where possible, the Parks and Countryside service has targeted unrestricted funds (such as government grants) at green spaces in priority neighbourhoods to ensure they benefit from good quality parks since other locations can sometimes benefit more from developer contributions. We also allow concessions to deliver equal opportunities, for example, Leeds schools get free entry into Tropical World.





Sustainability

Currently, a key consideration for Parks and Countryside services across the country is sustainability - ensuring it is possible to provide good quality public green spaces, fit for the 21st Century, in the long term. There are several aspects to this theme including financial sustainability, workforce skills and site management plans.

As described above, securing sufficient funding to manage public green space to a high standard is a real challenge at the moment. Over the last decade Leeds City Council has adapted to this by developing a creative approach based around the concept of 'civic enterprise' (described on page 6). In Parks and Countryside this has been achieved through a range of means including enterprise, partnerships and external funding. For example, by developing a shop and café at the council's plant nursery, The Arium, an additional £1million income was generated in 2018-19 financial year compared with the best year at the previous nursery site at Red Hall. Another example is receiving £1.5 million in external funding from British Cycling, Sport England and others for the creation of Middleton Park Bike Hub (which hosted over 300,000 visits in its first year of opening!).

Leeds City Council recognises the value and popularity of public green space, and is committed to continuing to provide core funding, but given the ongoing funding challenges for local government, it is proposed to continue to explore and develop an innovative, collaborative, varied and enterprising approach to managing the Parks and Countryside service to facilitate delivery of the aim of getting all community parks up to LQP standard.

With regards to sustainability, it is also important that the Parks and Countryside service has a workforce with the skills required to look after the future parks and green spaces of Leeds, so offering apprenticeships, succession planning and upskilling the current workforce (e.g. training them in managing parks for climate change) are also important.

Another key aspect of ensuring quality green spaces are sustainable is having management plans for all parks, developed in partnership with local communities. So, it is proposed that simple management plans are produced highlighting priorities and potential improvements for each park.

Culture

As described above, parks can be a cultural hub for a city.

The University of Leeds survey showed that 'events and activities for local communities' was a top 5 priority for residents in relation to parks. And a local citizen's panel survey in 2013 revealed 'visiting a park' to be the most popular cultural activity in the city.

We propose that, going forward, parks endeavour to represent the culture of the communities around them, bring communities together and provide opportunities for people enjoy the cultural offer of the city.





What do you think?

Whilst we believe that the themes highlighted above are along the right lines, parks are first and foremost about their users (both residents and visitors) so we would like to thank-you for reading this document and find out what you think.

All views and comments on the future of public parks and green spaces in Leeds are welcome and, in particular, we are interested in your responses to the following questions:

1. Name
2. Organisation (if relevant)
3. Which park do you use most often?
4. Why are public parks and green spaces important to you (and/or your organisation)?
5. What do you think the best things about public parks and green spaces in Leeds are?
6. Are there any issues with parks and green spaces in Leeds that you would like to see addressed?
7. What are your views on how any issues you have highlighted might be addressed?
8. *(With reference to the emerging themes identified)* Do you think we've identified the right priorities for public parks and green spaces in the city over the next 10 years, or is there anything we should add, remove or replace?
9. Do you have any further comments and/or suggestions for Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside service when considering how best to manage parks and green spaces in future?

Closing date for consultation: 28 Feb 2020.

Please send your responses to us at the contact details below:

Contact us

- Post: *Parks and Green Space Strategy, Parks and Countryside, Hall Lane, Leeds, LS12 5HA*
- Email: greenspacestrategy@leeds.gov.uk





Sources of information

The document above was informed by the following reports, plans and websites:

[Cabespace, Decent Parks Decent Behaviour](#)

[Cabespace, Does Money Grow on Trees?](#)

[Government inquiry into public parks and response 2016-17](#)

[Green Flag standard](#)

[HLF State of UK public parks 2016](#)

[Leeds City Council, Best Council Plan](#)

[Planning a Healthy City 2014 - 15](#)

[Rethinking Parks](#)

[Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces 2018](#)

[University of Leeds, Leeds Parks Survey 2016](#)

[University of Leeds, Charitable Giving to Parks and Green Spaces 2018](#)

[Vision for Leeds 2011 – 2030](#)



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Report of Head of Democratic Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 12 September 2019

Subject: Work Schedule

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	☐ Yes ☒ No
Has consultation been carried out?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes ☒ No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

2. Background information

- 2.1 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as something that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.
- 3.2 Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 24th July 2019 are also attached as Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and identify any matter where specific scrutiny activity may be warranted, and therefore subsequently incorporated into the work schedule.

Developing the work schedule

- 3.3 When considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
- Avoid unnecessary duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue.
 - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.
 - Avoid pure “information items” except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review.
 - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings, taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place.
 - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year.
- 3.4 In addition, in order to deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to take a flexible approach and undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits, where necessary and appropriate. This flexible approach may also require additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board.

Developments since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.5 There are no significant developments to report since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting.

4. Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Vision for Scrutiny states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director(s) and Executive Member(s) about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include ‘to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council’s Equality and Diversity Scheme’.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 When considering areas of work, the Board is reminded that influencing climate change and sustainability should be a key area of focus.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
- 4.4.2 The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.

Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:

- Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
- Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 This report has no specific legal implications.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 This report has no specific risk management implications.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to consider the matters outlined in this report and agree (or amend) the overall work schedule (as presented at Appendix 1) as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2019/20.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Meeting Agenda for 13 June 2019	Meeting Agenda for 11 July 2019	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference and Sources of Work (DB) Performance Update (PM) Credit Union (Exec Board referral) (PSR)	Formal Response – Waste Inquiry Report (RT) Draft Waste Strategy for Consultation (PDS) Finance - Out-turn Report 2018/19 (PM) LASBT Review Update (PSR) –EXB on 26 June.	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Meeting Agenda for 12 September 2019	Meeting Agenda for 17 October 2019	Meeting Agenda for 14 November 2019
Climate Emergency Advisory Committee – Priorities and Work Programme (PSR) Parks and Greenspace Strategy – Early Consultation (PDS) Car Parking – current strategic position, how this supports climate change, implementation and enforcement of TRO's (x ref waste inquiry) (PSR)	Climate Change – Energy efficiency in Council House Stock (PSR) Standards in Private Rented Sector – Monitoring and Regulation (including energy efficiency) (PSR) Inquiry into Leeds' response to Grenfell - (RT)	Reducing Poverty and improving Financial Inclusion – Current position, challenges and response, including impact of Universal Credit, fuel poverty etc. (PSR) Priority Neighbourhoods update – impact and outcomes (PSR)
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

December	January	February
No Meeting	Meeting Agenda for 09 January 2020	No Meeting
	Performance report (PM) Financial Health Monitoring (PSR) and 2020/21 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) Best Council Plan Refresh? (PDS) Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling (RT) (Timing in accordance with inquiry recommendations)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

March	April	May
Meeting Agenda for 05 March 2020	Meeting Agenda for 16 April 2020	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Housing Repairs – Response Management, contractual arrangements and performance Progress update following working group 26 Sept 18. (PSR) Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts (RT) Development of Community Hubs – Update position (PSR)	Clean Air Zone – post implementation (January) review (PSR) Council House Growth Programme – progress report (PSR) Agree Scrutiny Inquiry Report(s) (if any)	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response

- Further progress on P&C Strategy required early 2020, to be considered in September.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 24TH JULY, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor J Blake in the Chair

Councillors A Carter, R Charlwood,
D Coupar, S Golton, J Lewis, L Mulherin,
J Pryor, M Rafique and F Venner

SUBSTITUTE: Councillor A Lamb

29 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-

- (a) That Appendices 2, 3 and 4 to the report entitled, 'Design and Cost Report: Development of a New Film / TV Studio', referred to in Minute No. 43 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the information within the appendices contains details regarding the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Council). It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the content of those appendices as being exempt from publication outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as disclosing it at this stage would prejudice the Council's commercial position and that of third parties;
- (b) That Appendix 2 to the report entitled, 'Creative and Digital Workspace Fund', referred to in Minute No. 44 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the information within the appendix provides the identity and investment plans of the Hope House social investors, and its release may prejudice their commercial interests. Withholding that information is considered to outweigh the public interest benefit of its release, as there is a risk that if the details of the social investors are made public, they may withdraw their support from the project.

30 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared at the meeting.

31 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th June 2019 be approved as a correct record.

32 Substitute Member

During the Board's consideration of agenda item 13 (Council Housing Growth Property Acquisitions Programme) Councillor A Carter left the meeting. At this point, under the provisions of Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 3.1.6, Councillor A Lamb was invited to attend the remainder of the meeting on behalf of Councillor A Carter. (Minute No. 40 refers).

RESOURCES

33 Financial Health Monitoring 2019/20 - Quarter 1

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which presented the projected financial health position of the Authority following the first quarter of the financial year.

Members welcomed the report's recommendation to submit proposals to the September Executive Board meeting to address the projected overspend within the Children and Families directorate.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information regarding the budget pressure within the Children and Families directorate which related to Children's Centre fee income, with Members receiving detail on the important role played by the centres and the actions being taken in Leeds regarding the early years offer provided. Further to this, it was requested that information be submitted to a future Board which presented Leeds' position regarding the provision and take up of key Children's Services during the current challenging financial climate, when compared with other Local Authorities.

The Board also received further information regarding the currently projected overspend in the waste management service, which it was noted in part related to the ongoing refuse review being undertaken, with the key role of Scrutiny in that review process being highlighted. It was further highlighted that despite the current projected overspend in waste, overall the directorate was projecting a balanced budget.

Members also discussed the nature of the monthly financial health monitoring report to the Board, the strategic level of data it presented to Members, which it was noted could be supplemented with Member briefings where appropriate, and the key role the report played in helping the Executive regularly monitor the financial position of the Authority. In relation to this, emphasis was also placed upon the work which continued to be undertaken behind such budgetary data by officers who looked to ensure that the Council's services were provided as effectively as possible.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the projected financial position of the Authority as at Quarter 1 of the financial year, be noted;
- (b) That the Director of Children and Families be requested to identify proposals to address the projected overspend in that directorate, with such proposals being incorporated into the next Financial Health Monitoring report to be submitted to Executive Board in September 2019;
- (c) That information be submitted to a future Board which presented Leeds' position regarding the provision and take up of key Children's Services during the current challenging financial climate, when compared with other Local Authorities.

34 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report presenting the Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy which had been extended to cover the five year period 2020/21 – 2024/25 for the Board's approval.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board noted that the capital programme was an area that would continue to be monitored and robustly reviewed. Members welcomed the clear presentation in the report of the current position regarding the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Also, it was noted that the approach being taken in regard to the MRP had been previously agreed at full Council, and in response to a Member, it was highlighted that the effective management of the Council's assets was a key consideration, including any assets deemed to be surplus.

Members also highlighted the importance of the Leeds' Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bid, and the significant impact that a successful bid would have upon the city.

Responding to a Member's comments, the Board was advised that the Council would continue to liaise with, and make representations to Government on key issues, such as looking to gain the latest information on funding opportunities and policy, whilst further detail on the Local Government Funding Settlement was awaited.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the 2020/21 – 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Strategy for both General Fund services and the Housing Revenue Account, as detailed within the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That it be noted that the budget saving proposals to address the estimated budget gaps will be brought to Executive Board in advance of the Initial Budget Proposals to be received by Executive Board in December 2019;

- (c) That it be noted that the Chief Officer (Financial Services) will be responsible for the implementation of the resolutions arising from the submitted report;
- (d) That the adoption of the revenue and capital principles, as set out in Annex 1 to the submitted report, which must be complied with in respect of the arrangements for the financial management of both the Revenue budget and the Capital Programme, be approved.

35 Capital Programme 2019/20 - 2022/23 Quarter 1 Update

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report providing an update on the Council's Capital Programme 2019/20 – 2022/23, as at Quarter 1 of the current financial year.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That an injection of £373.8k in relation to Capital Receipts, which will be utilised by Ward Councillors under the Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme (CRIS) as detailed at Appendix C to the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That the latest position on the General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that resolution (a) above, regarding the injection of £378.3k of funding will be implemented by the Chief Officer (Financial Services).

36 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance and Assurance Report

Further to Minute No. 179, 18th April 2018, the Director of Resources and Housing submitted a report which reviewed the Council's performance in respect of health, safety and wellbeing matters over the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. The report provided related assurances where appropriate, highlighted the improvements which had been made in this area and identified the challenges ahead.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member for Resources highlighted that he had requested that further work be undertaken on the increase in verbal / physical assaults upon Council staff, as detailed within the annual report.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the submitted report be noted, with it being recognised that a robust, yet proportionate approach to risk management within the Council continues to be applied.

CLIMATE CHANGE, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

37 HS2 Phase 2b Design Refinement Consultation - Proposed Response

The Director of City Development submitted a report presenting an update on HS2 Ltd.'s proposed route refinement to the Phase 2b route in Leeds, and which sought approval for the principles of the proposed City Council response to the design refinement consultation exercise being undertaken.

Responding to a Member's comments, the Board was advised that the specific consultation exercise, as detailed within the submitted report, was being driven by the issue of cost efficiency and build ability when considering the line of route for the southern approach into Leeds station.

Also in response to a Member's comments, it was highlighted that should any residents affected by the HS2 proposals not be able to access related information, then that should be brought to the attention of HS2 or the Council, who could raise it with HS2 on their behalf.

Responding to a Member's concerns and comments, which included the need for the provision of high quality mitigation in affected communities, further information was provided to the Board. This included clarification on what the specific consultation exercise, as detailed within the report covered, how the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the South Bank presented the Council's ambition for that part of the city and how the SPD process could help to embed the Council's vision for the line of route into the station. Following this, officers offered to provide the Member in question with a briefing on related matters.

Also, Members were advised of the active role that the Council continued to play in terms of the level of feedback and challenge it provided to HS2, where appropriate.

The Board also discussed the benefits of HS2 for the city and the region, whilst the importance of the Council continuing to monitor the national position in respect of HS2 was highlighted.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the principles of the proposed City Council response to the consultation exercise, as outlined within sections 3.9 to 3.21 of the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That the necessary authority be delegated to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development to enable the Director to finalise and submit the Council's formal consultation response to the HS2 Ltd. Phase 2b design refinement consultation by the consultation deadline.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Golton required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

38 Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme: Alwoodley Park and Ride & Temple Green Park and Ride

The Director of City Development submitted a report which provided an update on the progress of delivering significant schemes during 2019/20 under the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP) programme

of funding. Also, the report specifically detailed proposals regarding a new Alwoodley Park and Ride site and the expansion of the Temple Green Park and Ride site.

Responding to Members' enquiries, the Board received further information and assurance regarding the future provision of bus services in Leeds by First Bus, which would accompany the ongoing development of related infrastructure.

Also, the Board received further detail on the demand forecasting which was undertaken ahead of any Park and Ride proposals being made, with reassurance being provided that there was a robust case for the Alwoodley proposal. With regard to the proposed bus service for that site, the Board received an update, with it being noted that a separate procurement exercise would be undertaken by West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Members welcomed the comprehensive Climate Emergency information contained within the submitted report.

It was requested that information be submitted to Board Members in the future which presented the initial findings following the introduction of cleaner buses on selected routes.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress made since April 2016 in developing proposals for the relevant projects benefiting from LPTIP funding, together with the subsequent public consultation responses received, be noted;
- (b) That the submission of a planning application for the new Alwoodley Park and Ride site be approved, and that subject to the granting of planning permission and the funding approval of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, approval also be given for the expenditure of up to £14.03m from the LPTIP Capital Programme which will carry out detail design and construction of the site;
- (c) That the submission of a planning application for the expansion of the Temple Green Park and Ride site be approved, and subject to the granting of planning permission and the funding approval of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, approval also be given for the expenditure of £5.966m (the cost of the Business Case minus the purchase of the land which has previously been approved) from the LPTIP Capital Programme which will carry out detail design and construction of the site. In addition, the Board's approval also be given for an injection of £431,978.55 from S106 Developer Contributions;
- (d) That subject to ongoing consultation with the relevant Executive Member, as appropriate, it be noted that the Chief Officer for Highways and Transportation will be responsible for the implementation of the resolutions as outlined above.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Carter required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

COMMUNITIES

39 Annual Report on the Strategic Approach to Migration in Leeds

Further to Minute No. 38, 25th July 2018, the Director of Communities and Environment submitted a report which provided an annual update on migration activity being delivered both on a citywide level and also with supported migrant populations in Leeds. The report also provided an update on key migration population trends in the past year and on national policy changes, specifically on the approach in place to support EU citizens living in Leeds obtain settled status.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the annual update on migration activity taking place in Leeds, as detailed within the submitted report, be received and endorsed;
- (b) That it be noted that the Director of Communities and Environment and the Executive Member for Communities are responsible for leading this work through the Council's 'Stronger Communities' Programme, with it also being noted that the Chief Officer (Communities) is responsible for leading on the work of the Leeds Strategic Migration Board;
- (c) That a further update on the progress being made in this area be submitted to the Board in July 2020.

40 Council Housing Growth - Property Acquisitions Programme

Further to Minute No. 22, 26th June 2019, the Director of Resources and Housing submitted a report which sought the necessary 'authority to spend' to support a new 2-3 year programme of up to 180 property acquisitions (and refurbishments), which followed the earlier injection into the Capital Programme at the Council meeting in February 2019. In addition, the report also sought the Board's approval of the updated Property Purchase Policy.

Members discussed the approach and criteria being proposed. During the discussion, emphasis was placed upon the need to ensure that the buying back of a property provided value for money and was a viable investment, whilst on the other hand, a concern was also raised about ensuring that the approach was not too restrictive.

Responding to Members' comments, emphasis was placed upon the need for any purchases to deliver value for money and enable the property to be brought up to the desired standard within the proposed 'per property' budget cap. It was clarified that the approach being taken was to focus on repurchasing former Council properties which had been bought under 'Right to Buy' provisions and that the 'Right of First Refusal' protocol had been identified as the main means to achieve this.

Reference was also made to the establishment of a Local Housing Company and the benefits that that would bring when looking to address housing need in the city.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress made to date in terms of the property acquisitions, as set out in the submitted report, be noted, with the establishment of the project, the supporting processes, resources and the governance arrangements also being noted;
- (b) That 'Authority to Spend' of £22.5m to the Council Housing Growth Programme which will support a new 2-3 year programme of c.150-200 property acquisitions (and refurbishments), following the injection of the Capital required at February 2019 Full Council, be granted, and that the Board's support also be provided for any funding bids which are required to optimise the funding mix for these acquisitions;
- (c) That it be noted that the acquisitions (and refurbishments) will be funded via a combination of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding, blended with either retained 'Right to Buy' receipts or Homes England Grant; and that the necessary authority to approve the final funding mix for the acquisition (and refurbishment costs) be delegated to the Director of Resources and Housing;
- (d) That the current budget cap of £145,000 per property, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted, and that the necessary authority to amend this in line with future fluctuations in housing prices be delegated to the Director of Resources and Housing;
- (e) That the updated Property Purchase Policy, as presented at Appendix A to the submitted report, be approved, and that the implementation of the Policy be delegated to the Director of Resources and Housing.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Golton required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

(During the Board's consideration of this item Councillor A Carter left the meeting. At this point, under the provisions of Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rule 3.1.6, Councillor A Lamb was invited to attend the remainder of the meeting on behalf of Councillor A Carter)

41 To consider the future of the two Highways high rise housing blocks in the Killingbeck area of east Leeds

The Director of Resources and Housing submitted a report on proposals regarding the future of the two Highways housing high rise blocks in Killingbeck, Leeds. The report outlined how the blocks had exceeded their original design life and required significant investment to bring them up to the standards that the Council wished for its residents.

The submitted report and the appended options appraisal document set out several potential options for progressing this matter, as follows, with Option 3 being recommended to the Board:-

Option 1: Clearance and demolition over the next ten years;

Option 2: Clearance and demolition of the site;

Option 3: Clearance and demolition and redevelopment of the site with new build Council homes;

Option 4: Refurbishment of the blocks.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information on how the proposal to demolish the site and replace with new build properties was more financially and environmentally sustainable over a 60 year period than the proposal to refurbish the existing buildings. It was also highlighted that the building of new properties enabled the standard of accommodation to be improved in line with the Council's ambitions.

Confirmation was provided that consultation had been undertaken with the local Ward Councillors and the tenants who were supportive of the proposals.

Members' comments regarding the Climate Emergency text within the submitted report and the need for more comprehensive information to be added in future was acknowledged. It was highlighted that such comments would be taken into consideration when drafting future Board reports, however, it was emphasised that Leeds was one of the first Council's to routinely incorporate such information into its Executive reports. Also, it was noted that some subject areas were currently easier to provide a forecast or measure potential impact than others, a situation which would evolve as research in this field developed.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report and the appended options appraisal document be noted;
- (b) That the properties of 62-121 Highways, Killingbeck, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS14 6AS and 1-61 Highways, Killingbeck, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS14 6AT be declared as being surplus to requirements;
- (c) That the Board's agreement be given to take out of charge the properties of 62-121 Highways, Killingbeck, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS14 6AS and 1-61 Highways, Killingbeck, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS14 6AT;
- (d) That the Board's agreement be given for the buildings on the site to be safely demolished, thus creating a clear site for future use;
- (e) That the serving of an initial demolition notice, in line with Housing Act processes, in respect of tenants wishing to exercise their 'Right to Buy', be approved;

- (f) That the Board's agreement be given for the site being developed as part of the Housing Growth programme, enabling new Council housing to be built on that site in the future;
- (g) That it be noted that a separate report will follow from the Council Housing Growth Programme, which will detail and request approval for the proposed replacement housing scheme.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND CULTURE

42 Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy 2018-2023 - One Year On

Further to Minute No. 134, 19th December 2018, the Director of City Development submitted a report presenting the appended 'Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy: One Year On' report, which set out the progress which had been made on the Inclusive Growth agenda over the past 12 months.

Members highlighted the importance of the business sector in the continued development of the Strategy, with a Member emphasising the Government's national role in the stimulation of growth.

Emphasis was placed upon the need for the strategy to promote environmentally sustainable growth, in addition to it promoting inclusive growth, with the example of strong local economies being given as a way of encouraging such sustainable growth.

Members acknowledged the importance of the work being undertaken on creating bespoke performance indicators for Leeds, to ensure effective measurement of progress in this area.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted report, together with the 'Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy - One Year On' report, as presented at Appendix A, be noted, its findings be welcomed, and that the Board's congratulations be extended to all the people involved in delivering the projects that benefit Inclusive Growth across the city;
- (b) That agreement be given to support the new 12 'Big Idea Ambassadors' initiative and also the Inclusive Growth Delivery Partnership;
- (c) That it be noted that the Director of City Development is the lead officer for the implementation of the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy.

43 Design and Cost Report: Development of New Film / TV Studio

The Director of City Development submitted a report which outlined plans to develop a new large scale Film and TV studio in the city, located on Whitehall Road to the west of the city centre, which would look to deliver a significant increase in capacity to film high end TV and feature films in the city.

The submitted report set out several options regarding the Council's potential involvement in progressing this matter, with the report proposing that actions be taken in line with Option 3, as follows:-

- Option 1: The Council designing and constructing a new facility at a new site;
- Option 2: The Council taking a head lease of the Polestar site and financing the fit out works for an operator;
- Option 3: The Council facilitating the delivery of a studio through a property transaction and a loan;
- Option 4: No Council involvement.

Following consideration of Appendices 2, 3 and 4 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which were considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the positive response from the Film / TV sector following the Channel 4 announcement be welcomed, and that the progress being made to maximise the economic benefits associated with Channel 4 locating to the city, be noted;
- (b) That agreement be given for the Council to take steps to facilitate the delivery of a new TV and Film studio at the former Polestar Petty Factory at Whitehall Road, with the economic and regeneration benefits of the Council doing so, being noted;
- (c) That agreement be given for the Director of City Development, in consultation with the Chief Officer (Financial Services), the Executive Member for Resources and the Leader of the Council:-
 - (i) To develop and enter into a head lease with NIB Pension Fund, as per the principles and Heads of Terms, as contained within exempt appendices 2 and 4 of the submitted report; and
 - (ii) To develop and enter into a lease and other legal agreements with Versa (Whitehall Road) Limited, as per the principles and Heads of Terms, as contained within exempt appendices 2 and 3 of the submitted report;
- (d) That agreement be given to inject £1.6m into Capital Scheme Number 33054/TVF/000 in order to finance a loan to Versa (Whitehall Road) Limited for external acoustic works; and that the necessary authority be delegated to the Director of City Development and the Chief Officer (Financial Services) to enable the Director and Chief Officer to provide 'authority to spend' up to that amount in order to provide the loan, subject to the completion of legal agreements with Versa (Whitehall Road) Limited.

44 Creative and Digital Workspace Fund

The Director of City Development submitted a report regarding the results of independent market research which had been undertaken into the provision of

workspace for the creative and digital sector in the city centre/city fringe. The report sought approval for a number of investments which would look to sustain and enhance the provision of creative workspace in locations where this provision was considered to be at risk.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information on the ways in which those creative businesses identified in the report would encourage Inclusive Growth within the communities where they were located in line with the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Following consideration of Appendix 2 to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the findings of the Council's research together with the feedback received from the recent 'call for evidence', which had been undertaken, be noted;
- (b) That approval be given for the decision to use the Creative and Digital Workspace Fund to support projects which enable the not-for-profit sector to refurbish and secure the long term future of affordable workspace for creative industries in city centre / city fringe locations;
- (c) That subject to the information contained within exempt Appendix 2 to the submitted report, approval in principle be given for the Council's support for the first three projects: namely, Leeds Media Centre; the Leeds Arts Hostel and Hope House, as follows:-
 - (i) **Leeds Media Centre:** To provide a grant of £800,000 to the Council's operator, Unity Property Services Limited, (with £300,000 allocated from the Creative and Digital Workspace Fund and £500,000 funded directly by the Council), which will be offset by an increase to the rent paid to the Council by the Unity Property Services Limited. Unity Property Services Limited will then use this £800,000 capital contribution as match funding to deliver a £1.6m refurbishment and reconfiguration of the premises;
 - (ii) **Leeds Arts Hostel:** To provide up to £150,000 grant to East Street Arts to support the strategic relocation of the Leeds Arts Hostel to Mabgate;
 - (iii) **Hope House:** To provide up to £450,000 grant to Music and Arts Production Leeds in order to secure the long term future of Hope House as a creative workspace and as a contribution towards the proposed refurbishment;
- (d) That it be noted that the Director for City Development will be responsible for the implementation of the resolutions, as detailed above;

- (e) That based on resolution (c)(i-iii) above, approval be given for the necessary authority to be delegated to the Director of City Development to enable the Director to finalise the detailed terms before entering into the new contracts and funding agreements associated with Leeds Media Centre, the Leeds Arts Hostel and Hope House;
- (f) That it be noted that the Director for City Development will seek to support further requests for assistance to sustain and improve the provision of creative workspace through the remaining £100,000 in the Creative and Digital Workspace Fund and the remaining funds in the Tech Hub Fund;
- (g) That approval be given for the decisions taken by Executive Board in respect of resolutions (c)(i) and (c)(iii) above, to be exempted from the Call In process, for the reasons of urgency, as set out in paragraphs 4.5.5 - 4.5.8 of the submitted report, with it being noted that resolution (c)(ii) (above) will remain eligible for Call In.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, resolutions (c)(i) and (c)(iii) (above) were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (g) above, and for the reasons as detailed within sections 4.5.5 – 4.5.8 of the submitted report)

ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

45 A Waste Strategy for the City of Leeds

The Director of Communities and Environment submitted a report which presented for the purposes of the Board's approval a new waste strategy for the city, as an interim strategy until 2021.

As part of the introduction to the report, the Executive Member for Environment and Active Lifestyles highlighted the current position nationally with regard to waste, the reasons why an interim approach had been identified as the appropriate way forward and highlighted the role that the Council would play in the delivery of the city strategy.

Responding to Members' concerns which included the speed at which the Council was progressing this issue, the Board was provided with an update on the Government's current position on this matter and how an interim strategy for Leeds had been developed in order to provide some interim commitments and prepare for the inevitable national requirements that will follow in this area, as and when they were agreed by Government. The Board was advised that a longer term strategy would follow when the national position was clearer.

It was noted that a cross-party Member working group had been involved in the development of the interim strategy, which was alongside the

consideration that Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) continued to give to the matter. Emphasis was also placed upon the proposed 'Key Commitments' of the Council which formed part of the strategy, as detailed within the report.

With regard to the actions being undertaken in respect of the refuse review, Members received an update on this, with it being noted that it had developed into a much more comprehensive piece of work, thanks to the significant contributions from the Scrutiny Board.

Following a further update on the work that continued to be undertaken in this area, it was requested that a report be submitted to a future Board providing an update on how the waste agenda had evolved in recent years, the refreshed approach being taken across the city and how the Council was developing its work with groups, such as young people, in order to harness the appetite there was for this agenda.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That in noting the contents of the submitted report, the interim waste strategy for the city, as presented at paragraph 3.5, be approved, and that a comprehensive updated waste strategy be submitted to the Board for consideration by 2021;
- (b) That a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Board providing an update on how the waste agenda had evolved in recent years, the refreshed approach being taken across the city and how the Council was developing its work with groups, such as young people, in order to harness the appetite there was for this agenda.

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND ADULTS

46 Integrated Market Position Statement

The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report providing an update on the development of an Integrated Market Position Statement in respect of the adult social care market. The report also sought approval of the appended Position Statement for the purposes of publication.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Integrated Market Position Statement, as appended to the submitted report, be approved for the purposes of publication.
- (b) That it be noted that the Director of Adults and Health is responsible for the publication of this document following the Board's approval and following the expiry of the Call In process.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

47 Review of Leeds Child Safeguarding Partnerships

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided an update on the progress made regarding the review of child safeguarding partnerships in the city and which set out the direction of travel for the future.

Responding to a Member's enquiries, the Board was advised that arrangements were currently on track for proposals to be implemented by September 2019. Also, assurance was provided on the safeguarding measures that would continue and be built upon in terms of cross-boundary provision.

Members also highlighted the need to ensure that the effectiveness of the proposals were monitored, with agreement being given that it would be appropriate for both Executive Board and the relevant Scrutiny Board to have a role in that monitoring process.

RESOLVED – That the new arrangements, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted, with it also being noted that a further report will be provided to Executive Board on the final arrangements in the Autumn.

LEARNING, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

48 Equality Improvement Priorities Progress Report 2018 - 2019

Further to Minute No. 48, 25th July 2018, the Director of Communities and Environment submitted a report presenting the annual progress which had been made against the Council's Equality Improvement Priorities for 2018 – 2022. The report also outlined the reviewed, amended and completed priorities, as detailed at appendix 1 to the submitted report.

The Board noted the suggestions made in respect of the report, which were that future annual reports be submitted to the Members' Equality Group for consideration prior to being submitted to Executive Board and that it would be useful to show comparisons in the report with those that did not have a protected characteristic when presenting relevant data.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Equality Improvement Priorities Annual Report 2018 – 2019, as appended to the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That approval be given to sign off the completed priorities for 2018/19;
- (c) That the new and amended priorities for 2019/20, be approved;
- (d) That a further report on such matters be submitted to the Board in July 2020;

- (e) That it be noted that the Director of Communities and Environment is responsible for the implementation of decisions made by Executive Board in respect of the submitted report.

49 Design & Cost Report for the Learning Places expansion of Beeston Hill St Luke's Church of England Primary School

Further to Minute No. 161, 21st March 2018, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided background information in respect to the proposed expansion at Beeston Hill St Luke's Church of England Primary School, and which sought approval to incur expenditure necessary to support the proposed project and provided further context in respect of any associated risk and cost implications.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the necessary 'authority to spend' on the Learning Places Programme for Beeston Hill St Luke's Church of England Primary School, at a total value of £4,295,000 and as detailed within the submitted report, be approved;
- (b) That the expenditure of £4,295,000 from capital scheme number 32737/BEE/000 for the construction work and associated fees for the expansion of Beeston Hill St Luke's Church of England Primary School, which is necessary to enable occupation from September 2020, be approved;
- (c) That the estimated scheme cost of £4,295,000 be noted, which includes: £3,220,000 for construction works, professional fees and survey costs of £485,000, £75,000 for loose furniture & equipment to support the expansion to 2 Form Entry and the setting up of Primary and Secondary SEN (Special Educational Needs) provision, £515,000 for supporting costs, together with a client held contingency commensurate to the scale and complexity of the project;
- (d) That it be noted that the officers responsible for the implementation of such matters are the Head of Service Learning Systems and the Head of Projects and Programmes, Asset Management & Regeneration, and that the necessary authority be delegated to those officers to enable them to enter into all other agreements required to deliver this project.

50 Outcome of consultation and request to approve funding to permanently increase learning places at Horsforth School from September 2022

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which presented a proposal brought forward to meet the Local Authority's duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. Specifically, the submitted report detailed the outcomes from a consultation exercise regarding a proposal to expand secondary school provision at Horsforth School and which sought a decision to fund the delivery of a scheme which would create the additional learning places required.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the outcome of the consultation undertaken on the proposal to permanently expand Horsforth School from a capacity of 1125 to 1425 students by increasing the admission number in year 7 from 225 to 285, with effect from September 2022, be noted;
- (b) That the outcome of initial feasibility work, be noted, and that provisional approval be granted for the authority to spend (ATS) of £4.8m to deliver the proposed permanent expansion at Horsforth School;
- (c) That it be noted that the implementation of the proposals detailed are subject to funding being agreed based upon the outcome of further detailed design work and planning applications, as indicated at section 4.4.1 of the submitted report, with it also being noted that the proposal has been brought forward in time for places to be delivered for 2022;
- (d) That it be noted that the Head of Learning Systems is the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters.

51 The 3As Strategy: Improving the attendance, attainment and achievement of children and young people in Leeds

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report providing an update on the development of the Council's '3A's Strategy', which focussed upon the attendance, attainment and achievement of children and young people in Leeds, and which formed part of the overall drive to support all children and young people in having a successful start in life.

Following a detailed introduction, Members welcomed the submitted report.

With regard to the Local Government Association Peer Review, as referenced in the report, it was requested that the findings from that review be shared as appropriate, to enable Members to identify positive actions in this field which they could help progress in their local communities.

It was noted that issues relating to the 3A's Strategy were scheduled to be submitted to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in the Autumn, and following a reference being made to the related issue of fixed term exclusions, it was noted that the issue of all exclusions together with related matters was also to be considered by the Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the development of the '3A's Strategy', as outlined within the submitted report and as appended, be noted;
- (b) That the comments made by the Board regarding ways in which the Council as a whole can support the Strategy, be noted;

- (c) That it be noted that the lead officer for the '3A's Strategy' is the Deputy Director for Children and Families (Learning).

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 26TH JULY 2019

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00 P.M., FRIDAY, 2ND AUGUST 2019