

Notice of Meeting

CABINET

Tuesday, 11 July 2017 - 7:00 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Barking

Members: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair); Cllr Saima Ashraf (Deputy Chair) and Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair); Cllr Sade Bright, Cllr Laila M. Butt, Cllr Evelyn Carpenter, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Lynda Rice, Cllr Bill Turner and Cllr Maureen Worby

Date of publication: 3 July 2017

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Chief Executive

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AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declaration of Members' Interests**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.
3. **Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2017 (Pages 3 - 10)**
4. **Budget Monitoring 2017/18 - April to May (Month 2) (Pages 11 - 22)**
5. **Medium Term Financial Strategy Update 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Pages 23 - 37)**
6. **Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto (Pages 39 - 66)**
7. **Equality and Diversity Strategy (Pages 67 - 125)**

8. **Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (Pages 127 - 245)**
9. **Debt Management Performance and Write-Offs 2016/17 (Quarter 4) (Pages 247 - 270)**
10. **Teresa Greene Community Centre: New Lease Arrangement (Pages 271 - 279)**
Appendix C to the report is in the private section of the agenda at Item 14.
11. **Barking and Dagenham Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017 - 2019 (Pages 281 - 308)**
Appendix 2 to the report is in the private section of the agenda at Item 15.
12. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
13. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Cabinet, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The items below are in the private part of the agenda as they contain information which is exempt from publication under Regulation 20(2)(a) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

14. **Appendix C: Teresa Greene Community Centre: New Lease Arrangement (Page 309)**
15. **Appendix 2: Barking and Dagenham Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017 - 2019 (Page 311)**
16. **Becontree Heath Redevelopment - Final Commercial Terms (Pages 313 - 326)**
17. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**



Our Vision for Barking and Dagenham

One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity

Our Priorities

Encouraging civic pride

- Build pride, respect and cohesion across our borough
- Promote a welcoming, safe, and resilient community
- Build civic responsibility and help residents shape their quality of life
- Promote and protect our green and public open spaces
- Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child

Enabling social responsibility

- Support residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community
- Protect the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe
- Ensure everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it
- Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential
- Fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families

Growing the borough

- Build high quality homes and a sustainable community
- Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities
- Support investment in housing, leisure, the creative industries and public spaces to enhance our environment
- Work with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs
- Enhance the borough's image to attract investment and business growth

Well run organisation

- A digital Council, with appropriate services delivered online
- Promote equalities in the workforce and community
- Implement a smarter working programme, making best use of accommodation and IT
- Allow Members and staff to work flexibly to support the community
- Continue to manage finances efficiently, looking for ways to make savings and generate income
- Be innovative in service delivery

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MINUTES OF CABINET

Tuesday, 20 June 2017
(7:02 - 8:54 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf (Deputy Chair), Cllr Dominic Twomey (Deputy Chair), Cllr Sade Bright, Cllr Laila M. Butt, Cllr Evelyn Carpenter, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Lynda Rice, Cllr Bill Turner and Cllr Maureen Worby

9. Minute's Silence

A minute's silence was observed at the request of the Leader in memory of those affected by the most recent tragic events at London Bridge, Grenfell Tower and the Finsbury Park Mosque.

10. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

11. Minutes (23 May 2017)

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2017 were confirmed as correct.

12. Revenue and Capital Final Outturn 2016/17

Further to Minute 4 (23 May 2017), the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment introduced a report on the Council's final revenue and capital outturn position for 2016/17.

The Cabinet Member advised that the revenue position was largely unchanged from the provisional position reported last month, with some minor corrections and adjustments improving the position by £0.087m to give a year-end overspend of £4.853m. The General Fund reserve, taking into account the overspend and transfers between reserve budgets, was at £19.3m while the Housing Revenue Account produced a surplus of £2.186m, of which £0.266m would be used as a contribution to the Capital Programme and £1.920m transferred to the HRA reserve.

The Dedicated Schools Grant showed a year-end deficit of £5.773m, mostly attributable to Schools' balances, while the Capital Programme outturn was £173.070m against the revised budget of £184.662m. In respect of the latter, the Cabinet Member referred to a number of carry-forward and reprofiling requests relating to capital projects as well as similar arrangements in respect of a number of revenue budgets.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the outturn position for 2016/17 of the Council's General Fund revenue budget and Housing Revenue Account as at 31 March 2017, as detailed in section 2 and Appendix A of the report;

- (ii) Approve the requests for carry forwards and transfers to and from reserves as set out in Appendix B of the report;
- (iii) Note the outturn for the Dedicated Schools Grant at 31 March 2017 as detailed in section 3 of the report;
- (iv) Note the outturn position for 2016/17 of the Council's capital budget at 31 March 2017, as detailed in section 4 of the report;
- (v) Approve the requests for capital carry forwards and the reprofiling of the 2017/18 Capital Programme as set out in section 4 and Appendix C of the report; and
- (vi) Note the position of the Council's General Fund and other reserves at 31 March 2017, as set out in Appendix D of the report.

13. Corporate Delivery Plan 2016/17 - Quarter 4 Performance Reporting

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Performance and Delivery introduced the corporate performance framework report for the fourth quarter of the 2016/17 financial year.

The report covered 50 key accountabilities and 40 key performance indicators (KPIs). The Cabinet Member referred to the evolving nature of the framework and highlighted several of the areas of above-target performance as well as aspects that continued to require improvement. Issues that arose during the course of the discussions included:

- (a) The percentage of respondents who believed that the Council listened to the concerns of local residents (KPI 2) – It was acknowledged that performance levels of 53% in 2015/16 and 54% in 2016/17 required improvement, particularly in view of recent events that had highlighted the importance of Councils responding to residents' concerns;
- (b) Health-related Indicators – Reference was made to a number of the KPIs, including the percentage uptake of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination, that were consistently below target levels and the steps being taken to improve performance. The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration advised that MMR uptake levels had been affected on a national level by the misinformation that was circulating several years ago relating to the potential side-effects of the vaccination. However, a more significant contributory factor for the poor performance in a number of areas locally, including MMR vaccinations and over 40's health checks, was a failure on the part of primary care providers to promote the services despite the funding being in place. The Cabinet Member advised that she had raised her concerns with the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group and was also pushing for greater accountability and sanctions against General Practitioners that were failing to deliver.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note progress against the key accountabilities as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) Note performance against the KPIs as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

14. Corporate Plan 2017/18

The Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement introduced the Council's Corporate Plan for 2017/18, which set out the Council's vision and priorities for the next 12 months together with details of key achievements over the past three years, the Council's transformation programme and the performance monitoring regime for 2017/18.

Issues raised during the discussions included:

- a) The difficult financial positions that many Councils found themselves in as a result of the Government's ongoing austerity programme and the need for that programme to be halted in view of the outcome of the General Election;
- b) The positive and innovative approach adopted by the Council in meeting the financial challenges imposed on it by Government;
- c) The need for the Cabinet portfolio responsibilities to fully reflect the cross-cutting nature of the key performance indicators;
- d) The need for effective publicity to ensure that local residents and staff were aware of the new Corporate Plan and the Council's achievements and vision for the future; and
- e) The addition of the Docklands Light Railway extension in the list of transport and infrastructure developments within the Borough.

The Cabinet **resolved** to recommend the Assembly to approve the Corporate Plan 2017/18.

15. Treasury Management Annual Report 2016/17

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment introduced the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2016/17 which set out the key areas of performance during the year.

The Cabinet Member advised that investment income for the year was £4.6m compared to the budget of £2.1m, while the Council's average interest return of 1.42% for 2016/17 was 0.83% higher than the average London Peer Group return and 0.73% higher than the Local Authority average return. The Cabinet Member added, however, that the current volatility stemming from the General Election result was likely to have a negative effect on markets.

The Cabinet **resolved** to recommend the Assembly to:

- (i) Note the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2016/17;

- (ii) Note that the Council complied with all 2016/17 treasury management indicators;
- (iii) Approve the actual Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2016/17;
- (iv) Note that the Council borrowed £60m from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) in June 2016 to fund capital expenditure;
- (v) Note that on 31 March 2017 a number of Loan Facility agreements were agreed between the Council and a number of Council owned Special Purpose Vehicles; and
- (vi) Maintain the delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, to continue to proportionally amend the counterparty lending limits agreed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement to consider the additional cash holdings resulting from borrowing from the European Investment Bank and the PWLB.

(Councillor Turner left the meeting at this point.)

16. Culture Everywhere: The Culture Strategy for Barking and Dagenham

The Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement introduced the proposed Borough Culture Strategy, Culture Everywhere, which set out the Council's ambitions for culture for the next five years.

The Cabinet Member explained that the Strategy was developed in direct response to the independent Growth Commission report which recognised the need to empower people in the Borough to play a greater role in its future through civic activity. A key emphasis of the Strategy was, therefore, the Council's future role as a facilitator rather than directly delivering services.

The Cabinet Member referred to the 10 core commitments within the Strategy and highlighted some of the main projects to be progressed over the next year or two, which included an application to be the London Borough of Culture in 2019 or 2020 and the creation of a legacy from the Creative Barking and Dagenham programme. In respect of the latter, Members spoke on some of the initiatives that had taken place and the importance of promoting Barking and Dagenham as an excellent investment opportunity for a wide range of cultural activities in addition to its huge regeneration potential.

The Cabinet **resolved** to adopt "Culture Everywhere", the Borough Culture Strategy for 2017 - 2022, at Appendix 1 to the report.

17. Review of School Places and Capital Investment - Update June 2017

Further to Minute 60 (15 November 2016), the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement presented an update report in respect of the various school expansion projects aimed at addressing the current and future demand for places in the Borough, as well as the latest funding issues.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council's lobbying of the Department for Education (DfE) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) had helped secure a Basic Need Grant allocation of £27.436m for 2019/20 for capital works, in addition to new funding for 2017/18 of £5.274m and a further £2.837m across 2018/19 – 2020/21 to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

It was noted that there had been a 62% increase in pupil numbers in the Borough since 2005 and the Council's ambitious regeneration plans meant that new school places would continue to be needed across the Borough. The Cabinet Member advised on the latest school expansion projects and Members placed on record their appreciation of the ongoing work of Council officers, School representatives and the Borough's school children for managing the demand pressures and achieving excellent results.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve the Future Planning Programme to meet Basic Need (including SEN places) 2017 to 2025 (amended May 2017) as set out in section 1.3 and Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) Approve the inclusion in the Capital Programme of the DfE grant allocations for 2017/18 as detailed in section 3 of the report;
- (iii) Approve the various projects and associated changes to the Capital Programme as set out in sections 5 to 9 and summarised in Section 10 of the report;
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration to approve the final procurement strategies for each project following their consideration and endorsement by the Procurement Board, in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules; and
- (v) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to award the respective project contracts.

18. Accelerating NEET Reduction

The Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement introduced a report on cross-cutting proposals to accelerate the reduction in the number of young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), with particular attention to care leavers, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and teenage parents.

The Cabinet Member advised that despite recent improvements in some areas, including a reduction in the number of young people whose education status was 'unknown' from 13.7% in 2013 to 6.6% in 2016, there was still a considerable amount of work to be done particularly in respect of a core of approximately 200 NEETS.

The current work was guided by the Borough's 14-19 Participation Plan and support was also received via the local Providers' Forum, made up of 35 local organisations that were funded to deliver pre-NEET and NEET work. Workshops earlier in the year had led to the development of a series of core proposals and an action plan and the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration referred to several of the proposals, which included a commitment by the Council to supplement the income of care leavers in apprenticeships to ensure that they had money to live on after paying their rent and other bills.

It was acknowledged that the action plan was not overly challenging as it was seen to be a 'work in progress' and other Cabinet Members were encouraged to join future workshops. Other issues that arose from the discussions included:

- The Council's and councillors' roles and responsibilities as corporate parents;
- Seven care leavers had graduated in the current academic year and the Council would be supporting them into their preferred internships;
- The need for the Council to set an example in relation to offers of apprenticeships, internships, work experience placements etc.;
- The importance of early intervention and the role of foster carers; and
- The work of the Council's Trident team, which was responsible for delivering the work experience programme.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the report and the work being undertaken to reduce NEETs, particularly within key vulnerable groups, as well as secure resources and enhance leadership and accountability; and
- (ii) Approve the Action Plan, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

19. Provision of Respite Care and Support Services for Disabled Children and Young People

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration presented a report on the proposed procurement of a framework contract to provide a diverse range of respite and support services for disabled children and young people.

The Cabinet Member commented that all too often the role of carers who willingly dedicated themselves to caring for family members was taken for granted. The new arrangements would provide respite services that met both current and future needs for disabled children, young people and families, within a pricing structure that was fixed for the duration of the four-year contract term, and would be open to eligible families participating in Direct Payment or Personal Budget arrangements.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree to commence the procurement of a four-year framework contract for the provision of respite and support services for disabled children and young people, in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules and the strategy set out in the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Service Development and

Integration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to award and enter into the framework agreements and all other necessary or ancillary agreements with the successful bidders.

20. Barking Riverside Gateways - Partner Procurement Strategy

Further to Minute 121 (19 April 2016), the Cabinet Member for Economic and Social Development presented proposals to procure a partner who would contribute funding towards land assembly and work in partnership with the Council / Be First on the delivery of the Barking Riverside Gateways Housing Zone project.

The Cabinet Member explained that the project related primarily to the Thames Road area, with the key objectives for the new partner being:

- To work in partnership with the Council / Be First to undertake acquisitions across the Housing Zone;
- Further develop proposals to deliver around 3,000 new homes and associated employment, community provision and public realm across the Housing Zone in line with the development framework; and
- Take a long-term management interest in the Housing Zone.

The Strategic Director of Growth and Homes clarified that in addition to the Council's contribution and the £30m grant from the Greater London Authority, the private partner would be expected to provide in the region of £60m towards land acquisition costs.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree the procurement of a partner, via Competitive Procedure with Negotiation, to deliver the aims and objectives of Barking Riverside Gateways Housing Zone, on the terms set out in the report;
- (ii) Approve the procurement of professional services, including legal advisors, property advisors and associated professional technical advisors, to support the procurement of a partner, on the terms set out in the report;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Growth and Homes, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to enter into all contracts associated with the procurement processes referred to in the report; and
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to agree all matters related to the financial viability of proposals following endorsement by the Council's Investment Panel.

21. School Improvement Partnership Full Business Case

Further to Minute 66 (15 November 2016), the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement introduced a report on the proposed creation of a new School Improvement Partnership (SIP) not-for-profit company, to be

wholly owned by the Council and participating Borough schools.

The Cabinet Member commented that recent national recognition of a number of the Borough's schools was testament to the excellent work being undertaken, despite the continued under-funding by the Government of education provision in Barking and Dagenham. The main purpose of the SIP would be to support the provision of high quality, best value services within schools to ensure continued improvements in educational standards for all children and young people in the Borough. The arrangements would also ensure that the Council would continue to have an ongoing role in the provision and standards of education in the Borough under the Service Delivery Agreement and Board arrangements.

The Cabinet **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve the School Improvement Partnership Full Business Case at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) Agree the establishment of a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, to be known as the School Improvement Partnership, in accordance with the proposals set out in the report;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement and the Director of Law and Governance, to implement all steps leading to the establishment of the new company in line with the proposals;
- (iv) Delegate authority to the Director of Law and Governance to execute all the legal agreements, contracts and any other documents on behalf of the Council to implement the setting up of the new company; and
- (v) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to select the individuals to be appointed to represent the Council on the School Improvement Partnership Company Board.

CABINET**11 July 2017**

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| Title: Budget Monitoring 2017/18 – April to May (Month 2) | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment | |
| Open Report | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Katherine Heffernan, Group Manager – Service Finance | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3262 E-mail: katherine.heffernan@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Director: Kathy Freeman, Finance Director | |
| Accountable Strategic Director: Claire Symonds, Chief Operating Officer | |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>This is the first budget monitoring report of this financial year. The Council is making good progress on its transformation journey with the setting up of new services such as Community Solutions. In order to support this transformation, the budget has been restated in line with the new structure.</p> <p>The Council, along with most other local authorities, is facing a challenging financial situation with reducing funding and significant pressures including those related to demography and demand and the impact of austerity and welfare reform on some of our residents. These pressures led to an overspend position at the end of 2016-17. The Council's management and finance team identified these pressures early and a range of actions have been taken including the provision of growth funding in the MTFs. However, the complexity of the issues tends to mean that a quick resolution is not always possible and so in many areas these pressures have continued into the new financial year.</p> <p>The forecast position for the full year as at the end of May 2017 is an overspend of £4.795m. This is based on known factors at this stage of the year and may change as the result of successful management action or the appearance of new risks and pressures. Early identification of pressures is key to being able to plan and implement successful mitigation and the position will continue to be monitored and reported to Cabinet throughout the year.</p> | |
| <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Agree the reallocation of approved service revenue budgets into the new management structures as set out in Appendix A to the report; (ii) Note the forecast outturn position for 2017/18 of the Council's General Fund revenue budget as detailed in section 2 and Appendix A to the report; | |

- (iii) Approve the transfer of £4.385m additional funding for Adult Social Care to the Adults Care and Support Service; and
- (iv) Approve the restatement of the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix B to the report.

Reason(s)

As a matter of good financial practice, the Cabinet should be informed about the Council's spending performance and its financial position. This will assist the Cabinet in holding officers to account and in making future financial decisions.

1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the forecast outturn for the Council's General Fund and the delivery of savings in 2017/18.

2 Overall Position

- 2.1 As reported to Cabinet in June, the final outturn variance for the Council's revenue budget in 2016-17 was an overspend of £4.854m. This was the result of a range of long standing pressures including demography and demand pressures and the impact of austerity on both Council budgets and our residents, especially those affected by welfare reform. These pressures were identified by the Council's management and finance team and action was taken to address them including the provision of growth funding in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. However, the issues involved are complex and the pressures are long standing. This means that they have largely continued into 2017/18 although in a reduced form.
- 2.2 There are overspends predicted for Children's Care and Support, the Homelessness budgets within Community Solutions, Leisure Services, Public Realm and Enforcement. The total forecast pressure at this stage is £4.795m. In many ways, this could be regarded as a worst case forecast that should be reduced by further management action. However, it should also be noted that new pressures and risks may yet emerge. The position will be closely monitored and reported to Cabinet on a monthly basis.
- 2.3 If this forecast was still the final position by the end of the financial year it would require a drawdown on the Council's reserves. Although we do have sufficient to cover this amount, a reduction in the reserves would mean less capacity for strategic investment and the management of future risks. For this reason, it is important that action is taken swiftly to mitigate these pressures and any others that arise in the year.
- 2.4 However at this stage most Council services including the HRA are currently forecasting that they will be able to work within their budget. Further details of the other services with significant variances are given below.

3. Main Variances

Public Realm - £1.76m overspent

- 3.1 This service is currently in transition to new ways of working. A new organisational structure has been implemented which has separated the old department into three new service delivery blocks:- Waste services, Cleaner communities and Parks & Environment. Alongside this a review of the total establishment is underway that should reduce costs in the medium term. However, there have been some delays in implementation and the restructures have led to some short-term instability and increased need for agency staff which is leading to a current projected staffing overspend of over £1.1m - particularly in Refuse and Cleaner communities.
- 3.2 In addition there is a pressure of £0.581m relating to the costs of the current fleet vehicles many of which are in poor condition resulting in high maintenance and repair costs as well as costs in the intermittent hiring of vehicles. Capital funding has been made available to allow investment in new equipment. Once this is in place then expenditure is expected to reduce.
- 3.3 An in-depth review of staffing and budgets is currently underway as part of the wider service improvement programme. This is currently nearing completion and a detailed management action plan is being developed. This will include:
- Moving high cost agency staff to fixed term contracts (fund 3 fixed term staff from the cost of 2 agency staff).
 - Reviewing the fleet and reducing the cost whilst providing 5 new vehicles.
 - Rounds and routes review in all areas to make the service as efficient as possible, focussing on 'hot spots' and use of the right equipment.

Community Solutions – Homelessness - £0.989m overspend

- 3.4 Community Solutions is an innovative new service to provide early help and support to local residents for a range of issues including Housing issues. The service will be providing the Council's Housing Advice and Homelessness services.
- 3.5 In common with most London boroughs, this Council has experienced an increase in both the demand for temporary accommodation and the costs of provision. This led to an overspend of £3m in 2016-17. Additional funding of £1.8m was provided in the MTFs and the service put in place an action plan to contain and reduce costs. Although there has been some success with a reduction in the total net cost of temporary accommodation of around £0.5m, there is a residual pressure that is proving hard to eliminate. This is resulting in a continued overspend of just over £1.0m on the Homelessness budget which is partially offset by savings elsewhere within the service.

Enforcement - £0.958m overspend

- 3.6 There continues to be a pressure in the Parking account, which is currently forecasting a shortfall of around £0.958m against the forecast income budget. Over recent years the pattern of income has been changing as a result of changes to the regulatory framework and motorist behaviour. Income from penalty charges has reduced as residents are parking more responsibly – perhaps partly as a result of

the council's education campaigns and emphasis on civic pride. A detailed exercise has been conducted to reprofile the income budgets which is suggesting a significant shortfall. This exercise and other evidence will be used to assess which enforcement activity is most effective in both promoting good behaviour and ensuring those people who do not behave well are caught and made to pay a fair penalty. This will form the basis of an action plan for the service that will be implemented over the summer.

Children's Services - £0.739m overspend

- 3.7 Children's Services have been extremely successful in improving financial management and service efficiency to reduce expenditure. The final outturn variance in 2016/17 was £2.65m – a huge reduction from the previous year and this downward trend has continued resulting in a current forecast of £0.7m. However there is still an issue with the recruitment and retention of permanent social workers resulting in the need to use higher cost agency workers. Based on the current position there is an overspend of £1.2m on staffing offset by underspends on other costs including in previously problematic areas such as NRPF and Asylum. The service is continuing to work on its recruitment strategy. If this work is successful this is likely to result in further cost reductions.

Leisure - £0.437m overspend

- 3.8 There is a continuing pressure in this service mostly relating to Abbey Leisure Centre. The original business case in 2011/12 for the new Abbey Leisure Centre was based on the premise that the centre would be self-financing. However, this relied on an ambitious estimate of the possible income which could be generated.
- 3.9 Since the business case was drawn up, the market in Barking has changed with the influx of other rival establishments to the area and the implication is that the centre started with a lower customer base than in the original projections. The cost of running the centre was also underestimated.
- 3.10 The Council has appointed a new partner with expertise and experience to manage its Leisure centres from September 2017. However, there is a half year pressure forecast relating to the months leading up to the transfer.

Traded Services – underspend of £0.09m

- 3.11 The Cleaning Service is forecasting a small revenue surplus that will be an underspend partly offsetting some of the pressures above.

4. Other Risks and Issues – Adult Social Care

- 4.1 There are also significant demand and demographic pressures within Adults Care and Support and the new Disability service. In addition, the profile of savings for these areas is very ambitious and there is a risk of slippage.
- 4.2 However the Chancellor made a late announcement of additional funding for Adults Social Care in the spring budget. The allocation for Barking and Dagenham was £4.385m. Due to the timing of this announcement it was not

reflected in the MTFS presented to Assembly in February. The funding comes with strict conditions to ensure that it is passported through to Adults. Cabinet are therefore asked to approve the addition of this funding to the Adults Care and Support budget.

- 4.3 This funding will be sufficient to meet existing pressures within Adults and so it is currently assumed that there will be no variance in Adults and Disability Care and Support services.

5. Revenue Savings

- 5.1 As set out in the MTFS, the Council has an ambitious programme of £9m of savings in 2017/18. These are being closely monitored using a programme management approach and will be reported to Cabinet quarterly. The first report will be after the end of quarter one and will consider both the in year progress and the impact on the medium term financial strategy as a whole.

6. Capital Programme

- 6.1 Appendix B shows the 2017/18 capital programme. Cabinet is asked to approve the restatement of the programme in line with the new management structure. There are no reported variances at this stage of the year.

7. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Kathy Freeman, Finance Director

- 7.1 This report details the financial position of the Council.

8. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Fiona Taylor, Director of Law and Governance

- 8.1 Local authorities are required by law to set a balanced budget for each financial year. During the year, there is an ongoing responsibility to monitor spending and ensure the finances continue to be sound. This does mean as a legal requirement there must be frequent reviews of spending and obligation trends so that timely intervention can be made ensuring the annual budgeting targets are met.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Oracle monitoring reports

List of Appendices

- **Appendix A** – General Fund Revenue budgets and forecasts.
- **Appendix B** –Capital Programme

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Appendix A

| SERVICES | Restated 2017/18 Budget | Actuals YTD at P2 | FORECAST | VARIANCE |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| CARE & SUPPORT | | | | |
| ADULT'S CARE & SUPPORT | 24,538,160 | 7,144,176 | 24,538,160 | 0 |
| CHILDREN'S CARE & SUPPORT | 33,625,400 | 6,023,853 | 34,364,400 | 739,000 |
| DISABILITIES | 16,219,810 | 5,089,810 | 16,219,810 | 0 |
| CARE & SUPPORT Total | 74,383,370 | 18,257,839 | 75,122,370 | 739,000 |
| CENTRAL | -942,410 | 3,927,936 | -942,410 | 0 |
| COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS | 11,357,930 | -230,201 | 12,346,930 | 989,000 |
| CONTRACTED SERVICES - ELEVATE | 13,182,050 | 12,931,525 | 13,182,050 | 0 |
| CORE | | | | |
| ELEVATE CLIENT TEAM | -54,590 | -9,501,090 | -54,590 | 0 |
| FINANCE | 3,992,100 | 976,189 | 3,992,100 | 0 |
| LAW & GOVERNANCE | 259,770 | -3,678,296 | 259,770 | 0 |
| STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP | 690,310 | 53,216 | 690,310 | 0 |
| STRATEGY & PROGRAMMES | 1,101,380 | -1,210,464 | 1,101,380 | 0 |
| TRANSFORMATION | 5,100 | 1,317,430 | 5,100 | 0 |
| CORE Total | 5,994,070 | -12,043,015 | 5,994,070 | 0 |
| EDUCATION, YOUTH & CHILDCARE | 12,353,110 | 3,372,281 | 12,353,110 | 0 |
| ENFORCEMENT | 10,569,740 | 3,078,744 | 11,527,740 | 958,000 |
| GROWTH & HOMES COMMISSIONING | | | 0 | 0 |
| ASSETS & INVESTMENT | -3,214,600 | -1,944,062 | -3,214,600 | 0 |
| CULTURE & RECREATION | 2,320,210 | 776,401 | 2,320,210 | 0 |
| GROWTH & HOMES | -59,430 | -166,605 | -59,430 | 0 |
| GROWTH & HOMES COMMISSIONING Total | -953,820 | -1,334,266 | -953,820 | 0 |
| MY PLACE | 0 | 19,729 | 0 | 0 |
| PUBLIC REALM | 7,038,350 | 1,194,633 | 8,798,350 | 1,760,000 |
| SDI COMMISSIONING | | | | |
| ADULTS COMMISSIONING | 5,889,960 | 1,077,996 | 5,889,960 | 0 |
| CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONING | 4,413,790 | 749,923 | 4,413,790 | 0 |
| HEALTHY LIFESTYLES & LEISURE | 446,050 | 663,371 | 883,050 | 437,000 |
| PUBLIC HEALTH | 1,033,980 | -1,803,782 | 1,033,980 | 0 |
| SDI COMMISSIONING Total | 11,783,780 | 687,508 | 12,220,780 | 437,000 |
| TRADED SERVICES | 363,500 | 363,500 | 275,500 | -88,000 |
| Grand Total | 145,129,670 | 30,226,213 | 149,924,670 | 4,795,000 |

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| Project No. | Project Name | 2017/18 Programme |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| BE FIRST | | |
| FC04047 | Be First | 1,978,000 |
| CARE & SUPPORT | | |
| FC00106 | Disabled Facilities Grant | 1,390,570 |
| FC02888 | Direct Pymt Adaptations | 400,000 |
| COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS | | |
| FC03060 | Barking Learning Centre Works | 447,000 |
| FC03092 | Dagenham Library Foyer | - |
| FC03095 | BLC void areas | - |
| FC04021 | Libraries Library Management System Tender | 60,000 |
| FC04036 | Upgrade & enhancement of Security & Threat Management System at BLC | 75,000 |
| FC04037 | Upgrade of Security & Fire Alarm System at Dagenham Library | |
| FC04049 | Community Solutions | 3,747,600 |
| CORE | | |
| FC02738 | Modernisation & Imp Cap Fund | - |
| FC02877 | Oracle R12 Joint Services | 247,866 |
| FC03052 | Elevate ICT investment | 118,058 |
| FC03059 | Customer Services Channel Shift | 336,991 |
| FC03068 | ICT End User Computing | - |
| FC02565 | Implement Corporate Accommodation Strategy | 6,780,486 |
| FC04009 | Smarter Working Programme | 494,000 |
| CUSTOMER ACCESS & TECHNOLOGY | | |
| FC04007 | Cross Cutting: Technology | 1,497,100 |
| FC04008 | Customer Access Strategy (CAS) | 2,711,500 |
| FC04010 | Customer Access & Workforce Development | 150,254 |
| EDUCATION, YOUTH & CHILDCARE | | |
| FC02736 | Roding Primary School (Cannington Road Annex) | 129,789 |
| FC02745 | George Carey CofE (formerly Barking Riverside) Primary School | 22,926 |
| FC02784 | Manor Longbridge (Former UEL Site) | 150,000 |
| FC02865 | William Bellamy Infants/Juniors (Expansion) | 442,676 |
| FC02920 | Warren / Furze Expansion | 374,111 |
| FC02924 | St Joseph's Primary(Barking) Extn 13-14 | 15,072 |
| FC02956 | Marsh Green Primary 13-15 | 277,709 |
| FC02957 | John Perry School Expansion 13-15 | 12,110 |
| FC02960 | Sydney Russell (Fanshawe) Primary Expansion | 68,895 |
| FC02979 | Gascoigne primary | 400,000 |
| FC03041 | Village Infants - additional pupil places | 211,511 |
| FC03053 | Gascoigne Prmy 5forms to 4 forms | 600,000 |
| FC02953 | All Saints Expansion 13-15 | 112,233 |
| FC02954 | Jo Richardson expansion | 168,626 |
| FC02959 | Robert Clack Expansion 13-15 | 1,200,000 |
| FC02977 | Riverside Secondary Free School | 1,061,078 |
| FC03018 | Eastbury Secondary | 973,254 |
| FC03019 | Eastbrook School | 817,847 |
| FC03020 | Dagenham Park | 368,573 |
| FC03022 | New Gascoigne Secondary School | 5,600,000 |
| FC03054 | Lymington Fields New School | 450,000 |
| FC03078 | Barking Abbey Expansion 2016-18 | 5,000,000 |

| Project No. | Project Name | 2017/18 Programme |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9999 | Devolved Capital Formula | 1,085,498 |
| FC02906 | School Expansion SEN projects | 130,315 |
| FC02909 | School Expansion Minor projects | 791,027 |
| FC02972 | Implementation of early education for 2 year olds | 300,000 |
| FC02978 | Schools Modernisation Fund 2013-14 | 62,128 |
| FC03010 | SMF 2014-16 | 93,794 |
| FC03033 | Upgrade of Children Centres | 7,970 |
| FC03042 | Additional SEN Provision | 365,840 |
| FC03043 | Pupil Intervention Project (PIP) | 464,133 |
| FC03051 | SMF 2015-17 | 691,809 |
| FC03063 | Extension of Abbey children's centre nursery | 125,842 |
| FC03085 | School Conditions Allocation 2017-19 | 2,500,000 |
| ENFORCEMENT | | - |
| FC02542 | Capital Improvements | 459,106 |
| FC02964 | Road Safety Improvements Programme (Various Locations) | 220,000 |
| FC02982 | Consolidation & Expansion of CPZ | 516,377 |
| FC03011 | Structural Repairs & Bridge Maintenance | 673,791 |
| FC03030 | Frizlands Phase 2 Asbestos Replacement | 15,614 |
| FC03064 | Street Lighting 2016-2019 : Expired Lighting Column Replacement | 3,665,802 |
| FC03065 | HIP 2016-17 Footways & Carriageways | 3,003,481 |
| FC03066 | Parking ICT System | 3,537 |
| FC03067 | Abeey Green Restoration/Works | 3,541 |
| FC03090 | Lakes | 80,000 |
| FC04015 | Enforcement Equipment | 188,000 |
| FC04019 | Replacement of Winter Maintenance Equipment / Gully Motors | 640,000 |
| FC04027 | Car Park Improvements | 130,000 |
| FC04029 | Engineering Works (Road Safety) | 385,000 |
| FC04023 | Enforcement | 186,000 |
| GROWTH & HOMES | | |
| Culture, Heritage and Recreation | | |
| FC03029 | Broadway Theatre | 500,000 |
| FC03032 | 3G football pitches in Parsloes Park | 495,970 |
| FC03057 | Youth Zone | 2,834,000 |
| FC03093 | Eastbury Manor House - Access and egress improvements | 121,000 |
| FC03094 | Access Improvements, Eastbury Manor House | - |
| FC04042 | Community Halls | 60,000 |
| FC04043 | The Abbey: Unlocking Barking's past, securing its future | 25,000 |
| FC04044 | East London Industrial Heritage Museum | 50,000 |
| FC04022 | Parks and Open Spaces Commercialisation | 170,000 |
| FC04024 | Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries | 49,000 |
| Investment Strategy | | |
| FC04046 | Investment Opportunities | 263,000 |
| FC02587 | Energy Efficiency Programme | 128,753 |
| FC03027 | Establishment of Council Owned Energy Services Company | 89,901 |
| Growth and Homes and Regeneration | | |
| FC02898 | Local Transport Plans | 60,000 |
| FC02969 | Creative Industry (formerly Barking Bathouse) | 310,586 |
| FC02985 | Gascoigne West (Housing Zone) | 3,493,904 |
| FC02986 | Gascoigne Estate 1 | 35,559,864 |
| FC02994 | Renwick Road/Choats Road | 367,000 |
| FC02996 | Barking Town Centre 2014/15 (TfL) | 757,768 |

| Project No. | Project Name | 2017/18 Programme |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| FC03055 | Barking Riverside Trans link | 2,654,652 |
| FC03058 | Kingsbridge Development | 8,572,089 |
| FC03070 | Boundary Road Hostel: Critical Needs Homelessness Assessment and Support | 858,337 |
| FC03072 | Conversion & Redevelopment of Former Sacred Heart Convent, 191 Goresbr | 8,485,156 |
| FC03082 | Gurdwara Way - Land Remediation | 825,405 |
| FC03084 | Sebastian Court - Redevelop | 3,587,697 |
| FC03099 | Abbey Green & Barking Town Centre Conservation Area Townscape HLF Proj | 407,500 |
| FC02962 | Principal Road Maintenance | 438,000 |
| FC03096 | Thames Road/River Road/Renwick Road Corridor Improvements | - |
| FC03097 | Thames View Cycle/Walking Link Improvements | 156,000 |
| FC03098 | Cycle Schemes - Quietway CS3X | 130,000 |
| MY PLACE | | - |
| FC04011 | My Place | 1,208,724 |
| PUBLIC REALM | | - |
| FC03026 | Old Dagenham Park BMX Track | 222,836 |
| FC03034 | Strategic Parks - Park Infrastructure | 90,559 |
| FC03083 | Chadwell Heath Cemetery Ext | 316,979 |
| FC04012 | Bins Rationalisation | 50,000 |
| FC04013 | Park Infrastructure Enhancements | 20,000 |
| FC04014 | Refuse Fleet | 84,000 |
| FC04016 | On-vehicle Bin Weighing System for Commercial Waste | 45,000 |
| FC04017 | Fixed play facilities | 50,000 |
| FC04018 | Park Buildings – Response to 2014 Building Surveys | 75,000 |
| FC04025 | Refuse | 81,000 |
| FC04028 | Equipment to reduce Hand Arm Vibration | 45,000 |
| SDI COMMISSIONING | | |
| FC02826 | Conversion of Heathway to Family Resource Centre | 2,661 |
| FC03061 | Social Care IT Replacement System | 1,517,712 |
| CAP35 | Redesign Adults & Childrens Social Care | 1,085,197 |
| FC02870 | Barking Leisure Centre 2012-14 | 100,661 |
| FC03062 | 50m Demountable Swimming Pool | 1,700,000 |
| FC04048 | Leisure | 53,000 |
| TRADED SERVICES | | |
| FC03091 | Traded Services | 517,103 |
| TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME | | 134,395,454 |

| Project No. | Project Name | 2017/18 Programme |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------|
| HRA | | - |
| FC02934 | Communal Roof Replacements | 500,000 |
| FC02950 | Communal Heating Replacement | 1,200,000 |
| FC03048 | Fire Safety Improvement Works | 1,742,000 |
| FC04002 | Lift Replacement Programme | 50,000 |
| FC04003 | Domestic Heating Replacement | 900,000 |
| FC04004 | Box-Bathroom Refurbs (Apprenticeships) | 50,000 |
| FC02939 | Conversions | 700,000 |
| FC02983 | Decent Homes Central 2017-19 | 7,500,000 |
| FC03039 | Estate Roads Resurfacing | 850,000 |
| FC03045 | External Fabric inc EWI- Blocks | 3,282,900 |
| FC03046 | Decent Homes North 2017-19 | 7,400,000 |
| FC03047 | Decent Homes South 2017-19 | 7,400,000 |
| FC04001 | Electrical Lateral Replacement | 1,000,000 |
| FC00100 | Aids And Adaptations | 950,000 |
| FC03037 | Energy Efficiency inc Green Street | 2,000,000 |
| FC02943 | Compliance (Asbestos, Tanks, Rewires) | 900,000 |
| FC03038 | Garages | 450,000 |
| FC04000 | Estate Environment Improvement | 125,100 |
| FC04005 | Public Realm Improvements | 500,000 |
| FC02933 | Voids | 3,000,000 |
| FC03007 | Windows & Door Replacements | 50,000 |
| FC03075 | Door Entry Systems | 50,000 |
| FC04006 | Minor Works & Replacements | 150,000 |
| FC02820 | Estate Renewal | 6,123,363 |
| FC02931 | Leys Phase 1 | 1,626,058 |
| FC02973 | Infill Sites | 4,000,000 |
| FC02991 | North St | 4,750,000 |
| FC03009 | Leys Phase 2 | 16,801,785 |
| FC03056 | Burford Close | 1,200,000 |
| FC03071 | Modular Programme | 3,999,000 |
| FC04048 | Home Services | 703,000 |
| FC03073 | Housing Transformation | 1,750,000 |
| | Additional Schemes | 9,015,864 |
| TOTAL HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME | | 90,719,070 |

CABINET**11 July 2017**

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: Medium Term Financial Strategy Update 2018/19 to 2020/21 | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment | |
| Open Report | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Kathy Freeman, Finance Director | Contact Details: Tel: 0208 227 3497 E-mail: Kathy.freeman@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Strategic Director: Claire Symonds, Chief Operating Officer | |
| Summary | |
| <p>This report updates the Medium Term Financial Strategy presented to Assembly in February 2017.</p> <p>The report updates Members on the process for the 2018/19 budget gap.</p> | |
| Recommendation(s) | |
| <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the budget gap between 2018/19 to 2020/21 which increased from £22.167m, as reported in February 2017, to £23.003m at July 2017; (ii) Note the budget gap of £15.79m for 2018/19 the process for closing that gap, as outlined in section 8 of the report; (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Growth and Homes, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to commence the purchasing of street properties which would form part of the Council's overall Investment Strategy, as outlined in section 5 of the report; (iv) Approve additional capital spend on the Council's leisure services of £1,694,075; as outlined in section 6 of the report; (v) Approve a loan of up to £3,394,075 to Sports and Leisure Management Ltd, who have been appointed to manage the Borough's leisure centres and athletics stadium, including Becontree Heath Leisure Centre, in accordance with the loan schedule at Appendix C to the report; and (vi) Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, to agree contractual terms, including the rate, duration and security as part of the loan agreement with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd. | |

Reason

Financial planning is key in supporting the Council to deliver its vision of “One borough; one community; London’s growth opportunity.”

1 Background

- 1.1 Assembly approved a balanced budget for 2017/18 and the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2020/21 on the 22nd February 2017.
- 1.2 The position reported in February was an increase of the gross budget gap to £70.109m, with savings of £47.942m from the Transformation Programme, leaving a revised budget gap of £22.167m to 2020/21.
- 1.3 The budget gap for 2018/19 in February 2017 was £14.954m.

2 Delivery of the 2017/18 Budget

- 2.1 The delivery of the 2017/18 budget will be reported regularly to Cabinet and an update at Month 2 features elsewhere on the agenda of this meeting. Whilst this report seeks to primarily focus on the Council’s financial position from 2018/19 onwards, it would be incomplete not to briefly reflect the pressures on the current and next few financial years. In some instances, where the pressures are thought to be uncontrollable due to changes in service requirements and demand pressures, these will be factored into the MTFS.

Children’s Care and Support

- 2.2 There has been significant progress made since 2015 when Children’s Care and Support projected an overspend of £9.6m which was managed down to c£5m by the 2015/16 outturn. During 2016/17 further progress has been made by the service in bringing this overspend down and the outturn position was a much reduced overspend of £2.6m. There are however risks in the Children’s Care and Support budget around the recruitment of permanent social workers as this remains highly challenging for the service. Therefore, it is expected that pressures of c£1m are likely to continue into 2018/19.

Community Solutions

- 2.3 Alongside other London Boroughs, Barking and Dagenham has seen a large increase in demand on the Homelessness budget. The 2016/17 outturn position reported an overspend of £3.1m and for 2017/18, the MTFS recognised the demand increase by allocating £1.8m of growth monies toward the pressure, with the remainder of the pressure being managed through a service recovery plan. Despite the recovery plan, additional demand pressures of £0.9m that will continue into 2018/19. Community Solutions going forward will not only tackle what the resident’s housing needs are but ask why they are homeless?

Public Realm

- 2.4 Following a series of service re-configurations and funding applied to the Public Realm budget in 2017/18 of £1m, additional resources have been brought in to support the delivery of the waste and cleansing services.

Enforcement

- 2.5 Following the introduction of the De-Regulation Act 2015 which restricted the use of mobile CCTV cameras to issue Penalty Charge Notices, there has been a steady decline in the parking income being generated. This income shortfall is estimated at c£1m which may continue into 2018/19.

Commissioning structure

- 2.6 To reflect the revised structure of the Council, a number of posts have been established in the commissioning core to ensure that the Council is able to effectively client/contract manage the wholly owned trading companies that are being set up. The other element of the commissioning structure will be to create capacity within Culture and Commissioning so the team is able to deliver the cultural objectives in the Growth Commission report. The increased cost of the commissioning structure is c£0.4m which will be built into the MTFs. The director of transformation role has now been formally established to support the Council in delivery of the £48m savings and the cultural change required. This post will be funded as part of the Council's Transformation Programme, through the Government's dispensation of the flexible use of capital receipts.

Shortfall of court costs income

- 2.7 The impact of Welfare Reform and the introduction of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme has made it increasingly difficult for the Council to collect debt that is due for Council Tax and Council Tax arrears. The impact of this has led to a £0.3m income shortfall.

3 Risk Update on the Transformation Programme

- 3.1 In July 2016, Members formally agreed to the launch of the Council's Transformation Programme which seeks to deliver £47.9m savings through a fundamental review of the Council's operating model that looks at how to sustainably transform services to support our residents to live independently.
- 3.2 The other angle of the Transformation Programme focuses on how the Council can grow its income base, and making the most of the space available and its accessibility to London. The setup of Be First, the Council's wholly owned regeneration and development company will be key in driving through the growth, delivering up to 2,500 homes a year.
- 3.3 The scope and scale of change the Council is expected to deliver is not without risk. As stated above, savings of £47.9m were agreed over the next four years as a product of the transformation programme. Savings totalling c£9m have been included in the balanced 2017/18 budget with the remainder forecasted to be achieved over the following three years.
- 3.4 The vast majority of savings are on track to be delivered. Inevitably however in a programme of this scale there are certain areas which have associated risks to delivery both in timing and quantum. Due to the sheer complexity and scale of what the transformation programme is trying to achieve, there are risks attached with the programme being able to deliver fully against its target. Therefore, an adjustment of c£2m has been made to recognise potential non-delivery of savings/income shortfall for 2018/19. Risks to future years' savings proposals will be RAG rated in the following years thereafter.

3.5 Going forward, the budget monitoring report will review not only the 17/18 in year savings but the savings across the entire programme to 2020/21, assessing the risks associated with delivery and implementation of the proposals. This will be reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

4 Government Funding and changes in legislation/new burdens

4.1 The Government announced a four-year Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2015 that the Council accepted in February 2016.

4.2 In February 2017, following significant campaigning and lobbying by ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services), the Government recognised the rising demographic and demand led pressures for Adult Social Care. Barking and Dagenham received c£8.3m for the Adult Social Care grant, with £4.3m being paid in 2018/19. This additional funding was much welcomed and will help alleviate a number of pressures experienced by Adults Care and Support.

4.3 Following the General Election on the 8th June, there is been little announced in terms of major policy changes that will directly impact on funding/changes in legislation for Local Government. The Queen's speech announced on the 21st June 2017 provided no further clarity on the roadmap towards 100% business rates retention.

4.4 However, discussions are progressing on the London Business Rates Devolution pilot and it is too early to model the potential implications for the Council at this stage. The premise for the discussions will be that no Council will be left worse off in the London Pool than not being part of the London Pool. The Council is currently part of a Business Rates Pool with LB Havering, Thurrock Council and Basildon District Council.

4.5 The speech did announce the intention to carry out a review of the Adult Social Care system and bring forward new proposals as to how as a society we enable all adults to live well into later life and how we deliver sustainable public services that support them to do so. This is an important piece of work that may have far reaching consequences for the borough. Although currently our population is relatively young compared with the national average, there are significant numbers living with ill health and disabilities and the proportion of the population over 65 will start to increase over the next decade resulting in significant demographic pressures. The Council's finance and commissioning teams will engage with the national debate in order to ensure the needs of our local residents are heard.

4.6 The speech also repeats the commitment to introduce a new national funding formula for schools. The Department of Education has not yet responded to the second stage of the consultation carried out over the winter and so we do not yet know if there will be significant changes. However regardless of the formula itself the education budget has been subject to a real terms reduction. It is possible that some additional funding may be provided but whether this will address the full scale of the pressures is not known. Schools and wider education funding therefore remains a major risk for this borough and many others.

4.7 The Homelessness Reduction Act was passed on 27th April. This brings into effect a wider range of duties for local authorities including responsibilities to provide help and support to people threatened by homelessness and duties to relieve homelessness for a wider group of people. The cost of meeting these

responsibilities are estimated by the service to be at least £0.75m. Under the New Burdens Doctrine, the Government have indicated there will be some additional funding provided but the allocation has not been confirmed. However, the indications are that it is likely to be grossly inadequate at a national level to meet the scale of need.

- 4.8 The recent tragic events at Grenfell Tower have highlighted the importance of fire prevention and other safety measures in social housing especially high-rise blocks. The council has been able to confirm that no Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings in the borough have the same type of cladding or fitting as Grenfell and additional fire assessments have been carried out. We are also carrying out checks on non HRA buildings such as schools. The safety of our residents is our top priority and any recommendations arising from the investigations will be closely studied for their implications and will be built into our Capital programme or the HRA business planning as appropriate with resources identified if adequate additional funding is not made available from central government to support Councils with this important work.
- 4.9 At the time of writing, DCLG have given no indication of a consultation relating to the local government finance settlement 2018/19. DCLG carried out a consultation relating to 2017/18 and this was undertaken during September and October 2016. The authority will anticipate the possibility of a similar consultation being carried out, and ensure it is able to respond appropriately if any such consultation is undertaken.
- 4.10 At the time of writing this report, no further changes to funding or policy changes have been announced.

5 Investment Strategy update

- 5.1 In November 2016, Cabinet approved the Investment and Land acquisition strategy which was forecast to deliver £5.2m of investment income by 2020/21, with £1.6m deliverable in 2018/19. The original premise of the Investment Strategy was to generate an index link rental yield income from Council constructed Private Sector Affordable Rented units, linked to the regeneration and development of 43 major schemes across the borough. A further report on the investment strategy will be presented to Cabinet in September, however in the meantime, Members are asked to approve for officers to commence with the Street Purchasing programme as a further aspect of the Investment and Land acquisition strategy that will further enhance the income generated.
- 5.2 It is expected that the Street Property purchasing scheme will be used to provide accommodation for the borough's care leavers which will support the reduction of the demand pressures on the Children's Care and Support budget. Other objectives of the Street Purchasing programme also include delivering a positive financial return, providing accommodation for homelessness people, as well as provide key worker housing for social workers and teachers.

6 Loans to Sports and Leisure Management Ltd

- 6.1 By Minute 82(vii) (19 January 2016), the Cabinet agreed to fund an additional demountable 50m swimming pool, at a cost of £1.70m and with an approximate 15-year life, at the Becontree Heath Leisure Centre site on land already owned by the Council and set aside for leisure use.

- 6.2 Subsequent to this decision, and as part of the Council's drive to get the borough in shape, Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM) have been appointed to manage the borough's leisure centres and athletics stadium, including Becontree Heath Leisure Centre.
- 6.3 As a result, from 1 September 2017, SLM will take over the Management of Becontree Heath Leisure Centre and will be responsible for managing the construction of the demountable pool and its management thereafter.
- 6.4 Since the decision in January 2016, construction costs have increased from the originally agreed £1.70m to £1.95m and Members are asked to agree the additional £250k now required to construct the demountable pool.
- 6.5 The demountable pool will be the first 4 lane 50m modular pool in the country. The additional investment is required following a detailed review of costs by SLM resulting in their offer of a new and improved facility which will allow increased participation in swimming over the next 25 years.
- 6.6 Members are also asked to agree that the full £1.9m is transferred to SLM as a loan from the Council. The duration of the loan will be 25 years, with repayments made by SLM in equal annual instalments of £76k per year plus interest on the remaining balance.
- 6.7 As the contract with SLM will only be for 10 years the remaining 15 years of the loan will:
1. Be transferred across to a new provider after the 10-year contract with SLM terminates; or
 2. Be transferred back to the Council; or
 3. Remain with SLM if the contract is extended or they are reappointed.
- 6.8 In addition to agreeing to lend SLM £1.95m for the demountable pool construction, Members are asked to agree two further loans, as outlined below:
1. Building Investment - £298,124 at 4.5%, repaid in equal instalments over a 10-year period; and
 2. Equipment Investment - £1,145,951 in four tranches in Years 1,2, 4 and 5 at 4.5%, repaid in equal instalments over a 5-year period per loan tranche.
- 6.9 These funds will initially allow for a Gym expansion at Becontree and the creation of a spin studio. The initial equipment cost will be to buy kit for the gym expansion and there is an allowance for equipment replacement and plant renewal thereafter across the life of the contract.
- 6.10 The total value of the loans to SLM will be £3,394,075, although this includes the £1.70m already agreed by Members in January 2016. Therefore, Members are asked to agree a total of £1,694,075 in capital spend on the Council's leisure services.
- 6.11 Members are also asked to agree the total capital spend for leisure is transferred across to SLM as a loan of £3,394,075, with payments to SLM as per the schedule in Appendix C.

7. Proposed changes to the MTFS

7.1 The pressures outlined in sections 2 to 4 of this report have been incorporated into the MTFS and the revised budget gap is now £20.520m for 2018/19 and £27.733m to 2020/21. Appendix A details the MTFS agreed by Assembly in February 2017, with Appendix B detailing the current position.

7.2 The table below highlights the proposed changes to the MTFS incorporating the pressures.

| Pressure | 2018/19 £000 | 2019/20 £000 | 2020/21 £000 | Total £000 |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Gross Budget Gap – February 2017 | 26,298 | 16,716 | 17,819 | 60,832 |
| Savings | (11,344) | (12,784) | (14,538) | (38,666) |
| Net Budget Gap – February 2017 | 14,954 | 3,932 | 3,281 | 22,167 |
| Budget Pressures | | | | |
| Children’s Care and Support Pressure | 1,000 | | | 1,000 |
| Community Solutions Demand Pressures | 880 | | | 880 |
| Waste and Cleaning Budget Support (Public Realm) | 1,009 | | | 1,009 |
| CCTV income shortfall | 1,000 | | | 1,000 |
| Commissioning Structure | 400 | | | 400 |
| Court Costs Income Shortfall | 300 | | | 300 |
| Healthy Lifestyle and Leisure | 550 | | | 550 |
| Customer Access Strategy | 380 | | | 380 |
| Adult’s Care and Support inc Disabilities Pressure | 47 | | | 47 |
| Revised Budget Gap July 2017 | 20,520 | 3,932 | 3,281 | 27,733 |

7.3 In order to manage down the pressures for 2018/19, a number of adjustments to the MTFS are proposed to reduce the budget gap

Staff inflation and pay awards

7.4 The MTFS incorporates £1m for staff inflation and the national pay award of 1%. Following discussions, it is felt that this increase can be absorbed within existing budgets by managing vacancies within the Council. It should be noted that this is the second year that services will be containing staff pay awards without the increase being reflected in their budget.

Non-staff inflation

7.5 There is currently a £2.1m provision within the MTFS relating to non-staff inflation for contracts/commissioned services. Given the demand led pressures elsewhere across the Council, an assessment has been made that containing inflationary

pressures within existing budgets will not be detrimental to current contractual arrangements with service providers.

Impact of legislative changes

- 7.6 There has been little in terms of policy changes/legislative burdens that will have a quantifiable impact on the MTFs at the time of writing this report. Removing this provision (£2.0m) entirely from the MTFs is not without risk as any policy changes should they arise will then need to be dealt with as a funding pressure in year or will increase the budget gap, leaving very short notice on how it can be resolved.

Demand increases

- 7.7 In order to reduce the level of demand for services, the Council has set up Community Solutions which will act as an early intervention service that supports residents by signposting them to more appropriate services that can provide targeted support to our residents to help themselves. Therefore, on the basis the Community Solutions will effectively manage down demand pressures (£1.630m), this provision has been stripped out from the MTFs.
- 7.8 The adjustments above removes £6.730m of pressures/growth items from the MTFs. This revises the 2018/19 budget gap to £15.790m as show in Table 2 below:

| Pressure | 2018/19 £000 | 2019/20 £000 | 2020/21 £000 | Total £000 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Gap – February 2017 | 14,954 | 3,932 | 3,281 | 22,167 |
| Revised Budget Gap - July 2017 | 20,520 | 3,932 | 3,281 | 27,733 |
| <i>MTFS adjustments</i> | | | | |
| Staff inflation and pay award | (1,000) | | | |
| Non–Staff inflation | (2,100) | | | |
| Impact of legislative changes | (2,000) | | | |
| Demand Increases | (1,630) | | | |
| Non-Delivery of Savings | 2,000 | | | |
| Revised gap after MTFs adjustments – July 2017 | 15,790 | 3,932 | 3,281 | 23,003 |

8. Process for closing the 2018/19 budget gap and beyond – Next steps

- 8.1 Having taken into account the risks and pressures outlined in section 2 above, and the adjustments made to the MTFs, the revised budget gap is now £15.79m for 2018/19.
- 8.2 The current transformation programme is forecasted to deliver £47.9m over the next four years by 2020/21. In order to balance the 2018/19 budget gap, there are proposals in place to stretch the performance targets where possible, for each of the workstreams to deliver further savings where possible. In order to determine the size and scope of the savings required, the £15.79m gap has been allocated across each of the three main commissioning functions based broadly on the size of net controllable budget.

8.3 Details of finalised proposals will be put forward to Members in the November 2017 Budget Strategy report with the public consultation process commencing thereafter. Where the proposals form part of the existing transformation programme, they will be indicated as such and will not be subject to further consultation.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 Financial implications feature throughout this report.

10. Legal Implications

Implications provided by: Paul Field, Senior Corporate Governance Solicitor

10.1 Local authorities are under an explicit duty to ensure that their financial management is adequate and effective and that they have a sound system of internal control and management of financial risk. This report contributes to that requirement. Specific legal advice may be required in due course on the detailed implementation of savings options.

10.2 Where there are proposals for the closure or discontinuance of a service or services, appropriate consultation will need to be carried out. In the event that savings proposals affect staff, it will require consultation with Unions and staff. In addition to that Members will need to be satisfied that Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out before the proposals are decided by Cabinet. If at any point a resort to constricting expenditure is required, it is essential that due regard is given to statutory duties and responsibilities. In particular the Council must have regard to:

- any existing contractual obligations covering current service provision. Such contractual obligations where they exist must either be fulfilled or varied with agreement of current providers;
- any legitimate expectations that persons already receiving a service (that is earmarked for reduction) may have to either continue to receive the service or to be consulted directly before the service is withdrawn;
- any rights which statute may have conferred on individuals that as a result of which the council may be bound to continue its provision. This could be where an assessment has been carried out for example for special educational needs following a statement of special educational needs;
- the impact on different groups affected by any changes to service provision as informed by relevant equality impact assessments;
- the response to any consultation undertaken.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

Appendix A: MTFs February Assembly (2017-18 to 2020-21)

Appendix B: MTFs July 17 Update (2018-19 to 2020-21)

Appendix C: Schedule of proposed capital works by Sports and Leisure Management Ltd

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Medium Term Financial Strategy - Summary Position 2017/18- 2020/21

Appendix A

| | 2017/18 £000 | 2017/18 £000 | 2018/19 £000 | 2019/20 £000 | 2020/21 £000 |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Nov ' 16 | Dec ' 16 | Revised | Revised | Revised |
| Prior Year (Surplus) / Deficit | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14,954 | 18,886 |
| Budget Increases | | | | | |
| Investment in the capital programme | 1,400 | 1,400 | 900 | 900 | 900 |
| Staff pay award and capacity building | 200 | 200 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| ELWA levy increase | 650 | 650 | 440 | 350 | 350 |
| Increased contribution to Pension Fund deficit | - | - | 650 | 325 | 325 |
| Apprenticeship levy | 675 | 675 | - | - | - |
| Non staff inflation | - | - | 2,100 | 2,100 | 2,100 |
| Delaying of interest costs | 900 | 900 | 2,000 | - | - |
| Children's demand led increase | 700 | 700 | 1,300 | 1,200 | 1,100 |
| Increased demand for Adult social care | - | - | 500 | 700 | 800 |
| Homelessness demand pressures | 1,800 | 1,800 | - | - | - |
| Implications of the Care Act 2014 | 119 | 119 | 45 | 377 | - |
| Increase in employers' NI contributions | - | - | - | - | - |
| Adults precept 3% Ctax increase | 1,028 | 1,529 | 1,629 | | |
| Participatory City | | 300 | | | |
| Crowd Funding Programme | | 120 | (120) | | |
| Events team and programme | | 420 | | | |
| Delayed implementation of Leisure Trust | - | - | - | - | - |
| Oracle and ICT hosting, LLW | - | - | - | - | - |
| Clean and Green Establishment Pressure | 591 | 591 | - | - | - |
| National minimum wage - corporate contracts | - | - | - | - | - |
| Potential impact of funding and levy changes | - | - | - | - | - |
| Potential impact of new legislation | - | - | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Potential impact of demographic pressures | 581 | 581 | 1,225 | 1,133 | 1,760 |
| CAB & Thurrock | 500 | 500 | | | |
| Strategy | 750 | 750 | | | |
| Education costs transfer to DSG | (611) | (607) | | | |
| Land development acquisition | 1,000 | 1,000 | 500 | | |
| MRP charge increase | - | - | - | - | - |
| London Living Wage April 2017 | - | 66 | - | - | - |
| Total Additional Costs | 10,283 | 11,694 | 14,169 | 10,085 | 10,335 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Changes in Income & Funding | | | | | |
| Government Grants | 7,230 | 6,947 | 4,456 | 7,380 | 7,002 |
| Reduction in HB admin grant | | | - | - | - |
| Education Services Grant | 3,400 | 3,440 | | | |
| Better Care Fund Grant | (400) | (400) | | | |
| ESG Transitional Protection | (500) | (995) | | | |
| New Homes Bonus Grant | - | 1,060 | 1,722 | 703 | 2,173 |
| ASC Grant 2017-18 | | (900) | | | |
| Reversal of Council tax and NNDR surplus | - | - | - | - | - |
| Increase in rates retention income | - | - | - | - | - |
| Business Rates Retention | 667 | 667 | | | |
| Business Rates Surplus loss | | - | | | |
| Council Tax and NNDR surplus | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1.99% increase in Council Tax | (1,023) | (1,014) | (1,081) | (1,119) | (1,158) |
| 3% increase in Council Tax Adult social care precept | (1,028) | (1,529) | (1,629) | | |
| Increase in Council Tax Base | (2,104) | (1,648) | (589) | (608) | (628) |
| Income from Business Rates Pooling | - | - | - | - | - |
| Transfer of industrial sites for residential use | - | - | - | - | - |
| Extra cost of Capital borrowing | | 83 | 1,120 | 275 | 95 |
| Total Changes in Income | 6,242 | 5,711 | 3,999 | 6,631 | 7,484 |
| In year Budget Gap | 16,525 | 17,405 | 18,168 | 16,716 | 17,819 |
| A2020 Savings | | | | | |
| Savings approved by Cabinet | (9,275) | (9,276) | (11,344) | (12,784) | (14,538) |
| Total Savings | (9,275) | (9,276) | (11,344) | (12,784) | (14,538) |
| In Year Budget Gap Including Savings | 7,250 | 8,129 | 6,824 | 3,932 | 3,281 |
| Other Adjustments | | | | | |
| Cashable savings VR | (1,800) | (1,798) | 1,798 | | |
| Cashable in year 16/17 savings | - | - | - | | |
| Drawdown from Reserves | (2,300) | (2,300) | 2,300 | | |
| Use of Collection Fund Surplus | (3,150) | (3,500) | 3,500 | | |
| One off reduction in Elevate client team costs | | (531) | 531 | | |
| Revised Budget Gap after other adjustments | - | - | 14,953 | 3,932 | 3,281 |
| Cumulatative Budget Gap including Savings | 0 | 0 | 14,954 | 18,886 | 22,167 |

Medium Term Financial Strategy - Summary Position 2018/19 - 2020/21

Appendix B

| | 2018/19 £000 | 2018/19 £000 | 2019/20 £000 | 2020/21 £000 |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Feb' 17 | Revised | Revised | Revised |
| Prior Year (Surplus) / Deficit | - | - | 15,790 | 19,723 |
| Budget Increases | | | | |
| Roll Forward of 2017-18 budget gap | 8,129 | 8,129 | | |
| Investment in the capital programme | 900 | 900 | 900 | 900 |
| Staff pay award and capacity building | 1,000 | | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| ELWA levy increase | 440 | 440 | 350 | 350 |
| Increased contribution to Pension Fund deficit | 650 | 650 | 325 | 325 |
| Apprenticeship levy | - | - | - | - |
| Non staff inflation | 2,100 | | 2,100 | 2,100 |
| Delaying of interest costs | 2,000 | 2,000 | - | - |
| Children's demand led increase | 1,300 | 1,300 | 1,200 | 1,100 |
| Increased demand for Adult social care | 500 | | 700 | 800 |
| Homelessness demand pressures | - | - | - | - |
| Implications of the Care Act 2014 | 45 | 45 | 377 | - |
| Increase in employers' NI contributions | - | - | - | - |
| Adults precept 3% Ctax increase | 1,629 | 1,629 | | |
| Participatory City | | | | |
| Crowd Funding Programme | (120) | (120) | | |
| Events team and programme | | | | |
| Clean and Green Establishment Pressure | - | - | - | - |
| Potential impact of new legislation | 2,000 | | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Potential impact of demographic pressures | 1,226 | 96 | 1,133 | 1,760 |
| Land development acquisition | 500 | 500 | | |
| London Living Wage April 2017 | - | - | - | - |
| Children's Care and Support Pressure | | 1,000 | | |
| Community Solutions Demand Pressures | | 880 | | |
| Waste and Cleaning Budget Support (Public Realm) | | 1,009 | | |
| CCTV income shortfall | | 1,000 | | |
| Commissioning Structure | | 400 | | |
| Court Costs Income Shortfall | | 300 | | |
| Healthy Lifestyle and Leisure | | 550 | | |
| Customer Access Strategy | | 380 | | |
| Adult's Care and Support inc Disabilities Pressure | | 47 | | |
| Total Additional Costs | 22,299 | 21,135 | 10,085 | 10,335 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Changes in Income & Funding | | | | |
| Government Grants | 4,456 | 4,456 | 7,380 | 7,002 |
| Reduction in HB admin grant | - | - | - | - |
| Education Services Grant | | - | | |
| Better Care Fund Grant | | | | |
| ESG Transitional Protection | | | | |
| New Homes Bonus Grant | 1,722 | 1,722 | 703 | 2,173 |
| ASC Grant 2017-18 | | - | | |
| 1.99% increase in Council Tax | (1,081) | (1,081) | (1,119) | (1,158) |
| 3% increase in Council Tax Adult social care precept | (1,629) | (1,629) | | |
| Increase in Council Tax Base | (589) | (589) | (608) | (628) |
| Income from Business Rates Pooling | - | - | - | - |
| Extra cost of Capital borrowing | 1,120 | 1,120 | 275 | 95 |
| Total Changes in Income | 3,999 | 3,999 | 6,631 | 7,484 |
| In year Budget Gap | 26,298 | 25,134 | 16,716 | 17,819 |
| A2020 Savings | | | | |
| Savings approved by Cabinet | (11,344) | (11,344) | (12,784) | (14,538) |
| Non-Delivery of Savings | | 2,000 | | |
| Total Savings | (11,344) | (9,344) | (12,784) | (14,538) |
| In Year Budget Gap Including Savings | 14,954 | 15,790 | 3,932 | 3,281 |
| Other Adjustments | | | | |
| Revised Budget Gap after other adjustments | 14,954 | 15,790 | 3,932 | 3,281 |
| Cumulative Budget Gap including Savings | 14,954 | 15,790 | 19,723 | 23,003 |

APPENDIX C

Barking and Dagenham Funding Requirements

Equipment Investment

| | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 | Yr 7 | Yr 8 | Yr 9 | Yr 10 | Total |
|------|---------|--------|------|---------|---------|------|------|------|------|-------|---------|
| AIC | 37,325 | - | - | - | 400,000 | - | - | - | - | - | 437,325 |
| BHLC | 160,628 | 17,998 | - | 450,000 | 80,000 | - | - | - | - | - | 708,626 |

Building Investment

| | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 | Yr 7 | Yr 8 | Yr 9 | Yr 10 | Total |
|------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|---------|
| AIC | 49,000 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 49,000 |
| BHLC | 249,124 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 249,124 |

Modular Pool - BHLC

| | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 | Yr 7 | Yr 8 | Yr 9 | Yr 10 | Total |
|------|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-----------|
| BHLC | 1,950,000 | | | | | | | | | | 1,950,000 |

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CABINET**11 July 2017**

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement | |
| Open Report | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Sal Asghar, Strategy and Performance Manager Kelly Rowson, Senior Strategy Officer | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 5638 E-mail: Kelly.rowson@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Director: Tom Hook: Strategy and Programmes Director | |
| Accountable Strategic Director: Chris Naylor: Chief Executive | |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>This report seeks Cabinet endorsement of ‘Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto’; a shared, resident-led, place-based vision for the borough over the next 20 years, owned and delivered by the Barking and Dagenham Delivery Partnership (BDDP). This report provides Cabinet with an update on the collaborative approach followed in the development of ‘Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto’ involving residents and partners throughout the entirety of the development process. Barking and Dagenham Together will form the foundation of a collaborative, cross-sector approach to tackling the long-term challenges facing the community, and reforming and delivering public services.</p> <p>This report references the Barking and Dagenham Together vision, aspirations and targets, and explains how these were reached.</p> | |
| <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Adopt the “Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto” strategy setting out the long-term vision for the Borough, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report; (ii) Note the collaborative and inclusive process followed to develop Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto; (iii) Agree that the vision set out in Barking and Dagenham Together forms the basis of the Council’s partnership working and articulates what the Borough aspires to achieve over the next 20 years; and (iv) Agree that the Council’s Corporate Plan should set out the Council’s contribution to delivering the vision set out in Barking and Dagenham Together. | |

Reason(s)

Barking and Dagenham faces a spectrum of long-term challenges, resulting from the continued impact of de-industrialisation, automation, globalisation and austerity. The borough's population is growing fast, becoming more complex, diverse, and with a rapid movement of people into and out of the borough. We continue to underperform across a range of socio-economic indicators, and residents have worse life chances than across London.

The complex challenges of the 21st century cannot be met by the standard approach of public services of the 20th century. Partners from across the public sector must adopt a place-based – rather than organisationally based – approach to the borough, and must collaborate with one another, and with stakeholders from the private and community sectors, to achieve a shared, resident-led vision. The Growth Commission recommended the drafting of this shared vision for Barking and Dagenham, not owned by the council but by all local partners. 'Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto' is that vision, and the Barking and Dagenham Delivery Partnership is the body which will enable achievement of that vision.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Independent Growth Commission published its final report in February 2016, which included 109 recommendations to ensure improvements of outcomes for residents and to capitalise on the borough's growth opportunities. One such recommendation was to develop 'a manifesto with a programme to develop these proposals and a sustained commitment to seeing them delivered on the ground'.
- 1.2 Consequently, council officers began work in partnership with all local stakeholders on the development of 'Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto'; a shared, place-based, 20-year vision for the borough, owned and delivered collectively and collaboratively by the BDDP. This has entailed a large-scale public consultation undertaken in the summer and autumn 2016 – which received nearly 3,000 responses – a conference for over 100 partners in November 2016, and a drafting and development process engaging key partners across the borough.
- 1.3 The result of this process is a series of themes, aspirations and targets, supported by a contextual narrative, which articulates the vision for the borough for the next 20 years.
- 1.4 On 14 November 2016 the council hosted a conference for over 100 partners, to share the consultation responses and discuss the themes and priorities which should consequently constitute the borough's vision. Partners were also able to feed in to how the responses translated into priorities and deliverables. A detailed account of the outcomes and outputs of the conference is available online at the link listed in section 2.4 of this report.
- 1.5 In parallel with the development of this vision, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Barking and Dagenham Delivery Partnership (BDDP) in November 2016. The BDDP is comprised of local partners from across the public, private and third sectors, and will collectively be responsible for providing oversight, direction, and

leadership in order to achieve the aspirations for the borough. The BDDP owns the development and delivery of Barking and Dagenham Together.

- 1.6 On 10 July 2017, the BDDP formally launched ‘Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto’.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 For this vision to truly be that of the borough and of the community, it was recognised that it had to be led and informed by residents themselves. To achieve this a large-scale public consultation was undertaken between 10 August and 31 October 2016. The consultation used a range of engagement methods with the following results:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| In-depth online survey, available via the council consultation portal. | 564 responses |
| In-depth online survey, designed and completed by young people attending the borough’s secondary schools/college. | 624 responses |
| Short printed questionnaire, distributed widely across the borough. | 1,125 responses |
| Short printed questionnaire distributed to all primary schools and completed in class. | 577 responses |
| Total: | 2,890 responses |

- 2.2 With nearly 3,000 responses this consultation was successful and gave partners a clear and coherent view of the concerns, priorities and opinions of the community. Commonly held views included:

- A cleaner borough – streets, parks, front gardens
- People take pride in their local area and do their bit to keep it clean
- More affordable housing for all life stages
- Greater enforcement against environmental ASB and behaviour change amongst residents
- More high street shops and department stores in the Borough
- Places to eat, drink and socialise
- A more integrated, cohesive community with a renewed sense of community spirit
- An aspirational place to live and work, and for businesses to settle – a destination that people visit, not just pass through
- Higher standards in education and improved Ofsted ratings of the borough’s schools
- More people in employment, more local job opportunities and overall a more affluent borough
- Less crime and a greater feeling of safety on the streets
- More facilities for young people to keep them off the streets and more services for older people to keep them active.

2.3 The consultation responses led the development of the vision, informing its eventual themes, aspirations and targets.

2.4 Detailed analysis of the consultation is available online at:
www.lbbd.gov.uk/manifesto

3. Development

3.1 The Strategy and Performance Team has worked in collaboration with each member of the BDDP, as well as with relevant officers from across the council and, and with each council Cabinet member, to develop and decide the themes, aspirations and targets which constitute Barking and Dagenham Together. Council officers have simultaneously developed the vision's contextual narrative.

3.2 The themes, narrative, aspirations and targets have been informed by, and developed to reflect:

- The responses of the public consultation
- The long-term challenges and opportunities faced by the borough
- The collaborative, place-based and cross-sector approach of the Borough Manifesto and the BDDP

3.3 The draft 'Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto' attached in Appendix 1 was launched by the BDDP on 10 July 2017.

4. Themes, Aspirations and Targets

4.1 The vision is constituted of the following 10 themes, each with a corresponding aspiration statement:

- **Housing:** a place with sufficient, accessible and varied housing.
- **Community and Cohesion:** a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit.
- **Education:** a place with high-quality education and sustained attainment for all residents.
- **Health and Social Care:** a place which supports residents to achieve independent, healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.
- **Crime and Safety:** a place where everyone feels safe and is safe.
- **The Environment:** a clean, green and sustainable borough.
- **Fairness:** a place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to succeed.
- **Employment, Skills and Enterprise:** a place where every resident has access to lifelong learning, employment and opportunity.
- **Arts, Culture and Leisure:** a place with great arts and culture for everyone, leading change in the borough.
- **Regeneration:** a place where businesses and communities grow and thrive.

4.2 The Strategy and Performance Team have worked in conjunction with the Corporate Insight Hub to identify a matrix of 13 cross-cutting targets. This means that they are not theme-specific, but instead broadly reflect how the borough should change over the next 20 years, if we are to achieve the aspirations of our vision,

and address the spectrum of long-term challenges the borough faces. Behind each target is in-depth analysis and research, comparing historic trends across Barking and Dagenham, London and the UK, to ensure each target is both aspirational and realistic.

4.3 The proposed targets (shown on the outer edge of the circle) are as follows:



4.4 The above diagram illustrates the Barking and Dagenham Together targets on the outer edge of the circle. The text in the boxes either side of the circle represents the supporting measures which will be monitored to provide an indication of whether the target is on track to be achieved. It is also important to note that the targets are cross-cutting and if reached will have a 'domino effect' in positively influencing other areas. For example, by improving educational attainment at all levels compared to London, it is logical to expect unemployment levels to reduce, income levels to rise, growth in the local economy to increase and health and wellbeing levels to improve.

5. Next steps, delivery and recommendations

5.1 Delivery of the vision will be owned by the BDDP, who will meet on a quarterly basis to monitor and analyse progress towards the vision. Progress towards achieving the targets will be publicly reported on an annual basis. Further work is required to map the contributions of each partner towards this vision, and the BDDP's process for delivering Barking and Dagenham Together.

5.2 Cabinet is recommended to approve 'Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto', as included in Appendix 1. It is also recommended to approve the next steps detailed above.

6. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Stephen Hinds, Chief Accountant

- 6.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report. All costs associated with the Council's contribution towards delivery of this vision will need to be contained within the parameters of the Council's existing budgets and ongoing MTFS.

7. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Erol Islek, Senior Property Solicitor, Law & Governance

- 7.1 There are no significant legal implications. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides local authorities with a general power of competence. Section 1 of the above Act states that a local authority has power to do anything that individuals may do. Therefore, the local authority has general power to implement the B&D Together aspirations. The vision's focus on inclusivity and fairness will also help the council fulfil its public sector equality duty under the 2010 Equality Act. Barking and Dagenham Delivery Partnership will enable achievement of the vision and aspirations.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Risk Management** - The BDDP will meet quarterly to assess work undertaken to deliver the vision, and plan future collaboration. Progress towards the targets of the vision will be analysed and publicly reported by the BDDP on an annual basis.
- 8.2 **Contractual Issues** - In the event that the Council is to procure goods or services to assist or comply with recommendations made by the BDDP, then the Council's Contract Rules would need to be adhered to.
- 8.3 **Corporate Policy and Customer Impact** - Equality, diversity and fairness is woven throughout the vision of Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto, and is an integral part of achieving the borough's aspirations for the next 20 years. This is a broad, high-level vision for the borough, and an articulation of an intention to build a more collaborative, place-based approach to partnership working. It would, therefore, not be appropriate to undertake a specific EQIA for B&D Together, as the vision does not dictate specific, actionable policy changes, but rather the framework through which such changes will be made. It will, however, aim to improve outcomes for all residents, ensure inclusive growth and regeneration, and tackle inequality and unfairness where it occurs against any protected characteristic. The vision will also, therefore, help the council fulfil its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.
- 8.4 **Safeguarding Children** - The Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto aims to improve outcomes for all residents, including children and young people in the borough. It aims to enable the community to reach its aspirations, building a borough suitable for the younger generations to enjoy, free from deprivation and discrimination.

- 8.5 **Health Issues** - Our residents currently lead shorter, less healthy lives than they should. Therefore, a key priority for the vision of Barking and Dagenham Together is enabling residents to lead healthier lives, and ensuring we and the community support those who require or provide care.
- 8.6 **Crime and Disorder Issues** - Ensuring residents feel and are safe in the borough is a priority for all partners, and emerged as a common concern from the consultation. Anti-social behaviour and environmental crime are widespread and visible problems which contribute to feeling unsafe in the borough.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1: Barking and Dagenham Together: The Borough Manifesto

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Barking and Dagenham Together



**THE BOROUGH
MANIFESTO**
YOUR BOROUGH
YOUR COMMUNITY
YOUR SAY

We are London’s growth opportunity. And over the next 20 years we will join forces to embrace and harness this change so it benefits everyone. We will ensure every resident has a fair opportunity to succeed in a rapidly changing world. And we will collaborate so that by 2037 Barking and Dagenham will be...

a place where every resident has access to lifelong learning, employment and opportunity.

a place with high-quality education and sustained attainment for all residents.

a place which supports residents to achieve independent, healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.

a place with sufficient, accessible and varied housing.

“a place people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay”

a place where businesses and communities grow and thrive.

a friendly and welcoming Borough with strong community spirit.

a place with great arts and culture for everyone, leading change in the Borough.

a place where everyone feels safe and is safe.

a place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to succeed.

a clean, green and sustainable Borough.

Introduction



**Councillor
Saima Ashraf,**

**Chair of the Barking
and Dagenham
Delivery Partnership**

In 2015, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our borough and our community. Together we looked back to the start of Barking and Dagenham, reflecting on our proud history of ambition, achievement and change. We are a borough of change. Over the centuries we have transitioned time and time again, adapting to local and national changes. Whether fishing, manufacturing or otherwise, industries have come and gone. And as we become better connected to the rest of the region and the wider world, our community grows and becomes more diverse. However, if our history and heritage have taught us anything, it is that we are one borough; one community. No matter what change we face, we must face it together.

Whilst our 50th anniversary celebrated the history of our community, we now look to the future and to the vision for Barking and Dagenham. In 2015 an Independent Growth Commission set out a blueprint for the future of the Borough. This highlighted our proud heritage, history of re-invention and untapped potential. It also, however, illustrated just how far the borough has to go to reach that potential.

One of the Growth Commission's recommendations was the development of a long-term vision for Barking and Dagenham that could harness the

energy, creativity and ambition of its residents. The development of the vision, aspirations and a series of stretching targets should be used to both engage residents but also help build a strong partnership between key stakeholders.

These targets aim to be long-term in nature, ambitious but realistic and need to be stuck to from today and for the next 20 years.

Nearly 3,000 residents have helped us create our vision, this document. We must look forward, together, and aspire to build a better Barking and Dagenham, where no-one is left behind.

We are London's growth opportunity. Over the next 20 years we will join forces to embrace and harness this change so it benefits everyone. We will ensure every resident has a fair opportunity to succeed in a rapidly changing world. And we will collaborate so that we deliver our long-term vision for Barking and Dagenham.

**Councillor Saima Ashraf,
Chair of the Barking and Dagenham Delivery
Partnership**



The Vision

**One Borough.
One Community.
No-one left behind.**

We have a proud working-class history, a heritage like no other London borough and strong community bonds built over generations. We are the youngest borough in London and our population is growing rapidly. As our community changes the common ties that bond us together must strengthen and evolve.

We have a responsibility; towards our friends, family, neighbours and our environment. Civic pride in the area and in the community is the shared value that should bind us together as one community. We want everyone who lives or works here to share that pride, and to show it in how we treat one another and our borough— from our parks to our streets and our homes. This will help create a place people are proud of and a community people want to be part of.

We have a lot to be proud of already; Barking and Dagenham boasts a history of enterprise, industry and adventure. And now, we are the fastest growing borough in London – not just in terms of our population but also in terms of the amount of positive change taking place. With 50,000 new homes, 20,000 jobs and large-scale regeneration coming to the borough, we truly are London's Growth Opportunity. We want our residents to have aspirations, to flourish as individuals and as families, to choose to stay in the borough and to be able to afford to do that. Our proximity to the rest of London means we also need to exploit wider employment and investment opportunities.

“I would like to see people taking more pride and responsibility in their neighbourhood”.

The vision for Barking and Dagenham is best understood through ten themes, all of which will need help and support from a range of organisations, and the local community, if they are to be successful.



Theme 1: Employment, Skills and Enterprise

“We need to create an environment where people aspire and achieve”.

Major economic changes over the last few decades has seen Barking and Dagenham’s traditional industries disappear. Large employers such as May & Baker and Fords used to offer the majority of local jobs, but this has changed. Automation means jobs, and the skills people need, are changing, and this is only set to continue - providing a challenge for the borough, but also an opportunity.

Our education results over the last decade have improved hugely. But while our young people leaving education are as equipped with qualifications as their peers nationally, a large group of our residents do not have adequate education and skills to maintain employment in an increasingly competitive world. Secure employment is key to everything for our residents and our community.

We are well connected to the rest of London. Our proximity to the rest of London gives us the opportunity to reap the rewards and the jobs the city offers.

We will work together – across authorities, employers, schools, colleges and communities – to ensure that **Barking and Dagenham is a place where every resident has access to lifelong learning, employment and opportunity.** As part of this we need to understand our place within London’s wider economy and establish our own identity as a borough that sets us apart from our neighbours. We will share information between employers and education providers, to ensure that the education and skills training available match the needs of the job market. This will enable residents to achieve the skills necessary to compete in a 21st century global marketplace.

Theme 2: Education

“We need more outstanding schools and nurseries”

High-quality education is a stepping stone to high-quality employment. Educational attainment for young people leaving schools and colleges in Barking and Dagenham is at a record high. Over the past decade, we have focused on raising standards in our schools while drastically increasing provision, and it has paid off. Our schools are good by national standards with 92% of schools rated as good or outstanding. Whilst above the national average and improving rapidly, we are still a couple of percentage points behind the London average, but are catching up fast.

Historically however, Barking and Dagenham relied on traditional, low-skill industry such as Fords to keep local people in work. Secure local employment meant it was easy for people to leave school young, rather than looking at further education or other employment opportunities. However, barriers still remain, stopping some of our residents from getting a good education. Too few local people go on to higher education, including to the most competitive universities. We recognise the importance of vocational training and the borough has a long history of providing skills training to meet the needs of London.

As technology becomes ever more important to employment, vocational education – including apprenticeships and diplomas – becomes increasingly central to our vision. We want to make sure every resident reaches their potential, whether it's through academic attainment or any vocational route and we will ensure pathways exist to support this.

The changing employment landscape makes it more important than ever that **Barking and Dagenham is a place with high-quality education and sustained attainment for all residents, regardless of background.**

To achieve this, we will focus on recruiting and retaining talented teachers. We will understand and support the role of families in their children's education. And we will forge a strong partnership between the council and every education provider. We will use the council's influence to encourage business partners to invest in our young people. We will offer a flexible and responsive education, enabling every resident to follow their ambition.



Theme 3: Regeneration

“I hope Barking and Dagenham will be the next great town in England”



We are already well on the way to becoming the centre of growth in London. With potential for 50,000 new homes and 20,000 new jobs, and with developments such as Crossrail soon to make the borough even more connected, Barking and Dagenham has greater potential than any other London Borough.

Over the past 50 years London has seen unprecedented growth. But not all boroughs and communities have benefited from this growth. The Olympics gave our neighbouring boroughs a chance to flourish. Now it is our turn.

Be First, a new council-owned company, will deliver our regeneration ambitions and inclusive growth agenda ensuring we genuinely achieve our goal to be London's Growth Opportunity. At the heart of Be First's approach will be inclusivity - making sure no-one is left behind – as will partnership working with the private sector.

This is not the first time the borough will have been at the centre of such innovation and growth. The development of the Becontree Estate in the 1920s and 1930s as the largest public housing estate in the world shows what can be accomplished. Growth planned for the borough over the next 20 years will provide twice as much accommodation as the Becontree Estate did.

Our approach to regeneration is to ensure that residents benefit from the creation of jobs and from the arrival of new industries as well as our housing growth. Our focus on job creation is for jobs and employers that are at or over the London living wage. We want our residents to have aspirations, to flourish as individuals and as families, to choose to stay in our borough and to be able to afford to do that.

A key priority is making our growth and regeneration truly inclusive; to ensure that no-one is left behind. Only if our whole mixed and diverse community feels the real benefit of regeneration will we have succeeded. Regeneration needs to deliver improvements in health, education, wellbeing, our environment and community cohesion. It is also our responsibility to ensure the physical regeneration of the borough is matched by its culture; that Barking and Dagenham is a pleasant, interesting and sociable place to live. If we achieve this Barking and Dagenham will be **a place where businesses and communities grow and thrive.**

Theme 4: Housing

“I hope for new and better quality housing”



We understand that housing has a social and community purpose. People need homes of many different kinds, sizes, designs and locations. A mix of different types of homes bonds us together; it builds communities and helps working people stay in the borough and families stay near each other. We will ensure Barking and Dagenham is **a place with sufficient, accessible and varied housing**. We will build communities, not just places, understanding that homes and jobs are vital infrastructure without which communities can't function. We want our residents to stay with us for a long time, to put down roots here, to raise their families here, for their families to live nearby and, while they live with us, for all our residents to make a positive contribution to our community.

The Gascoigne Estate for example will see redevelopment over the next decade that will provide not only 1,500 new homes but also new schools, children's facilities, community spaces, retail and a medical centre. As London's healthy new town, Barking Riverside, 10,800 new homes will be the foundation of a flourishing new healthy community.

We are developing a Local Plan, to outline our long-term response to London's housing crisis, and our approach to creating an improved housing offer. As part of this approach, we will deliver 50,000 new, high-quality homes of mixed type, tenure and price across the borough, these will provide housing for residents on different income levels. We will collaborate with the private rental sector to ensure a high quality housing offer, and enforce these standards where they are broken. We will remember that every resident has the right to move, rent and invest in their home as they wish. And that our children should be able to afford a home within the borough.

London's success as a global city has fuelled demand for housing, yet for many it is unaffordable. The result is the housing crisis we face today. Working people are being forced out of London. First-time buyers are becoming first-time renters, increasing rental prices. A minority of landlords are exploiting demand by decreasing standards and overcrowding property. And increasing numbers of people are requiring support from friends, family or the council, or are finding themselves homeless. So, we must ensure that by 2037 we can provide homes for working people.



Theme 5: Health and Social Care



“People should have more say in their health and a greater emphasis upon preventative measures”.

As our population grows and ages we place increasing strain on our health and care services. Providing adequate care and supporting carers are becoming ever more difficult, as demand increases and resource and finance decrease. Finding a sustainable solution to the care crisis is a key priority.

Our community faces long-term challenges because of unhealthy lifestyles. Simply put, residents should be leading longer and healthier lives than they currently are. Illnesses caused by obesity – especially among children – smoking, alcohol and drug abuse are too common. This is exacerbated by the lack of healthy food options and barriers to affordable exercise facilities. As a result, how long we can expect to lead healthy lives is falling behind that of London, especially for women, who have a healthy life expectancy – the number of years they can expect to live in good health - of 58 years compared to the London average of 64 years.

To buck these trends, we need to approach health and care differently; health and care services need to work more closely together, reducing the barriers between services. We are working towards services

being fully integrated and seamless, and we will embrace and drive this transformation, so that Barking and Dagenham becomes **a place which supports residents to achieve independent, healthy, safe and fulfilling lives**. We will improve access to outstanding healthcare, by addressing the fact that we only have 6.9 GPs per 10,000 residents, compared to the London average of 7.7. As well as maintaining accessible health services to the highest of standards, we will enable residents to lead healthy lifestyles, with ample access to exercise facilities and healthy food options. We will ensure that care is available for those who need it, and the providers of care are adequately supported.

We need to change our focus across the public sector to take preventative action in identifying and resolving the root cause of an individual’s or family’s problems. This will involve breaking down silos and ensuring services aren’t provided in isolation – including housing, community safety, employment and aspects of social care – creating coordinated services that wrap around residents who need help, changing their experience of public services.

Theme 6: Community and Cohesion



“We need a large, happy community of friendly people who love to help each other”.

Our borough is growing and like the rest of London this growth is expected to continue. Change can be unsettling and can impact upon community spirit. Social cohesion and community spirit are vital to the success of the borough. We will embrace change and diversity as a strength.

We understand the importance of community and cohesion, and are determined to make **Barking and Dagenham a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit**. To achieve this we will support the community to celebrate our history and heritage, through events and activities. We will tackle extremism and hate crime wherever it occurs. And we will help different groups within our community to come together and integrate, understanding that diversity is a strength and we can all learn from one another.

We are one community, and we have created this vision as one community. Nearly 3,000 local people and partners from across neighbourhoods, occupations and organisations from the public, private and third sectors took part in the consultation which informed and defined this vision. Not only is this vision resident-led, but it is evidence of the engagement of the community in our shared future.

To achieve our vision we will change the way we work together. We will come together and support our residents and communities to be more resilient so that they are able to do more for themselves. And we will start acting as equal partners, doing our bit across sectors and organisations for the benefit of the borough.

Theme 7: Environment

“I want a lovely and clean environment for my family”

We are lucky as a London Borough to enjoy so many beautiful parks and green and open spaces. Our house building programmes from the last century have left us hundreds of local amenity greens brimming with potential, we have many parks and spaces such as Barking and Parsloes Park, and Abbey Green, and our river fronts contain some of the most stunning environment in London. Maintaining and enhancing these community assets, as well as making full use of them for activities and events, is a key priority essential to improving our health and wellbeing.

Our consultation showed that we all understand the importance of the environment, as it proved one of the most pressing concerns of the community. Many said they want the borough to be cleaner, better maintained, safe, attractive and respected. Some stressed the importance and potential of our parks, green and open spaces. Others singled out specific environmental issues – including littering, vandalism and fly-tipping – as holding back the community.

Environmental crime – or grime crime - is a widespread and visible challenge facing our community.

Cleanliness, litter, vandalism and fly-tipping not only impact how pleasant the borough is to live, travel and work in, but also affect how safe we feel in the borough as they can negatively impact on someone’s perceptions of an area.

The threat of climate change, worsening air pollution and limited resources mean it’s more important now than ever before that we create a sustainable and respectful environment for everyone. We will reduce waste and increase recycling, while making sure these services are run to the highest standards. Through our local energy company we will provide green energy to our new housing developments. We will work with partners across the country to improve air quality and sustainability, keeping our environment healthy for generations to come. If we improve and maintain our environment, we will create civic pride; pride in the local area and community. We understand that our community is nothing without our environment, and vice versa. So it is paramount that together we build **a clean, green and sustainable borough.**



Theme 8: Crime and Safety



"I just want to feel safe in the borough."

It is every person's right to feel safe in their community. A feeling of safety is a basic requirement for creating civic pride in the area and community cohesion. Crime and safety will, therefore, always be prioritised. Community starts with safety and we are one of the safest boroughs in London.

However, less than half of residents feel safe in the borough after dark, compared to 79% across the country. The borough has a significant issue with domestic violence and violence against women and girls. This is a priority for us moving forward.

Anti-social behaviour and environmental crime are highly visible problems which impact how safe we feel in the community. If we walk through the streets and see people drinking and smoking, littering, harassing others, fly-tipping, dealing or taking drugs, failing to maintain their property, or damaging others', there

is a cumulative impact. We feel unsafe and we lose trust in our neighbours. The opposite is also true, if the streets are clean and the people friendly, welcoming and polite, we feel engaged and comfortable; we feel safe. We will support the community in setting and maintaining high standards of expected behaviour.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour needs to be a joint endeavour between the council, police and our residents. We will work collectively with support from residents to take action against anyone who continues to behave anti-socially and unacceptably, bringing together everything from environmental health and protection, to private sector housing licensing, noise and nuisance, and trading standards. This approach will allow us to work together against both serious crime and the perception of crime, to ensure our community is a **place where everyone feels safe and is safe.**

Theme 9: Fairness

“Fair treatment for all”

Fairness will be woven into everything we do in the borough. And we will actively target our work to meet the varying needs of the community, acknowledging that a ‘one size fits all’ approach works for nobody, and helping everyone does not mean helping everyone equally.

We will take action to ensure the growth we will soon enjoy does not worsen the inequality we can already see in our community. Inequality is everyone’s problem. It impacts health, both physical and mental, income, rates of violence, teenage pregnancy, and addiction. Inequality destroys relationships between members of the same communities and it creates isolation, alienation and anxiety. Inequality fuels inequality.

Our borough is becoming more diverse each year, but it is not just our ethnicity that is diversifying. We are constantly learning what makes us unique, whether it be our gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital, civil partnership or maternity status; there is more that unites us than divides us. Our diversity needs to be understood, embraced, and harnessed for the benefit of everyone. And to reap the benefits of diversity, our community must be united, not segregated. Community is the result of what we do, not who we are. When we understand this and act accordingly, Barking and Dagenham will be a **place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to succeed.**



Theme 10: Arts, Culture and Leisure



“We should build a vibrant, diverse culture, and make the most of our parks”.

Culture, the arts and leisure boost our economy by creating jobs and supporting local people to realise their potential. They form and strengthen the identity of our community and make people want to visit. They provide learning opportunities for all ages and abilities, and supports the delivery of health and social care. They can break down barriers between people, bringing people together and helping them take pride in their area and community.

We have a strong tradition of culture and the arts in Barking and Dagenham. With cultural assets ranging from the Broadway Theatre to our many parks and open spaces, and flourishing events and activities including music festivals, dramatic workshops and dance showcases.

Community events are an effective and popular way of using culture to bring people together and create a sense of pride. Together we celebrate our history and heritage, as well as the music, drama, sports and community we have today, and in doing so strengthen the bonds between us.

We are London’s growth opportunity, and London is moving east not just for housing and jobs, but for culture. This means there are huge opportunities coming our way in the near future. Widespread development will bring the borough new resources – whether museums, cinemas, venues or otherwise.

By 2037 Barking and Dagenham will be **a place with great arts and culture for everyone, leading change in the borough**. Everyone will have the opportunity to take part in, enjoy and benefit from our culture, which will in turn improve our health and wellbeing.

We will use our Arts, Culture, and Heritage as a vehicle to bring about some of the changes that residents outlined in the consultation, making the borough a destination rather than a place people commute through, and as a means to improve community cohesion.



The Need

Our vision is vital because our community faces a range of severe and long-term challenges. Residents need and expect a better quality of life. Otherwise we will fall further behind.

The loss of industry has proven the greatest challenge to our community over the past 50 years. Where once it was the norm for young residents to leave school at 16 and move into low-skilled and local employment – at Fords or May & Baker or similar – now we find ourselves an interconnected London Borough. We compete and grow not only with the rest of London, but with the world. Now technology is set to once again change the employment and skills landscape. We need to respond to this change. More recently Barking and Dagenham has become one of the fastest-changing communities in Britain. Between 2001 to 2016 the population rose from 164,000 to 206,500, and is projected to rise to 275,000 by 2037. We also face a rapid movement of people. Between 2012 and 2014 approximately one quarter of the population moved into the borough, and the same proportion moved out.

The age of our community is changing. We have the highest birth rate in London. And a huge number of young people, including the greatest proportion of 0-16 year-olds in the UK.

Barking and Dagenham more diverse each year. The proportion of the population identifying as coming from black minority ethnic backgrounds increased from 15% to 50% between 2001 and 2011, while those identifying as white British reduced from 79% to 49%.

These historic forces of change have had a range of consequences for our community. People in our borough die earlier, have poorer health, and lower levels of education and skills, than across London. Too many are insufficiently skilled, too many are in low paid work, and too many struggle to find suitable homes that they can afford. Meanwhile community cohesion remains a challenge as people have seen rapid change in a short space of time. Change can be unsettling, and can break down the trust between members of the community.

Demand for services will only increase as our population continues to change and grow. By 2020 reductions in funding imposed by central government will mean the council will have approximately half the money it had to spend in 2010, and local partners – including local NHS Trusts and the Metropolitan Police – are facing similar funding crises. It is within this context – of continuing austerity and doing more with less – that we, the partners of Barking and Dagenham will collaborate to reform public services over the years to come, and fulfil our community's vision.

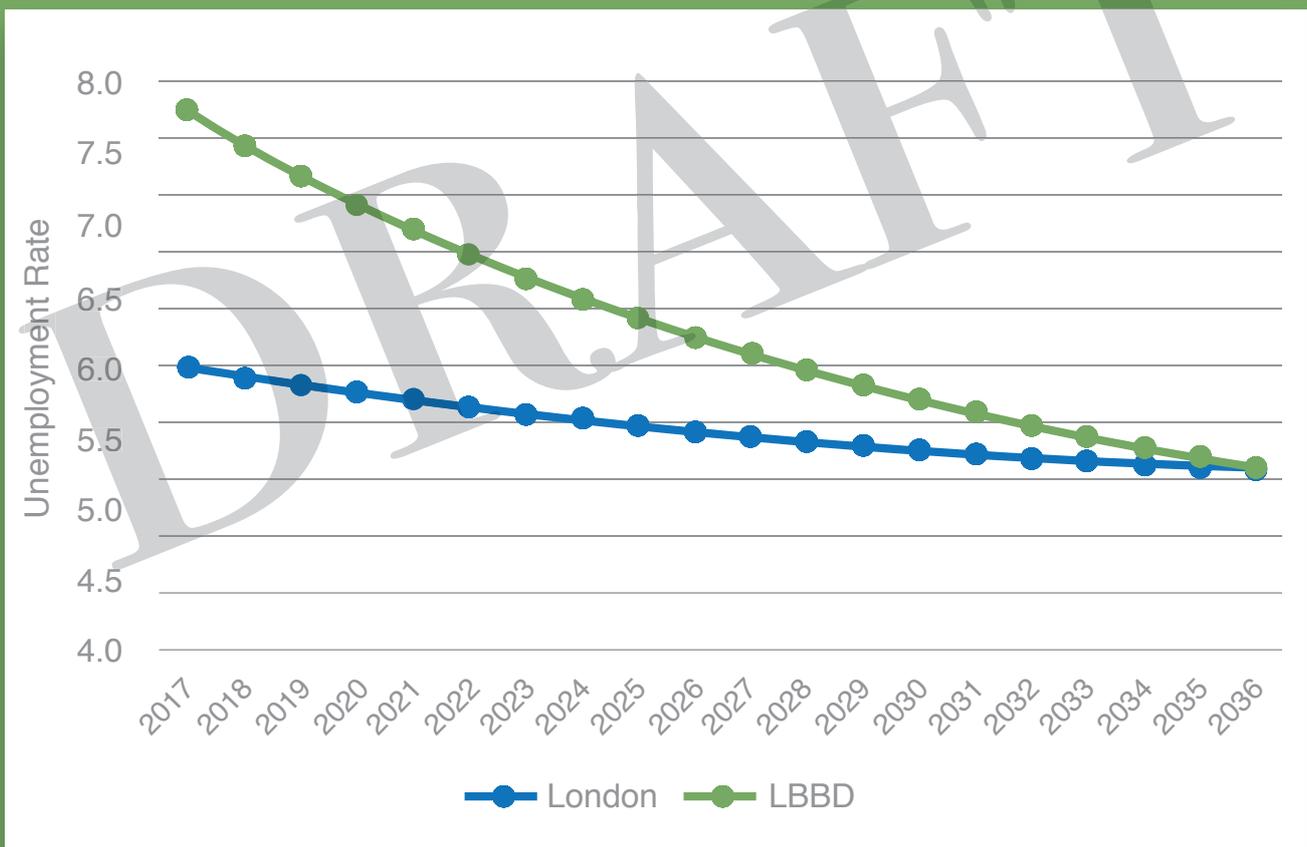
The scale of the challenge

The Growth Commission highlighted how big the task before us is. Outcomes for residents are towards the bottom of most London league tables. In developing the 20 year targets the starting point has to be to aim for the London average, just how hard this is can be seen in the example below.

Using the target ‘unemployment lower than the London average’ as an example we can begin to see just how challenging achieving some of these targets will be. The current unemployment rate is 7.8% (London=6%). That represents a 30% gap in unemployment rate between LBBB and London. To be able to achieve the London unemployment rate, Barking

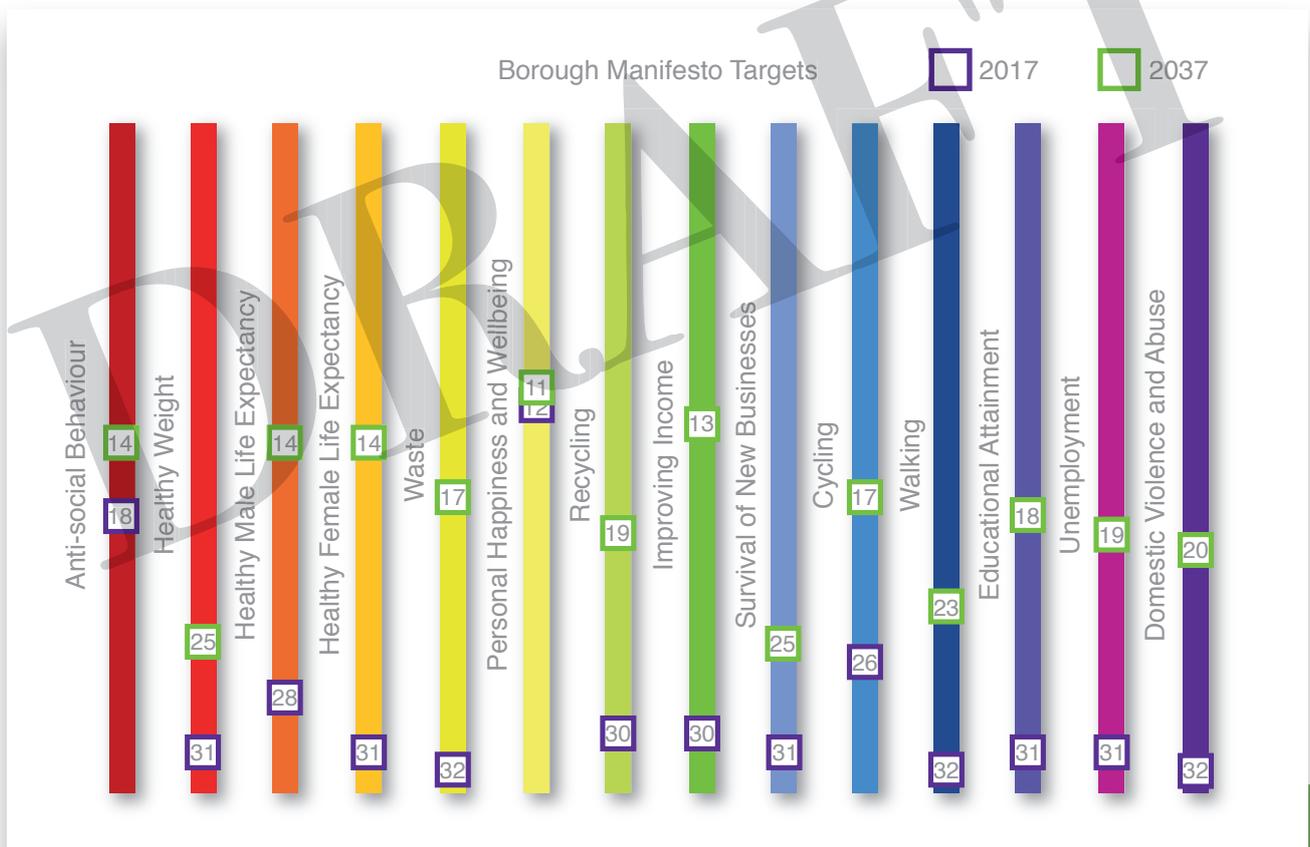
and Dagenham needs to consistently reduce the rate three times faster than London. In other words, if in a given year London reduces the rate by 10%, Barking and Dagenham will need to improve by 30%. That has to happen consistently during the next 20 years.

There may be some reasons that provide optimism as to why the gap may be reduced such as the planned regeneration and growth in the borough. However, other parts of London will also be taking steps to reduce unemployment, and it seems unrealistic to assume that every year Barking and Dagenham will be able to outperform London with an unemployment decrease three times faster than London.



We aspire to be in the top of the London league tables, however at a time of significant reductions in public spending, this is more challenging for a borough such as Barking and Dagenham than for boroughs less reliant on government support. In the context of the continued success of London it becomes ever harder to move up league tables as other boroughs also progress.

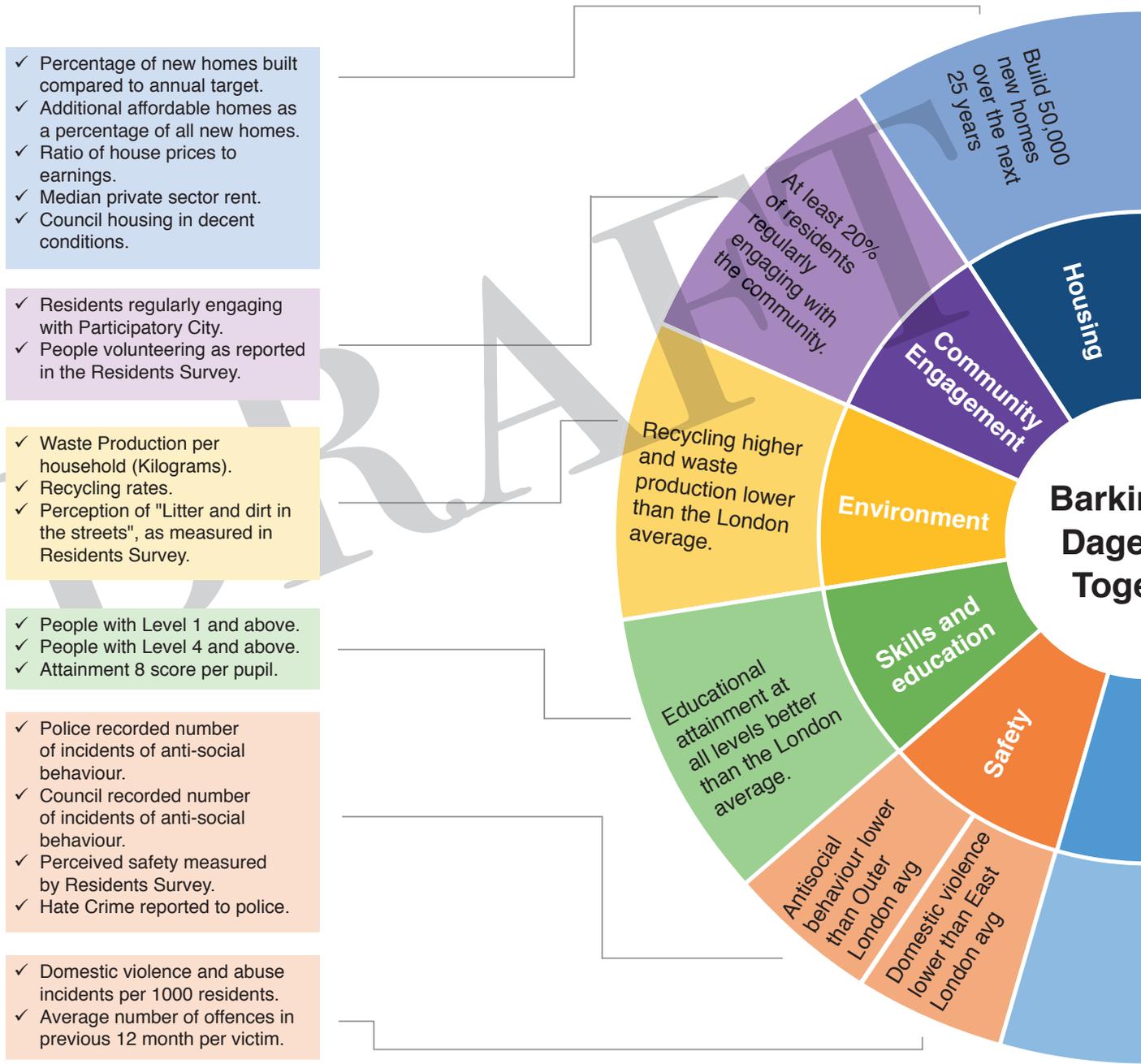
The graph below shows where Barking and Dagenham would be in relation to the rest of London if we achieve our targets assuming London continues on the current trajectory. This would mean that Barking and Dagenham would go from being at the bottom of many of the indicators to around mid-table. However, again this depends heavily on the rate of improvement of other London boroughs. The targets we have devised are both ambitious and realistic.



Targets and Themes

Our vision will form the foundation of place-based collaboration for Barking and Dagenham. Our plans, strategies and policies will be informed by this vision and will help us achieve it. We will deliver it together through a series of collaborative strategies and plans focused on shorter lengths of time than the vision itself.

The Delivery Partnership – comprising all of the borough’s key stakeholders – will meet on a quarterly basis to assess progress made towards our targets and aspirations, and to plan how best to collaborate in the future. In delivering this we will remember that public services – no matter who they are provided by - impact upon each other and are interlinked across neighbourhoods, communities, organisations and sectors.

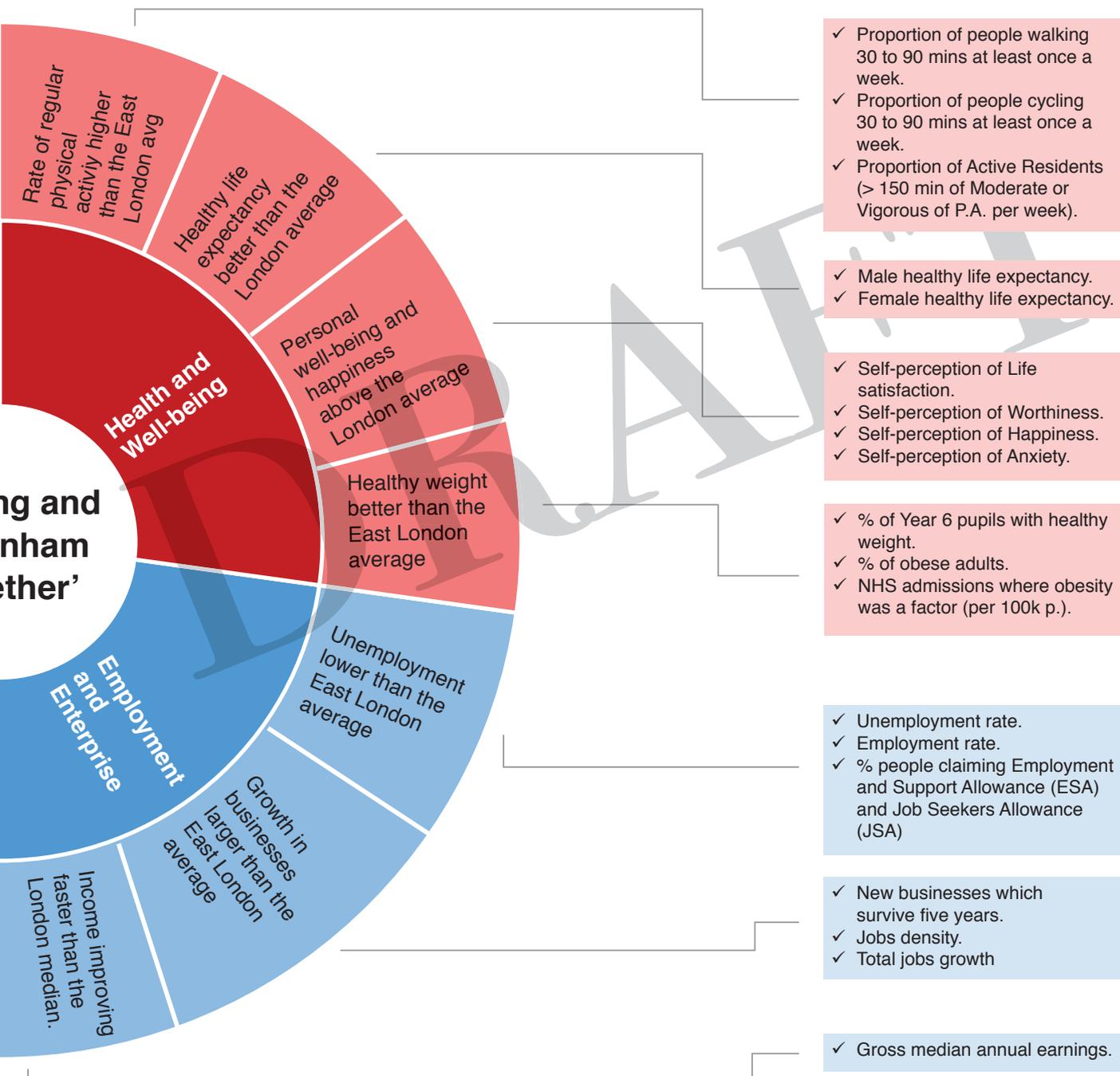


In order to monitor progress towards our achievement of this vision, we have identified a matrix of key targets. These **cross-cutting targets** characterise how the borough should change over the next 20 years, if we are to achieve our aspirations, and address the spectrum of long-term challenges we currently face.

We have adopted a matrix approach because we understand that public services and socio-

economic outcomes are deeply interconnected, and achieving improvements for one outcome will have consequences for others across the community.

The data collected and the way it is used is likely to change over the next 20 years. Therefore, our targets might need to be amended to reflect change over time, but the aspiration behind each target will remain unchanged.



DRAFT

CABINET**11 July 2017**

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| Title: Equality and Diversity Strategy | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion | |
| Open Report | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All wards | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Sal Asghar, Strategy and Performance Manager, | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3734 E-mail: Salauoddin.asghar@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Director: Tom Hook, Director of Strategy and Programmes | |
| Accountable Strategic Director: Chris Naylor, Chief Executive | |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>The Single Equalities Scheme 2012-2016 has expired and will be replaced by a new Equality and Diversity Strategy that will set new priorities for where we want to make an impact over the next few years to close equality gaps for all residents and ensure fair access to services. The Strategy is a key part of the Council's policy framework, and the Equality Act 2010 requires that the Council must have in such a strategy.</p> <p>Over the winter period a 10-week consultation was conducted to gather the views of partners, staff, and residents about where we should prioritise activity. Using the responses from that consultation, the Strategy and Performance Team, with direct input from relevant service blocks, has developed the Strategy at Appendix 1 which Cabinet is asked to agree.</p> | |
| <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Adopt the Equality and Diversity Strategy at Appendix 1 to the report; and (ii) Note that monitoring of the delivery of the Strategy and its actions will take place annually through the Corporate Performance Group. | |
| <p>Reason(s)</p> <p>By replacing the Single Equalities Scheme 2012-2016 with the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2017-2021 the Council continues to meet its public sector equalities duties under the Equality Act 2010; specifically this includes compliance with the regulation for public sector organisations to set equality and diversity objectives at least every four years. Furthermore, the Strategy and its proposed actions contributes towards improving outcomes for residents by closing equality gaps and ensuring fair access to services.</p> | |

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. The 'general equality duty' was introduced to help local authorities (and all other public authorities) avoid discriminatory practices and integrate equality into their core business. It requires that public authorities are taking steps to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic¹ and those who do not;
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 1.2. Local authorities must apply this duty to their employees and those impacted by the policies and practices of the authority. Furthermore, the authority must have regard to the nine protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010, and in doing so:
 - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people with protected characteristics due to having that characteristic
 - take steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics that are different from people who do not have that characteristic (including taking account of a disability)
 - encourage protected groups to participate in public life and in any other activity where participation is disproportionately low.
- 1.3. As part of the 'general equality duty' of the Equality Act 2010, local authorities must prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years.²
- 1.4. To continue to comply with the Equality Act 2010 the Council must develop a new strategy for meeting the general equality duty. It is for this reason this report is presented to Cabinet.

2. Context

- 2.1. The Equality and Diversity Strategy has been developed in a challenging context of reduced budgets and large scale transformation of council services and functions. The Strategy is particularly influenced by, and seeks to dovetail with these important agendas:

¹ The nine protected characteristics are as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity status
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

² The Single Equalities Scheme, which is now expired, was developed to meet this legal obligation when it came in effect on 06 April 2012.

Transformation programmes

Ambition 2020 is the Council's wholesale transformation programme to create a sustainable organisation that can live within its means; tackle the challenges the borough faces; respond to the Growth Commission findings and deliver the Council's vision. The programme will trigger significant re-configurations of services and functions to achieve £63 million of savings. Managing change and transitioning to new service delivery models will require a sensitive approach to equality and diversity.

Growth Commission

The Growth Commission made recommendations about how to maximise the contribution of the borough to the London economy; generating growth in Barking and Dagenham in a way that benefits all residents. There were more than 100 recommendations, covering issues including housing, inclusive growth, regeneration, and civic culture.

Borough Manifesto

The Borough Manifesto is a collaborative, place-based, resident-led vision of the future of Barking and Dagenham. It is a set of aspirations and targets, jointly owned by public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations, setting out how the Borough should move forward over the next 20 years. A major theme of the Manifesto is fairness and removing barriers to equality.

3. About the Strategy

- 3.1. The Strategy primarily aims to improve outcomes for residents by setting actions to address known equality and diversity issues faced by our population covering several important domains that have an impact on outcomes such as housing, employment, health, and education.
- 3.2. It is also concerned with how the Council operates and uses instruments, functions and tools at its disposal, such as commissioning, data and intelligence, and equalities impact assessments to systematically ensure the council has a robust approach to equality and diversity.
- 3.3. As well as advancing equality and diversity for people affected by the Council's policies and service delivery, the public sector equality duty includes employees of the organisation. The Strategy therefore outlines our approach as an employer and sets objectives specific to our workforce.
- 3.4. The Strategy is divided into four main objectives, each with sub-objectives and proposed actions. Following the introductory commentary, contextual information, and the methodology for developing the Strategy, the document is structured as follows:

| Objective | Sub-objective |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Improve outcomes for all | Improve educational attainment |
| | Reduce hate crime and intervene where hostility surfaces |
| | Tackle health inequalities |

| Objective | Sub-objective |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Protect everyone from domestic violence and abuse |
| No-one left behind | Harness economic growth and use regeneration as a tool to improve outcomes |
| | Help and support working age residents into employment |
| | Ensure there are suitable and good homes for everyone |
| Fair and open service delivery | Make best use of insight and intelligence |
| | Ensure that commissioning decisions reflect the needs of service users |
| | Ensure equalities impact assessments are carried out, and that this is done to a high standard |
| | Engage with residents and stakeholders on service design and delivery |
| Exemplar employer | Ensure that employment processes and conditions are free from discrimination |
| | Maintain status as a 'Disability Confident' employer and remove barriers for people with impairments |
| | Improve diversity in the workforce so that it represents and reflects the community it serves |

- 3.5. The Strategy acts an umbrella document with the specific purpose to articulate our priorities for the next period (2017-2021) and bring together a suite of actions (some of which will be reflected in other policies and strategies) that demonstrate how we will be working to improve equality and diversity for our population. The Strategy has links to the Council's wider policy framework and, to make these links clear, at the end of each section the Strategy signposts to where more detailed plans and actions can be found on that topic or issue which will include more granular level detail about equalities and diversity priorities and actions.
- 3.6. The Strategy is not a definitive or exhaustive about our approach to equality and diversity. The entirety of our approach is contained within all of our policies, plans and strategies, and each service block of the Council is responsible for meeting equalities and diversity duties. The Strategy expresses how equality and diversity is embedded in everything we do and mission-critical to delivering the Council's strategic priorities.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. On 1st November 2016, we launched a 10-week consultation to seek the views of people who live and work in the borough about what our priorities and objectives should be with regard to equality and diversity, and to give people the opportunity to highlight issues and problems that the Strategy should seek to address.
- 4.2. Members of the public were invited to respond to the consultation by completing an online questionnaire which was available on the Council's consultation portal. Stakeholders could also respond by submitting hardcopies by post or by e-mailing the Strategy and Performance Team. The consultation document was displayed in local libraries and children's centres and downloadable from the Council's website. An easy read version of the consultation information and questionnaire was developed to ensure accessibility; this was used to engage people with learning disabilities and people who have English as a second language.
- 4.3. The public consultation closed on 13th January 2017. In total, there were 29 responses.
- 4.4. Separately and taking a more targeted approach, the Council wrote to partners and voluntary sector groups and organisations directly. As well as inviting them to respond to the public consultation, the Strategy and Performance Team attended local groups and forums to discuss the consultation and get input from stakeholders. Through this approach we were able to engage the following groups and forums:
 - Barking and Dagenham Ethnic Minority Forum
 - Barking and Dagenham Faith Forum
 - Barking and Dagenham LGBT Network
 - Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum
 - Learning Disability Partnership Board
 - International Day of Disabled People (consultation workshop hosted by the Sycamore Trust)
- 4.5. Council staff were consulted separately about how the Council meets its equality duties as an organisation and service provider, and how it treats staff as an employer. All staff were invited to respond to the Staff Temperature Check survey, which is a consultation mechanism used by HR to measure staff satisfaction in several domains including wellbeing, fairness, communications, and equality. Additional questions, specific to the Equality and Diversity Strategy, were included to engage staff about where and how we can improve our approach to equalities, diversity, fairness and inclusion. The Staff Temperature Check was completed by 750 members of staff (21% of all council employees).
- 4.6. Responses from the consultation are summarised in Appendix 2.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Lance Porteous, Principal Accountant

- 5.1. The Strategy aligns with existing plans and strategies as well as emerging policies and programmes within the organisation. It will therefore be possible to deliver the Strategy within the existing budgets held by the service blocks who own the actions and who will be responsible for delivery.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Dr Paul Field, Senior Governance Lawyer

- 6.1. The Equality Act 2010 requires that we, as a local authority, must consider all individuals when carrying out our day-to-day work. This includes shaping policy, delivering services and how we treat our employees.
- 6.2. More broadly, under the Equality Act, we must ensure that we are taking steps to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.3. This Strategy sets out our approach to meeting the duties of the Equality Act 2010. The Strategy is a significant piece of the Council's overall policy framework and cuts across all other policies, plans and strategies which are service specific in meeting these overarching equality and diversity duties.
- 6.4. The Strategy is due to expire again in 2021, when by law we will be required to set new equalities objectives. In the meantime, it is recommended that the actions of the Strategy are reviewed annually by Corporate Performance Group who will monitor delivery progress and be able to set new objectives as appropriate to keep the Strategy up-to-date and abreast of new developments or responsibilities.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. **Risk Management** - To ensure oversight and to measure progress the Strategy and Performance Team will compile annual progress reports to Corporate Performance Group. Action owners from relevant service blocks will contribute to this report by providing updates on actions apportioned to them and they will be held to account for delivery.
- 7.2. **Contractual Issues** - There are no direct contract or procurement implications for this Strategy. However, Cabinet should note that the Council's Contract Rules comply with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and the Council's Social Value Policy. This means that before starting a procurement process officers should consider how what is proposed to be procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Council's area; and how, in conducting the process of procurement, it might act with a view to securing that improvement. Improving outcomes for residents and equalities and diversity is therefore embedded in the Council's procurement process.
- 7.3. **Staffing Issues** - The Staff Temperature Check was used to engage staff in the development of the Strategy and the findings of the consultation have informed the actions and priorities. Objective four of the Equality and Diversity Strategy focuses exclusively on the Council as an employer and proposes actions to improve equality, fairness, inclusion, and diversity. The Strategy supplements the Council's Equalities in Employment Policy which is the primary policy through which the Council articulates its equalities and diversity responsibilities as an employer.

In-line with the Equalities in Employment Policy, the Equality and Diversity Strategy highlights the need to enable and support disabled employees, improve the diversity of the workforce, ensure we provide family-friendly working arrangements, and ensure employment processes and practices are fair and free from discrimination. The Strategy highlights the Council's Investor in People status and 'Disability Confident' employer accreditation as evidence in support of our strong track-record as a fair and equal employer.

7.4. Corporate Policy and Customer Impact - Objective 3 of the Strategy (Fair and open service delivery) outlines how we ensure equality and diversity is considered in policy development, service design, decision-making, and operational service delivery. This is achieved through the use of:

- data and intelligence to understand the population's needs and characteristics
- equalities impact assessments to systematically consider the impacts of proposals and policies on the population, and those with protected characteristics.
- commissioning to develop service provision which meets the needs of service users
- consultation and engagement to involve residents in service design and decision-making processes.

By strengthening our approaches in these areas we drive continuous improvement in service delivery and advance our understanding of the community and how we must develop services and functions to meet their needs and deliver better outcomes.

7.5. Health Issues - The Strategy proposes a suite of actions to tackle health inequalities and focuses on closing the life expectancy and healthy life expectancy gap, where Barking and Dagenham is behind national and regional averages. These actions directly relate to the wider agenda for improving the health of our population principally set out in the borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Strategy takes a comprehensive approach to health and wellbeing and is concerned with addressing the wider socio-economic determinants of health. It therefore proposes actions related to education, employment, housing, and regeneration.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

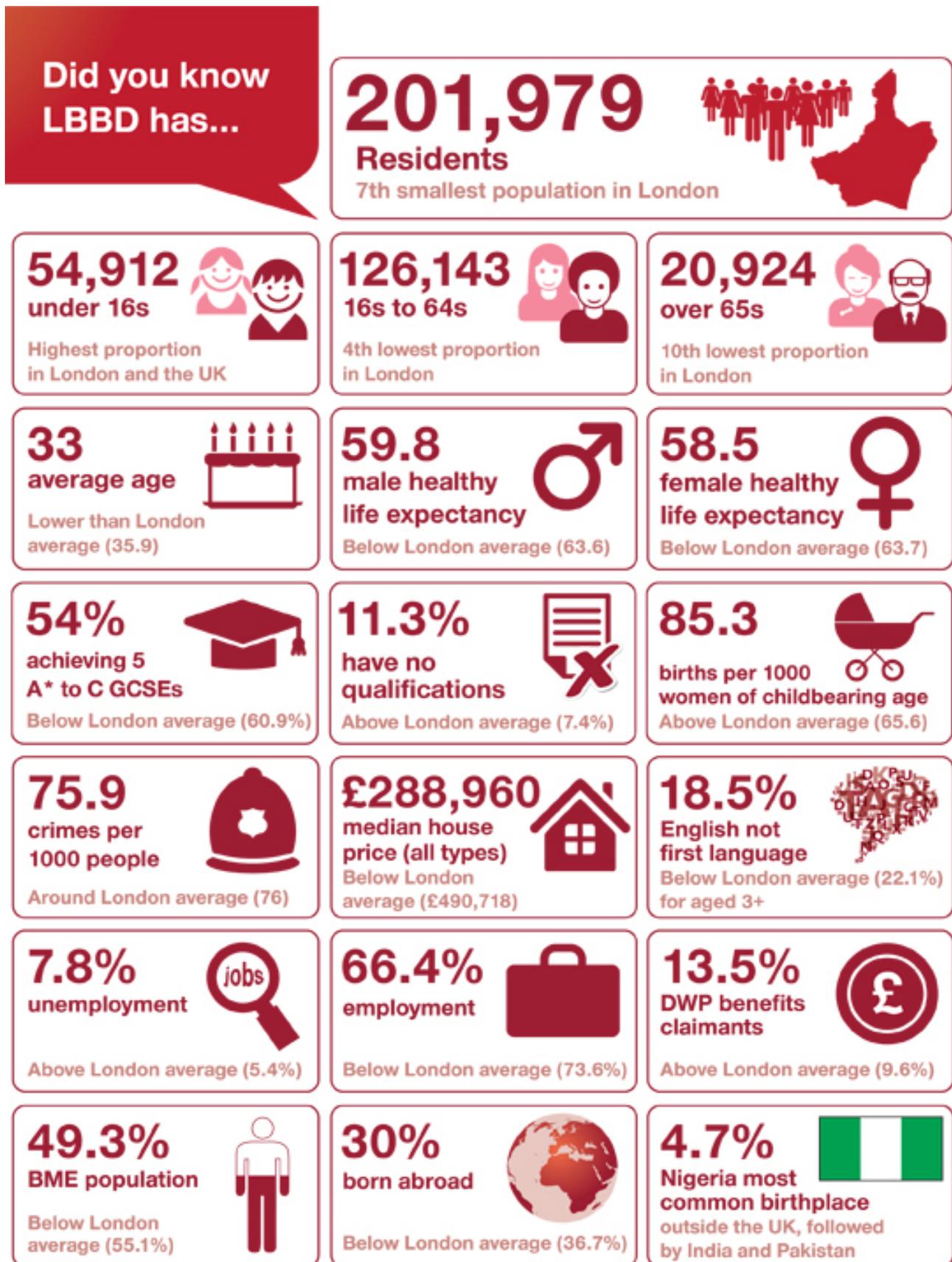
- Appendix 1: Equality and Diversity Strategy

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Equality and Diversity Strategy 2017 - 2021



Key population and demographic facts



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Council vision and priorities

One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity

Encouraging civic pride

Build pride, respect and cohesion across our borough

Promote a welcoming, safe, and resilient community

Build civic responsibility and help residents shape their quality of life

Promote and protect our green and public open spaces

Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child

Enabling social responsibility

Support residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community

Protect the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe

Ensure everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it

Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential

Fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families

Build high quality homes and a sustainable community

Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities

Support investment in housing, leisure, the creative industries and public spaces to enhance our environment

Work with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs

Enhance the borough's image to attract investment and business growth

Well run organisation

A digital Council, with appropriate services delivered online

Promote equalities and diversity in the workforce and community

Implement a 'smarter working' programme, making best use of accommodation and IT, allowing Members and staff to work flexibly to support the community

Continue to manage finances efficiently, looking for ways to make savings, generate income, and be innovative in service delivery.

Growing the borough

See also:

— Corporate Delivery Plan 2017/18

— Borough Manifesto

Message from the Chief Executive

Equality matters, and we must never get complacent that we are doing enough to improve equality, inclusion, and fairness.

Many problems and issues our residents face are the result of, or compounded by, inequality. Despite changes in attitudes, behaviours and beliefs, discrimination, unconscious bias, and prejudice still holds certain people or groups back and prevents them from fully participating in society. Despite social progress and the advancements of rights and freedoms there are still entrenched, systemic inequalities in our society. Barking and Dagenham, a community that is diverse and deprived feels the consequences of inequality acutely.

Removing barriers to opportunity and closing equality gaps is mission central to the Council. We are failing as an organisation if we are not attempting to tackle the root causes of inequality, as opposed to reacting to the symptoms of it.

There is a moral and ethical case for doing this but there is also a solid financial business case. The Council's services need to deliver, enable, or facilitate change in people's lives. Our services need to be ruthlessly efficient at delivering better outcomes. This will help us to reduce and manage demand for precious public services and deliver financial savings, but more importantly it will help our residents to live better quality lives, and fulfil their potential for the benefit of them and the whole community.

This is why we are fundamentally redesigning services to make them

outcomes-focused and person-centred. This is why our vision is 'no one left behind', and why we are doing everything we can to achieve inclusive growth and harness the benefits of the Borough's potential for physical regeneration.

As Chief Executive, it is my job to ensure that equality and diversity is embedded into every service, decision, policy, transaction, and interaction. It is my job to ensure that processes, procedures, and systems work for everyone fairly, regardless of identity, characteristics, or circumstances. And it is my job to ensure that everyone in the Council, at all levels and across all services and functions, shares my passion and standards for striving for equality and fairness.

The Equality and Diversity Strategy is the keystone of our policy framework. This Strategy provides an overview of our approach to equality and diversity, it highlights some of the work we are doing to close equality gaps, and sets objectives to make a difference over the next period. The document is comprehensive, but reflects only a small portion of everything we do to advance equality and diversity.



Chris Naylor
Chief Executive

Foreword



Barking and Dagenham Council recognises, values and welcomes the diversity of people living, working and visiting our Borough. We are committed to promoting equality and tackling social exclusion and discrimination.

We are a vibrant, diverse and changing borough. These are things of which we should be proud and celebrate. As London moves east to capitalise on our, and neighbouring boroughs, growth potential we will experience more change, our population will grow and the Borough will feel and look different. These are not changes we should fear.

Growth will bring homes, jobs and opportunity, but we should recognise that change can be unsettling. Anyone who knows the history of our Borough knows the challenges we have faced and the need to take everyone with us. It is our job, and that of partners, to ensure that the change that happens in the Borough is positive, to the benefit of all and that no-one is left behind. This means that the Council commits to support every person

and every family to fulfil their potential through education, work and, where needed, social support.

This Equality and Diversity Strategy is an important document setting out our priorities over the coming years as we seek to fundamentally redesign council services, deliver significant budget cuts and improve outcomes for residents. Our vision is to create a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other's differences. A place where tolerance, understanding and a sense of responsibility can grow and all people can enjoy full equality and fulfil their potential.

Our diversity as a Borough is something in which we should be proud, something we should celebrate and not tolerate. My appointment as the first Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion shows the importance of these issues to the Council.

A0Bright

Cllr Sade Bright

Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion

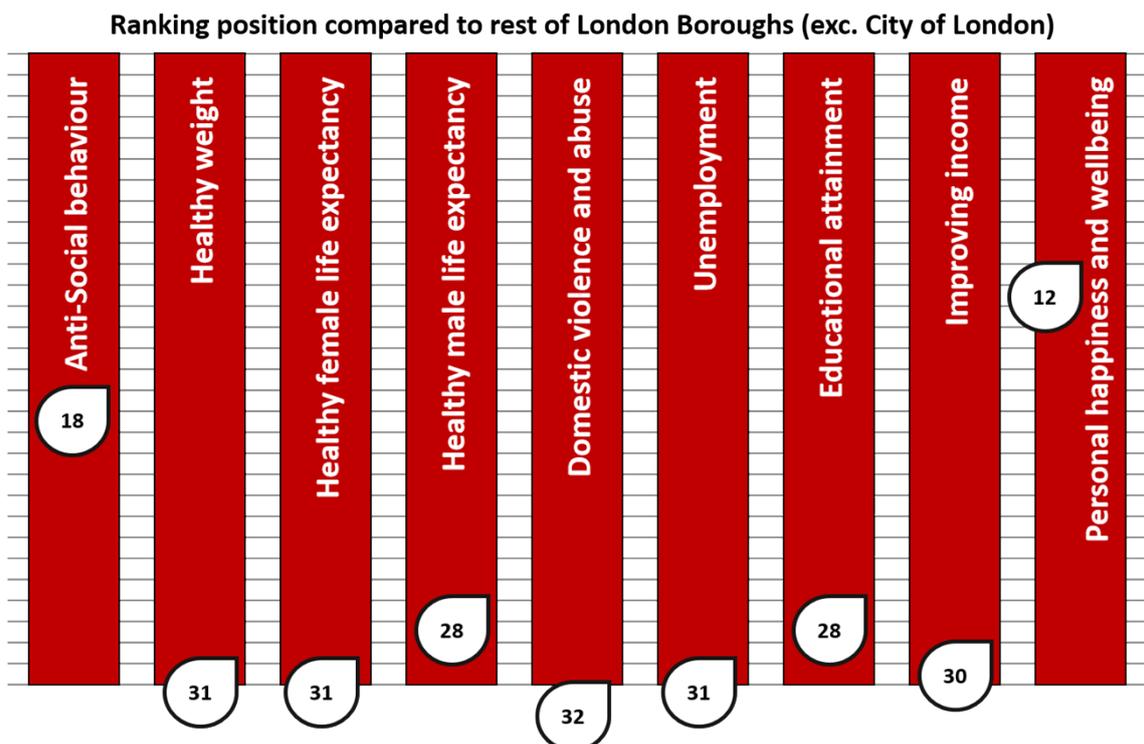
Introduction

Barking and Dagenham has a strong record of advancing equality. We are proud to have connections to important figures in history such as Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the first feminists, and Elizabeth Fry, a prison reformer. In more modern times this tradition has been carried on by Annie Huggett, a leading figure in the Suffragette movement, and the female sewing machinists at Ford's, whose industrial action ultimately led to the Equal Pay Act in 1970. Only a year ago, we launched the Gender Equality Charter, a focussed programme of action to improve equality for women.

We should remember our history as a place that has improved equality through regeneration, economic growth, and housing. In the past, the fishing, car manufacturing, and pharmaceutical industries have provided jobs and growth to local people. Today we are at the beginning of a new chapter in our history where we are capitalising on being a major beneficiary of London's economic growth. Over the next 20 years we aim to build 50,000 homes, bring in new industries and investment, and regenerate neglected parts of the borough.

This heritage shows our achievements, but it also shows that our work is never finished. Even in today's times there are groups within society and within our community who face inequalities and disadvantages. The Council is not complacent about equality and we recognise that the wellbeing, success, and prosperity of our community hinges on eliminating gaps in equality and improving outcomes in key areas.

The diagram below illustrates the scale of the challenge. It shows that people in our borough are more deprived, die earlier, have poorer health, and lower levels of education and skills, than in most other London Boroughs.



This strategy, allied with all our other plans and strategies, sets a course to tackle inequality and improve outcomes.

Our population

Over the last 15 years Barking and Dagenham has become one of the fastest-changing communities in Britain both in terms of growth and diversity.

Based on the latest projections, the population for the borough stands at roughly 201,979. Since 2001 the population has risen by 35,000 and growth in the future will continue at a similar rate. By 2020, the population is expected to grow to 220,000, and reach 275,000 by 2037. The growth in the population is largely due to the borough having the highest birth rate in London.¹ Our population is characterised by its large proportion of young people, of which we have the largest proportion of 0-16 year olds of anywhere in the UK (54,912 or 27% of the overall population). We also have an ageing population with 20,924 people over 65.² Of these 8,068 are aged between 75-89, and 1,075 are aged 90+. Where people are living longer we can expect this section of the population (and their care and support needs) to grow; by 2017 there is estimated to be 30,277 people aged 65 and over with an increasing proportion aged over 75 and over 90.³ There are also more people living with disabilities or long-term health conditions. According to the Census 2011 26.9%⁴ of all households in the borough have a person with a long-term health condition or disability.

The population has also become considerably more ethnically diverse with growth in representation from people with Black African, Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani heritage. More nationalities, cultures and faiths are represented than ever before. 30% of the population was born outside of the UK and for 18.5% of residents English is not their first language⁵.

Diversity is an asset and a strength but it also brings challenges. As a commissioner and provider of public services we must keep up-to-date with demographic changes and adapt our approach to meet the needs and expectations of our residents. We must value diversity and understand that residents are individuals. As such we must evolve how we plan and deliver services that are inclusive, accessible, outcomes focussed, and where appropriate, personalised.

Deprivation is another challenge for our population. Our overall rank, or rank of average rank, in the Indices of Deprivation, which measures deprivation using seven domains⁶, positions the borough in the top 1% most deprived boroughs in England. Within London, the borough is ranked 2nd compared to 6th in 2010. This means that significant proportions of the population are living in income deprived households; for children, the figure is 32%, for working age adults 24%, and for older people 28%. Poverty is key factor in causing and sustaining inequality and impacts on outcomes in education, health, housing, and employment.

Child poverty is especially damaging to outcomes and life chances. On average 28% of children in the Borough live in poverty compared to a London and England average of 21.8% and 18% respectively. Within the borough levels of child poverty vary. For example in Gascoigne ward child poverty is at 39%, almost 130% higher than Longbridge ward which has the lowest level (17%).

Poverty disproportionately impacts different groups within the population. Some examples are given in the table below.

At risk groups for poverty, Barking and Dagenham⁷

| Group | Number in LBBD | Percentage (of total in LBBD) | Poverty risk compared with national data |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Teenage Parents | 369 (under 21's) | 1.8% of all households with dependent children | Children of teenage mothers have a 63% increased risk of being born into poverty compared to babies born to mothers in their twenties |
| Lone Parents (2011 census) | 9,965 ⁸ | 42.3% of households with dependent children | Children with a lone parent are a third more likely to be in poverty than those living with more than one parent |
| Workless families | 14,250 ⁹ (children) | 27.2% of all children in households with dependent children | Children in workless families are 2.5 times more likely to be in poverty than the average family |
| Large families (4+ children) | 3,890 families | 6% of all families | Children in large families are 2/3 more likely to be in poverty than those living in smaller families |
| Ethnic minorities | 59% BME school population. Highest growth rate in London | | Varies between groups (e.g., Pakistani households 3 times more likely to be in poverty than white British) |
| Migrants/ Asylum | 5017 (estimated) | 2.8% population | No national data within confidence limits |
| Disabled people | 3,978 households | 16.4% of households | Children with 1+ disabled parents are 1.5 times more likely to be in poverty |

This Strategy sets out how we will use data about our population, and data about how the population is set to change in the future, to guide an evidence-based approach to equality and diversity that takes account of the characteristics of residents.

Given the profile of our population our approach to equality and diversity must recognise intersectionality - i.e. that people, because of their identity and circumstances, face multiple disadvantages and barriers which overlap and are interdependent. Furthermore, we must recognise that regardless of our aim to achieve equality, we must ensure that, as a minimum, all residents have fair access to services and are treated fairly and without discrimination.

See also:

- **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**
- **Census 2011**
- **Indices of Deprivation**

Meeting our legal duties

This Strategy provides the framework for how we will meet the [public sector duty](#) of the [Equality Act 2010](#). The legal duty requires that we, as a local authority, must consider all individuals when carrying out our day-to-day work. This includes shaping policy, delivering services and how we treat our employees.

More broadly, under the Equality Act, we must ensure that we are taking steps to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In meeting these duties, we will have regard for the equal treatment of people based on the Equality Act's nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity status
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

The duty for public bodies to consider the impact of their policies on reducing class or socio-economic disadvantage was removed from the Equality Act. However, we consider that it is necessary to pay due regard to socio-economic factors as we believe it is fundamental to delivering true equality for all our residents and improving living standards. This Strategy has specific objectives and actions to address socio-economic factors that lead to or perpetuate inequality.

See also:

— **Equality Act 2010**

Vision for equality and diversity

Our vision is to create a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other's differences. A place where tolerance, understanding and a sense of responsibility can grow and all people can enjoy full equality and fulfil their potential.

Here and now actions and priorities

This Strategy sets out the range of work we are doing to improve equality and diversity, how we are going beyond the minimum requirements we are expected to meet under the Equality Act 2010, and it sets actions and priorities for the next four-year period. This Strategy is being developed in the context of several key pieces of work which have recently been completed or are currently taking place.

Growth Commission A team of independent experts were commissioned to review our ambition to be London's growth opportunity and make recommendations how to maximise the contribution of the borough to the London economy; generating growth in Barking and Dagenham in a way that benefits all residents.

The Commission offered over 100 recommendations, covering issues including housing, inclusive growth, regeneration, and civic culture.

Borough Manifesto The Borough Manifesto is a collaborative, place-based, resident-led vision of the future of Barking and Dagenham. It is a set of aspirations and targets, jointly owned by public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations, setting out how the Borough should move forward over the next 20 years. A major theme of the Manifesto is fairness and removing barriers to equality.

Transformation programmes Ambition 2020 was the Council's wholesale transformation plan to create a sustainable organisation that can live within its means; tackle the challenges the borough faces; respond to the Growth Commission findings and deliver the Council's vision. Ambition 2020 triggered significant re-configurations of

services and functions through several transformation programmes which have moved into implementation. Managing change and transitioning to new service delivery models will require a sensitive approach to equality and diversity.

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Community Solutions | A flagship transformation programme is Community Solutions. The purpose of this new service will be early resolution and problem-solving to help residents to become more self-sufficient and resilient. It will tackle the multiple needs of households in a joined-up way and at an early stage. It will comprise multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams that will collaborate closely with the voluntary and community sector and others to deliver early intervention and preventative support. |
| Customer Access Strategy | It is estimated that 20% of adults in the borough do not have all five of the basic digital skills, and that 72% have not used all five basic digital skills in the last three months. It is therefore important that when designing new services that we take account of digital exclusion. Through the Customer Access Strategy that is being developed we will ensure that people are supported to access services through digital channels. Libraries, other universal services, and other community settings will be vital for helping people online and building skills and confidence in digital services. |
| Welfare reform | The Welfare Reform Team was set up to identify and provide advice and support to people and households affected by the benefit cap and other welfare reforms. The team takes a holistic approach in understanding their circumstance and agree suitable options including gaining employment and a move to more affordable accommodation for coping with the reforms. Through the holistic approach, the team identify any other issues or barriers the affected person may have and refer them to relevant services, whilst maintaining a co-ordinating role and monitoring their progress to achieving the desired outcome. Between November 2016 to February 2017, 559 people had their benefits capped. 141 of these were helped or encouraged to come off the cap by the Welfare Reform Team. |
| Gender Equality Charter | The Council has become the first local authority to develop a Gender Equality Charter, working with elected representatives, Council officers, local businesses, and the voluntary and community sector to form a plan of action to improve gender equality in the Borough. The Charter includes a 10-point action plan, setting our priority actions for issues such as domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, the representation of women in leadership roles, and the engagement of young people with the subject of gender equality. |
| LGBT+ needs | The Council is undertaking an important piece of work to increase our understanding and insights into the health and |

assessment

wellbeing priorities of the LGBT+ community. This community needs assessment will identify gaps in services, community assets, and local perspectives of the community and key stakeholders. This will inform our future service provision and ways of working with this population.

Fuel poverty

According to the last statistical release in 2014, 7,877 households in the borough were fuel poor. This has risen slightly in the last few years but at a lesser rate than our comparator boroughs. The Council's high profile attempts to encourage insulation uptake, tariff and collective fuel switching, and smart energy use has made an impact on fuel poverty. Since 2014, 7,000 households received insulation works through the Council.

Equalities events and Summer of Festivals

The Council uses its events programme to build community cohesion and bring different groups through community and cultural events. Within this programme are a series of equalities related events including LGBT History Month, Black History Month, and Women's Empowerment Month. The Council also facilitates community-led 'donate a flag' event to celebrate different groups and cultures within the borough.

Objective 1: Improve outcomes for all

Improve educational attainment

The population of the borough is characterised by having the highest proportion of under 16s of anywhere in the UK (54,912). Education is a fundamental determinant of these young people's futures and through education young people can improve social mobility, escape poverty, and be more likely to have good health and wellbeing in adulthood.

Educational attainment for young people leaving schools and colleges in Barking and Dagenham is at a record high and we are closing gaps with London and England. However, historically, educational attainment has been low and not enough of our young people have left school with the qualifications which allow them to compete with other Londoners for the best career opportunities. This has led to there being a skills gap (where 1 in 7 residents have no qualifications) and high unemployment which has maintained the borough's position as one of the most deprived areas of the country. However, after sustained effort, and through delivering comprehensive improvement plans and a strong partnership between the Council and local schools, the attainment gap with London has largely closed by the age of 11. At 16 our young people perform at national levels and behind London. The biggest gap is at 18 and closing this gap is a priority for the Council and all education providers in the Borough. Another measure of the improvement in education in recent years is that at the end of 2016, 90% of schools were rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.

In 2016, primary results across all age groups were our best to date, 86% of schools are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. A measure of progress is that by the end of the primary phase our 11 year olds are now in-line with London with performance in mathematics particularly strong and amongst the best in the country. At key stage 4/GSCE we have largely maintained an improving trajectory year-on-year. In 2016, overall results improved by 4% to 60% putting us in line with national averages. Importantly, within that progress, we are improving performance in key subjects (English and Maths), and making significant improvement in having more high attainers (pupils achieving A*/A); in English this figure is 12.5%, 5% to 18% and in maths 18%. Achievement of this type is crucial to enable our young people to enter further and higher education to gain the qualifications required to compete for jobs and careers in skilled professions.

While the overall position is positive and improving, we know that there are inequalities that we need to address to reach the next levels of ambition. For example White British boys have fallen behind other groups at GCSE-level. 50% of White British boys achieved A*- C in English and Maths, 10 percentage points below all pupils in the borough and 13 below all pupils nationally.

Department for Education data from 2016 shows that 6.6% or around 350 of 16-18 year olds in the borough are not in education, employment, or training. Too many young people do not stay in education past the age of 16 and we need to do more to secure pathways

for them into further education, vocational training, or employment. Leaving education, or not progressing directly into training or employment has a detrimental impact on young people's outcomes. To improve the offer for young people we are strengthening local careers information and advice, increasing the number of apprenticeships, internships, traineeships, and working strongly with Barking and Dagenham College and other further and higher education partners. The expansion of Coventry University into the borough is an example of the new opportunities the Council is brokering.

Children and young people with disabilities or special needs experience barriers to learning which may lead to poorer educational outcomes than their peers and have an impact on employment in adulthood. Support to overcome such barriers either comes through Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support where direct funding is allocated to early years, schools and other providers or through the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Pathway. The latter, which replaces Statements of SEN, is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person to achieve what they want in life. In the early years evidence shows children and young people with special needs and/or disabilities in Barking and Dagenham, achieve a good level of development, above the London and national average. Those receiving SEN Support and those with an EHC Plan make good progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 in English, but not in maths. The percentage of pupils receiving SEN Support and those with an EHC Plan achieving 5 A* to G including English and maths is below London and national averages. This is a priority for improvements for schools and the local authority.

We need to improve education outcomes for looked-after children who face inequalities because of their experiences in the care system ensuring that they are provided with the opportunities needed to help them move successfully to adulthood. 35% of looked after children pupils achieved A*- C in English and Maths, 25 percentage points lower than pupils not looked after. To close this gap our priorities are to get unaccompanied asylum seeking children into educational placements as quickly as possible, to reduce exclusions, and improve attendance at key stage 4. The Council's Virtual Headteacher champions and oversees the education of all Barking and Dagenham Looked After Children. Advisory staff support students with poor attendance, those who are not making good progress, and those who are at risk of permanent exclusion. The Virtual School also uses specialist mentoring, online support packages, and 1:1 tuition to support young people to make the best possible progress.

Proposed Actions:

- 1. Ensure high quality early years provision to make sure that all children get the best possible start and begin statutory school education at 5 with the right skills and behaviours to make good progress.**
- 2. Ensure that the Council keeps a strong focus on the progress and outcomes for those groups which are vulnerable or are performing below**

their peers until the gaps are closed.

- 3. Work with partners from education, employment and business to bring about a step change in outcomes for young people at 18.**

See also:

- **Education Strategy 2014-2017**
- **Early Years Strategy**
- **Special Educational Needs Strategy**
- **Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2015-2016**

Reduce hate crime and intervene where hostility surfaces

Hate crimes have a deep impact on victims because it is a unique form of attack that targets the person based exclusively on identity, or perceived identity (race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity). Hate crime victims are more likely to suffer repeat victimisation, more likely to suffer serious psychological impacts, and less likely than the victims of other crime to be satisfied with the police response. Hate crime can limit people's opportunities and can lead to isolation and segregation. It is also damaging to the community, undermining integration and cohesion, and eroding shared values of acceptance and respect for others.

Between December 2015 to December 2016, there were 397 reported incidents of hate crime in the borough,¹⁰ 89% of these were religious or racial hate crimes. We are concerned that hate crimes against the LGBT+ community is significantly under-reported and this correlates with anecdotal evidence that people from this group are reluctant to report hate crimes against them.

Under-reporting is an issue relating to all hate crime and we must do more to enable victims or witnesses to come forward. We must also continue to support victims and ensure that perpetrators face justice. Finally, we must work as a community to challenge the attitudes and beliefs that drive these crimes. The Council works closely with the Citizen's Advice Bureau and RAMFEL¹¹ to make third party referrals and we commission the Hate Crime Advocacy Service to provide practical and emotional support to hate crime victims. We also work in partnership through the Hate Incident Panel to investigate hate crimes and put in place safety plans for victims.

Our approach to tackling hate crime is set to be renewed as part of the refresh of the Hate Crime Strategy 2013-2016. The development of the strategy will closely consider the Government's 'Hate Crime Action Plan' and align with its priorities at a national level to increase reporting, improve support for victims, and build a better understanding of hate crime, with the overall aim of preventing and reducing the incidents of hate crime. The Strategy will benefit from additional financial investment in new services and interventions to combat hate crime and extremism drawing on funding available through the London

Crime Prevention Fund. This will enable us to establish Hate Crime Referral Centres, improve hate crime reporting, and to support high risk victims and groups.

Proposed Actions:

- 4. Continue to provide an LGBT+ youth group (FlipSide) and ensure it is increasingly high profile and actively involved in borough events and consultations as part of a wider series of activities designed to support the LGBT+ community.**
- 5. Develop disability awareness campaigns to improve the visibility of, and celebrate achievements of people with disabilities in Barking & Dagenham.**
- 6. Increase the reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime to ensure that hate crime is effectively tackled.**
- 7. Provide support for victims of hate crime which contribute to a cohesive community.**

See also:

- **Hate Crime Action Plan**
- **Prevent Strategy 2017/19**
- **Cohesion Strategy (in development)**
- **Culture Everywhere: The Culture Strategy for Barking and Dagenham**

Tackle health inequalities

Barking and Dagenham faces stark health inequalities at all stages of the life course. The cumulative impact of these health inequalities means that our population has lower life expectancy than any other London borough. Healthy life expectancy (the years lived in good health) in Barking and Dagenham for males is 4 years lower than the England average; for females, the gap is 9 years. Premature deaths are largely attributable to just a handful of health conditions which are preventable through prevention, early intervention, and our population making positive lifestyle choices.

Smoking prevalence in the borough is estimated to be between 21-23%, this is higher than the London and England averages (17 and 18% respectively). Smoking is responsible for 9 out of 10 deaths from lung cancer and it is also responsible for about 17% of deaths from heart disease, and 80% of deaths from chronic lung diseases such as bronchitis and emphysema. In 2015, we established the Tobacco Control Alliance, a multi-agency response to achieve a step change in smoking quit rates and to stop people from starting to smoke. We have, successfully, invested heavily in helping residents to stop smoking over the past four years. Our approach is moving toward preventing our younger residents taking up smoking, A partnership Tobacco Control Strategy will be agreed in 2017.

We want our residents to be a healthy weight. After smoking, unhealthy weight is one of the most important risk factors to being healthy for our residents. Over two third of adults in

the borough are overweight (68.4%) compared to 58.4% in London. Childhood obesity is also a problem with 27.5% of reception class children overweight or obese, and we have the 7th highest rate of obesity of children in year 6. Obesity increases the risk of coronary heart disease, hypertension, osteoarthritis, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers such as breast, colon, endometrial and kidney cancer. People who are overweight or obese may also experience mental health problems, stigmatisation and discrimination because of their weight. Being underweight is a problem too, especially for children and frail older people. Malnutrition can have an impact on immunity, reduce muscle and tissue mass, and slow down recovery. A healthy and varied diet with adequate calories is essential. Supporting people to be a healthy weight is a top prevention priority in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy: focussing both on obesity and malnutrition. To give further focus to the issue we have formed a coalition of partners to deliver the Healthy Weight Strategy 2016-2020. The Strategy aims to enable families to live active and healthy lives with an environment that supports this. It also uses targeted approaches to engage and support at risk groups. Critical to this agenda is encouraging physical activity, including active travel, and ensuring that residents of all ages have access to different types of sport, leisure, and recreation activities in the Borough.

The other major cause of lower life expectancy for our population is premature death from cancer. Whereas cancer deaths are falling nationally, in Barking and Dagenham cancer deaths are continuing to rise. The one year survival rate for all cancers (64.9%) is lower than London rate of 70.9% and the England rate of 70.2%. Looking at premature death from lung cancer, our mortality rate is 50.3% higher than the England average. Late diagnosis due to low levels of uptake of screening programmes is a factor in premature cancer deaths but we also need to do more to educate our community about the symptoms of cancer, and provide early intervention to prevent cancer or improve survival rates.

Tackling these three major health issues will contribute significantly towards closing the gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. Narrowing health inequalities is also the focus of improving the prospects of residents ageing well and enjoying good quality of life in old age. We have invested in Active Age Centres at accessible locations across the borough to provide a range of physical and social activities. The Ageing Well Programme support mental as well as physical wellbeing, ensuring that older people are active in their communities and not socially isolated.

Making progress against this key indicator of health inequality will enable residents to enjoy a longer and better quality of life. Progress in reducing health inequalities is dependent on addressing the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, and economic status which this Strategy and other key strategies seek to address.

Proposed Actions:

8. **Continue to work with the Clinical Commissioning Group to improve the physical health outcomes of people with mental health conditions and their access to effective physical health support.**
9. **Take action through the Health and Wellbeing Board to reduce the prevalence of smokers in the borough, to levels comparable with London.**
10. **Take action through the Health and Wellbeing Board to reduce the number of overweight and obese individuals in the borough, to levels comparable with London.**
11. **Take action through the Health and Wellbeing Board to increase residents' awareness of the how lifestyle can affect the likelihood of developing cancer, the signs and symptoms of cancer and the importance of early diagnosis, and screening.**
12. **Continue to work with partners to improve all health outcomes, physical and mental, in vulnerable and minority groups identified in this strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.**

See also:

- **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**
- **Prevention Strategy**
- **Healthy Weight Strategy**
- **Mental Health Strategy**
- **Parks and Open Spaces Strategy**
- **Health and Adult Services Select Committee: cancer prevention, awareness, and early intervention: Scrutiny Review 2016/17**

Protect everyone from domestic violence and abuse

Domestic abuse and violence has far-reaching and pernicious impacts on victims who live in fear, become isolated from their social networks, and suffer physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Children who are victims or who witness domestic violence and abuse suffer similarly and the effects can be deep and long-lasting. Domestic abuse and violence disproportionately affects women and children; national and local data highlights that three quarters of victims are female.

Domestic abuse and violence is a longstanding problem for Barking and Dagenham and one that the Council and its partners have not managed to make sufficient progress in tackling. The scale of the problem is evident in the data and as an under-reported crime the problem is likely bigger than we are aware. Barking and Dagenham has the highest number of reported incidents of domestic violence per 1,000 population in London. Using year to date totals, there were 2,568 offences in 2015/16, which represents an increase of 5.4% compared with 2014/15. 46% of offences involved violence or injury. These are shocking statistics, behind which the lives of many of our residents are blighted.

The Community Safety Partnership is totally committed to preventing and reducing domestic abuse and violence. Over the past two years Barking and Dagenham has made good progress in developing its response to domestic abuse and violence through partnership working, jointly commissioned specialist services, and public awareness campaigns. Going forward, we will be strengthening our approach and developing a new Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy. The Strategy will improve co-ordination between agencies and professionals, and place a greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention. It will build on the provision of support available to victims and their children and ensure that perpetrators are held to account and receive help to break the cycle of abusive behaviour.

Proposed Actions:

- 13. Continue to commission and develop a range of options for supporting women to escape domestic abuse through a new Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy to be published in 2017.**
- 14. Maintain a focus on the highest risk victims through Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference arrangements with partners.**
- 15. Ensure regular high-profile events to maintain visibility of the message that abuse is not acceptable in Barking and Dagenham.**

See also:

- **Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy**
- **Gender Equality Charter**

Objective 2: No one left behind

Harness economic growth and use regeneration as a tool to improve outcomes

We see inclusive growth and regeneration as one of the most important policy interventions at our disposal to improve outcomes for local people and to address the root causes of inequality and deprivation. The borough has been recognised as having the most untapped potential for growth in the capital due to its access to central London, house building potential, and space for business and industry. If harnessed in the right way, growth will reduce deprivation and create opportunities for residents by developing skills and employability, creating jobs in new and emerging sectors and industries, improving the physical environment, and widening the choice of housing. It is now our responsibility to fulfil that potential and in the next 20 years we aim to build 50,000 homes and create 20,000 jobs, bringing opportunity to all residents.

The Growth Commission has provided a roadmap for what we need to do as a Council and as a partnership to unlock the potential for economic growth. We understand that growth must be inclusive and make a tangible difference to the outcomes of residents. That is why, following the recommendations of the Growth Commission, we are taking a long-term and strategic approach to planning and regeneration covering physical, economic, and social aspects.

Such is the importance of regeneration to our prosperity as a borough that we have created a special purpose company called 'Be First' to manage and accelerate delivery of this agenda. 'Be First' will be responsible for housing growth and diversity of tenure, investment in transport and other infrastructure, attracting inward investment, business growth and job creation. In performing these roles Be First will ensure that the future planning of homes, infrastructure, and business is done holistically and not without balance between physical regeneration and social regeneration. Therefore, consideration will be given to the ingredients that make for thriving communities such as schools, community spaces, places of worship, parks and open spaces, sports and leisure facilities, health facilities, and retail spaces.

Barking and Dagenham has a strong track-record of delivering holistic physical regeneration using public and private sector investment and by working in partnership with developers. Evidence of this can be seen in the transformation of Barking Town Centre and other developments including Barking Enterprise Centre, Dagenham Business Centre, Becontree Leisure Centre and Abbey Leisure Centre. Barking Riverside is one of NHS England's Healthy New Town demonstrator sites and we are working with NHS England and our local partner Care City to use urban design and housing design to improve the health of the population that will be living in Barking Riverside. We intend to use the principles and approaches from developing a Healthy New Town in other developments and sites across the Borough.

Moving forward, and as recommended by the Growth Commission, we will be focusing on regenerating Barking town centre (including the upper Roding River), Barking Riverside (including the lower Roding River), Becontree (including Dagenham Heathway), Chadwell Heath, and Dagenham Riverside. For each locality we will develop a distinct plan and objectives relevant to the needs, dynamics, characteristics, and potential opportunities to be unlocked for that area.

Our approach to regeneration will continue to be guided by consultation and engagement with residents about what they want for their community and we will use this with analysis of economic trends and demographic forecasts so that regeneration is sensitive to existing communities, future-proofed, and supports the overall growth of the borough. As standard regeneration projects will be underpinned by robust Equalities Impact Assessments. An example of this approach in action is the comprehensive Health Impact Assessment of the Local Plan that our Public Health Team has undertaken to ensure new developments are creating healthy communities.

Proposed Actions:

- 16. Ensure Be First's rolling five-year business plan sets out clearly how it intends to deliver inclusive growth and regeneration.**
- 17. Ensure that physical regeneration supports employment and skills outcomes through planning obligations in both the construction phase and end use. Specific outcomes will be sought for people disadvantaged in the labour market, especially people with disabilities and/or long term workless.**
- 18. Ensure new developments make reasonable adjustments for people with different abilities, including physical features of premises.**
- 19. Protect and enhance social infrastructure and community facilities such as healthcare and recreational facilities, where appropriate.**
- 20. Ensure all new developments achieve the highest standards of accessibility and inclusive design, and for the public realm to be accessible and usable for all.**
- 21. Seek to create safe, secure and appropriately accessible environments where crime and disorder, fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.**
- 22. Ensure regeneration works with local communities to ensure proposed developments preserve or enhance local social, historical, cultural, environmental, and economic characteristics of the local area.**
- 23. Ensure through working with Barking Enterprise Centres CIC and other partners, that businesses and entrepreneurs in the borough are supported to set up and grow.**
- 24. Take onboard the recommendations of the Health Impact Assessment of the Local Plan and ensure the recommendations have reach and influence across the Council.**

See also:

- **Growth Strategy 2013/2023**
- **No-one left behind: in pursuit of growth for the benefit of everyone**
- **Local Plan**

Help and support working age residents into employment

Unemployment in Barking and Dagenham is estimated at 7.8%¹², higher than the London average (6%). To close this gap as many as 11,000 residents would need to move into employment. An education and skills gap drives high unemployment locally, and there are other more entrenched barriers to employment which prevent groups with protected characteristics from participating in the local and regional labour market.

Supplementary to mainstream employment provision, we are focussing resources and using targeted initiatives to support individuals who are furthest away from employment. 40% of people with disabilities in Barking and Dagenham are in employment, compared to 49% in London. To support people with disabilities into employment we are working with other boroughs through the Local London Partnership to commission the Work & Health Programme which will integrate healthcare and employment support and bring together professionals to focus on getting people with disabilities into work. It will also provide support to long-term unemployed claimants.

There is a substantial gap of 9.1% in employment rates for women in the borough compared to the London figure (57.6% compared to 66.7%)¹³. Almost 60% of the residents accessing our Job Shop brokerage service are women and there is also support provided by Early Intervention and Jobcentre Plus to support families with children. The latter support is being increased through the European Social Funding-funded Inspiring Families project.

A range of projects are focused on those disadvantaged in the labour market are being funded by the Department of Work & Pensions, Skills Funding Agency and Big Lottery. These include projects supporting families, people with mental health problems, over 50s, carers and refugees. We will work with providers to ensure that we support their local delivery arrangements.

The borough has a similar proportion of young people (6.6% or 356 individuals)¹⁴ that are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) to UK average (6.8%). We are helping to improve employability skills of young people and encouraging participation in further and higher education to improve their skills, academic and vocational. We are also increasing apprenticeship opportunities and improving information and advice related to work and careers.

To improve outcomes we also need to facilitate residents moving into better employment. Typically, our residents work in low-skilled and low-paid jobs which is why household

incomes are on average the lowest in London. For older people, their skills are more likely to be less matched to the demands of the modern or future economy so it is important that we work with them and partners to develop new skills so they can change jobs/careers and compete for better employment.

Helping residents into higher paying and higher skilled jobs is a priority as this will improve their financial security, health and wellbeing, and overall quality of life and access to opportunities. Our approach to this is three-fold. Firstly, we are ensuring that education equips young people to compete for jobs at the highest levels and access the opportunities our proximity to central London brings. Secondly, we are using growth and regeneration to develop the local economy so that it creates good employment opportunities in new industries; this includes supporting people to be entrepreneurs or self-employed, and promoting apprenticeships and vocational options that provide a path into these industries and sectors. Thirdly, we are working with partners to upskill working age adults so that they can find sustainable employment.

In all the above we are working in partnership as we know we cannot make a sizeable difference by working in siloes. The Barking & Dagenham Employability Partnership (whose members include DWP, Work Programme providers, North East London Foundation Trust, and FE and HE providers) works to improve integration and co-ordination and to ensure that as a borough we are commissioning services that deliver positive outcomes. This approach is further evidenced and reflected in the new Employment and Skills Strategy being developed for the borough. The improvement priorities of the Strategy have a strong emphasis on equalities and removing barriers for residents with protected characteristics.

Proposed Actions:

- 25. Ensure the Work & Health Programme is integrated with local provision (including social care funded interventions for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities) and assists in narrowing the employment rate gap for disabled people and long-term unemployed.**
- 26. Ensure that the employment support provided by the Community Solutions service is focused on those most disadvantaged in the labour market. And use Community Solutions as an intervention point to improve skills and employability to help service users into higher skilled and better paid jobs.**
- 27. Use the Council's economic powers to support upskilling in key local growth sectors, including care, construction, creative industries, advanced manufacturing, and green technologies.**
- 28. Actively promote apprenticeships, including at higher level, to young people and adults looking to re-train as well as to employers.**
- 29. Integrate the range of ESF-funded local projects with local provision and ensure that providers are supported to deliver locally.**
- 30. Ensure that the Barking & Dagenham Employability Partnership develops an**

annual delivery plan that addresses support for key groups, especially disabled people and claimants of health-related benefits.

- 31. Reduce the number of NEET and unknown young people 16-18, increase participation and educational achievement rates, particularly to Care Leavers, Teen Parents and those with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.**

See also:

- **Employment and Skills Strategy**
- **Apprenticeship Strategy**
- **Better Care Fund plans**

Ensure there are suitable and good homes for everyone

Housing is at the heart of the Council's drive to improve the quality of life for residents and to create thriving communities and attractive places – homes and places where people positively choose to live. Our strategic approach addresses the housing needs and aspirations of a dynamically changing population, embracing the need to provide a wider range of housing choice for local people and further the physical, social and economic regeneration of Barking & Dagenham.

Housing plays a fundamental role in people's lives and directly influences access to critical opportunities such as employment and education and the ability to participate in the social and economic life of communities. These factors determine our basic sense of belonging and our feelings of health and wellbeing which is why tackling housing inequality is a top priority for the Council as reflected in our Housing Strategy. We also have developed a discrete Older People's Housing Strategy to ensure that older people are supported to age well and live independently with a range of quality housing options to meet their needs including sheltered housing, floating support and community alarm services.

Rising house prices and lack of supply of affordable housing is putting homeownership further away from young people and families who are trapped in expensive private rented accommodation which in some cases is poor quality, insecure and temporary. The exorbitant costs of housing are also dividing our community into the 'haves' and 'have nots' where homeowners and renters have very different levels of wealth and living standards.

The Council is using housing policy and other levers to relieve the symptoms and address the drivers of the housing crisis. Quality of accommodation and affordability are at the heart of our approach as we aim to provide homes of all types and tenures, and for all members of the community. The most direct way in which we can address the housing crisis is to tackle the lack of supply of housing. Since 2012 we have built 2,675 homes. Over the next 20 years we expect to build 50,000 new homes, 10,800 of which will be on the flagship Barking Riverside development. With these new homes we will deliver new

infrastructure that will create vibrant and successful communities; ultimately leading to better quality of life and outcomes for residents.

The emerging policy, 'Infrastructure Housing', will be framed around three housing rights: The Right to Rent, the Right to Move, and the Right to Invest. The Council wants to see more geographically balanced and mixed communities, and will be developing homes appropriate to different neighbourhood areas through its new housing policies. In areas where housing concentrations of Council housing currently exist, the Council will be introducing a range of mixed tenure options where housing of different rent levels and ownership types will provide a more mixed community and vice versa. The Right to Rent will be developed in five forms:

- Social housing rents, including for those with the lowest incomes;
- Homes at the London Living Rent, as promoted by the Mayor of London in his manifesto;
- Benchmark rents in the mid-market range, housing for the aspiring households who want to move up the housing ladder;
- Affordable rented housing at 65% market rents; and
- Housing for those on higher incomes, at 80% to 100% of market rents.

The Council further proposes to develop a Right to Move: an incentive scheme for tenants who qualify financially, to enable them to move out of Council housing with the assistance of a substantial deposit and free up much needed social housing. Finally, there is a Right to Invest, which enables tenants should they wish to do so, to part purchase their homes and take on ownership of a share of their home, and pay a percentage of the rent on the remainder. This is designed to give low income working households the opportunity of stepping up into home ownership gradually.

To raise standards in the private rented sector we have introduced a borough-wide landlord licencing scheme. The scheme ensures that the health, safety, and welfare of tenants is safeguarded, that accommodation is suitable for the number of occupiers, and that tenants benefit from leases and conditions which are lawful and meet recognised professional standards.

Accepting that we cannot bring down the costs of renting in the private sector, or do a great deal to stop the factors that are driving the market, we are finding ways in which we can at least ensure there is better value for money and higher quality housing available. Through Reside, an affordable lettings company created by the Council, we are offering new homes to rent at less than the market rate. These affordable lettings are primarily aimed at helping working people who can't afford to get on the housing ladder and would find it impossible to access social housing. This initiative shows our commitment to intervene and affect the private rented market by providing high quality, affordable lettings to those trapped by high rents.

We are helping people onto the property ladder through our 'Right to Invest' tenant shared ownership scheme which allows council tenants to buy a share of their council home. This scheme is the first of its kind to be introduced in the UK and aims to provide an affordable shared ownership option for council tenants on low incomes.

As a social landlord, the Council maintains the lowest rent prices in London reflecting the incomes of residents and giving respite to the increasing costs of living. This is important as our tenants are some of the most deprived and vulnerable residents in the borough.

The impact of the Government's welfare reforms and the rising costs of private renting have squeezed local incomes, threatening household budgets and tenancy sustainment. This had resulted in unprecedented numbers of residents, many who are vulnerable, seeking temporary accommodation from the Council because they are homeless. To ensure that residents are equipped to keep a roof over their heads during difficult times the Council is planning a new homelessness prevention platform through rent deposits, mediation services, tenancy sustainment training and personal housing plans through Community Solutions.

In some cases the Council is approached once the incident of homelessness has already occurred and it has a statutory duty to find accommodation. To manage such cases, the Council has embarked upon a hostel expansion programme which seeks to deliver the refurbishment and adaptation of existing premises as well as renovating non-domestic buildings to increase the supply of temporary accommodation, including Boundary Road which will specifically cater to complex needs individuals who are homeless. For many homeless households finding affordable, permanent affordable accommodation in Barking and Dagenham is impossible and the Council is adopting a policy to source and offer private rented sector tenancies outside of the capital which residents can afford, thereby assisting them with managing living costs and sustaining the tenancies.

We know that there is high demand for social housing which vastly outstrips supply. Since 2014 the Council has built more than 830 affordable homes. Across the next thirty years we are planning an additional 50,000 homes for the borough with 10,000 homes of all tenures, including affordable homes, built in the next six years. As part of our building programme we are increasing the numbers of purpose-built bungalows for elderly and disabled people so that we can meet their needs, but also to free up family-sized homes for working age people. As well as increasing supply of social housing we are investing in our existing housing stock to improve living conditions. Under the Council's Decent Homes programme 4,300 homes have been improved, and there is a further £350 million earmarked for future improvements.

Proposed Actions:

- 32. To deliver the Council's London Plan target for net new homes at 1,236 new homes per year.**
- 33. Plan the renewal of the Private Sector Licensing Scheme for implementation**

in 2019.

34. Continue to tackle and reduce fuel poverty rates in the borough.
35. Implement the Private Rented Sector Offer policy in 2017 to help tackle and reduce homelessness in the borough.
36. Ensure that regeneration developments include opportunities for first class homes in which residents can age well, and which can adapt to meet emerging care needs, and that there are good quality homes for those with disabilities and mental health conditions.

See also:

- Growth Strategy 2013-2023
- Housing Strategy
- Landlord Licencing Scheme
- Right to Invest
- Barking and Dagenham Reside
- Older People's Housing Strategy

Objective 3: Fair and open service delivery

The Council is going through a sustained period of change to modernise services and to meet the challenges of delivering a wide range of services with considerably less resource, and attempting to do so without compromising on the quality residents expect from public services.

Across the organisation services are being re-modelled, in some cases this is evolution and part of continuous improvement, in other cases, the change is more profound as services are being fundamentally re-designed or created from new. In all cases the Council is taking an outcomes-focussed approach to service transformation to make best use of resources and to deliver a meaningful impact to service users.

How we develop and design services is fundamental to how we meet our equality and diversity responsibilities. The design process and decision-making about how we make changes to services is underpinned by principles and approaches that ensure equality and diversity issues are identified and acted on so that residents' needs are met and that they can access services in ways that suit them.

Make best use of insight and intelligence

The Council is becoming increasingly data-driven and using the wealth of data and information it holds about residents to inform policy-making, decision-making, service design and service delivery. Through rigorous analysis of data we are able to:

- manage demand more efficiently and make best use of resources by taking an evidence-based approach
- ensure that plans and strategies take account of demographic changes, the characteristics of service users, and other relevant trends
- use behavioural insights and exploratory analysis to inform service design and innovate
- turn data analysis into actionable insights that deliver service improvements
- improve performance and increase accountability through open and transparent data.

Our commitment and faith in the power of data and evidence to improve how we operate and to deliver better outcomes for residents is reflected in the recent establishment of the Corporate Insight Hub. The Hub will provide a central source of expertise and tools to support a data-driven approach and will be utilised internally and by partners for the purposes described above. The Hub will support the Council's key business processes and in doing so help to draw out equalities impacts and issues for us to address.

Proposed Actions:

- 37. Create a data repository to hold data-sets of demographic and service user information which can be used for analysis and for developing insights**
- 38. Develop and monitor measures relating to social progress and use this framework to inform actions to improve outcomes**
- 39. Use data and intelligence to inform approaches to prevention and early intervention**
- 40. Mainstream the use of a range of data analysis tools, techniques, and disciplines to become a data-driven organisation**
- 41. Collaborate and share data with partners to drive wider improvements in the borough**
- 42. Explore possible options to work with Care City to share data and achieve joint insights and intelligence for health and social care**

Ensure that commissioning decisions reflect the needs of service users

As part of our transformation programme we are fundamentally changing our commissioning structures to align with how we will be organised operationally and to move away from siloed services towards more holistic, person-centred services. We are becoming a 'commissioning council' where commissioning is the engine room for service design, development and improvement and we have developed the Commissioning for Better Outcomes framework to establish the principles and approach we will use to commission excellent public services.

Using the Commissioning for Better Outcomes framework our aim is to deliver inclusive and accessible services that are person-centred and outcomes-focused. This will be achieved by:

- using data, evidence and research to understand needs and demand for services, and in particular using Equalities Impact Assessments to ensure protected groups are considered
- being innovative and using different types of service models and proven methods of effective service delivery
- working with partners to commission jointly and develop integrated systems and pathways that improve customer experience
- ensuring value for money by maximising the use of available resources
- addressing gaps in the market and shaping the market to ensure that high-quality services are available to buy both now and in the future, either by us or by our residents.

As well as getting the provision and design of services correct, it is just as important that we review and monitor how those services are being delivered and checking that services

are delivering the outcomes that they were commissioned to achieve. To this end, we have a robust quality assurance and monitoring framework to scrutinise and challenge service providers. We are committed to ensuring that contractors and service providers share our ethos on equality and diversity, which is on par with value for money and other quality and efficiency measures.

Our commissioning cycle involves service users, partners and other stakeholders at each stage of the process using co-design and co-production approaches where appropriate. Through this ongoing dialogue and participation in the commissioning process we can get a better understanding of residents needs and aspirations and use these insights for service design and ongoing improvements.

Proposed Actions:

- 43. Use appropriate commissioning methodologies and models (e.g. payment by results, social return on investment) to achieve outcomes and to ensure the highest standards of commissioning practice**
- 44. Develop commissioning plans setting the outcomes, goals and targets for contracted services and in-house service blocks.**
- 45. Develop Mandates' outlining commissioning priorities and the focusses of service improvements in the short and medium term, linking operational delivery to strategic objectives**
- 46. Involve service users and their carers in the design process (co-production) and use their feedback about services to drive improvements**
- 47. Take a whole system approach to commissioning and seize opportunities to commission jointly with partners to drive service integration**

See also:

- **Commissioning for Better Outcomes**

Ensure equalities impact assessments are carried out, and that this is done to a high standard

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is an essential tool for designing services and understanding the impact, positive and negative, of our decisions on different protected groups. EQIAs also help to understand where people have multiple protected characteristics and how they might be impacted thus.

EQIAs are the primary way in which equalities and diversity issues are identified and they provide a systematic framework and evidence-base to demonstrate that we have considered equalities and diversity as required by law.

We use EQIAs as part of our decision-making and we are transparent with their findings, summarising or publishing in full the impacts at timely points in the decision-making process.

Our EQIA framework has been developed to be flexible and can be used partially or in full depending on the scope and scale of the decision or proposal. As a minimum we expect screening assessments to be carried out at a formative stage of policy or service development. If the screening assessment reveals negative or adverse impacts then a full EQIA is required.

Staff completing EQIAs have good equalities and diversity awareness training and they are supported by capability and expertise from the Corporate Centre to make sure that EQIAs are completed to a high standard.

Proposed Actions:

- 48. Develop a framework for completing Equality Impact Assessments and provide support and guidance to officers about when and how to use this tool.**
- 49. Ensure that decisions, and especially those relating to service re-configuration, have regard for equalities and diversity issues, and use impact assessments to evidence issues and develop mitigating or alternative actions**

Engage with residents and stakeholders on service design and delivery

Giving a voice to our community about how we operate and provide public services, and providing opportunities for the community to participate in the democratic process is central to how we fulfil our duties in the Equality Act 2010.

Good engagement and consultation with residents is key to providing accessible and inclusive services that are designed and influenced by the people who will use and benefit from them. When engaging we take care to reach all sections of the community and marginalised or under-represented groups. We also ensure that how we engage and consult is sensitive to different needs and preferences and offers choice in how people interact with us. Equally important is that we listen to feedback from residents and reflect their views in what we do; this feedback loop helps to drive continuous improvement.

Maintaining good standards of engagement and consultation is more important than ever. The Council is undergoing significant change and will be proposing further, perhaps more radical, changes in the future. We must communicate with the community about the direction of travel and involve them in the decisions that will impact how their services are delivered. We will continue to strengthen our approach to engagement and consultation and ensure that our principles and standards are reflected in practice.

Proposed Actions:

- 50. Provide opportunities for residents to participate in service design, policy-making and decision-making by engaging and consulting with them meaningfully and appropriately**
- 51. Follow the Government’s consultation principles when formally consulting with residents on changes, and ensure that consultations are inclusive and accessible**
- 52. Ensure that equalities monitoring information is captured and analysed when consulting with residents**
- 53. Publish a forward plan of consultations to enable participation**
- 54. Continue with the Annual Residents Survey and act upon any relevant equalities and diversity findings**

See also:

- **Government consultation principles**

Objective 4: Exemplar Employer

The Council is an equal opportunity employer and we aim to have the highest standards of employment practices to attract and retain a high-performing, inclusive and diverse workforce. Meeting our duties in the Equality Act 2010 starts with how we value, support and nurture our workforce.

We recognise that to deliver the outcomes residents need and deserve we need talented public servants working for the Council who understand and represent our community and who can give their absolute best in a positive and supportive environment.

The Council’s Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy, and our day-to-day application of this policy, ensures that our employment processes and conditions are free from discrimination and that we work towards removing barriers to employment, training, and promotion for everyone. Our Business in the Community and Employers Disability Forum membership gives us access to advice and support on equality and diversity issues, that also helps when developing policy.

Our commitment and standards are reflected in the Council maintaining its status as an Investor in People and ‘Disability Confident’ employer. We make every effort to strengthen our approach to equalities and keep our employment policies and practices up-to-date, and we are looking to develop an action plan to become an “exemplar” employer. Staff benefit from flexible working, competitive pay and benefits, learning and development, and support to maintain work/life balance. We are investing in technology and refurbishing our offices to improve the environments staff operate from, and this will benefit staff by enabling more flexibility and creating more accessible places of work.

Deprivation is a major challenge for our borough and income levels for residents are behind those of London and national averages. We are very proud to have been the first authority in 2013 to guarantee that no permanent staff (except apprentices) should be paid less than £9 an hour; this has been increased in line with the London Living Wage and applies to all agency staff working on Council assignments, giving staff more financial security.

Ensure that employment processes and conditions are free from discrimination

For staff to give their best they must be able to do so in an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying or harassment. There must be equality of opportunity in how we recruit and promote staff, and we must treat staff fairly and equally throughout their employment. The Council's employment policies and practices have been developed to comply with the law, to promote equality and diversity, and to provide checks and balances to ensure our approach is applied consistently and reflected in the experiences of staff.

To prevent discrimination and to guard against complacency in our approach we have put in place a range of policies and mechanisms, backed up with practical support including e-learning, training and HR advice. The performance and appraisals framework, disciplinary procedure, and grievance process can be used to deal with failures to treat people with dignity, respect, equality, and fairness. Staff are aware of these processes, and empowered and confident to use them to hold us to account as an employer.

Our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion is underpinned by the Employees' Code of Conduct which is embedded in the Council's employee's contracts of employment and all staff must follow, this details the culture and values we expect staff to exemplify. A key theme of the Council's DRIVE values is to value people for who they are and what they do.

Equality and diversity will be at the centre of how we deliver changes to services. Through our transformation programmes we will be changing how we deliver services and this will have impacts for staff whose roles might change. Our priority will be to manage change carefully and sensitively to ensure that changes to services do not unfairly or negatively impact sections of the workforce, or employees with protected characteristics. This will be achieved through involving staff in the change process and communicating and engaging with them at key milestones.

Equalities Impact Assessments that we use to consider the impacts of change on service users and residents will also be used to identify and consider impacts on staff. We will to prepare staff for change by providing supervision, support, and learning and development to equip them to manage change and carry out their roles in the future.

Proposed Actions:

- 55. Ensure good engagement with staff about transformation programmes and the implications for service delivery and individual roles**
- 56. Investigate and address gender pay gaps within the workforce and be transparent about gaps that are identified, reporting and publishing findings as per the regulations of the Equality Act 2010.**
- 57. Retain Investors in People accreditation**

See also:

- **DRIVE values**
- **Code of Conduct**

Maintain status as a ‘Disability Confident’ employer and remove barriers for people with impairments

The Council is a Department for Works and Pensions accredited ‘Disability Confident’ employer and since 2005 has adopted the Social Model of Disability. By achieving this standard, we demonstrate how we value staff with disabilities, how we are sensitive to their needs, and how we ensure that they are treated equally and without discrimination.

The Council meets its duty to make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and has clear information and processes to enable such adjustments to be made, as well as to keep a voluntary record of what changes are agreed. Staff with disabilities can also get support through the Government’s [Access to Work](#) scheme which awards grants for practical support to enable full participation in the workplace.

We aim to have fair, supportive and compassionate policies relating to sickness absence and leave, and we actively promote the health and wellbeing of our employees through the Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health Service. All staff have the right to request flexible working arrangements and we have a range of support available to promote personal wellbeing. These policies and services benefit all staff but are key to how we support and enable those staff with disabilities to perform their roles. We are signed up to the London Healthy Workplace Charter, and are working on an action plan to be assessed at achievement and then excellence level.

Managers play a crucial role in creating and maintaining a positive and supportive working environment for staff with disabilities. As a ‘disability confident’ employer we provide managers with learning and development, tools and resources, and professional HR advice so they can effectively carry out this role. We also have equalities awareness training for the wider workforce and robust approaches to addressing discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Further to having progressive policies and a range of support initiatives for employees with disabilities, we pro-actively seek their views about their experience of working for the Council and the challenges they face. Through the annual Accessibility and Employment Survey we gain a deeper understanding of how we can best support staff with disabilities and tailor our approach to their needs. Importantly this feedback tells us if our policies are working in practice and whether we are meeting our duty of care and legal obligations for this section of the workforce.

4%¹⁵ of the Council's workforce have a voluntarily disclosed that they have a disability (the actual figure is likely to be higher), which is behind where we should be in terms of representation and diversity. 17%¹⁶ of the borough's working population has a disability illustrating this gap. We hope to address this issue through recruitment and selection, staff retention, and by improving rates of disclosure of disabilities by staff (32% do not disclose their disability status).

Proposed Actions:

- 58. Through the Smarter Working Programme, create disability-friendly workplaces by improving the accessibility of working environments and the amenities and facilities therein.**
- 59. Encourage and support staff to disclose disabilities, to get a more accurate information about disabled employees and ensure we have appropriate support provisions in place.**
- 60. Supporting employees to manage disabilities or health conditions through reasonable adjustments and/or other types of support**
- 61. Engage with staff with disabilities through the staff network and using the annual Accessibility and Employment Survey**
- 62. Complete further 'disability confident' self-assessments to monitor progress and identify improvements**
- 63. Improve opportunities for supported employment with the Council and partners, improving the visibility of disability in the workplace, including learning disability**
- 64. Meet the Mayor of London's Healthy Workplace Charter Standard at Excellence level**

See also:

- **Equalities in Employment Policy**
- **Disability Confident**
- **Access to Work scheme**

Improve diversity in the workforce so that it represents and reflects the community it serves

The community has changed considerably in the last 15 years; over this period the population has become more ethnically and culturally diverse, and much younger. The profile of our workforce has not changed at the same speed and we recognise that we need to accelerate improvements in this area, especially as the Council is one of the borough's largest employers.

To increase the pace of change we need to set ambitious targets and actions to address under-representation otherwise we will be losing out on skills, knowledge, and experience that we need to deliver excellent public services, both now and in the future. We are taking part in the Business in the Community age, race and gender benchmarking surveys and which information will help when developing policies and programmes of action; we will also have access to examples of best practice in other organisations.

The Council wants to attract people of all characteristics and from all backgrounds to work for us, and we want to retain staff by valuing their contribution and supporting them to give their best. Our approach to equality and diversity is at the heart of how we do this. As well as fair recruitment and tackling barriers to employment, we offer flexible ways of working, family-friendly policies, and learning and development opportunities to help staff fulfil their potential.

We are constantly analysing workforce equalities monitoring information to understand where there is under-representation. Profiling the characteristics and make-up of the workforce informs the overall workforce development plans and highlights where targeted interventions are required, this includes 'positive action' to attract or retain staff.

Proposed Actions:

- 65. Ensure that all managers involved in the recruitment and selection process for the Council have completed the mandatory training or assessment process.**
- 66. Use equalities monitoring information to develop targeted interventions to improve representation and diversity in the workforce**
- 67. Where appropriate, take 'positive action' to improve recruitment and retention of under-represented groups**

See also:

- **Workforce Profile 2017**
- **Staff Charter**

Monitoring and delivery

The Chief Executive is responsible for overall delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan, and the for Council fulfilling its equality duties. Actions from the Action Plan will be delegated to the relevant service directors who will be responsible for completing them and reporting on progress.

Corporate Performance Group will annually review the Action Plan and set new actions and priorities to meet the objectives.

The Strategy and Action Plan will be fully refreshed in April 2021.

Action Plan

| # | Action | Owner |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Objective 1: Improve outcomes for all | | |
| Improve educational attainment | | |
| 1 | Ensure high quality early years provision to make sure that all children get the best possible start and begin statutory school education at 5 with the right skills and behaviours to make good progress. | Commissioning Director of Education |
| 2 | Ensure that the Council keeps a strong focus on the progress and outcomes for those groups which are vulnerable or are performing below their peers until the gaps are closed. | Commissioning Director of Education |
| 3 | Work with partners from education, employment and business to bring about a step change in outcomes for young people at 18. | Commissioning Director of Education |
| Reduce hate crime and intervene where hostility surfaces | | |
| 4 | Continue to provide an LGBT+ youth group (FlipSide) and ensure it is increasingly high profile and actively involved in borough events and consultations as part of a wider series of activities designed to support the LGBT+ community. | Commissioning Director of Education |
| 5 | Develop disability awareness campaigns to improve the visibility of, and celebrate achievements of people with disabilities in Barking & Dagenham. | Commissioning Director of Adults' Care & Support, and Commissioning Director of Children's Care & Support, |
| 6 | Increase the reporting of all strands of hate incidents and hate crime to ensure that hate crime is effectively tackled. | Director of Public Health |
| 7 | Provide support for victims of hate crime which contribute to a cohesive community. | Director of Public Health |

| # | Action | Owner |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Tackle health inequalities | | |
| 8 | Continue to work with the Clinical Commissioning Group to improve the physical health outcomes of people with mental health conditions and their access to effective physical health support. | Director of Public Health |
| 9 | Take action through the Health and Wellbeing Board to reduce the prevalence of smokers in the borough, to levels comparable with London. | Director of Public Health |
| 10 | Take action through the Health and Wellbeing Board to reduce the number of overweight and obese individuals in the borough, to levels comparable with London. | Director of Public Health |
| 11 | Take action through the Health and Wellbeing Board to increase residents' awareness of the how lifestyle can affect the likelihood of developing cancer, the signs and symptoms of cancer and the importance of early diagnosis, and screening. | Director of Public Health |
| 12 | Continue to work with partners to improve all health outcomes, physical and mental, in vulnerable and minority groups identified in this strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. | Director of Public Health |
| Protect everyone from domestic violence and abuse | | |
| 13 | Continue to commission and develop a range of options for supporting women to escape domestic abuse through a new Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy to be published in 2017. | Commissioning Director of Adults' Care and Support |
| 14 | Maintain a focus on the highest risk victims through Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference arrangements with partners. | Commissioning Director of Adults' Care and Support |
| 15 | Ensure regular high-profile events to maintain visibility of the message that abuse is not acceptable in Barking and Dagenham. | Commissioning Director of Adults' Care and Support |

| # | Action | Owner |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Objective 2: No one left behind | | |
| Harness economic growth and use regeneration as a tool to improve outcomes | | |
| 16 | Ensure Be First's rolling five-year business plan sets out clearly how it intends to deliver inclusive growth and regeneration. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 17 | Ensure that physical regeneration supports employment and skills outcomes through planning obligations in both the construction phase and end use. Specific outcomes will be sought for people disadvantaged in the labour market, especially people with disabilities and/or long term workless. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 18 | Ensure new developments make reasonable adjustments for people with different abilities, including physical features of premises. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 19 | Protect and enhance social infrastructure and community facilities such as healthcare and recreational facilities, where appropriate. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 20 | Ensure all new developments achieve the highest standards of accessibility and inclusive design, and for the public realm to be accessible and usable for all. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 21 | Seek to create safe, secure and appropriately accessible environments where crime and disorder, fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 22 | Ensure regeneration works with local communities to ensure proposed developments preserve or enhance local social, historical, cultural, environmental, and economic characteristics of the local area. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 23 | Ensure through working with Barking Enterprise Centres CIC and other partners, that businesses and entrepreneurs in the borough are supported to set up and grow. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |

| # | Action | Owner |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24 | Take onboard the recommendations of the Health Impact Assessment of the Local Plan and ensure the recommendations have reach and influence across the Council. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| Help and support working age residents into employment | | |
| 25 | Ensure the Work & Health Programme is integrated with local provision (including social care funded interventions for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities) and assists in narrowing the employment rate gap for disabled people and long-term unemployed. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 26 | Ensure that the employment support provided by the Community Solutions service is focused on those most disadvantaged in the labour market. And use Community Solutions as an intervention point to improve skills and employability to help service users into higher skilled and better paid jobs. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 27 | Use the Council's economic powers to support upskilling in key local growth sectors, including care, construction, creative industries, advanced manufacturing, and green technologies. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 28 | Actively promote apprenticeships, including at higher level, to young people and adults looking to re-train as well as to employers. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 29 | Integrate the range of European Social Fund-funded local projects with local provision and ensure that providers are supported to deliver locally. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 30 | Ensure that the Barking & Dagenham Employability Partnership develops an annual delivery plan that addresses support for key groups, especially disabled people and claimants of health-related benefits. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 31 | Reduce the number of NEET and unknown young people 16-18, increase participation and educational achievement rates, particularly to Care Leavers, Teen | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes, and Commissioning Director of Education |

| # | Action | Owner |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| | Parents and those with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. | |
| Ensure there are suitable and good homes for everyone | | |
| 32 | To deliver the Council's London Plan target for net new homes at 1,236 new homes per year. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 33 | Plan the renewal of the Private Sector Licensing Scheme for implementation in 2019. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 34 | Continue to tackle and reduce fuel poverty rates in the borough. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 35 | Implement the Private Rented Sector Offer policy in 2017 to help tackle and reduce homelessness in the borough. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| 36 | Ensure that regeneration developments include opportunities for first class homes in which residents can age well, and which can adapt to meet emerging care needs, and that there are good quality homes for those with disabilities and mental health conditions. | Strategic Director of Growth and Homes |
| Objective 3: Fair and open service delivery | | |
| Make best use of insight and intelligence | | |
| 37 | Create a data repository to hold data-sets of demographic and service user information which can be used for analysis and for developing insights | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| 38 | Develop and monitor measures relating to social progress and use this framework to inform actions to improve outcomes | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| 39 | Use data and intelligence to inform approaches to prevention and early intervention | All Commissioning Directors |

| # | Action | Owner |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 40 | Mainstream the use of a range of data analysis tools, techniques, and disciplines to become a data-driven organisation | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| 41 | Collaborate and share data with partners to drive wider improvements in the borough | All Commissioning Directors |
| 42 | Explore possible options to work with Care City to share data and achieve joint insights and intelligence for health and social care | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| Ensure that commissioning decisions reflect the needs of service users | | |
| 43 | Use appropriate commissioning methodologies and models (e.g. payment by results, social return on investment) to achieve outcomes and to ensure the highest standards of commissioning practice | All Commissioning Directors |
| 44 | Develop commissioning plans setting the outcomes, goals and targets for contracted services and in-house service blocks. | All Commissioning Directors |
| 45 | Develop mandates outlining commissioning priorities and the focusses of service improvements in the short and medium term, linking operational delivery to strategic objectives | All Commissioning Directors |
| 46 | Involve service users and their carers in the design process (co-production) and use their feedback about services to drive improvements | All Commissioning Directors |
| 47 | Take a whole system approach to commissioning and seize opportunities to commission jointly with partners to drive service integration | All Commissioning Directors |
| Ensure equalities impact assessments are carried out, and that this is done to a high standard | | |
| 48 | Develop a framework for completing Equality Impact Assessments and provide support and guidance to officers about when and how to use this tool. | Director of Strategy and Programmes |

| # | Action | Owner |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 49 | Ensure that decisions, and especially those relating to service re-configuration, have regard for equalities and diversity issues, and use impact assessments to evidence issues and develop mitigating or alternative actions | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| Engage with residents and stakeholders on service design and delivery | | |
| 50 | Provide opportunities for residents to participate in service design, policy-making and decision-making by engaging and consulting with them meaningfully and appropriately | All Commissioning Directors |
| 51 | Follow the Government's consultation principles when formally consulting with residents on changes, and ensure that consultations are inclusive and accessible | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| 52 | Ensure that equalities monitoring information is captured and analysed when consulting with residents | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| 53 | Publish a forward plan of consultations to enable participation | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| 54 | Continue with the Annual Residents Survey and act upon any relevant equalities and diversity findings | Director of Strategy and Programmes |
| Objective 4: Exemplar Employer | | |
| Ensure that employment processes and conditions are free from discrimination | | |
| 55 | Ensure good engagement with staff about transformation programmes and the implications for service delivery and individual roles | Programme Director and Head of Workforce Change |
| 56 | Investigate and address gender pay gaps within the workforce and be transparent about gaps that are identified, reporting and publishing findings as per the regulations of the Equality Act 2010. | Head of Workforce Change |

| # | Action | Owner |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 57 | Retain Investors in People accreditation | Head of Workforce Change |
| Maintain status as a 'Disability Confident' employer and remove barriers for people with impairments | | |
| 58 | Through the Smarter Working Programme, create disability-friendly workplaces by improving the accessibility of working environments and the amenities and facilities therein. | Director of My Place and Head of Workforce Change |
| 59 | Encourage and support staff to disclose disabilities, to get a more accurate information about disabled employees and ensure we have appropriate support provisions in place. | Head of Workforce Change |
| 60 | Supporting employees to manage disabilities or health conditions through reasonable adjustments and/or other types of support | Head of Workforce Change |
| 61 | Engage with staff with disabilities through the staff network and using the annual Accessibility and Employment Survey | Head of Workforce Change |
| 62 | Complete further 'disability confident' self-assessments to monitor progress and identify improvements | Head of Workforce Change |
| 63 | Improve opportunities for supported employment with the Council and partners, improving the visibility of disability in the workplace, including learning disability | Head of Workforce Change |
| 64 | Meet the Mayor of London's Healthy Workplace Charter Standard at Excellence level | Head of Workforce Change |
| Improve diversity in the workforce so that it represents and reflects the community it serves | | |
| 65 | Ensure that all managers involved in the recruitment and selection process for the Council have completed the mandatory training or assessment process. | Head of Workforce Change |

| # | Action | Owner |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 66 | Use equalities monitoring information to develop targeted interventions to improve representation and diversity in the workforce | Head of Workforce Change |
| 67 | Where appropriate, take 'positive action' to improve recruitment and retention of under-represented groups | Head of Workforce Change |

Appendix 1: Equality and diversity profile of the borough

Age

The borough has the highest population percentage of 0-19 year olds in the country at 31%. The over 60 population accounts for one of the smallest percentages of population in England and Wales.¹⁷

Disability and ill health

26.9% of all households in the borough have a person with a long-term health condition or disability.

Gender

51.5 % of the borough's residents are female, and 49.6% are male.¹⁸

Gender reassignment

We estimate that there may be approximately 40 people in the borough who have or who will undergo gender reassignment.¹⁹

Pregnancy and maternity status

Teenage pregnancy rates are significantly higher than average. The rate of teenage conceptions in 2014 was 32.4 per 1000 population of females aged 15-17. This was the second highest rate in London.²⁰

Marriage and civil partnership

41.9% of the population aged 16 and above are married, 38.8% are single and never married, and 0.2% are in a same-sex civil partnership²¹ (Source: Census 2011).

Ethnicity

The population ethnicity is 24.6% Black (African, Caribbean and Black Other) residents; 15.5% Asian (Bangladeshi,

Indian and Pakistani); and 8% from other or mixed ethnic groups.²²

Religion or belief

56% of the population identify as Christian. 18.9% identify with no religion. 13.7% identify as Muslim.²³

Sexual orientation

Between 10,000 – 14,000 people in Barking and Dagenham are lesbian, gay and bisexual.²⁴

Socio-economic status

The borough is ranked 3rd most deprived within England: this places the borough in top 1% most deprived authorities in England. This indicator indicates that the borough is in a more relatively deprived position than 2010. Within London, the borough is ranked 2nd most deprived, worsening from 6th in 2010.²⁵

Digital inclusion

Likelihood of overall digital exclusion in Barking and Dagenham is low. 20% of adults in the borough do not have all five of the basic digital skills. 72% of adults in the borough have not used all five of the basic digital skills in the last three months.²⁶

Appendix 2: How we developed the Strategy

On 1st November 2016, we launched a 10-week consultation to seek the views of people who live and work in the borough about what our priorities and objectives should be with regard to equality and diversity, and to give people the opportunity to highlight issues and problems that the Strategy should seek to address.

Members of the public were invited to respond to the consultation by completing an online questionnaire which was available on the Council's consultation portal. Stakeholders could also respond by submitting hardcopies by post or by emailing the Strategy and Performance Team. The consultation document was displayed in local libraries and children's centres and downloadable from the Council's website. An easy read version of the consultation information and questionnaire was developed to ensure accessibility; this was used to engage people with learning disabilities and people who have English as a second language.

The public consultation closed on 13th January 2017. In total, there were 29 responses.

Taking a more targeted approach, the Council wrote to partners and voluntary sector groups and organisations directly. As well as inviting them to respond to the public consultation, we also attended local groups and forums to discuss the consultation and get their input. Through this approach we were able to engage the following groups and forums:

- Barking and Dagenham Ethnic Minority Forum
- Barking and Dagenham Faith Forum
- Barking and Dagenham LGBT Network
- Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum
- Learning Disability Partnership Board
- International Day of Disabled People (consultation workshop hosted by the Sycamore Trust)

Council staff were consulted separately about how the Council meets its equality duties as an organisation and service provider, and how it treats staff as an employer. All staff were invited to respond to the Staff Temperature Check survey which is a consultation mechanism used to measure staff satisfaction in several domains including wellbeing, fairness, communications, and equality. Additional questions, specific to the Equality and Diversity Strategy, were included to engage staff about where and how we can improve our approach to equalities, diversity, and inclusion.

The Staff Temperature Check was completed by 750 members of staff (21% of all Council employees).

Endnotes

- 1 79.4 births per 1000 population.
- 2 GLA Population projections 2015 (February 2017 data release)
- 3 11,680 people aged 75-89. 1,821 people aged 90+.
- 4 Census 2011
- 5 Census 2011
- 6 Income, employment, education, skills and training, health and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services, living environment
- 7 Sources: Teen parents- LBBB record 2014; Lone parents- GLA household projections 2013; Workless families Department of Works & Pension, 2013; Large families+ HMRC Children in low income families local measure; Ethnic minorities- School Census; Migrants/asylum seekers- Jobcentre Plus one off estimate 2012; Disabled people – 2011 census
- 8 Census 2011, Lone parent households with dependent children, local authorities in the United Kingdom, available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-286262> – Last accessed 13 April 2015
- 9 ONS 2014, Children in out-of-work benefit households: 2012 and 2013 snapshot, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-out-of-work-benefit-households-2012-and-2013-snapshot> - Last accessed 13 April 2015
- 10 MOPAC Hate Crime Dashboard
- 11 Refugee and Migrant Forum for East London
- 12 NOMIS Labour Market Profile (October 2015 – September 2016)
- 13 NOMIS Labour Market Profile
- 14 April 2016 (Source: 15Billionebp.org)
- 15 Workforce Summary (March 2015)
- 16 DWP
- 17 Census 2011
- 18 Census 2011
- 19 Gender Identity Research and Education Society advice
- 20 ONS
- 21 Census 2011
- 22 GLA population projections
- 23 Census 2011
- 24 Stonewall estimates
- 25 Index of Multiple Deprivation (rank of average rank)
- 26 <http://heatmap.thetechpartnership.com/>

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CABINET**11 July 2017**

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: Parks and Open Spaces Strategy | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement | |
| Open Report | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Paul Hogan, Commissioning Director for Culture and Recreation | Contact Details: Tel: 020 227 3576 E-mail: paul.hogan@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Director: Paul Hogan, Commissioning Director for Culture and Recreation | |
| Accountable Strategic Director: John East, Strategic Director: Growth and Homes | |
| Summary | |
| <p>Barking and Dagenham has a great collection of parks and open spaces. Whether these are associated with historic houses or were created at a time of rapid housing development in the 1920's, these spaces are a vital part of the fabric of the borough. Parks are places to get fit and healthy, to play, to walk the dog, to meet and make friends and to enjoy nature.</p> <p>Barking and Dagenham is going to experience a period of rapid housing growth with over 35,000 new homes being provided at Barking Riverside, Castle Green and other sites over the next 20 years. As was the case in the 1920's, new public open space will be at the centre of these new developments. But we want to be sure that all the borough's existing parks and green spaces are also benefitting local communities as much as they can.</p> <p>Recent research has clearly demonstrated the range of positive outcomes that good quality parks can deliver. Everybody understands that parks are places to become fit and active and enjoy sports, but parks are also places where people are employed, can learn new skills and can volunteer and they play a vital role in absorbing pollution and preventing flooding and urban warming. In the strategy, we've looked at a new way of assessing the value of these benefits (Corporate Natural Capital Accounting - CNCA). We can use the evidence that CNCA provides to support the case for more investment in the borough's parks and green spaces.</p> <p>We want Barking and Dagenham's parks to deliver as many positive outcomes for the economy, for communities and for the environment as possible. To help us plan this, we have assessed the current quality of the borough's parks and compared this with the quality assessment we carried out in 2003. This has told us that we have some work to do to improve the quality of our parks so that they can deliver in the way that we want them to. Equipped with this quality assessment and the CNCA report, we can look at ways in which we can improve our parks over the next 10 years. We'll look at how we can use the council's own resources and at what funding we can bring in from outside to pay</p> | |

for these improvements.

We think the best way to improve parks is to work in partnership with local communities and organisations. To prepare the strategy, we've consulted widely across the borough, gathering the views of residents, whether they use our parks or not. We've incorporated what we've been told into the strategy recommendations and will continue to work with residents to deliver these by establishing 'Friends' groups for parks and by supporting volunteering and training initiatives.

In common with many councils, the borough is facing a significant challenge in terms of funding and we need to consider the best way to deliver and sustain the benefits we all want to see. The strategy looks at new ways of doing things and considers if there might be different ways to run and pay for parks in future.

These are exciting times for Barking and Dagenham and we want parks to be a key part of the future borough just as they have been in the past. By committing to this strategy and Action Plan, we can be confident that parks will continue to tell a great story about Barking and Dagenham as a place to live, learn and work.

Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet is recommended to adopt the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy at Appendix 1 to the report.

Reasons

To assist the Council in achieving its corporate priorities in relation to: Encouraging civic pride, Enabling social responsibility, and Growing the borough.

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy outlines our ambitions for green spaces in the Borough for the next ten years.
- 1.2 It will enable the Council to:
 - Prioritise, plan and commit resources to improve green spaces across the Borough.
 - Make the case to funders for increased external resources.
 - Make informed decisions about the future management of the service.
 - Ensure future development is informed by open space needs and requirements and is aligned with other corporate priorities.
- 1.3 Building on and updating existing plans, the new strategy assesses the quality, quantity and accessibility of existing provision for parks and open space and associated facilities. It has been informed by extensive resident consultation and provides an assessment of future needs and establishes locally derived standards.
- 1.4 The Strategy connects with a raft of strategic initiatives and research so that this vision for our parks and open spaces is joined up with national and local thinking. Included is a set of commitments, deliverables and actions.

The distribution of parks and open spaces

- 1.5 Barking and Dagenham has a portfolio of 28 parks and open spaces providing 463 hectares of public open space and these are distributed fairly evenly across the borough but with a concentration of provision in a central belt running from Barking town centre in the west to Central Park and Eastbrookend Country Park in the east.
- 1.6 In the context of the GLAs 2011 public open space categorisation, the borough portfolio consists of eight 'district parks', 11 'local parks', and nine 'small open spaces'.
- 1.7 There is currently a deficiency of district and local parks in both the northern and southern areas of the borough but in the latter area, this will be addressed by new provision at Barking Riverside. This will leave a deficiency in local and district park provision in the north of the borough which will in part be addressed by the new park provision at Chadwell Heath.

The quality of parks and open spaces

- 1.8 The Green Flag Award is a national benchmark of good stewardship, with assessment based on a cyclical combination of desktop research and site visits. Green Flag evaluation is banded; all Green Flag sites in Barking and Dagenham are at the lower end of the quality banding. The Borough currently holds four Green Flag Awards (Abbey Green, Barking Park, Mayesbrook Park, and Valence Park), having lost two Awards in recent years.
- 1.9 There has been a decline in the quality of the borough's parks and open spaces since the last strategy was adopted in 2003:
 - No parks achieved a rating of 'very good'; however, nor did any in 2003.
 - Only two parks scored 'good' (Mayesbrook Park and Barking Park) in comparison to four in 2003.
 - Mayesbrook Park's ranking has improved the most (from 36% to 70%), achieving the best quality score in the borough.
 - The number of parks scored as 'poor' has increased from eight to seventeen.
 - Most of the borough's parks are either of 'average' or 'poor' quality.
 - The overall average quality score has fallen from 42% to 36% since 2003.

Resident satisfaction with parks and open spaces

- 1.10 LBBB residents are less satisfied with our parks than the London average. The Residents' Survey tells us that 60% of LBBB residents consider the condition of parks to be good or better, this is a lot lower than the London average of 75%. Also:
 - 18% of LBBB residents considered local parks to be poor or worse – three times higher than the London average of 6%;
 - The gap between satisfaction with LBBB parks and London's parks has grown – in 2004 42% of residents were satisfied with the parks against a London average of 52% - a gap of 10 percentage points which grew to 15 percentage points by 2015.

2.0 Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 There is currently no coherent dedicated parks service managing these assets. Most parks have few visitor attractions of note; basic facilities such as refreshments and toilets are of variable quality and in some cases non-existent.
- 2.2 There is no current visitor intelligence, volunteering infrastructure is weak and capacity building potential through the Ranger Service is minimal following previous service reductions. Current staffing is focused on maintenance of the parks and on enforcement activity.
- 2.3 The Borough's parks are currently dilapidated with significant outstanding financial liabilities and there is an urgent need for capital and revenue investment. The lack of a strategic framework makes it difficult to attract investment which exacerbates the risk of further deterioration of the infrastructure of parks, as well as the buildings and facilities in them.
- 2.4 Our aspiration is to see our parks and open spaces as assets that help deliver the Borough's growth ambitions. We are seeking to become a destination of choice and it is vital that the public realm looks the best it possibly can.
- 2.5 We want to restore and enhance these green spaces so that they offer a better quality and wider range of services and facilities to encourage formal and informal recreation and provide a rich and diverse visitor experience.
- 2.6 The value of increasing and enhancing the range and quality of services and facilities and realising improvements to the wider infrastructure will encourage visitor use and will be a fundamental factor in improving the health and well-being of residents.
- 2.7 Clearly the quality of the borough's parks needs to improve but these improvements need to be prioritised. The strategy advocates the development of a programme for investment and renewal over a ten-year period of the strategy in order that the most serious issues are addressed as soon as possible.

Methodology

- 2.8 The scope of the strategy development process has been wide ranging and has included a robust quantitative and qualitative assessment and audit of the Borough's parks and open spaces and associated assets and facilities. This has informed the production of a comprehensive database of park infrastructure that identifies strengths and weaknesses and gaps in provision.
- 2.9 A consultation exercise with residents, stakeholders and partners about the Borough's parks has been undertaken to establish levels of satisfaction and identify current and emerging needs, expectations and aspirations. This has helped us understand how the parks and open spaces can make a greater contribution to the quality of life of residents and how best this can be communicated.
- 2.10 A desk top exercise was implemented to review the Borough's existing Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (adopted in 2003) and related green space strategies, studies and plans (both local and national). This included a critical assessment of

the value and benefits of existing open spaces, especially in terms of regeneration health inequalities, flood mitigations, crime and anti-social behaviour, and to provide clear evidence to support the need for changes to the parks.

- 2.11 There has also been an evaluation of opportunities for additional community involvement and responsibility in caring for and improving the Borough's parks. And an exploration of new uses and activities within parks and open spaces and the identification of opportunities to attract investment either through existing schemes or new funding sources and/or commercial partnerships.
- 2.12 Master plans, which seek to address the neglect of many years and guide the restoration of the Borough's most important parks, have been produced for: Barking Park; Central Park; Greatfields Park; Mayesbrook Park; Old Dagenham Park; St Chad's Park; Valence Park; Abbey Green; and the Eastbrookend Country Park.
- 2.13 A master plan for Parsloes Park was produced in advance of the strategy development process to enable a significant funding bid to be made to the Park Life scheme and to support the planning application process in relation to the Youth Zone.
- 2.14 In conjunction with, and informed by, the development of this strategy, work is underway by Barking Riverside Limited to produce a masterplan for the green spaces that will be created as part of their extensive housing development programme, which will ultimately comprise part of the s106 agreement for the site.
- 2.15 The strategy, master plans and action plan is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.16 A technical assessment and evidence base document accompanied the main strategy document and can be found at <http://moderngov.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=180&MId=9411&Ver=4>). That document incorporates the following:
- An 'events in parks' policy (section 6).
 - A play strategy (section 7).
 - Community food growing development opportunities (section 8).
 - A playing pitch strategy implementation plan (section 9 - the overarching playing pitch strategy was adopted by the Council in 2016).
 - Corporate Natural Capital Account (section 10).
 - Public consultation and engagement (section 11).
 - Capital investment plan (section 12)
 - Future governance options (section 13)
- 2.17 Members are asked to note that the 'events in parks' policy includes the proposal to encourage and enable faith groups in the Borough to hold events in parks.
- 2.18 The masterplan for Parsloes Park is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.19 The proposed improvement actions that will be prioritised for implementation over the first three years of the strategy's ten-year life span are set out in table 1 below. The primary focus will be on identifying opportunities to increase income and reduce costs through commercial activity in the parks and to build on the success of the Public Health supported tree planting and community food growing initiative.

Table 1 Parks and Open Spaces improvement priorities – 2017 to 2020

| Ref. | Action |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SOCIAL OUTCOMES | |
| 1 | Set up charitable trust to support development of friends' groups and volunteering activity across the Borough's parks. |
| 2 | Install more measured routes for walking, running and cycling in parks. |
| 3 | Clearly signed walking and cycling routes between and through parks. |
| 4 | Prioritise measures to promote perception of safety |
| 5 | Provide better information on events through the web and social media. |
| 6 | Expand the current health walks programme and explore opportunities to align the programme with local surgeries and public health programmes. |
| ECONOMIC OUTCOMES | |
| 7 | Initiate 'quick wins' programme of park improvements through direct consultation with local communities that will deliver a broad range of benefits and outcomes. |
| 8 | Initiate programme of playground upgrades and repairs focussing on those areas that have the highest demand and are currently in the poorest condition. |
| 9 | Develop and implement a strategy for s106 and CIL investment in parks across the borough. |
| 10 | Implement capital improvement projects for Abbey Green and Abbey Ruins and for a regional football and cricket hub at Parsloes Park. |
| 11 | Seek new partnerships to develop new facilities and entrepreneurial management model for Central Park. |
| 12 | Seek to expand a variety of income generating opportunities in parks through developing the events programme. |
| 13 | Seek to develop partnership with Capel Manor for the provision of new training and management opportunities at Eastbrookend Country Park. |
| 14 | Investigate opportunities to develop new and/or accommodate existing social enterprises within parks. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES | |
| 15 | Introduce a 'peat free' policy for plant stock and the sustainable sourcing of timber. |
| 16 | Implement a programme of installing habitat enhancements, such as bird and bat boxes, across all parks. |
| 17 | Explore the potential for developing nature trails and providing nature walks across parks with high ecological and natural capital assets. |
| 18 | Undertake a programme of air quality monitoring across district and local parks, targeting investment where air quality is poorest. |
| 19 | Promote generation of renewable energy through identifying opportunities for wind turbine installation. |
| 20 | Develop partnerships with external organisations to develop a tree planting programme across the borough to improve air quality, biodiversity and community food growing opportunities. |

3.0 Options Appraisal

- 3.1 The options available to Cabinet are to agree that the strategy and the associated masterplans and action plan (with any direction on amendments to be made) or to reject it.

- 3.2 If Cabinet do not adopt the strategy, this will mean that there is no strategic framework to drive improvements in green space provision in the borough, which would also impact on our ability to lever in external funding to support service delivery and capital developments.
- 3.3 Therefore, Cabinet is recommended to adopt the strategy with any amendments, removals, or additions as they consider appropriate.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The development of the draft strategy has been informed by consultation with ward councillors and Cabinet members, key council officers, and external stakeholders, such as: Dagenham Rugby Club, St. Chads Bowls Club, BAD BMX club; Barking Riverside Ltd; and the volunteers at Greatfields Park.
- 4.2 We have also considered the views of the wider community gathered from an on-line survey as well as holding public consultation meetings in Barking and Dagenham.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Group Finance Manager

- 5.1 The strategy set out in the report would be delivered using funding received from the council's general fund and any other funding secured during the period covered by this strategy. Year on year the funding will be reviewed as this may fluctuate if cuts are required or if any of the grants cease. Any major variation in the funding may impact on the delivery of the strategy. Funding streams will be regularly reviewed to minimise this risk.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Dr. Paul Feild Senior Lawyer

- 6.1 As set out in the report the Council will best develop and administer its parks and green spaces stewardship through the means of a forward-looking strategy reviewed on a timely and periodic basis to ensure it reflects local needs and the resources available to deliver it.
- 6.2 Where the strategy identifies a requirement for change in services particularly where there may be closure(s) or discontinuance of a service or services, appropriate consultation will need to be carried out. Any savings proposals that affect staff will require consultation with Unions and staff.
- 6.3 In addition, Members will need to be satisfied that Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out. In relation to the impact on different groups it should be noted that the Equality Act 2010 provides that a public authority must in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who do and those who do not share a relevant 'protected characteristic'.

6.4 If at any point resort to constricting expenditure is required, it is important that due regard is given to statutory duties and responsibilities. In particular the Council must have regard to:

- any existing contractual obligations covering current service provision. Such contractual obligations where they exist must be fulfilled or varied with agreement of current providers;
- any legitimate expectations that persons already receiving a service (due to be cut) may have to either continue to receive the service or to be consulted directly before the service is withdrawn;
- any rights which statute may have conferred on individuals and as a result of which the council may be bound to continue its provision;
- the impact on different groups affected by any changes to service provision as informed by relevant equality impact assessments;
- having due regard to any consultation undertaken

7. Other Issues

7.1 **Customer Impact** – Numerous studies have identified the capacity of parks to reinforce a sense of place and residents’ affinity with a neighbourhood. People will identify strongly with their local park as part of the fabric of their neighbourhood. Where a park is of high quality, this will foster a sense of pride in the places where people live and work. These feelings are particularly strongly expressed when parks have direct heritage value or contain cultural assets or activities of significance. Conversely a poor quality or neglected park can have a negative impact on perceptions of neighbourhood quality.

Through the delivery of the strategy action plan, it is expected that there will be a marked increase in the number and range of people who will use our parks for formal and informal recreation over the life of the strategy. And that over the life of the strategy satisfaction levels will rise and be as good as the London average.

7.2 **Safeguarding Children** – Parks and open spaces have long been used by schools to extend their play and educational offer. Parks offer opportunities for children to explore their perceptions of risk in a dynamic, free outdoor classroom.

A clear focus for the strategy is to improve access to parks by children and families and to support the delivery of health and well-being activities and cultural events.

All events or activities delivered directly or commissioned by the Culture and Recreation service will be covered by its safeguarding policy framework for children and vulnerable adults.

7.3 **Health Issues** – One of the priorities identified in the strategy is to harness the untapped potential of the borough’s parks to improve the health and well-being of local people.

DEFRA has calculated that the NHS could save £2.1 billion per year if parks and open spaces infrastructure encouraged people into more active lifestyles. Good quality parks and open spaces can have a significant impact on some of the most

prevalent disease groups – coronary heart disease, stroke, type two diabetes, and mental health.

This strategy demonstrates how parks can develop as places where physical activity can be promoted through the principles of ‘active design’ and proposes the development of more opportunities for people to come together to socialise and to take an active part in the community through volunteering.

Targeted programmes will also be developed to support local people to lead healthy lives by improving self-confidence and reducing isolation as well as promoting fitness and good mental health.

- 7.4 **Asset management** – The strategy will help the Council to make the case to funders, like Sport England and national governing bodies for football, rugby and cricket, to secure investment in our playing pitches and pavilions.

The success of the Eastbrook May and Baker sports club is a great example of what can be achieved through community asset transfers. The club was established by the Council as a limited company with charitable status to manage the football, cricket, and rugby pitches and ancillary facilities owned by Sanofi and which were subsequently gifted to the Council. The estimated cost to the Council if the facilities were to be managed in-house was c£250,000 per year; however, the club is successfully managing these facilities at no cost to the Council.

It could well be the case that this delivery vehicle could be replicated elsewhere in the Borough, for example at Parsloes Park, where a Community Football Trust model for the management of the football facilities has considerable potential. Over the life of the strategy, it is intended that approval will be sought for the transfer of management responsibility for several parks’ buildings to community sports clubs via long term lease arrangements.

- 7.5 **Crime and Disorder Issues** - The Council has a statutory duty to consider crime and disorder implications in all its decision making. The strategy recognises that whilst the proportion of residents worrying about crimes is well above the London average, actual crime in Barking and Dagenham parks is relatively low.

In delivering this strategy and action plan, the Council will aim to challenge this perception in a constructive way by providing quality facilities and activities, which will provide positive activities for all residents and opportunities for families to enjoy their leisure time together.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Parks & Open Spaces Strategy Technical Appendices and Evidence Base (<http://moderngov.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=180&MId=9411&Ver=4>)

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1 Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (in two parts)
Appendix 2 Parsloes Park masterplan

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PARKS AND OPEN SPACES STRATEGY

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

PROJECT TITLE: A1763 London Borough Of Barking and Dagenham Parks and Open Spaces Strategy
Client: The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

| Version | Date | Version Details | Prepared by | Checked by | Approved by Principal |
|---------|------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| V1.0 | | | Jon Sheaff, Peter Neal, Tim Gill, Sarah Williams, Aniela Zaba, Margarida Oliveira, Julia Halasz, Visakha Sroy, Tom Jackson | Jon Sheaff, Peter Neal | Jon Sheaff |
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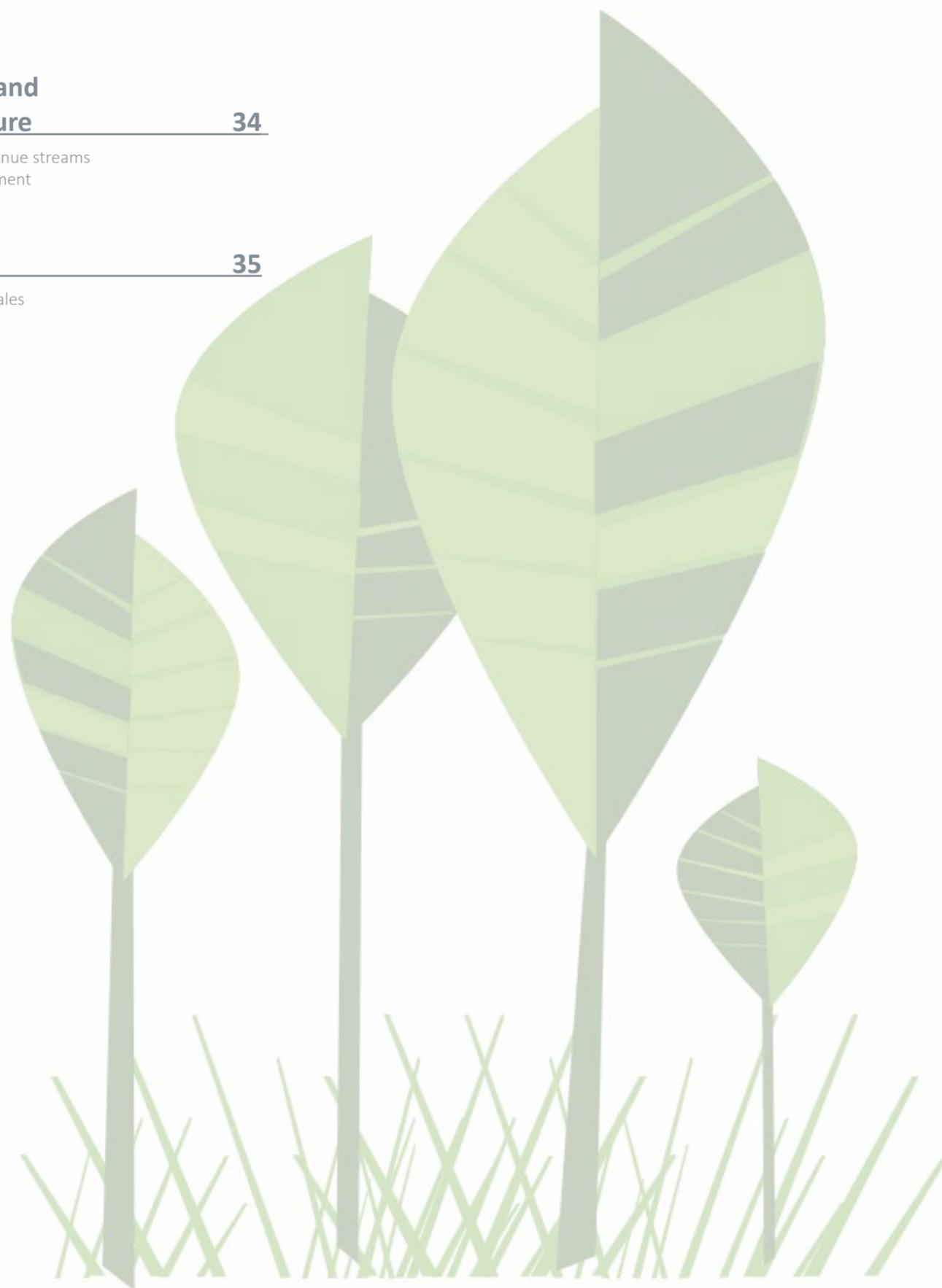
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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------|
| ANGSt | Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard |
| CO2e | Carbon equivalent |
| CNCA | Corporate Natural Capital Account |
| GIS | Geographic information systems |
| LBBD | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham |
| MENE | Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment |
| NICE | National institute for Health and Care Excellence |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| ORVal | Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool |
| OSA | Open Space Assessment |
| SEG | Socio-Economic Group |



FOREWORD AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FOREWORD



Councillor Saima Ashraf
Deputy Leader and Cabinet
Member for community
engagement and leadership

Executive Summary

Barking and Dagenham has a great collection of parks and open spaces. Whether these are associated with historic houses or were created at a time of rapid housing development in the 1920's, these spaces are a vital part of the fabric of the borough. Parks are great places to get fit and healthy, to play, to walk the dog, to meet and make friends and to enjoy nature.

Barking and Dagenham is going to experience a period of rapid housing growth with over 35,000 new homes being provided at Barking Riverside, Castle Green and other sites over the next 20 years. As was the case in the 1920's, new public open space will be at the centre of these new developments. However, we want to be sure that all of the borough's existing parks and greenspaces are also benefitting local communities as much as they can.

Recent research has clearly demonstrated the range of positive outcomes that good quality parks can deliver. Everybody understands that parks are great places to become fit and active and enjoy sports, but parks are also places where people are employed, can learn new skills, volunteer and they play a vital role in absorbing pollution and preventing flooding and urban warming. In this Strategy, we've looked at a new way of assessing the value of these benefits (Corporate Natural Capital Accounting- CNCA). We can use the evidence that CNCA provides to support the case for more investment in the borough's parks and green spaces.

We want Barking and Dagenham's parks to deliver as many positive outcomes for the economy, for communities and for the environment as possible. To help us plan this, we have assessed the current quality of the borough's parks and compared this with the quality assessment we carried out in 2003. This

has told us that we have some work to do to improve the quality of our parks so that they can deliver in the way that we want them to. Equipped with this quality assessment and the CNCA report, we can look at ways in which we can improve our parks over the next 10 years. We'll look at how we can use the council's own resources and at what funding we can bring in from outside to pay for these improvements.

We think the best way to improve parks is to work in partnership with local communities and organisations. To prepare the strategy, we've consulted widely across the borough, gathering the views of residents, whether they use our parks or not. We've incorporated what you've told us into the strategy recommendations and want to continue to work with you to deliver these ideas by helping you to establish 'Friends' groups for parks and by supporting volunteering and training initiatives. We also want to work with you to implement a programme of immediate investment to fix some of the issues you've identified

In common with many councils, the borough is facing a significant challenge in terms of funding and we need to consider the best way to deliver and sustain the benefits we all want to see. The strategy looks at new ways of doing things and considers if there might be different ways to run and pay for parks in future.

These are exciting times for Barking and Dagenham and we want parks to be a key part of the future borough just as they have in the past. By committing to this strategy and Action Plan, we can be confident that parks will continue to tell a great story about Barking and Dagenham as a place to live, learn and work.



THE PURPOSE OF THIS STRATEGY

Barking and Dagenham has some wonderful parks, open spaces, nature reserves and playgrounds. Barking and Dagenham's parks are much in demand but some of the borough's parks are not as good as they could be.

2.8 million

More than 2.8 million visits to Barking and Dagenham's parks every year

(ref: ORVal, Outdoor Recreation Valuation Tool)

The value of good quality parks and open spaces is now understood more clearly than ever before, so there are good reasons for investing in the borough's parks. There is also a clear need – the population of the borough is set to increase by 48% between now and 2037. Most of these new residents will be living in high density housing with little or no access to private gardens. The borough's parks and green spaces will help people to adopt a healthy lifestyle and will give free access to the outdoors and the natural world. Barking and Dagenham's parks need to be ready to face this challenge.

13%

Over 13% of Barking and Dagenham's surface area is set out as parks and greenspace

Barking and Dagenham is facing some immediate issues that good quality parks can help to address. The Action Plan section of the strategy will propose ways to address these issues.

- Barking and Dagenham has a very young population. The borough needs to have good quality play facilities in parks to encourage children to stay active and healthy
- Barking and Dagenham has high levels of obesity and long-term illness. We need to make the borough's parks more attractive to encourage people to adopt an active lifestyle
- Climate change is an issue facing us all. Parks can help to limit the impact of flooding, of urban warming and of air pollution. We need to make sure that parks can continue to deliver these outcomes

We want to develop an ambitious vision for the borough's parks that can be delivered by a practical and realistic plan of action. The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will look at how parks can benefit local communities identifying priorities for investment and management over the next ten years. We'll base these decisions on an assessment of the current quality of Barking and Dagenham's parks and open spaces.

To make sure that the strategy is delivering what residents want, we've completed a comprehensive residents' survey and a broad programme of consultation and engagement. This has included school children, youth groups, individual parks friends and user groups, elected members, council departments and wider network of residents and stakeholders.

2.1 Enhancing place, identity and quality of life

97%

97% of people think that parks and open spaces make their neighbourhood a nice place to live

(Ref: GreenSpace. (2010).GreenSTAT visitor survey system)

Parks are a really important part of Barking and Dagenham's heritage. The lands of Barking Abbey once covered the whole of the borough and in medieval times, manor houses like Parsloes and Valence controlled country estates. In time and as London rapidly expanded, these former estates became the public parks we know today. Much of the borough's housing was built between the wars and parks became the centrepieces of these new estates (refer to Fig.2.1).



Fig.2.1- Historical photo of Becontree Estate, circa 1960's

Looking ahead, the borough has ambitious plans for growth. The population of the borough is set to increase dramatically and these new residents will need for better transport and community facilities.

Parks and open spaces can help people to become more healthy and active, are great places to relax, to play, to meet friends and to hold events. They also help to make urban life more sustainable by supporting food growing, biodiversity, improving air quality and controlling flood risk. Most important of all, parks are free.

We want to make sure that parks continue to be safe and welcoming to all, making the borough a great place to live and work.

2.2 The Council's strategic vision

The Parks and Open Spaces Strategy is one of a number of initiatives that the council is adopting to shape the future of the borough (refer to Fig.2.2).

2.2.1 The Borough Manifesto

Barking and Dagenham's Borough Manifesto sets out the council's long-term vision. The Manifesto suggests ways in which health, housing, education and the environment need to change over the next twenty years.

The Manifesto proposes:

- A much cleaner borough, and particularly its streets, parks and front gardens
- A borough of cohesive communities with a renewed sense of community spirit
- A great place to live and work and for businesses to settle and grow
- More facilities for young people
- More services for older people to keep them active

The Manifesto suggests that parks and open spaces can help to deliver these priorities.

- By maintaining parks to better standards
- By updating and repairing worn-out children's play and leisure facilities
- By ensuring parks are safe and easy to use, particularly for children and young people.

This strategy will be looking at ways in which parks can deliver these outcomes and others besides.

2.2.2 Delivering sustainable growth – the Growth Strategy

The council's Growth Strategy talks about creating neighbourhoods places with a clear sense of character. The borough's parks have a fundamental role to play in this process.

The Growth Strategy identifies locations for new developments as well as a programme of estate renewal. Parks and open spaces will be at the centre of these projects (see Fig.2.3)

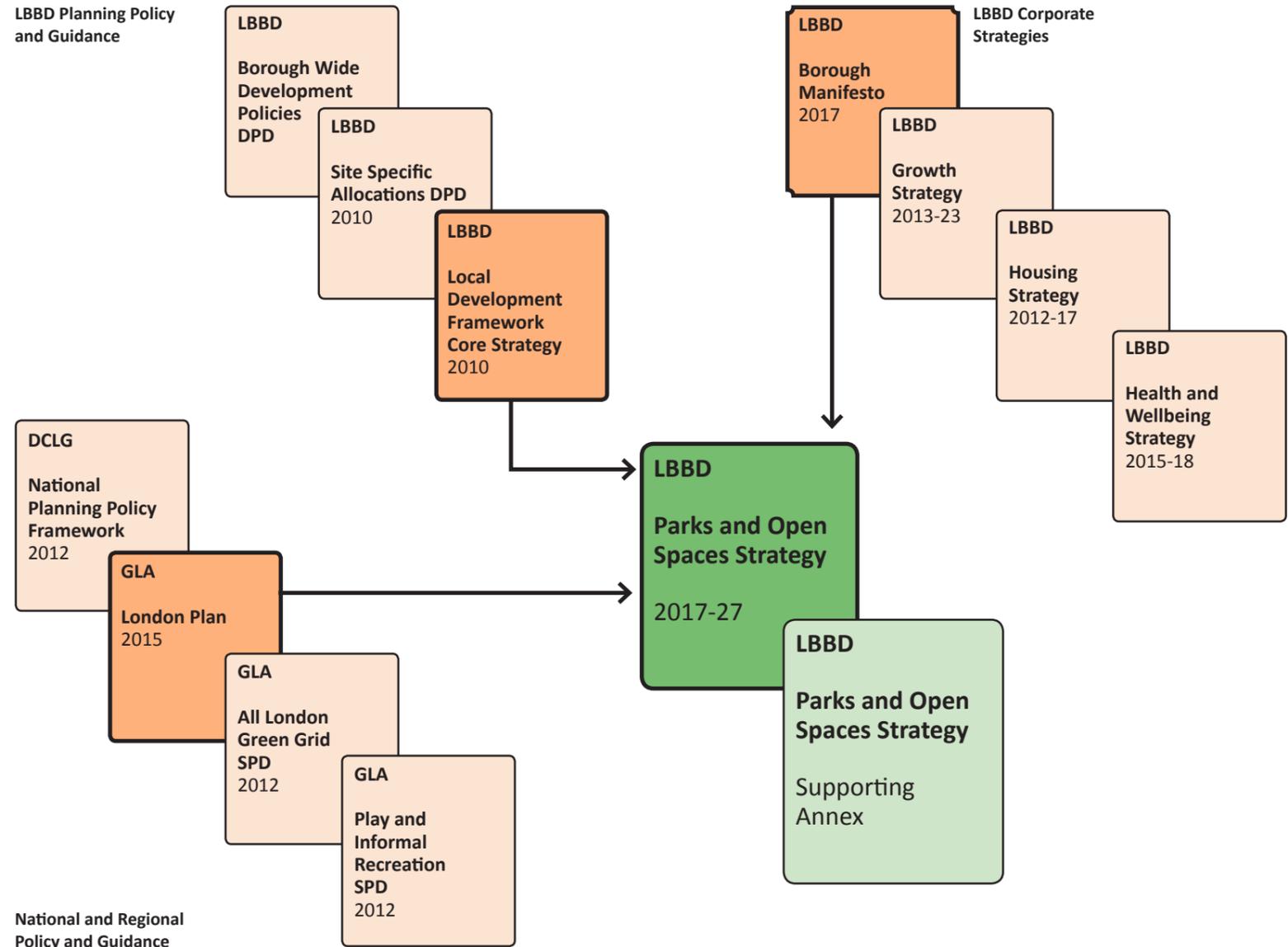


Fig.2.2 - National and local strategies and frameworks organogram

2.2.3 National and local planning policy

As a key document that will shape future planning, the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy also needs to reflect national and local planning policy:

The *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012) emphasises that parks and open spaces can deliver 'a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'¹. The strategy includes an up-to-date assessment of the quantity and quality of the borough's parks and open spaces, giving us the evidence we need to decide how to improve the borough's parks and how to deliver more benefits for communities.

The *London Plan* (2015) describes a hierarchy for the city's parks and open spaces, seeks their protection and promotes the creation new spaces.

The *Barking and Dagenham Local Plan* (2011) refers to the council's Strategy for Parks and Green Spaces (2004). This acknowledges that 'there is a good level of public open space in the borough, but that public satisfaction with parks and other open spaces is below the London average'. The planning vision for 2025 proposes a major improvement in the borough's environmental sustainability by connecting parks 'by a network of tree-lined streets, wildlife corridors, and cycle paths'.

The specific policy for the Green Belt and Public Open Spaces (CM3) sets out the protection of a number of local public open spaces designated as District Parks, Local Parks and Open Spaces and Small Open Spaces. The protection of all of the borough's existing parks and open spaces from development will be a principal aim of this strategy.

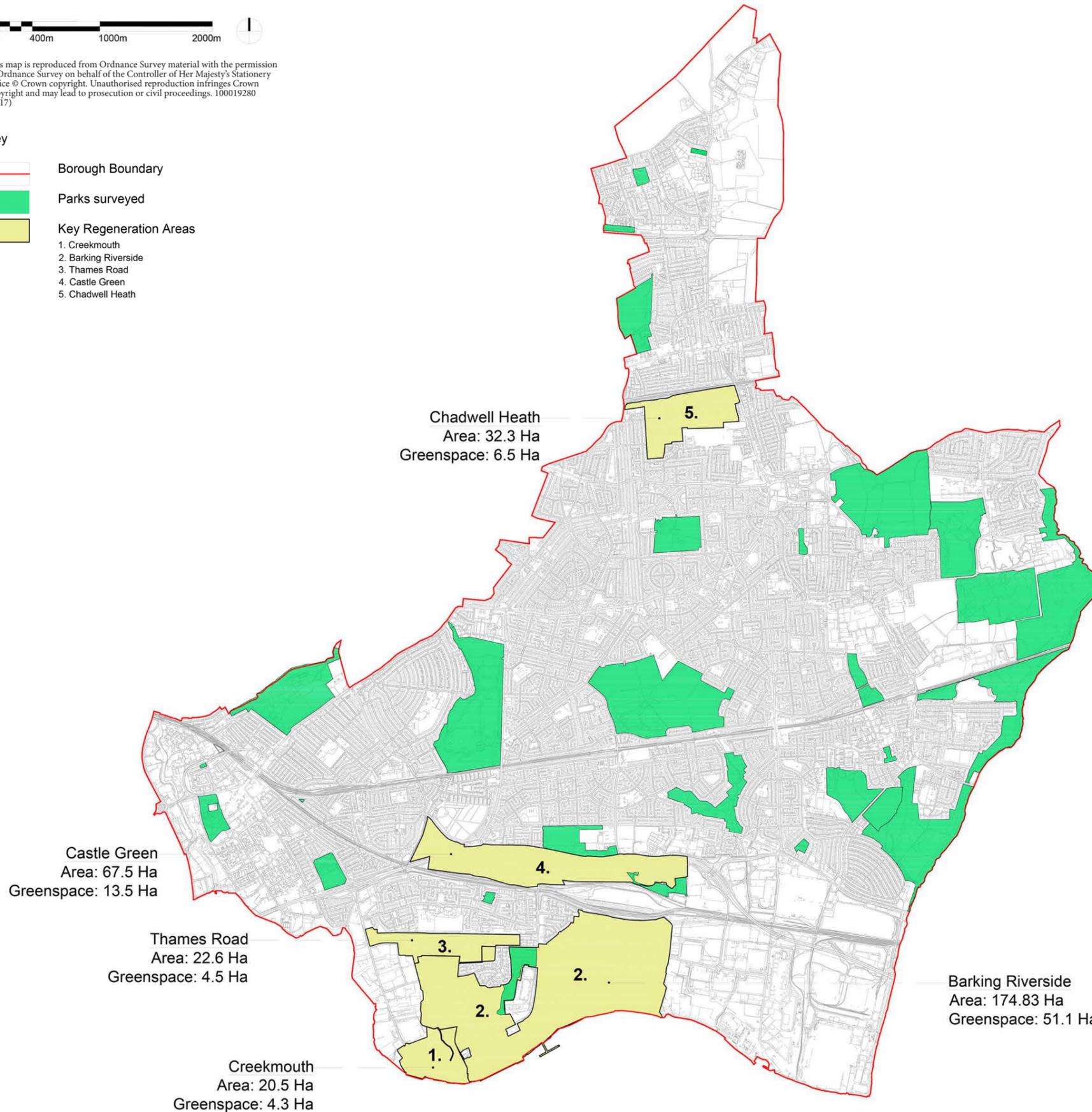
Fig.2.3 - Map of parks, development and renewal projects



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Key

-  Borough Boundary
-  Parks surveyed
-  Key Regeneration Areas
 - 1. Creekmouth
 - 2. Barking Riverside
 - 3. Thames Road
 - 4. Castle Green
 - 5. Chadwell Heath



2.2.4 Responding to wider strategies

Parks can also help to deliver a range of other important objectives:

- The *Housing Strategy*² emphasises the need to create and maintain popular and attractive neighbourhoods.
- The *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment* looks at ways in which parks can offer a variety of health programmes. These need to encourage more use of parks by every age group
- Barking Riverside is part of NHS England's *Healthy New Towns* initiative. This will look at ways in which green spaces and waterways can help to improve health.

2.3 Challenges facing public parks

Whilst it is clear parks and green spaces have an important role to play in making the borough a great place to live and work, funding for parks is under pressure. Across the UK parks budgets have fallen significantly and Barking and Dagenham faces similar pressures.

The council recognises the importance of parks to quality of life. In this strategy, we are looking at innovative park projects and models of good practice so these benefits can be secured in the long term.

NOTES

- ¹ National Planning Policy Framework, 2012, page 52
- ² Barking and Dagenham Housing Strategy 2012 – 2017



WHY PARKS MATTER

Over the past twenty years, there has been a revival in the quality of urban parks. Local communities have always valued good quality parks but there is now a lot of evidence that greenspace can contribute significantly to the quality of urban life in many different ways.

The benefits that parks can deliver can be grouped into three main categories:

ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

- Good quality parks make town centres attractive, helping to sustain their economic success and making them attractive places to work and set up business
- Good quality parks support the value of homes
- Parks are places where people work, run businesses, volunteer and gain skills
- Good quality parks are tourist destinations in their own right, boosting the tourist economy

£35 million

the annual value of volunteering in Britain's parks is up to £35 million

(ref: Greenspace (2003) Community Networking Project – final report)

SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Parks are free to use and diverse; parks are open to all irrespective of gender, age, ethnic background, or religion
- Parks can have a positive impact on some of the most serious health conditions affecting the UK population – coronary heart disease, Type II diabetes, stroke and clinical depression
- Regular contact with the natural world can significantly help children to achieve better results at school
- Parks are central to a sense of place and people strongly identify with their local park as an essential part of their neighbourhood

50% cut

take a daily brisk walk in the park can cut the risk of heart attack, stroke and Type II diabetes by 50%

(ref: Bird 2002: Green Space and our Health)

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Parks help to limit the impact of extreme weather events and can prevent flooding
- Parks absorb pollutants from the atmosphere
- Parks are cooler than the streets surrounding them
- Parks sustain biodiversity and forge stronger connections between the city and the surrounding countryside

Where greenspace occupies more than 50% of land surface, temperatures are up to 7°C lower than elsewhere. This effect can be experienced up to 300 metres from the park edge (ref: European Environmental Agency:2012)

1 tree



a single tree can compensate for 3,000-10,000 car kilometres a year in terms of carbon and nitrogen emissions

(ref: Trees and Design Action Group: 2010)

NATURAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTING

Natural Capital can be defined as the world's stocks of natural assets. These include the air we breathe and the water we drink but also the world's geology its soils and all living things.

Natural Capital provides us with a range of 'ecosystem services' which make human life possible.

The most obvious ecosystem services include the food we eat, the water we drink and the plant materials we use for fuel, building materials and medicines. But there are many more.

Until now, the cost of maintaining parks and open spaces has been measured using a traditional accounting method. This does not capture the value of the ecosystem services provided by parks and open spaces or the value of the economic, social and environmental benefits that they can deliver.

In developing the Strategy, we have used a new form of accounting (Corporate Natural Capital Accounting- CNCA) to capture the value of the ecosystem services that are delivered by parks and greenspaces.

The CNCA balance sheet shows that when £1 is invested in parks, the return to communities in terms of the value of benefits delivered by parks is in excess of £27.

This will make it easier for us to make a strong case for investment in parks in the future.



4

STRATEGIC THEMES AND POLICIES



4.1 What parks can deliver for Barking and Dagenham

In the Borough's manifesto the council has identified a clear set of priorities for the future development of the borough.

- A much cleaner borough, and particularly its streets, parks and front gardens
- A borough of cohesive communities with a renewed sense of community spirit
- A great place to live and work and for businesses to settle and grow
- More facilities for young people
- More services for older people to keep them active

In the Strategy, we have described ways in which good quality parks and greenspaces can deliver benefits for people, for communities and for the borough as a whole. In the Action Plan, we'll consider how we can deliver these benefits through detailed programmes and initiatives across the borough. In this section, we'll consider the most important targets for the strategy:

4.2 Community health and wellbeing

Barking and Dagenham has some very challenging health statistics. The borough has significantly higher levels of childhood and adult obesity than both regional and national averages. The number of people diagnosed with diabetes was higher than the average for England. The prevalence of smoking in the borough is worse than the average for England and is rising.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By making parks more attractive and distinctive to encourage more people to use outdoor space and adopt a healthy lifestyle;
- Through a programme of investment in playgrounds across the borough to encourage children to play outdoors
- Through a programme of investment in sports facilities to encourage people to be fit and active;
- By designing out crime hotspots to make parks more secure and to encourage out greater use;
- By supporting food growing opportunities across the borough helping people to get fit and eat healthily;
- By giving people an opportunity to volunteer and help to maintain parks
- By working with GP's and health providers to develop health related programmes in parks to protect residents' health; and
- By improving accessibility for people with disabilities and special needs.



4.3 Placemaking and housing growth

The population of the borough is set to increase by 48% over the next 20 years. The borough's new residents will be accommodated mainly in high rise high density accommodation with little or no private space. The provision of new greenspace will form an integral element of emerging masterplans for these regeneration areas, but an increased population will place increased pressure on the borough's existing greenspace assets. The borough's parks need to be ready to face this challenge.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By developing and adopting new masterplans for 10 of the borough's most important parks. These masterplans will give us a framework for the future development of these sites that we can bring into effect as resources become available
- By developing a quick wins programme to address some of the most urgent issues facing our parks – how to make individual parks more attractive and distinctive, how to improve connections between parks and how to improve playgrounds
- By identifying short, medium and long term funding opportunities to deliver improvements to parks
- By getting started on major projects for Parsloes Park and Central Park
- By looking at how parks are paid for and how they are managed and by considering different ways of doing this in future to make sure that the parks service is improving in response to an increased level of demand



Barking Park case study, LB Barking and Dagenham

Barking Park is a very successful, well-designed, highest-quality play space. Its location is ideal, in the de facto hub of the park. It is close to the splashpark (a popular family destination), café, toilets and boat hire. It is also relatively near to the main sports facilities and skatepark.

The design is attractive, welcoming and offers a wide range of play opportunities for children of different ages and abilities, while allowing family groups of different compositions to visit together. The area has a strong spirit of place and identity. Exemplary design features include:

- Distinctive and thoughtfully chosen equipment. The bespoke sunken ship structure is eye-catching and memorable. The sand and water features are popular with families with young children. There are several challenging items such as the basket swing and slide, and several items that have good accessibility.
- Naturalistic features, landform and ground modelling that enhance the play offers and adds new ones.
- The long bench-wall: a design element that adds play value as a climbing/balancing item, offers generous seating to make the space more sociable, and divides the area into 'rooms' while allowing parents to keep an eye on children of different ages.

The lack of hard boundaries, while perhaps not universally appreciated, is a bold decision that brings several benefits:

- The area feels part of the wider park rather than a segregated 'play ghetto', solely for use by children and their adult carers. This enhances the degree of casual social contact with - and informal supervision by - other park users.
- The play area and features are easy to access from any direction.
- Children's active play – especially chase games- can easily flow around and well beyond the features.
- The site can cope with high visitor numbers in a flexible way
- Responsible dog owners are more likely to keep their dog under control nearby the play area and possibly in the wider park
- It is not possible for the play area to be dominated by small numbers of aggressive or anti-social users, and it is unattractive to anti-social dog owners in search of places where they can bring/train their dogs (unlike a gated play area).



4.4 Children, learning and spaces to play

The opportunity to play is central to a healthy, happy childhood and the provision of good play facilities is a principal of the Borough Manifesto. Good play opportunities and time spent in green outdoor environments are good for children, for families and for communities.

Play facilities are evenly distributed across the borough but there are gaps in provision, notably within adjoining areas of Longbridge and Eastbury Wards, on the western edges of Becontree and Valence Wards, on the eastern fringes of Whalebone and Chadwell Heath Wards, in Alibon and Heath Wards and the eastern edge of Eastbrook Ward.

An area of deficiency in Thames and River Wards is likely to be addressed by new play provision in Barking Riverside.

The borough's current playgrounds are often in poor condition and in need of repair. These playgrounds do not offer children opportunities for imaginative and adventurous play or opportunities for children to socialise. Barking Park is the most successful, highest-quality play space and sets a standard for play facilities in other parks.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By initiating a programme for the repair and renewal of playgrounds across the borough
- By providing new play facilities in the borough's housing regeneration areas
- By making new and existing playgrounds inclusive, attractive and a distinctive part of the neighbourhood
- By building these design principles into playground designs for the 10 masterplan sites
- By encouraging children and families to be part of the design process for playgrounds
- By encouraging children to define risk for themselves
- By making playgrounds robust and easy to maintain and by carrying out repairs when these are needed



Now That's a Festival, Central Park, Barking

Now That's a Festival currently operates in Central Park on the August bank holiday weekend. The festival attracts 3,000 – 5,000 people per day and in 2017 is expanding to a two day festival. The festival receives a reduction in fees including not paying any park hire fees and gets to use council licences in exchange for leaving all their infrastructure (staging, generators etc.) up for the following day when a council managed event (Roundhouse music festival) uses that infrastructure at no cost allowing them to put on a larger event than would otherwise not be possible for relatively little hassle.



4.5 Programming and events

Many of Barking and Dagenham's parks already act as venues for events and celebrations and there are great opportunities to develop more. The existing programme of events is popular and well attended mainly by local residents.

The borough has a very young age profile, challenging health statistics and a very low engagement with the arts. An exciting and innovative events programme can help in all of these areas.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By identifying what is distinctive about each park and encouraging events that will complement this distinctiveness.
- By developing a balanced programme of events across the borough
- Where possible, to promote events that will generate revenue for the borough that can be ploughed back into park maintenance
- By identifying key parks to host large events and making sure that these parks can support events without causing long term impacts
- By setting up a clear booking system to ensure that a simple and straightforward process is in place for both commercial and community event organisers
- By encouraging commercial event organisers to share infrastructure with the organisers of community events to promote a diverse and inclusive programme
- By ensuring that event organisers immediately address any physical impacts of events on parks

4.6 Food and productivity

Growing food in parks has become commonplace over the last 10 years. While traditional allotments are still in high demand, provision of food growing within community settings is increasingly recognised as a way to give people more opportunity to get outside, get active, learn new skills and create a sense of place.

Within Barking and Dagenham, 42 community food growing projects have been initiated in schools, care homes, housing estates and communal areas during the last eight years. Around 20 of these are currently active.

There is huge scope for more food growing in Barking and Dagenham with land being more abundant than in many other urban areas. A number of successful local projects are already operating but there is potential to do much more.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By building initiatives for food growing into the 10 park masterplans; planting design will include orchard trees and plants that can be foraged
- By supporting current food growing partners, allowing them to re-purpose areas of parks that are currently under-used
- By seeking new partners to develop new health, education and skills initiatives linked to food growing
- By encouraging social enterprise as a means of growing the food growing sector





Growing Communities' Dagenham Farm

Growing Communities' Dagenham Farm produces about five tonnes of organic veg and fruit every year, in glasshouses and polytunnels and outdoors for sale locally and through Growing Communities' fruit and veg bag scheme.

The farm opened in 2012 on the former council nursery site. The aim is to produce excellent, organic food closer to where people actually live as well as helping local residents to gain skills in food growing, preparation and selling.

Dagenham Farm shows the potential for growing- and selling- significant amounts of produce from farms on the outskirts of London. With funding from the Big Lottery they currently run a community outreach programme that includes:

- A volunteer programme on Wednesdays and Sundays where local residents can come and learn new skills, take gentle exercise and buy fresh farm produce and learn about healthy eating via a free volunteers' lunch.
- A Grown in Dagenham young people's programme for over 130 young people a year as well as a free Growing on Holiday club and after schools club
- A 9 month paid Food Worker training programme, for unemployed local residents and lone parents.
- A weekly food growing and skills session for residents in recovery from alcohol and substance abuse.

In 2016 they recorded considerable success with 384 visitors to the farm including 42 regular volunteers, contributing 2205 volunteer hours and engaged 179 pupils. In addition they recruited 4 lone parent on a paid traineeship.

The farm set up was funded by the Local Food Fund, part of the Big Lottery, from March 2012 to March 2014, when it also became fully certified as organic. The growers' salaries and farm rent are financed through sales of produce.

Growing Communities secured more Big Lottery funding in 2015 for the Grown in Dagenham project to improve local people's mental and physical health and well-being and help them develop new skills from January 2016 to December 2018.



4.7 Sports provision

The provision of high quality outdoor sports facilities is an important priority for the borough. Working with local sports clubs, the council has adopted an Outdoor Playing Pitch Strategy (OPPS) that has looked at current provision and what future demand for pitches will be. Having adopted the OPPS, the council can approach national governing bodies for sports to seek funding for improved facilities across the borough.

How will the strategy support this?

- The OPPS suggests where playing opportunities for different sports should be created across the borough. These recommendations have been incorporated into the masterplans for the borough's major parks that have been developed as part of the strategy
- By talking to sports clubs about how the strategy will help to deliver new and improved sports facilities across the borough
- By adding proposals for funding applications for specific projects to the strategy action plan

4.8 Environmental sustainability

Barking and Dagenham is facing a number of key environmental issues and parks and green spaces can help to address these.

GLOBAL WARMING

The impact of global warming on the climate of the UK over the next century is difficult to predict but an increased frequency of extreme weather events with increased level of rainfall is likely. These weather patterns are likely to increase flood risk. Significant areas of the borough close to the Thames fall within "Flood Zone 3" but are protected by flood defences. Areas of the borough along Loxford Water, the Goresbrook, Mayesbrook, the River Beam and the River Ingrebourne are flood risk zones.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By looking at ways in which parks can provide flood storage capacity
- By naturalising river valleys and allowing rivers to flood parkland intermittently
- By sustaining and increasing tree cover and minimising hard surfacing to help to absorb rainfall
- By developing sustainable urban drainage systems for parks to reduce the loading on mains drainage

Average summer temperatures are predicted to rise between 2 and 4 degrees Celsius over the next 60 years. In combination with localised temperature rises in cities (caused by higher levels of pollutants) and a general rise in temperature across the borough caused by increased development, global warming will impact significantly in Barking and Dagenham.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By sustaining and increasing tree cover to ensure that the cooling effects of parks and shade areas within greenspaces are sustainable
- By the selection and planting of plant species that are adapted for higher temperatures and that are drought tolerant.

ECOLOGY AND BIO-DIVERSITY

Barking and Dagenham already has a significant area of land managed for ecology and bio-diversity. The strategy gives us the opportunity to develop this further. At the same time, increasing levels of development and climate change will place ecosystems under increasing levels of pressure.

How will the strategy address these issues?

- By considering how green spaces can be better connected to encourage the development of wildlife corridors (including links to other boroughs and the countryside beyond London)
- By protecting habitats for species identified in the London Biodiversity Action Plan
- By selecting species that are adapted for the impact of climate change and reducing dependency on species that are vulnerable to disease.

4.9 Funding and governance

In common with other local authorities, Barking and Dagenham has managed parks and greenspaces as a local authority service since it was created. Funding for parks is under pressure as never before and many councils are having to make significant cuts to budgets. Almost half of local authorities (46%) are considering selling parks and green spaces or transferring their management to others.

In the Strategy, we are looking at new ways to fund and manage parks to make sure that the benefits they can deliver are secured for future generations. The options we are considering include:

The options we are considering include:

- Creating parks trusts with endowments to help fund their future maintenance
- Business Improvement Districts and Neighbourhood Improvement Districts where residents pay a small levy to pay for their local parks
- Working with external providers to develop new ideas for parks to make them self-funding
- Managing parks and open spaces in new housing growth areas separately through housing service charges

These options are discussed in more detail in Section 8 of the Strategy.

EXISTING PARK ASSETS - THEIR CHARACTER AND USE

5.1 Summary of baseline characteristics

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham is situated on the North bank of the River Thames to the East of London, nine miles from the centre of the city. The borough has a population of some 201,000 and a total land area of 3,611 hectares.

TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND HABITATS

Barking and Dagenham lies on the eastern edge of the Thames Basin and the topography of the area is characterised by gentle undulations shelving steadily to the south and the valley of the Thames. The valleys of the River Roding and Beam River define the western and eastern boundaries of the borough. Both valleys converge on the River Thames. A small plateau to the north of the borough, within Marks Gate, marks the highest point at 32-36m AOD.

The geology of the borough consists predominantly of made ground, alluvium (clay and silt, with some peat), Thames gravels and London Clay of variable thickness.

Barking and Dagenham includes a wide range of habitats that have been influenced by the underlying landscape and by human activities. Industry and housing in the 20th century shaped large parts of the borough and many greenspace sites are recovering from these influences.

The London Regional Landscape Framework (May 2009) defined four landscape character types within Barking and Dagenham:

- Essex Plateau
- North Thames Terraces
- Lower Thames Floodplain
- Wide tidal Thames

RIVERS AND WETLANDS

Three of the four Borough boundaries are watercourses. To the East is the River Roding, to the West is the River Beam and to the South is the River Thames. In addition the Borough has some further tributary watercourses including the Rivers Mayesbrook, Beam and Wantz, the Goresbrook, Cran Brook and Loxford Water. Flood risk across the borough is entirely confined to these river valleys.

Extensive gravel extraction has, and continues to occur, in the Borough. Where gravel pits have not been infilled they now form attractive water features, such as those found at Mayesbrook Park and Eastbrookend Country Park.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND LAND USE

Until the 19th Century, the Borough was predominantly rural, dominated by agricultural uses, contained in the north by Hainault Forest, to the south by the River Thames, in the west by the River Roding and to the east by the River Beam.

As London expanded in the late nineteenth century, pressure intensified on agricultural land use and development expanded eastwards, principally in the aftermath of the development of rail and road transport corridors.

Intensive development followed WW1. The Housing Act of 1919 permitted the London County Council to build housing outside the County of London and the Becontree Estate was constructed between 1921 and 1935 on 'cottage estate' principles. Upon its completion the estate was the largest public housing estate in the world.

In parallel, the borough developed a distinctive industrial landscape, dominated by the Ford Motor Company assembly plant in the south-east of the borough. Industrial development expanded and intensified after WW2 and remains the dominant built form in substantial parts of the south and west of the borough.

The 1960's and 1970's saw the construction of some higher density high rise housing but low rise suburban housing remained the dominant form of housing, as it does today. The future development of Barking Riverside, Castle Green and other housing regeneration sites will introduce new variety into the quality of the built environment across the borough.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Barking and Dagenham has been becoming an increasingly young borough over the past 20 years. There are now twice as many teenagers in the borough as there are people over 65. Only 10% of the borough's population falls into this age group (for the UK as a whole, 18% are over 65). One in four people in the borough is 14 or under.

Population distribution across the borough is determined by town centres, settlement patterns and proximity to areas of economic activity and transport hubs. Density intensifies towards the south and the west of the borough. Population growth is also projected to be greatest in the south and the west with greatest growth being projected in Valence, Mayesbrook and Longbridge Wards. The higher density housing planned for Barking Riverside, Castle Green, Thames Road, Chadwell and Creekmouth will impact on future densities in Thames, Gascoigne and Abbey Wards.

ETHNICITY

Barking and Dagenham has been becoming an increasingly diverse borough over the past twenty years. In 2015, the proportion of those living in the borough who identified as 'white' had fallen to 47%. 10% of people who identified as white were born outside the UK. By contrast, the majority (53%) of BME residents in Barking and Dagenham in 2015 were born in the UK.

Across the borough particular areas are favoured by different ethnicities. The Becontree Estate, Rush Green and Rylands Estate areas remain more strongly White British. Barking, the Leftley Estate, Longbridge Road area and the western edge of the Borough have significant Asian communities. Barking town centre, particularly the Gascoigne Estate, and the southern residential areas of the borough have extensive Black African and Afro-Caribbean communities.

CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Crime rates across the borough have declined over the past four years. Despite this, fear of crime is high by London standards. The proportion of people worrying about crime (36%) is well above the London average (25%).

Crime levels in parks are relatively low but fear of crime in parks and open spaces is also higher than crime statistics justify. Barking Park, Mayesbrook Park, St Chads Park recorded the highest crime figures of all parks with respectively 70, 80 and 53 TNO offences. These parks are amongst the most popular in the borough so higher rates of reported crime could be expected to be higher than those for smaller or less popular sites

5.2 The distribution of parks and open spaces

Barking and Dagenham has a portfolio of 28 park and open spaces providing 463 hectares of public open space and these are distributed fairly evenly across the borough but with a concentration of provision in a central belt running from Barking town centre in the west to Central Park and Eastbrookend Country Park in the east. In the context of the GLA's 2011 Public Open Space categorisation, the borough portfolio consists of eight 'District Parks', 11 'Local Park' and nine 'Small Open Spaces.' (Refer to Table 5.1)

GREENSPACE PROVISION

Through its planned regeneration programmes, a further 80 hectares of public space will be added over the next twenty years at Barking Riverside, Creekmouth, Thames Road, Castle Green and Chadwell Heath, giving a total provision of 544 hectares.

Given the borough's population of 206,056, greenspace provision of 544 hectares equates to 2.64 hectares per 1,000 head of population. By 2027, the borough's population will have grown to 229,047, resulting in a rate of greenspace provision of 2.38 hectares per 1,000 head of population.

Open space provision across all types of green space, (parks, playgrounds, sports sites, natural and semi-natural greenspaces) is 888.76 Hectares (approximately 25% of the area of the borough). This equates to 4.3 hectares per 1,000 head of population. The addition of a further 80 hectares of greenspace will increase overall provision to 968 hectares, equivalent to 4.69 hectares per 1,000 head of population. By 2027, the increase in the borough's population will have reduced the overall level of provision to 4.2 hectares per 1,000 head of population.

Provision of parks and open spaces is evenly distributed across the borough with a significant concentration of district and local parks across the central belt of the borough. The council is planning further public open space Initiatives within the Creekmouth, Castle Green, Thames Road and Chadwell Heath regeneration areas but as these projects are at an early stage of development, their impact on overall provision and accessibility cannot currently be quantified in detail.

There is currently a deficiency of district and local parks in both the northern and southern areas of the borough but in the latter area, this is likely to be addressed by new park provision at Barking Riverside. This will leave a deficiency in local and district park provision in the north of the Borough which will in part be addressed by the new park provision at Chadwell Heath.

The borough does not currently have any metropolitan parks (parks over 60 hectares), although Parsloes Park at 59.5 hectares is very close to this

Table 5.1 - The distribution of parks and open spaces

| | Name | Neighbourhood Area (refer to 9.1) | Typology | Area (ha) | Designations |
|----|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 01 | Abbey Green-Abbey Ruins | Group 3 | Local | 6.27 | NC, REGEN. AREA, CONS. AREA |
| 02 | Barking Park | Group 3 | District | 29.80 | SINC, MOL |
| 03 | Beam Parklands | Group 2 | District | 38.75 | SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR |
| 04 | Beam Valley Country Park | Group 2 | District | 26.99 | SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR |
| 05 | Castle Green Park | Group 3 | Local | 10.41 | Undesignated |
| 06 | Central Park | Group 2 | District | 50.17 | GREEN BELT |
| 07 | Chase Nature Reserve | Group 2 | District | 42.22 | SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR |
| 08 | Eastbrookend Country Park | Group 2 | District | 55.45 | SINC, GREEN BELT, LNR |
| 09 | Essex Road Gardens | Group 3 | Small OS | 0.74 | Undesignated |
| 10 | Goresbrook Park | Group 2 | Local | 14.71 | SINC |
| 11 | Greatfields Park | SGroup 3 | Local | 5.80 | Undesignated |
| 12 | Heath Park Open Space | Group 1 | Small OS | 1.23 | Undesignated |
| 13 | Mayesbrook Park | Group 2 | District | 48.95 | SINC, MOL |
| 14 | Newlands Park | Group 1 | Small OS | 0.79 | Undesignated |
| 15 | Old Dagenham Park | Group 1 | Local | 13.38 | GREEN BELT |
| 16 | Padnall Open Space | Group 3 | Small OS | 1.44 | Undesignated |
| 17 | Parsloes Park | Group 2 | District | 59.57 | MOL |
| 18 | Pondfield Park | Group 1 | Local | 5.68 | SINC |
| 19 | Ripple Nature Reserve | Group 1 | Local | 7.23 | SINC, REGEN. AREA, LNR |
| 20 | Scrattons Farm Ecopark | Group 2 | Local | 3.77 | SINC, LNR |
| 21 | St Chads Park | Group 3 | Local | 14.44 | SINC |
| 22 | St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard | Group 3 | Small OS | 0.87 | SINC, LNR |
| 23 | Tantony Green | Group 3 | Small OS | 1.64 | Undesignated |
| 24 | The Leys | Group 1 | Local | 7.54 | GREEN BELT |
| 25 | Valence Park | Group 2 | Local | 12.20 | SINC |
| 26 | Quaker Burial Ground | Group 1 | Small OS | 1.69 | Undesignated |
| 27 | Kingston Hill Rec. Ground | Group 2 | Small OS | 0.56 | GREEN BELT |
| 28 | King George's Fields | Group 1 | Small OS | 0.9 | Undesignated |
| | | | | 463.19 | |

standard. Metropolitan parks in neighbouring boroughs (Wanstead Flats, Fairlop Waters and Britton Playing Fields) all have catchments covering areas of Barking and Dagenham.

Barking and Dagenham has 25 sites designated as being of importance of nature conservation. Three of these sites (River Thames, Ripple Nature Reserve and The Chase and Eastbrookend) are designated as being of Metropolitan Importance. A further 15 sites are designated as being of Borough Significance and a further seven as locally important. In the context of the 2017 Local Plan Review, a further site of Borough Importance will be designated and a site currently designated as being of Local Importance

will be upgraded to Borough Importance. 10 new sites are proposed for designation as sites of Local Importance.

ACCESS TO SITES OF IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

The borough is fortunate to enjoy a significant level of provision of sites of Metropolitan and Borough Significance to Nature Conservation and access to these sites is evenly distributed across the borough. There are two small areas of deficiency (in Becontree, Valence and Parsloes Wards).

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is an important factor to be considered when assessing the provision of parks and open spaces. A high quality open space can be of limited value if access to it is restricted by major barriers such as transport corridors and rivers.

In Barking and Dagenham, transport corridors area a major factor affecting the accessibility of both public open space and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. The A13 road corridor and the mainline rail lines running between central London and south Essex and the Underground line between central London and Upminster all significantly influence the potential catchments of parks. The catchments to the south of for Mayesbrook Park and Parsloes Park are particularly affected by this restriction.

The creation of a new Overground railway link to Barking Riverside is likely to influence the catchment for greenspace within this proposed development. The proposal to tunnel sections of the A13 that form part of the Castle Green proposal are likely to significantly affect the accessibility of public open space within this regeneration area as well as its connectivity with Barking Riverside.

5.3 Public engagement and consultation findings

Parks are for people and it's important that the new Parks and Open Spaces Strategy responds to the needs and aspirations of the boroughs residents. There are a number of specific reasons for this:

- Satisfaction with the borough's parks and opens spaces is currently low relative to other London boroughs. The implementation of the strategy should help to improve levels of satisfaction
- Parks and open spaces can deliver a variety of positive outcomes for residents but this can only happen if people use parks and open spaces. The strategy needs to address residents' concerns to make parks more popular
- The council wants people to be more involved in day to day decisions about parks and wants to support volunteering opportunities in parks



Fig.5.1- Public meeting in Dagenham Library, 25th March 2017

In order to meet these objectives, we have carried out a detailed consultation and engagement process to gather views on the boroughs parks and ideas for their future management and development.

We have gathered information in the following ways:

- An on-line questionnaire was available for a period of six weeks. 583 residents participated in the survey process, providing us with useful information on current use of parks and the main issues faced by residents using parks
- Two public meetings to discuss the different parts of the strategy
- Two public meetings to discuss masterplans for the borough's most important parks
- A meeting with Barking and Dagenham's Access and Planning Forum for people with disabilities
- A meeting with the BAD Youth Forum
- A workshop with Northbury Primary School
- Three presentations for local Councillors
- A meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader
- Meetings with council officers to coordinate the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy with other council initiatives in respect of parks, events, planning, health, education, environment, crime and anti-social behaviour
- A workshop to develop the strategy Action Plan
- Discussions with neighbouring boroughs to encourage best practice and cross-border working
- By using social media, gathering views on parks and open spaces through the council's Facebook pages.

The consultation process has given us the following information:

- Cleanliness, safety and the quality of the facilities for parents and children in parks were identified as the most important issues affecting enjoyment and use of parks and open spaces (see Fig.5.2)
- The quality of facilities for families (including toilets and playspaces) and the cleanliness and maintenance of parks were identified as most in need of improvement in local parks and open spaces (see Fig.5.3).
- Respondents valued welcoming, accessible and inclusive spaces
- Opportunities should be developed for older children
- Opportunities for volunteering should be developed
- Dog fouling and control are seen as major issues
- Anti-social behaviour affects the use and enjoyment of parks
- The reintroduction of park wardens is seen as desirable
- A wide range of events in parks is seen as important
- People would also like to see more and better communication about events and volunteering opportunities in parks

Fig.5.2 - Looking at the list below, which three things are most important to you in your local parks and open spaces? (Please tick only three categories)

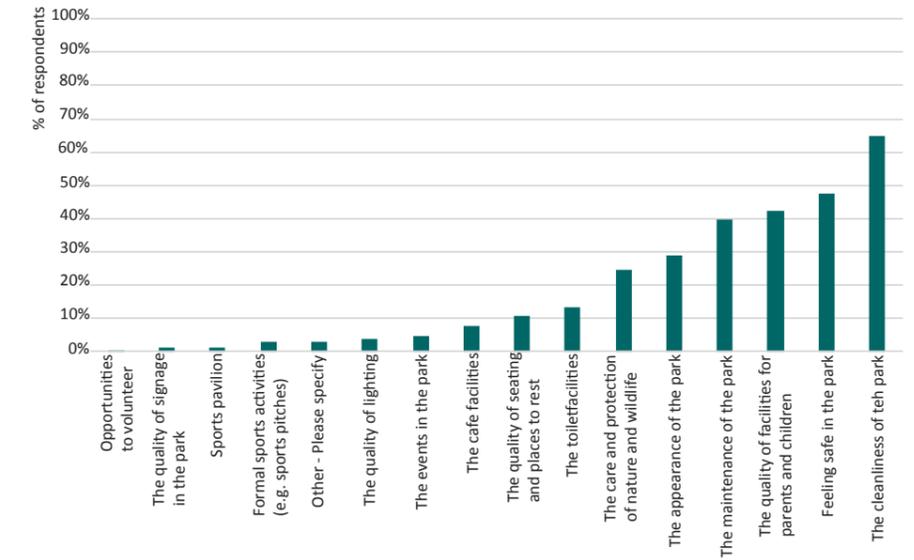


Fig. 5.3 - Which three things need most improving in your local parks and open spaces?

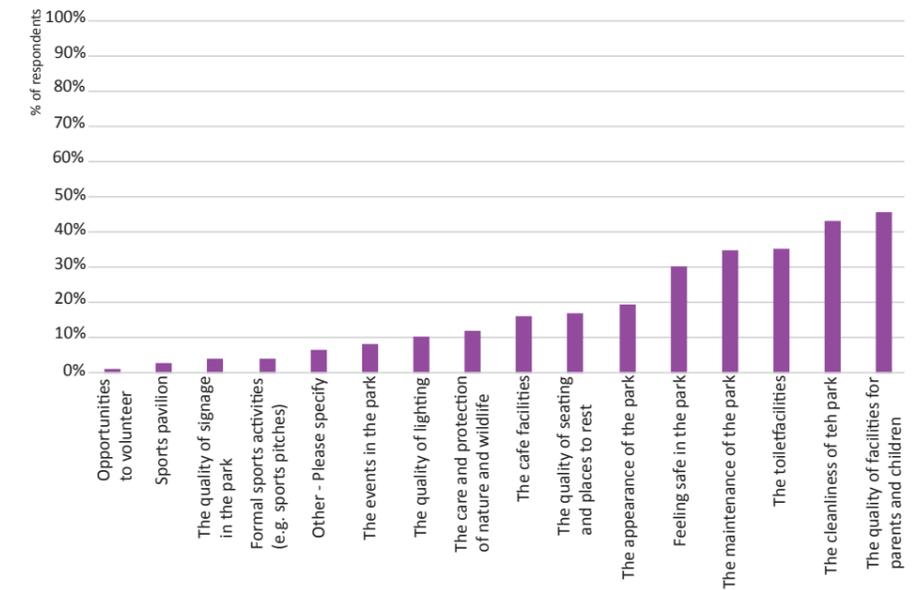
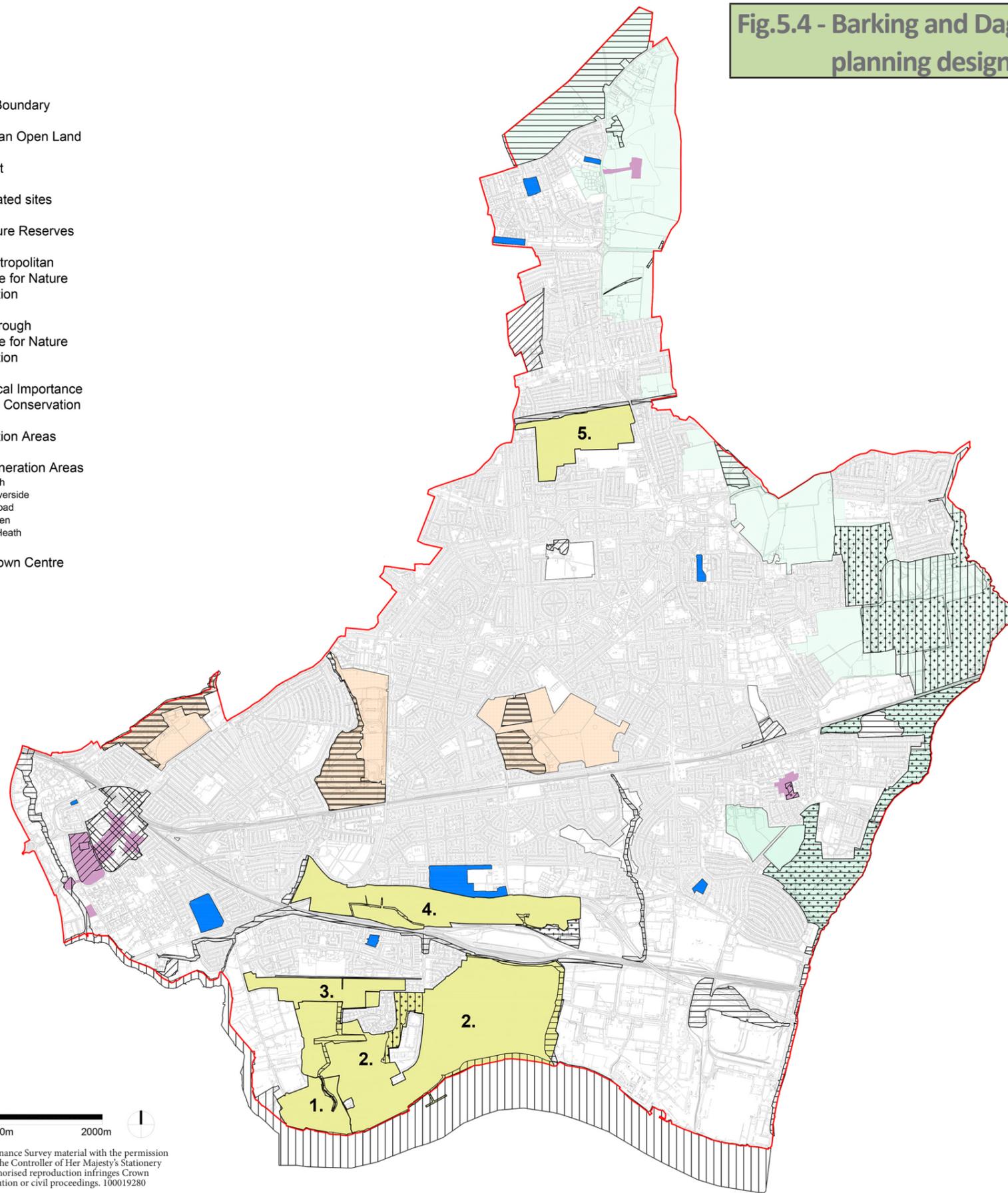


Fig.5.4 - Barking and Dagenham's Parks and Open Spaces by planning designation

- Key**
-  Borough Boundary
 -  Metropolitan Open Land
 -  Green Belt
 -  Undesignated sites
 -  Local Nature Reserves
 -  Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation
 -  Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation
 -  Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation
 -  Conservation Areas
 -  Key Regeneration Areas
 - 1. Creekmouth
 - 2. Barking Riverside
 - 3. Thames Road
 - 4. Castle Green
 - 5. Chadwell Heath
 -  Barking Town Centre

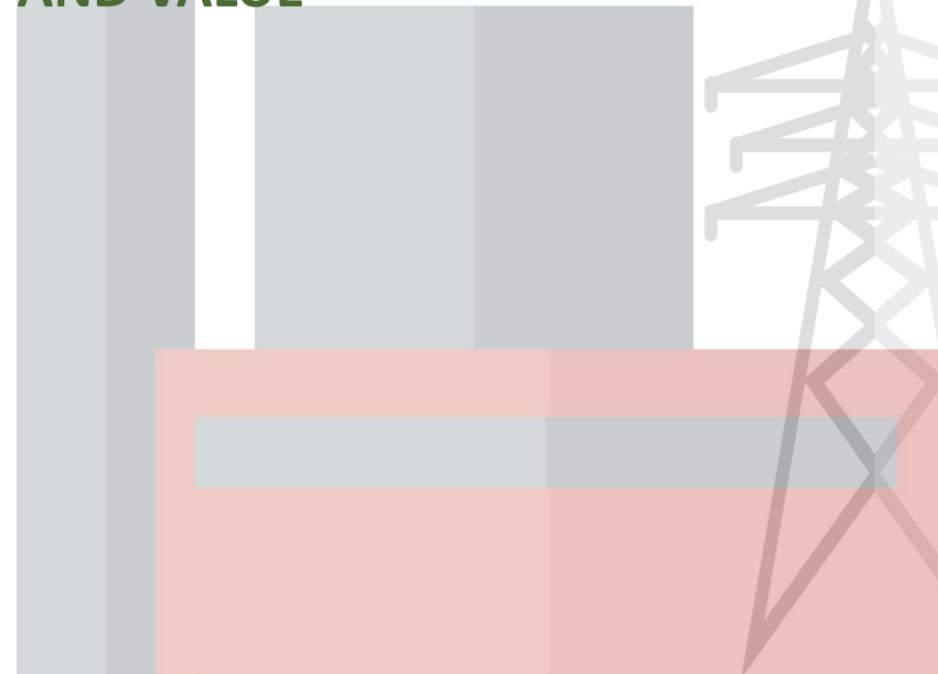


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CURRENT QUALITY, CONDITION AND VALUE



6.1 Quality standards and assessment of condition

The quality of Barking and Dagenham’s parks needs to improve but these improvements need to be prioritised. So that we can make the right decisions about which parks need to be improved and when, we need to understand the current condition of all of our greenspaces. To prepare the strategy, we’ve assessed the quality of the borough’s 28 parks. We can use this information to:

- Develop a programme for investment and renewal over the 10 year period of the strategy in order that the most serious issues are addressed as soon as possible
- Target this investment programme in areas where the population is going to grow most significantly and where demand for parks is going to be greatest in future

The council last carried out an assessment of the quality of its parks and open spaces in 2003. We have used the same set of questions that were used in 2003 to assess quality in 2017. This will help us to understand whether parks have got better, got worse or stayed the same over this period. It will also help us to identify any sites where quality has declined significantly and that might be priorities for investment.

The following criteria have been used to assess quality:

- How good are the park’s entrances and are they accessible for people with disabilities?
- How good are the general facilities in the park (e.g. bins, benches, lighting, signage)
- How good is the overall quality of the park landscape?
- How safe and secure is the park?
- Is there a good range of play opportunities in the park?
- Does the park cater for people with disabilities or special needs?
- Does the park cater for older people?
- Is the park well maintained?
- Does the park include areas managed for wildlife and bio-diversity?
- Does the park offer initiatives to support health and education outcomes?
- Are staff present in the park and is information available about management, events and activities?

6.2 Recent changes and trends in quality

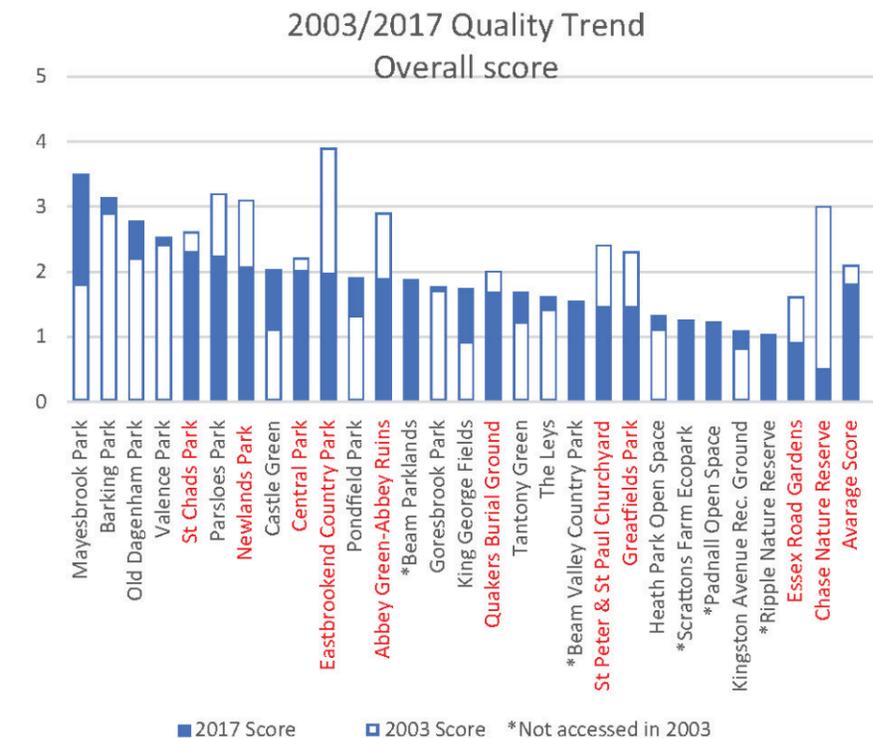


Fig.6.1 - Trending in LBDD park's quality score between 2003 and 2017

The scores for each component of the assessment were translated into scores of ‘very good’, ‘good’, ‘average’, ‘poor’ and ‘bad’. Sites which achieved over 80% of the maximum points available were awarded ‘very good’, sites in the 60%-80% bracket awarded ‘good’, 40%-60% were awarded ‘average’, 20%-40% were awarded ‘poor’ and those sites scoring below 20% of the maximum points available scored ‘bad’.

As in 2003, the quality of parks across the borough varies considerably.

Similarly to 2003 no parks have achieved a ‘very good’ ranking. In contrast with the 2003 assessment, the number of parks achieving scores of ‘good and ‘average’ has declined. More parks across the borough are now classified as ‘poor’. The number of parks classified as ‘bad’ hasn’t changed.

Across the entire portfolio, parks tend to score worst in terms of management and health and catering for people with disabilities and best in entrance information and landscape character. Since 2003 there has been a considerable decline in terms of how well parks are managed and how secure they are. In common with the 2003 study, the quality of Barking and Dagenham’s parks and open spaces varies considerably across the borough. The majority of parks are either of ‘average or ‘poor’ quality.

Only two parks are currently scored as ‘good’, in comparison to four parks in 2003. Between 2003 and 2017, the number of parks scored as ‘good’ fell from nine to seven. The number of parks scored as ‘poor’ increased from eight to seventeen. The overall average quality score has fallen from 42% to 36% since 2003.

Both parks are in the western part of the borough. Parks classified as “good” decline towards the eastern edge of the borough.

There is an even more considerable decline in quality within natural green spaces since 2003. Overall quality score for the Chase Nature Reserve has fallen by almost 50% and in the case of Eastbrookend Country Park by 38%.

QUALITY SCORES/TREND - KEY FINDINGS

- The overall average quality score of parks has fallen from 42% to 36% since 2003
- Similarly to 2003 no parks have achieved ‘very good’ ranking
- The number of parks achieving scores of ‘good’ and ‘average’ has declined from thirteen to nine since 2003
- The number of parks classified as ‘poor quality’ increased from eight to seventeen.

Worst average scores in:

- Management (23%)
- Providing for disabled people (28%)

Best average scores:

- Entrance information (56%)
- Landscape character (50%)

Biggest decline since 2003:

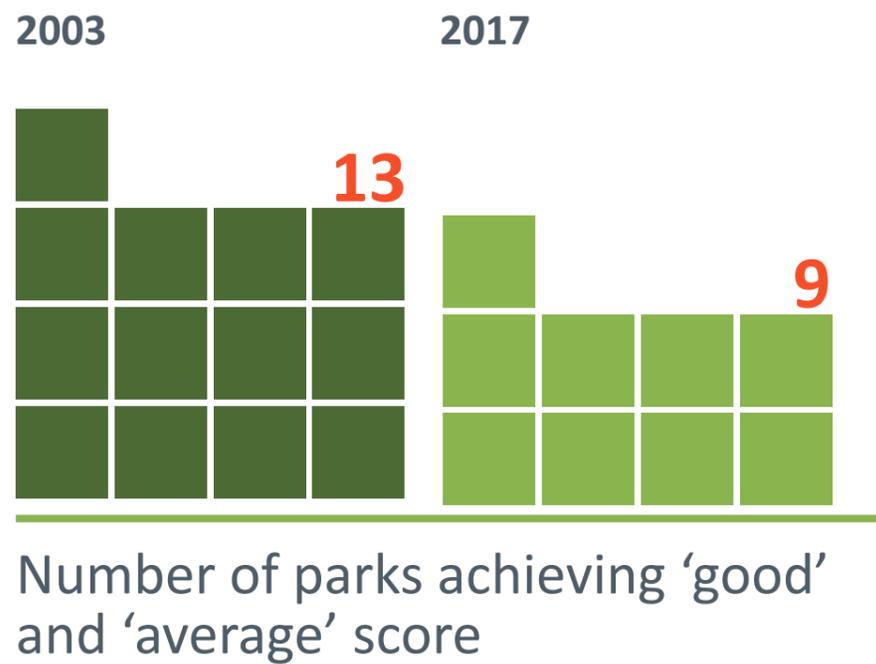
- Management (42% to 23%)
- Security and vandalism (53% to 36%)

Biggest improvement since 2003:

- Ecology, education and health (29% to 39%)

Some of the findings include:

- Only two parks (Mayesbrook Park and Barking Park) are currently scored as ‘good’, in comparison to four parks in 2003
- Better quality parks to the west of the borough, quality scores decline to the east
- Quality of natural green spaces decreased most considerably (Chase Nature Reserve’s quality score has fallen by 50 %!)
- Mayesbrook Park’s score has improved the most (from 36% to 70%), achieving best quality score in the borough



6.3 Capturing natural capital value

Barking and Dagenham’s parks deliver a range of outcomes for the local economy, for health, education and neighbourhood and for the environment. The value of these benefits does not currently appear in the council’s balance sheet.

In order to capture these values, we have used the information we have gathered on the quality of the borough’s parks to create a Corporate Natural Capital Account (CNCA) for Barking and Dagenham. The CNCA estimates the value of the benefits delivered by the borough’s parks and open spaces and the current cost of delivering these services. The CNCA also estimates the cost of sustaining these benefits over the strategy period.

The CNCA suggests that £1 invested in parks and open spaces in Barking and Dagenham will bring a return of £27.

By developing the CNCA, we can demonstrate why future investment in the borough’s parks and open spaces makes economic sense.

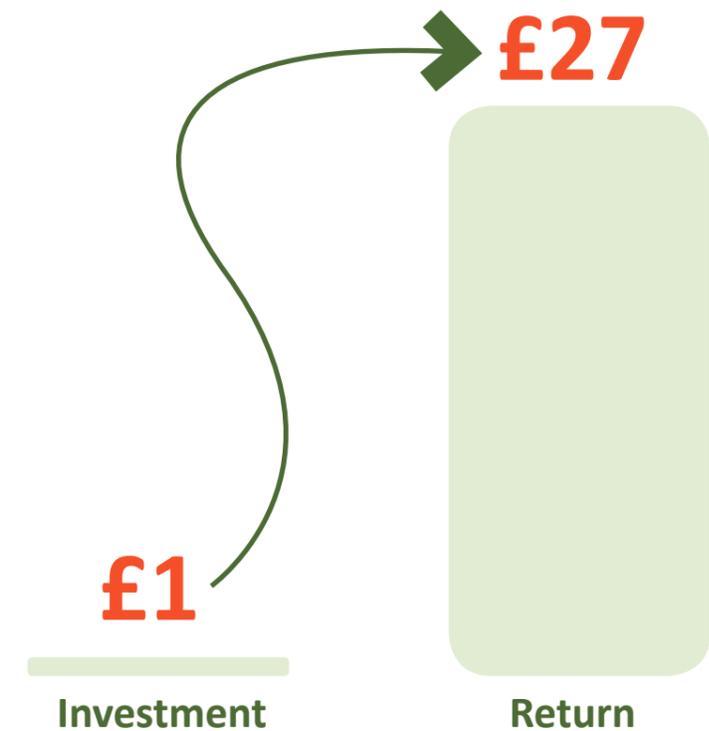
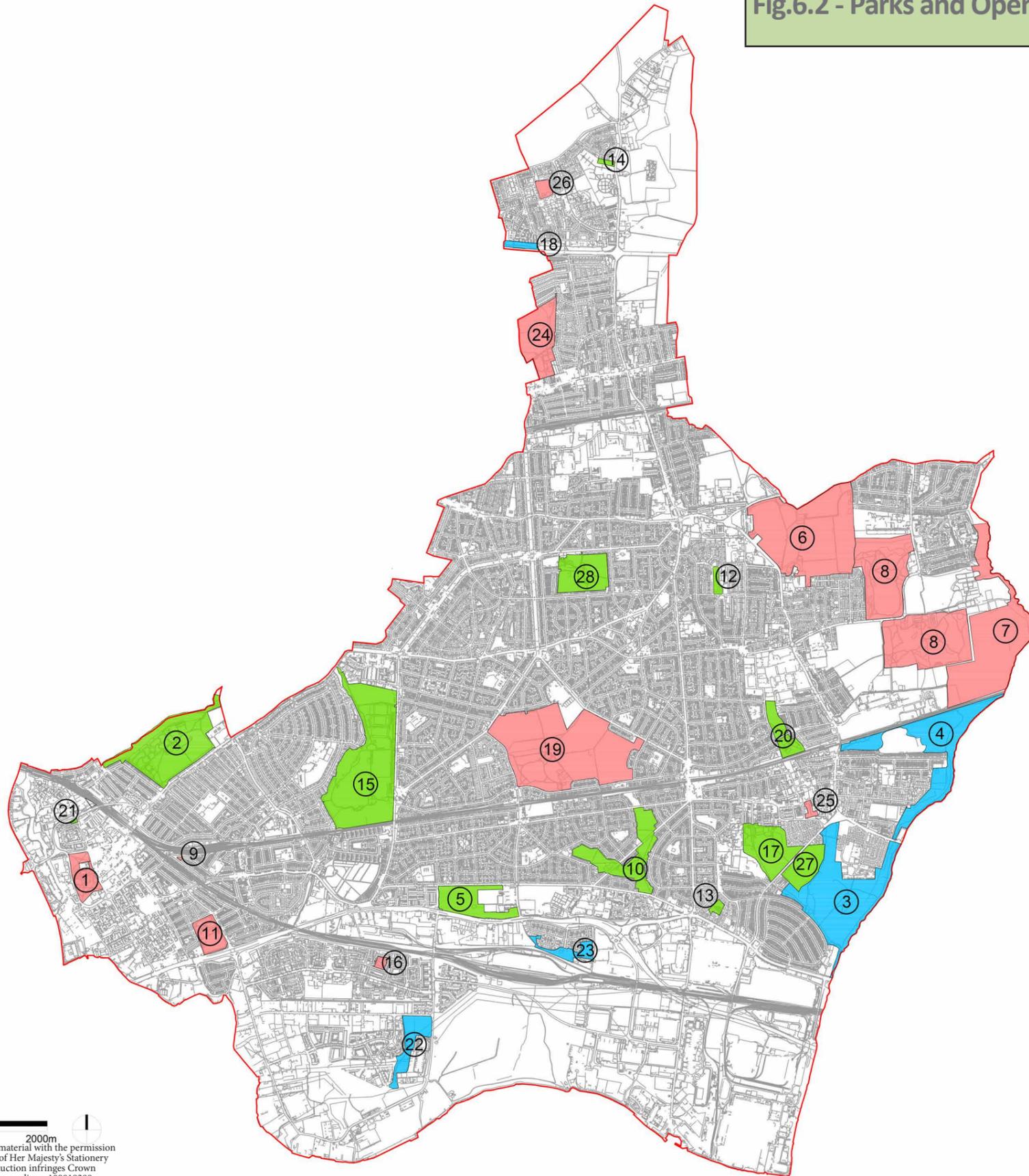


Fig.6.2 - Parks and Open Spaces Quality Trend Map



- Key**
- Borough Boundary
 - Positive trend
 - Negative trend
 - Parks not accessed in 2003

| # | Park name | Trend |
|----|---------------------------------|-------|
| 15 | Mayesbrook Park | 1.70 |
| 5 | Castle Green | 0.93 |
| 13 | King George's Field | 0.85 |
| 20 | Pondfield Park | 0.62 |
| 17 | Old Dagenham Park | 0.58 |
| 21 | Tantony Green | 0.48 |
| 14 | Kingston Hill Rec. Ground | 0.30 |
| 2 | Barking Park | 0.23 |
| 12 | Heath Park Open Space | 0.23 |
| 27 | The Leys | 0.22 |
| 28 | Valence Park | 0.13 |
| 10 | Goresbrook Park | 0.07 |
| 6 | Central Park | -0.18 |
| 24 | St Chads Park | -0.28 |
| 26 | Quaker Burial Ground | -0.32 |
| 9 | Essex Road Gardens | -0.68 |
| 25 | Greatfields Park | -0.83 |
| 11 | St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard | -0.93 |
| 19 | Parsloes Park | -0.95 |
| 1 | Abbey Green-Abbey Ruins | -1.00 |
| 16 | Newlands Park | -1.02 |
| 8 | Eastbrookend Country Park | -1.92 |
| 7 | Chase Nature Reserve | -2.48 |
| 3 | Beam Parklands | N.A. |
| 4 | Beam Valley Country Park | N.A. |
| 23 | Scrattons Farm Ecopark | N.A. |
| 18 | Padnall Open Space | N.A. |
| 22 | Ripple Nature Reserve | N.A. |

0m 400m 1000m 2000m
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PARK MASTERPLANS

As part of the strategy, we have developed masterplans for 10 of the borough's most important parks. These masterplans will give us a template for future development so that we can strengthen the outcomes that each site delivers as funds become available. We've also devised a programme of immediate work across all of the borough's parks so that we can get under way with delivering improvements straight away.

7.1 - Abbey Green Masterplan Proposals



What is distinctive about Abbey Green?

- Central location
- High pedestrian footfall
- Rich heritage (Barking Abbey Ruins)
- Proximity to the Town Quay and the River Roding
- Adjacent to Barking's main High Street
- Playground
- Mature trees

Main interventions

- Improved connection to the Town Quay
- Viewing structure over Barking Abbey Ruin, that improves accessibility to site
- Relocated and enlarged play area
- Interface with Townscape Heritage Scheme
- New civic space
- Improved connections to surrounding new development areas
- Improved planting strategy throughout

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7.2 - Barking Park Masterplan Proposals



KEY:



What is distinctive about Barking Park?

- Central location
- Long and linear boating lake
- Historic ornamental gardens
- Restored 1930s light railway
- Splash park
- Bowling green, tennis courts and skate park
- Café and playground
- Playing fields

Main interventions

- Amphitheatre shaped mounds with adjacent events space
- Orchard planting
- New playground for older children
- New cricket pitch and two adult football pitches
- Food growing area on the former bowling green
- Bridge to Loxford Park
- Integrated basketball and skate park
- Improved access to War Memorial

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7.3 - Central Park Masterplan Proposals



KEY:

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| | Existing Tree | | Play equipment |
| | Proposed Tree | | Play Area surfacing |
| | Lawn | | Gravel path |
| | Meadow | | Grass path |
| | Shrubs | | Public furniture |
| | Formal square Woodland woodland blocks | | Fence |
| | Ornamental planting | | Mound |
| | Low herbaceous planting | | |
| | Existing footpath | | |
| | Proposed new footpath | | |

What is distinctive about Central Park?

- Large park with a flat topography
- Open views
- Predominantly managed grassland
- Good range of sports provision
- Connection to Eastbrookend Country Park and The Chase
- Mini-golf course and bowling green
- Children's playground
- Outdoor gym

Main interventions

- Amphitheatre shaped mounds with adjacent events space
- 3G rugby pitch with rounded viewing terraces
- New pavilion/changing rooms
- Relocated tennis court
- New play provision for older children
- Extended 'Growing Communities' site
- Story-telling area
- New accessible playground
- New café terrace
- Improved connections to Eastbrookend Country Park

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7.4 - Eastbrookend Country Park Masterplan Proposals



- KEY:
- Existing Tree
 - Proposed Tree
 - Long grass meadow
 - Woodland
 - Mounds
 - Proposed shared surface
 - Interpretation boards
 - Play equipment
 - Public furniture

What is distinctive about Eastbrookend Country Park?

- Extensive natural landscape
- Undulating terrain
- Extensive grassland, woodland and wetland, giving the site a high biodiversity value
- Fishing lakes
- Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation/SINC
- Local Nature Reserve
- The site is split into two zones by Dagenham Road
- Millennium Centre
- Connections to Central Park and The Chase

Main interventions

- Improved pedestrian connection between 2 parts of the park, in Dagenham Road
- Improved connections to Central Park and The Chase
- Informal cycle track along northern valleys
- Allocated area for potential educational purposes
- New play facilities around the existing Millennium Centre
- Altered path networks
- Improved access and views to fishing lakes
- Introduction of informal play
- Reinforce woodland and meadow character

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7.5 - Greatfields Park Masterplan Proposals



KEY:

-  Existing Tree
-  Proposed Tree
-  Lawn
-  Low herbaceous planting
-  Meadow
-  Wetland planting
-  Existing footpath
-  Grass path
-  Proposed new entrance
-  Play equipment
-  Play Area surfacing
-  Multi-Sports Area surfacing
-  Public furniture
-  Grass mound

What is distinctive about Greatfields Park?

- Proximity to Barking town centre
- Close proximity to A13
- Controlled and confined
- Traditional Victorian-style layout
- Avenue of weeping willows
- Ornamental flower gardens
- Children's playground
- Tennis courts

Main interventions

- New and relocated playground
- New multi-sports area
- New grass mounds with tree planting to minimise impact of A13
- Wetland area with shrub planting
- Improved sight-lines, especially at entrances
- New entrances to improve connection to neighbourhood areas
- New social space

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7.6 - Mayesbrook Park Masterplan Proposals



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What is distinctive about Mayesbrook Park?

- A park of substantial size
- High biodiversity and ecological value; both with its woodland and wetland offerings
- Newly restored river landscape as part of flood defence
- Large boating lakes with rich wildlife
- Wide range of sport and activity offerings
- Indoor Activity Centre boasting climbing and trampolining

Main interventions

- Floating boardwalk across lake
- New viewing platform overlooking lake
- Enclosed swimming area and beach
- New multi-sports area
- New natural play area and café
- New social space
- New edible planting area
- Extended wetland and swales
- Reconfigured and extended mounding near Activity Centre

7.7 - Old Dagenham Park Masterplan Proposals



KEY:

| | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|---------------------|
| | Existing Tree | | Play equipment |
| | Proposed Tree | | Play Area surfacing |
| | Lawn | | Gravel path |
| | Meadow | | Grass path |
| | Native hedge | | Mound |
| | Ornamental shrubs | | Tennis court |
| | Ornamental planting | | |
| | Perennial planting | | |
| | Wetland | | |
| | Existing footpath | | |
| | Proposed new footpath | | |

What is distinctive about Old Dagenham Park?

- Flat and open
- Predominantly managed grassland
- Varied sport offer
- Unused BMX track
- Close proximity to the Leys Playing Fields/Beam Valley
- Bowling green and café
- Heritage entrance design
- Ornamental flower gardens

Main interventions

- New, larger skatepark
- Re-location of BMX track to the Leys
- Re-structuring of playing pitches
- Grass clearings with natural play features
- New mounding
- New entrances and paths, improved connections
- New playground
- New woodland areas

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7.8- St Chads Park Masterplan Proposals



What is distinctive about St Chads Park?

- Oldest park in the borough
- Varied landscape character
- Northern part is more open and activity orientated
- Southern part is a traditional inter-war style park
- Wildlife Conservation Area
- Entrances aren't well-balanced around the site's perimeter
- Children's playground, Bowling Club and greens, tennis courts
- Formal ornamental planting beds that reflect heritage

Main interventions

- Reconfigured playground
- New entrances to enhance connectivity
- New meadow planting
- Relocated tennis courts and outdoor gym
- New tea lawn
- Orchard
- Improved entrance and connection to the High Road
- Re-purposed pavillion building

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7.9 - Valence Park Masterplan Proposals



KEY:

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| | Existing Tree | | Play Area surfacing |
| | Proposed Tree | | Self-binding gravel path |
| | Lawn | | Grass path |
| | Meadow | | Public furniture |
| | Shrubs | | Fence |
| | Long grass | | Mound |
| | Ornamental planting | | |
| | Low herbaceous planting | | |
| | Existing footpath | | |
| | Proposed new footpath | | |
| | Play equipment | | |

What is distinctive about Valence Park?

- Valence House and park once part of historic estate
- Valence House Museum and Herb Garden
- Historical trees (Holm oak and yew)
- Fishing lake (part of old moat around Valence House)
- Predominantly managed grassland
- Flat and open
- Events
- Sports provision

Main interventions

- Re-located carpark
- New mounds with play features
- New playgrounds
- New activity area: Wheels area, outdoor gym and basketball
- Events space and picnic area
- New football pavillion and pitches
- Orchard
- Improved accessibility and circulation around fishing lake
- Boundary of native hedges and long grass areas

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7.10 - Parsloes Park Masterplan Proposals



Main interventions

- ① 3G/All weather pitches
- ② Multi-functional park hub
- ③ Informal play
- ④ Re-wilding The Squatts LNR
- ⑤ Restoration of People's Park
- ⑥ Cricket grounds & informal kickabout areas
- ⑦ Wetland
- ⑧ Proposed Youth Zone
- ⑨ New road access
- ⑩ Restoration of paddling pool

What is distinctive about Parsloes Park?

- Largest park in the borough
- Historical character
- Emphasis on sport (football, Tennis, basketball, bowling green)
- Predominantly managed grassland
- Part of site managed for wildlife as a Local Nature Reserve (acid grassland with historic hedge)
- Newly constructed children's play area
- Large lake to the south
- Easily accessible

This map is reproduced from *Parsloes Park - People's Park Alive: Masterplan report* (March 2016) by ARUP

APPROACHES TO FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT IN THE FUTURE

As is the case for many local authorities, the council is having to find significant savings and needs to think about the most cost-effective way to deliver services like parks. Other councils and organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund have considered new ways in which parks might be funded in future. Some of these approaches could be used in Barking and Dagenham.

8.1 New ways to pay for parks

There are a number of ways to grow the commercial potential of parks. These include:

- Grants and contributions from other service providers such as health and education to support the delivery of benefits from parks. The Corporate Natural Capital Account being developed as part of this Strategy can provide evidence to support this.
- Events and festivals can generate income through ticketing and corporate sponsorship and enhance the social and cultural significance of parks
- Café and concessions can generate revenue as parks become more popular with residents.
- Fees and charges for car parking and the use of sports grounds can be an important source of income. Increasingly, councils are generating income from professional trainers, fitness classes, filming and private events.
- Planning gain can fund improvements to parks and open spaces. The significant increase in housing in the borough over the next 20 years will generate significant sums for this.
- Corporate sponsorship and fundraising in connection with activity programmes for community organisation and charities can bring additional resources to parks. Much of this funding is not available to the council and will depend on a strong partnership with the voluntary sector.
- Public and corporate volunteering can help with the day to day management of greenspaces and help to equip people with new skills.
- Endowments funds are made up of assets that can generate revenue to support the management of parks and open spaces. If large enough, these funds can provide parks services with an independent source of funding.
- Business Improvement and Park Improvement Districts can fund the management of parks and open spaces through a modest local levy on businesses, residents or both.
- Ecosystem services funding seeks to capture the value that natural systems provide in improving air quality, managing surface water and flood risk, reducing peak summer temperatures, capturing carbon, generating food and improving public health. The Corporate Natural Capital Account being developed as part of this Strategy can provide evidence to support this.

8.2 New ways to manage parks

Until recently, the council has taken sole responsibility for managing the borough's parks but is now considering other approaches. Beam Parklands is now managed by The Land Trust on the Council's behalf and new greenspaces in Barking and Riverside will be managed by a community interest company (CIC). These changes will be part of the council's plan to transform the ways in which services are delivered. in the future.

A number of different approaches to managing parks have been developed in recent years and the council could consider these as options for the future management of the service.

- Arm's Length Organisations: Local Authority Trading Companies have the opportunity to trade commercially and to generate income across a range of services. Profits are re-invested locally and in the service
- Social enterprises can manage parks or parts of Parks to deliver a wide range of community benefits that are funded through a mix of commercial and grant programmes. They also offer local people a chance to manage local assets and to acquire new skills.
- Partnerships and shared services involve collaborations between councils, agencies and community organisations. Local authorities can team up to deliver entire parks services to co-manage individual sites. At a local level, site base partnerships can harness the benefits of working more directly with volunteers and community groups through formal and informal management arrangements
- Trusts and Foundations can manage individual parks or groups of parks. Trusts can benefit from operating independently. Charitable status brings additional financial benefit in terms of both taxation and their appeal to secure gifts and philanthropic support.
- Area-based Management Organisations can be formed to pool investment from local residents and businesses and provide a means to tackle particular site specific, social, environmental and commercial concerns and opportunities.

Beam Parklands case study, LB Barking and Dagenham

In 2009, The Land Restoration Trust, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission and Groundwork UK secured approval for a grant of £1.57m capital from the European Regional Development Fund and a £1.98m dowry from the Department of Communities and Local Government under its Thames Gateway Parklands scheme. These funds, along with £5.6m match funding from the Environment Agency funded the enhancement and long term management and maintenance of the Dagenham Washlands site.

As a consequence, Barking and Dagenham Council entered into a 99 year lease with the Land Restoration Trust in respect of the Council's land holdings at The Leys and the southern part of Beam Valley Country Park Local Nature Reserve, in order to facilitate the management by the Land Restoration Trust of the entire 53 hectare site. The Land Trust has subsequently delivered over £7m in capital enhancements for the site. The £1.9 million dowry from the DCLG funds the on-going maintenance of the site.

Beam Parklands was recognised as a multi-functional project that demonstrates the sustainable use of wetland habitats by winning a CIWEM's 'Living Wetlands Award' and a Brownfield Briefing Award 'Best Use of Brownfield Land' in 2011.



ACTION PLAN



9.1 - Barking & Dagenham Sub-divisions Map

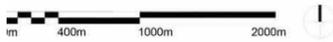
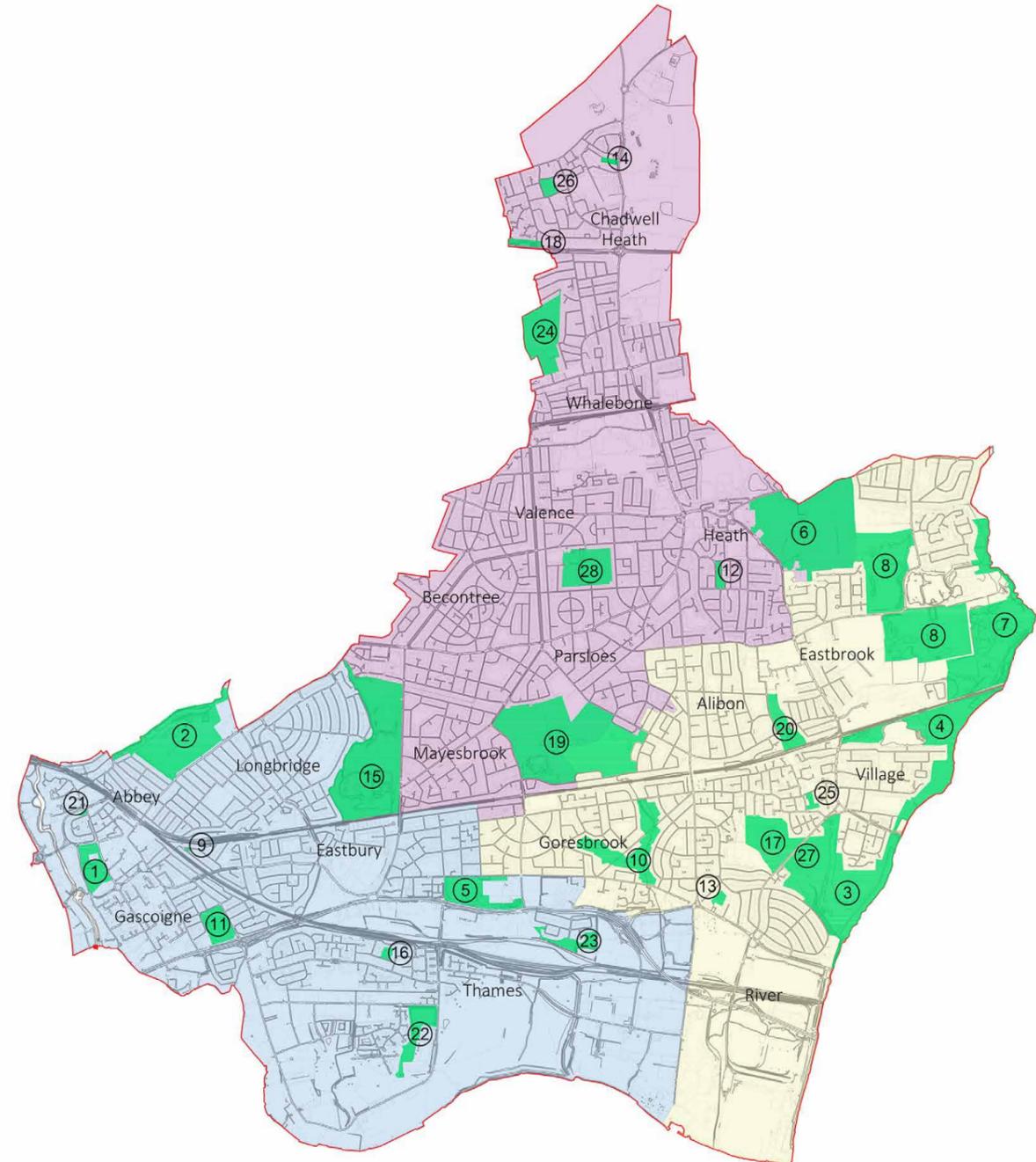
| | Park name |
|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Abbey Green-Abbey Ruins |
| 2 | Barking Park |
| 3 | Beam Parklands |
| 4 | Beam Valley Country Park |
| 5 | Castle Green |
| 6 | Central Park |
| 7 | Chase Nature Reserve |
| 8 | Eastbrookend Country Park |
| 9 | Essex Road Gardens |
| 10 | Goresbrook Park |
| 11 | Greatfields Park |
| 12 | Heath Park Open Space |
| 13 | King George's Field |
| 14 | Kingston Hill Rec. Ground |
| 15 | Mayesbrook Park |
| 16 | Newlands Park |
| 17 | Old Dagenham Park |
| 18 | Padnall Open Space |
| 19 | Parsloes Park |
| 20 | Pondfield Park |
| 21 | Quaker Burial Ground |
| 22 | Ripple Nature Reserve |
| 23 | Scrattons Farm Ecopark |
| 24 | St Chads Park |
| 25 | St Peter & St Paul's Churchyard |
| 26 | Tantony Green |
| 27 | The Leys |
| 28 | Valence Park |

Key

-  Borough Boundary
-  Parks surveyed

Neighbourhood Areas:

-  Group 1
-  Group 2
-  Group 3



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Table 9.1 - Action Plans

ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

| Action Plan No | Action | Timescale* | Lead/Partners | Resources | Related strategy |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| EC1 | Initiate quick wins programme of park improvements through direct consultation with local communities that will deliver a broad range of benefits and outcomes | Short | LBBB Parks | LBBB capital and S106 | Borough Manifesto |
| EC2 | Initiate programme of playground upgrades and repairs focussing first on those areas that have the highest demand and are currently in the poorest condition | Short | LBBB Parks | LBBB capital and S106 | Borough Manifesto |
| EC3 | Develop and implement a strategy for S106/CIL investment across the borough | Short | | | |
| EC4 | Initiate capital improvement projects for Abbey Ruins and Parsloes Park | Medium | HLF/Parklife | £5m external funding | |
| EC5 | Seek new partnerships to develop new facilities and an entrepreneurial management model for Central Park | Medium | External development partner | External partner resources | |
| EC6 | Work with local and regional partners to develop community and corporate volunteering, training and skills opportunities in parks and open spaces | Medium | Growing Communities; Drinks Company | In kind through lease agreements | Education |
| EC7 | Seek to expand a variety of income generating opportunities in parks through developing the events programme | Medium | LBBB Parks and external partners | Self-funding | |
| EC8 | Use CNCA to target investment to increase functionality and productivity of parks and open spaces | Medium | LBBB Parks | | |
| EC9 | Explore opportunities to develop a corporate sponsorship programme with local businesses and companies | Medium | LBBB Parks and external partners | Income generating | |
| EC10 | Seek to develop partnership with Capel Manor for the provision of new training opportunities in Eastbrookend Country Park | Long | Capel Manor College | External partner resources | Education |
| EC11 | Consider developing a Business or Neighbourhood Improvement District pilot that is potentially aligned with the borough's estate regeneration programme as an alternative approach to funding and governance | Long | LBBB Economic Development | Internal resources | |
| EC12 | Create two new local parks in Becontree/Valence/Whalebone to address local provision deficit | Long | Planning | | Local Plan |
| EC13 | Provide new and enhanced open space and green infrastructure of appropriate quality through the council's regeneration projects in Barking Riverside, Castle Green, Creekmouth, Thames Road, and Chadwell Heath | Long | BRL and developer partners | S106/CIL | Growth Strategy |
| EC14 | Seek to develop new sports improvement projects with external funders for Central Park, Mayesbrook Park and Barking Park | Long | Sport England ECB, RFU, LTA and FA | S106/CIL | Health and Wellbeing |
| EC15 | Develop pilot projects to model alternative approaches to funding and governance of parks and open spaces to address issue of declining funding of greenspace services | Long | LBBB Parks | | |
| EC16 | Use the findings of the Corporate Natural Capital Account (CNCA) report to access additional funding for parks and green infrastructure | Long | LBBB Parks | | |
| EC17 | Look at opportunities to develop social enterprises that can operate within parks and capable of bringing additional benefits to parks. | Long | LBBB Parks and external partners | External / Self-funding | |
| EC18 | Consider developing programme of WiFi enabled parks, starting with Barking Park as a pilot project | Long | LBBB Parks and external partners | External / Self-funding | |

*Timescale: Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7-10 years

Table 9.2 - Action Plans

SOCIAL OUTCOMES

| Action Plan No | Action | Timescale* | Lead/Partners | Resources | Related strategy |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| S1 | Set up charitable trust to support development of 'Friends of' groups across the borough | Short | LBBB Parks | Internal resources | |
| S2 | Install more measured routes for walking, running and cycling in parks as part of the quick wins programme | Short | LBBB Parks | Internal resources | Health and Wellbeing |
| S3 | Clearly signed walking and cycling routes between and through parks as part of quick wins programme | Short | LBBB Parks | S106/CIL/LIP | |
| S4 | Prioritise measures to promote perception of safety as part of quick wins programme, collating data from community police teams to identify and tackle specific areas of vandalism, anti-social behaviour and direct crime | Short | LBBB Parks | S106/CIL | Community Safety |
| S5 | Provide better information on events through the web and social media | Short | LBBB Parks | Internal resources | |
| S6 | Develop Health Hubs across the three defined localities | Short/medium | ?? | Internal resources | Health and Wellbeing |
| S7 | Expand the current healthy walks programme and explore opportunities to align the programme with local surgeries and public health programmes | Short/medium | LBBB Parks | Internal resources | Health and Wellbeing |
| S8 | Develop Forest Schools programme in parks in partnership with local schools with a particular focus on Parsloes, Mayesbrook and Eastbrookend | Short/medium | LBBB Parks/schools | External funding | Education |
| S9 | Work with Healthy Towns to develop new health-focused initiatives in the borough's parks that are aligned with specific health issues and focused outcomes | Medium | LBBB Parks/Healthy Towns | Internal resources | Health and Wellbeing |
| S10 | Improve play facilities where there is under-provision or where quality has been identified as poor. Work with children and families to deliver improvements | Medium | LBBB Parks/'Friends of' | S106/CIL and external funding | Education |
| S11 | Work in partnership with external organisations to develop food growing opportunities across the borough | Medium | LBBB Parks/ Growing Communities/'Friends of' groups | External funding | Health and Wellbeing |
| S12 | Promote the use of parks, identified by focussed and targeted consultation, by those not currently using them through quick wins programme | Medium | External organisations | Internal resources | |
| S13 | Work with local businesses and user groups to promote responsible dog ownership and to develop events for dog owners | Medium | LBBB Parks and external partners | - | |
| S14 | Consider re-defining current embargo on use of parks for religious observance to promote inclusion and generate revenue | Medium | LBBB Parks | - | |
| S15 | Develop Supplementary Planning Guidance for new play provision across the borough | Medium | LBBB Parks/ Planning | - | Local Plan |
| S16 | Develop and adopt corporate risk benefit assessment for play | Medium | LBBB Parks | | |
| S17 | Focus specific investment programmes for children and young people | Medium | LBBB Parks | Internal resources | |
| S18 | Work with community organisation, "Friends of" groups and external promoters and partners to develop the boroughs regular, seasonal and annual events programme | Medium/Long | LBBB Parks and external partners | Self-funding | |
| S19 | Prioritise inclusiveness and accessibility for new park initiatives | Long | LBBB Parks | - | |
| S20 | Promote further development of cafes and facilities that provide venues for hosting community events | Long | LBBB Parks and external partners | Internal resources | |

*Timescale: Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7-10 years

Table 9.3 - Action Plans

ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES

| Action Plan No | Action | Timescale* | Lead/Partners | Resources | Related strategy |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| EV1 | Introduce a 'peat free' policy for plant stock and the sustainable sourcing of timber | Short | LBBB Parks | | |
| EV2 | Develop a programme of installing habitat enhancements, such as bird and bat boxes, across all parks | Short | LBBB Parks, local partners and schools | | |
| EV3 | Explore the potential for developing nature trails and providing nature walks across parks with high ecological and natural capital assets | Short | LBBB Parks and local conservation partners | | |
| EV4 | Undertake a programme of air quality monitoring across district and local parks, targeting investment where air quality is the poorest | Short | LBBB Parks | | |
| EV5 | Develop partnerships with external organisations to develop a tree planting programmes across the borough to improve air quality, green/ ecological links between parks, biomass, etc | Medium | LBBB Parks/Trees for Cities/Orchard Project | External funding | |
| EV6 | Develop strategy for planting across the borough that responds to the impact of climate change with a focus on flood risk, peak summer temperatures and carbon capture. | Medium | LBBB Parks | - | |
| EV7 | Promote green corridors to connect parks and open spaces to reinforce bio-diversity outcomes | Medium | LBBB Parks | - | |
| EV8 | Work with external partners to protect London BAP target species and habitats | Medium | LBBB Parks and external partners (GLA, LWT, RSPB, Capel Manor etc..) | | |
| EV9 | Promote generation of renewable energy through identifying opportunities for wind turbine installation | Medium | Further potential sites within parks for wind turbines could be identified subject to the preparation of technical appraisals | | |
| EV10 | Support target driven re-cycling by providing segregated bins in parks and the reuse of green waste generated within parks and across the borough | Medium | TBC | TBC | |
| EV11 | Develop a nature and ecology education programme that can be delivered in key parks, including Mayesbrook and Eastbrookend | Medium | LBBB Parks and local partners | | |
| EV12 | Establish habitat restoration and action plans for specific parks | Medium | LBBB Parks | | |
| EV13 | Re-establish strategic partnerships with local and regional wildlife and conservation organisations | Medium | LBBB Parks and environmental organisations | | |
| EV14 | Work with the Environment Agency and other partners to sustain the role played by parks in absorbing precipitation and promoting sustainable drainage systems (SUDS). Develop flood attenuation and watercourse naturalisation projects where appropriate | Long | EA and other partners | External funding | |
| EV15 | Work with external partners to develop effective management of biodiversity sites across the borough and access external funding | Long | LBBB Parks and external partners (LWT, RSPB etc..) | External funding | |
| EV16 | Work with external partners to promote volunteering and skills development initiatives for ecological management | Long | LBBB Parks and external partners (LWT, RSPB, Capel Manor etc..) | External funding | |

*Timescale: Short 1-3 years, Medium 4-6 years, Long 7-10 years



People's Park Alive: Masterplan report



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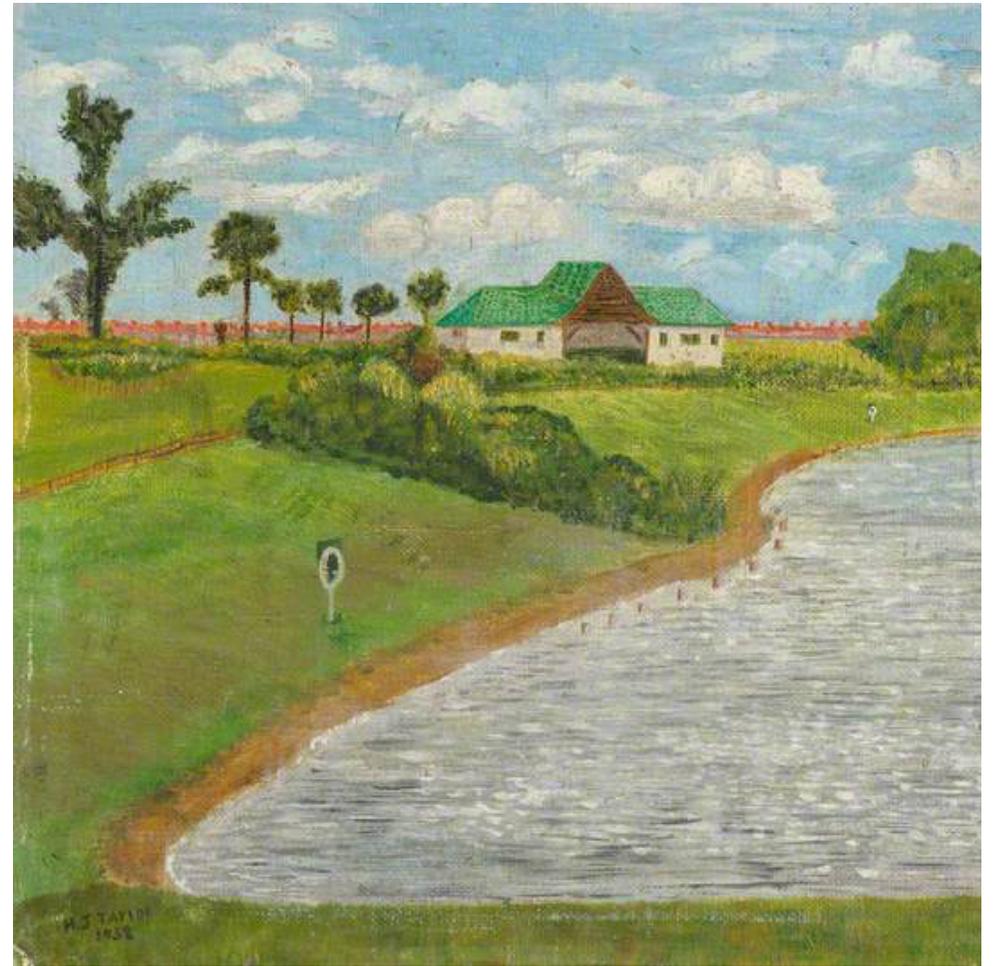
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Parsloes Park - People's Park Alive

Masterplan report | March 2016

The 1935 Vision for
the **People's Park** -
'An open space of trees and
grass...without railings...
for people to walk and
children to play upon'



Parsloes Park, 1938, by Henry James Taylor (Valence House Collection)

Above:



People's Park Alive

1.0 Introduction

The importance of Parsloes Park for the communities of Barking and Dagenham has long been recognised. Over the years since the Park's most recent heyday as a **People's Park** in the 1930s, Parsloes Park has suffered from cuts to resourcing, although it is a park of real quality and potential.

There is growing recognition for the role that parks and green spaces can play in quality of life and creating attractive places to live. Although Parsloes Park makes an important contribution to the green and open space network of Barking and Dagenham and beyond, the open space is not reaching the audience that it should as a **Metropolitan Park**. The significant growth planned for the borough means that parks and green spaces should meet the needs of the existing community as well as addressing the pressures of an increasing population. Reviving Parsloes Park has the potential to address a number of the borough's challenges including improving health and wellbeing, inclusive access and recreation, active and sustainable travel, adapting to climate change, and conserving and enhancing its biodiversity and heritage. Importantly the regeneration of the park also has the potential to deliver upon the three key aspects

of the borough's strategic vision and priorities which are: Encouraging civic pride, enabling social responsibility and growing the borough. These are discussed further in section 6.

New funding opportunities present an opportunity to re-imagine and reinvigorate the Park in a financially sustainable way. Funding for a new youth zone, football facilities, a reinstated Gores Brook and interventions to reveal the heritage potential of the Park could make a significant contribution to bringing it back into community use and promoting a sense of ownership.

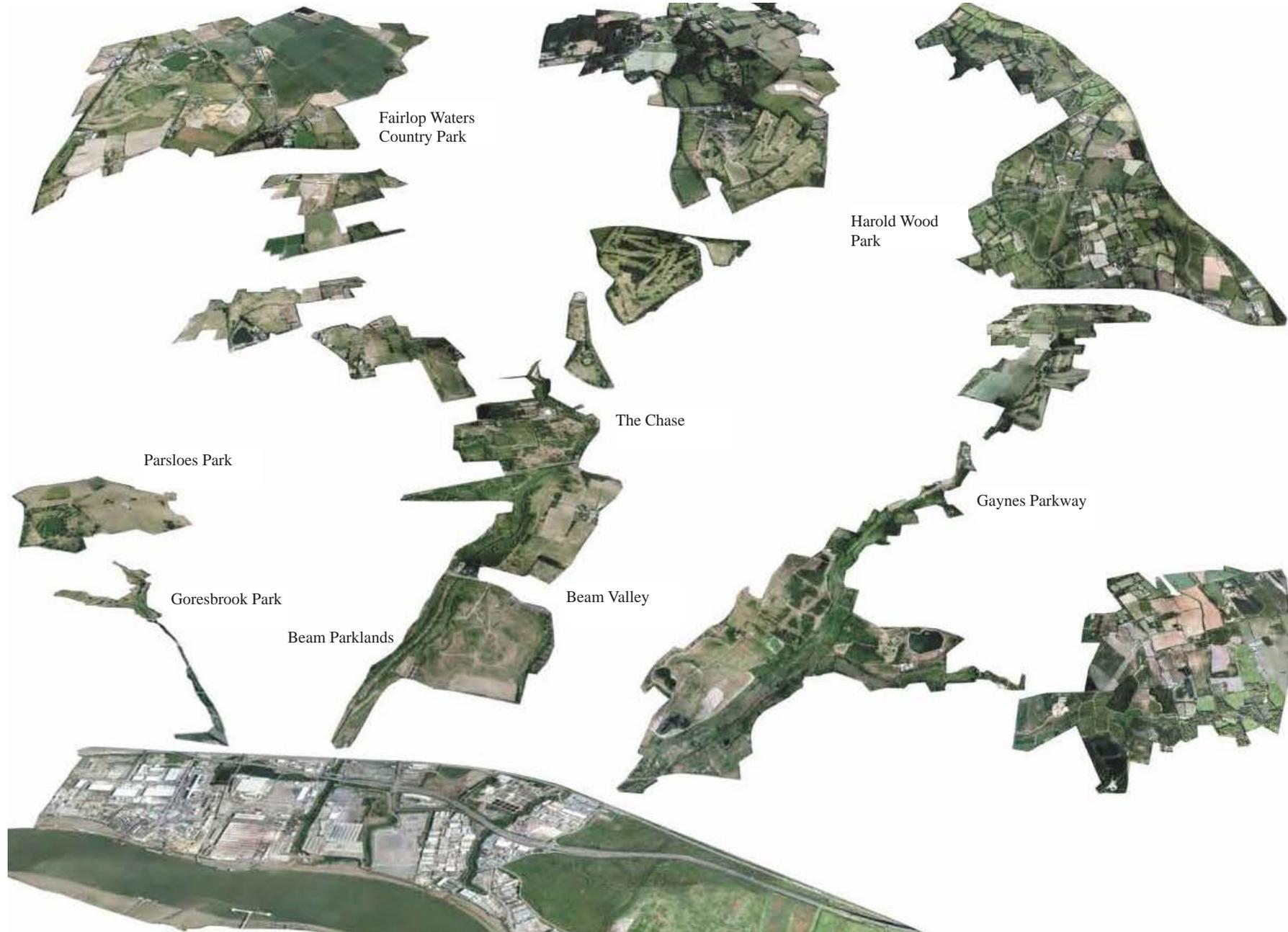
The masterplan and management plan commissioned by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham takes stock of these opportunities so that proposals can be integrated and delivered in a coherent way to optimise the benefits to the Council and the community.

This Report sets out the context, characteristics and significance of Parsloes Park in the following sections:

- Parsloes Park in context
- From Passelewe's to People's Park
- Identity, community and memories
- Landscape, historic and natural character;
- Why now?
- Towards the masterplan
- Statement of significance
- Masterplan vision and concept
- Detail areas
- Proposals: Risks, issues and opportunities: Assessment of potential impacts
- Delivery Plan
- Management Strategy
- Appendices

Left Parsloes Park, c.1867, from the Gores Brook (Valence Collection)

© Copyright London Borough of Barking and Dagenham



2.0 Parsloes in context

Parsloes Park is a 59 hectare Metropolitan Park at the centre of the borough of Barking and Dagenham, to the north of Becontree and Dagenham Heathway neighbourhood centres.

Parsloes Park plays an important role in a network of public open space for the borough and East London; the Park forms part of the All London Green Grid. It is one of 25 parks and green spaces in the borough and one of three Metropolitan Open Land designations, together with Barking Park and Mayesbrook Park to the west, with relationships with Goresbrook Park and Beam Parklands to the east, Eastbrook Country Park, the Green Belt to the east and Valence Park to the north.

Parsloes Park is the largest of the formal parks created during the 1930s as public amenity space for the London County Council's inter-war housing developments in and around Dagenham. The Park formed the green lung of the Becontree Estate which today provides half of the borough's council housing stock and characterises the post 1900 residential terraces that surround and give onto the Park.

The park was laid out on the greater part of the former historic Fanshawe family estate of Parsloes (medieval and later), which was gradually broken up from 1900-17, with the great house demolished in 1925. As such, Parsloes Park and other surviving greenspaces such as Valence Park represent the surviving 'fragments' of an ancient network of parklands and landed estates once held by the Fanshawes in the area.

The Park is served by two tube stations at Becontree and Dagenham Heathway as well as bus routes along Gale Street and Parsloes Avenue to the west. The Park is bordered by quieter residential roads to the south, east and north. The Sydney Russell Secondary School and Porters Avenue Health Centre are located to the north of the Park and there are a range of other facilities in the surrounding area including Parsloes, Southwood, Valence and Roding primary schools, the Adult college of Barking and Dagenham, the Sydney Russell Leisure Centre, Fanshawe Hall Community Centre and Markyate, Dagenham and Fanshawe Libraries.

More information on the landscape, natural and historic character of the site is set out in the following sections of this report.

Left: Parsloes Park in its green infrastructure context (All London Green Grid)



The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham is the **9th most deprived** London borough, with **35%** local authority/shared ownership housing, and the **lowest average London house prices** (£288,809 in November 2015) . The borough has the **lowest life expectancy in London** at 77.6 years for men and 82 years for women.

The borough has **34%** green space coverage, with **492.4 hectares of public open space**. Parsloes Park represents almost **12%** of the total public open space of the borough.

186,000 people live in the borough, of these around 45% participate in 30 minutes or more of exercise per week. **7% are unemployed**, 28% of 16+ year olds have no qualifications.

81% have English as their main language, 50% are white British, 56% are Christian.

Just 42% of people are satisfied with their parks and open spaces.

(Sources: London Borough of Barking and Dagenham *Adopted Core Strategy 2010*; Greater London Authority 2013, *Better Environment, Better Health - A GLA Guide for London's Boroughs - Barking and Dagenham*; 2011 census returns)

Left 'The Colour of Time' at the One Borough Community Day in Parsloes Park in July 2015

© Copyright Anita Adeshina

c.1250: 13 acres of land in Dagenham is conveyed to Hugh Passelewe

c.1570: Manor is sold to Sir Edward Osborne, who builds a large house in the closing years of the 16th century

1644: Parsloes is temporarily sequestrated due to the Fanshawe family's support of the Royalists in the Civil War

1844: Parsloes is a substantial landed estate of 270 acres, although the increasing debts of the Fanshawes would soon spell the end for the estate

1903: Evelyn John Fanshawe inherits Parsloes. The house is now derelict

1921-3: The whole estate is acquired by London County Council to build the Becontree Estate with 107 acres of Parsloes retained as a 'People's Park'

1330: Now extending to 277 acres, the estate is settled upon Simon de Merk, and passing to the Barnardistons, who own it through the 15th century

1619: Parsloes is sold to William Fanshawe, who is said to have extended the house by 1634

1814: Revd John Fanshawe remodels the mansion house in 'Gothick' style

1858: The Fanshawes cease to live at Parsloes and the estate is let to a succession of tenants, notably the Denman family, descendants of Lord Chief Justice Thomas Denman, a prominent anti-slavery campaigner

1913: The first tranche of the estate is sold off to Essex County Council, with William Buckley buying more land including the house in 1917

1925: Parsloes House is demolished. The People's Park is laid out, completed in 1935. Despite later 20th century decline many of the features of the People's Park survive to this day



Above: John Fanshawe, who inherited Parsloes in 1803

© Copyright London Borough of Barking and Dagenham



Above: Thomas, Lord Denman, Lord Chief Justice

3.0

From Passelewes to People's Park - A chronology

A summary chronology of the park, outlining its main stages and periods of evolution, is set out opposite and below (drawing from the Victoria County History¹ and the entry on the London Parks and Gardens register):

c.1250: Gervase le Halleward and his wife Maud convey 13 acres of land in Dagenham to Hugh Passelewe, from which the manor takes its name (later adapted to Parsloes) - a manorial name referencing mede or meadow. Cf Passelewe from the old French 'to cross the water', relating to merchants/travellers.

1330 An estate of 277 acres in Barking, Ilford and Dagenham was settled upon Simon de Merk and his wife Margery. The estate subsequently passes to the Barnadiston family by marriage.

1402-3: Parsloes is held by Roger de Barnadiston.

1561: The manor is sold by John Barnadiston to Sir Martin Bowes, a City MP and former Lord Mayor of London.

1568: Parsloes is sold by Sir Martin's son Martin to Sir Rowland Hayward (Lord Mayor of London in 1570) and Thomas Wilbraham.

After 1570: The manor is acquired by Sir Edward Osborne (d.1591), a London merchant, politician and later Lord Mayor (1583). The manor house was reconstructed in the 16th century – a rectangular building of two storeys with a central hall.

1619: Parsloes is sold to William Fanshawe (d.1634). Fanshawe is said to have added a new north wing to the house.

1644: Due to the Fanshawe family's support of the Royalist cause in the Civil War, the estate is sequestered. Sir Hugh Kingsmill, father in law of John Fanshawe, William's son, applies for a lease of the estate, of which part had been sold by Fanshawe and his mother prior to the sequestration. The claim is granted in 1645.

1700s: The house is further remodelled (as shown in a painting of 1800).

1814: Reverend John Fanshawe adds a new south wing and has the whole house encased in new brick, the whole being improved in the then fashionable 'gothick' style with gothic sash windows and castellated details and battlements. It is now a substantial dwelling of 24 rooms with the oak library floor brought from Eastbury Manor House, Barking.

1844: Parsloes is recorded as a substantial landed estate of 270 acres, although it would soon become heavily mortgaged, due to the increasing debts of the Fanshawe family.

1858: The Fanshawe family cease to live at Parsloes following the death of Reverend Thomas Fanshawe and the estate is let to a succession of tenants, notably including the Denman family, descendants of Lord Denman, Lord Chief Justice and a figure within the slavery abolition movement.

¹<http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/essex>

1901: Part of the park, including some of the pleasure grounds near the house, is leased to the National Trotting Horse Breeders Association, who lay out an American style pony trotting ground in the central part of the park, a use which continues until 1923.

1903: Evelyn John Fanshawe inherits Parsloes. By this time Parsloes House is derelict.

1913: The Fanshawe family sell the first tranche of the estate to Essex County Council.

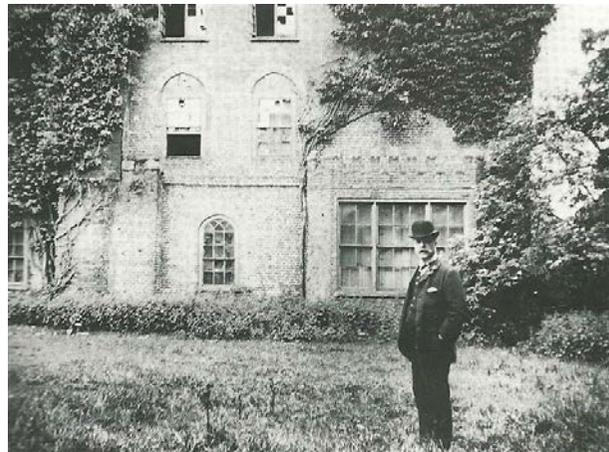
1917: The remainder of the site, including the house, is sold to William Buckley.

1921-23: The whole estate is acquired by the London County Council, earmarked for the Becontree Housing Estate, with 107 acres to be retained as a 'Peoples' Park', as centrepiece of the estate.

1925: Parsloes House is demolished. Some of its bricks are used to build two small houses in Stevens Road. The grand approach to the house and associated lime/sweet chestnut avenue are woven into the design for the Peoples' Park and survive to this day, albeit increasingly fragmented. Nearby parkland clumps of elms, contemporary with the avenue and the 18th-19th century landscape park of the former house survived until the 1960s.

1925-1935: The Peoples' Park is laid out, with the 'northern end to consist of playing fields, and in the south west large public gardens, the remainder to be levelled as an open space of trees and grass without railings partly for football, cricket and tennis but mostly free for people to walk and children to play upon'. Aspects of the Peoples' Park included an ornamental lake with flamingos, a rose garden and shrubbery with formal paths, pavilions, paddling pools and bowling green. Most of these features survive to some degree to this day.

1980: Ownership of the park is vested in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.



Above: Parsloes Manor in a state of dereliction in the early 20th century



Left: Parsloes in 1875, showing John Fanshawe's house which appears to have incorporated a much earlier avenue approach from the west. Note also the pleasure grounds and orchards in the vicinity of the mansion.

© Landmark Information Group



Left: Parsloes in 1901, showing the American style pony trotting track laid out in the central part of the park.

© Landmark Information Group

Right: 1898 Ordnance Survey mapping of Parsloes overlaid upon modern aerial photograph

Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland



‘Sandwiched between the District line and Ivyhouse Road was where I lived in a small 2 bedroom council house built for £200 quid...across the road was the Parsloes Park. It was the **best thing a young boy could wish for** - Apart from the swings and the paddling pool they had Punch and Judy magic shows, mobile film vans, pantomimes, mobile zoos..., then there was bird egging, tadpoles down the drains, tree climbing, football...**In the summer we lived in the park**. I remember the pink flamingos that had their wings clipped so they could not fly away, I also remember them turning white and vanishing overnight. The flower beds around the lake were beautiful looking, although at the time I didn’t care I just wanted a flamingo egg for my up and coming bird egg collection - ignorance was bliss’.

A local resident remembers Parsloes in its People’s Park heyday

4.0 Identity, community and memory

Parsloes Park was once one of the most popular Parks in Barking and Dagenham. Fond memories have been voiced in the community about its popular play offer and one o'clock club, formal gardens, horticulture and lake and family events in the Park.

For a time the London County Council and later the Greater London Council were responsible for the management of the Park until it was dissolved in the 1980s and responsibility fell to the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. Since then, like many London and UK Parks, Parsloes Park has suffered from the challenges of on-going resourcing cuts to capital works, maintenance and management. Although the Park is well kept, its facilities and spaces have gradually fallen into a dilapidated state and the Park is not as it used to be. Barking and Dagenham was one of the first boroughs to produce a parks strategy in 2003 (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, May 2003, *Parks and Green Spaces Strategy*) and there is a positive legacy and strong green space network to build upon.



Above: The Cherry Tree Avenue at some time prior to 1987 © London Borough of Barking and Dagenham



Above: Existing landscape elements, landscape character areas

(Ordnance Survey base mapping: Crown copyright and database right, 2015)

5.0 Landscape, historic and natural character

This section sets out the landscape characterisation of Parsloes Park which has been defined to understand current character and assets, as well as condition and management issues, plus aspects of significance in relation to the park's design and heritage.

The present day Parsloes Park is a greenspace of significant scale formed from the surviving remnants and the greater part of the old Parsloes Manor Estate which was extant from the 13th century to the 1920s, plus outlying remnant farmland which may have related to the parkland core and now lost manor house. Much of the park is overlaid with features associated with the development of the Peoples' Park, laid out from 1925-35 as centrepiece of the 1930s Becontree Housing Estate, which now surrounds the site.

As such, the setting of the park has changed entirely as it is now completely surrounded by built development, with the southern part of the Gores Brook tributary to the south and the Beam Parklands toward the Thames Foreshore now forming the only other substantial areas of greenspace in this locality.

The site comprises a formal landscape of boating lake, pavilions and rose gardens/shrubberies linked by an intertwined network of paths in the south west, the remnants of an ancient lime and sweet chestnut avenue which once formed the grand approach to the destroyed manor house and which is now interplanted with the remains of an ornamental Cherry avenue of the Peoples' Park era (the latter being much damaged in the storms of 1987).

Immediately north is a 'wilderness' area of long grassland and heath, known as 'The Squatts' Local Nature Reserve (LNR), and to the east an extensive, flat open area of ground given over to football pitches, served by a long low, 1970s changing room block and pavilion, which appears highly prominent in this open, exposed landscape. The easternmost parts of the site were once marked by the Gores Brook, a tributary of the River Roding, although this was culverted in the earlier 20th century. Save for the odd shallow depression and occasional mature riverbank poplar and willow, plus seasonally wet and boggy ground, the brook is invisible today.

For the purposes of the masterplan the site has been classified into a series of historic landscape character areas (described overleaf), in which the salient characteristics and qualities of the landscape are described, with condition and management issues noted. The significance of each area, whether in the context of design, heritage or recreational/amenity value, is also noted.

Area 1: People's Park and the Lake

Description, condition and management issues

Covering the south western quadrant of the site including a large and deep ornamental lake (LNR) which was the legacy of past gravel extraction during the course of the construction of the Becontree Estate. The lake is on the site of a much earlier pit (which included palaeolithic archaeology) and is approached via a formal path and the remains of an arts and crafts style geometric rose garden to the south west. A sinuous path layout encircles the lake which is now heavily planted and overgrown in places, obscures the view towards the ornamental 1930s pavilion and shelter on the opposite side of the water, near the site of the former Home Farm of Parsloes Manor.

This pavilion is surrounded by mature shrubberies (*Rhododendron ponticum*) and is associated with a now disused bowling green immediately north. A diverse range of mature tree species defines the ornamental grounds surrounding the lake. East of the lake is a relatively recent play area (2006), catering for older children. Nearby is the site of a former drinking fountain which appears to date from the Peoples' Park era, plus a former paddling pool now used as a small skate park with the paddling pool structure intact. This is faced by another characteristic 1930s rusticated pavilion, which appears to have been the mirror image of the one by the bowling green. Behind lies a large and rather stark play area, with a disused park depot immediately north, surrounded by security fencing.

The wider area is surrounded by spiked railings, with much of the character area sub divided by a proliferation of fencing types. This includes a distinctive design of low bow top fences which surrounds the former paddling pool (allied to dense mixed shrub planting), the lake area and the lawns and Rhododendron beds near the bowling green and pavilion.

Significance

This area is significant as the largely intact and greater surviving part of the People's Park of 1935. It has a strong and distinctive character which could be enhanced through view management and restoration, to reveal vistas across the lake and to the 1930s pavilion, to draw people into the Park. The Arts and Crafts style landscape layout is notable and could provide a framework for more flexible, sustainable landscape planting and management set within a formal framework - a contemporary celebration of the People's Park's past horticultural excellence.



Above: Surviving elements of the People's Park and lake including one of the pavilions



Above: The flamingos which once inhabited the People's Park Lake are commemorated in this mural by Tom Berry opposite the Gale Street Entrance

Area 2: Park Core

Description, condition and management issues

This area includes the remnant east-west avenue which formerly marked the grand approach to the manor house, which occupied the full width of the avenue and stood at its eastern end, immediately west of the present disused tennis courts. The avenue appears to have been a double avenue of lime and sweet chestnut of strong formal design, terminated by a now lost lodge house to the western boundary with Gale Street. A number of over mature/veteran tree specimens survive, although the carriage drive itself has been re-routed south as part of the Peoples' Park path network. Traces of both the manor and the lodge house can be faintly discerned in the ornamental lawn. The avenue was infill planted with much smaller ornamental trees including flowering and double cherry during the Peoples' Park era, although many of these were lost in the storms of 1987, giving the avenue a truncated, disjointed appearance.

Immediately north of the avenue at the western entrance is a shallow depression which marks the site of a former pond visible on the 1871 and 1895 Ordnance Survey. Immediately east and forming the western edge of the expansive, open and historic heathland and grasslands now known as The Squatts LNR, later the site of Ministry of Defence (MOD) activity in the Second World War, can be faintly discerned the old course of Gale Street. This road is also visible on the old OS mapping and was re-aligned to form the western boundary of the Peoples' Park on the breakup of the old estate.

The scrubby hedgerow forming the southern boundary of The Squatts appears to be a historic feature, having been visible on the old OS mapping and includes a number of old, multi stemmed coppiced sycamore.

A combination of railings and small ornamental trees defines the boundary with the busy Gale Street, although most of the park gates are either missing or permanently open. To the north, the boundaries with adjoining residential gardens are defined by mature fencing although palisade fencing also features, which, along with some incidental 'cut through' type entrances from the housing estate, contribute to an unwelcoming appearance. Parts of this area are again defined by a proliferation of discontinuous fencing and bollards, including a line that separates The Squatts from the remains of the formal avenue.

Significance

This area is significant as the surviving fragment of the 18th-19th century landscape park and the approach to the lost mansion, overlaid upon a much older planned and designed estate landscape. The surviving veteran limes and sweet chestnuts clearly mark out the extents of the former avenue, and could be made more legible by appropriate new parkland planting to reinforce these elements for future generations. The Squatts LNR is locally significant for its biodiversity interest, and has considerable enhancement potential. Its local historic associations with the MOD and World War II air raids also add to its value.



Above and above left: The remnant east west avenue and The Squatts Local Nature Reserve

Left : The Squatts Local Nature Reserve





Area 3: Sports Park

Description, condition and management issues

This forms the large central part of the park, given over to senior and junior football pitches (16No total), with a long, low central changing room and shower/toilet block occupying a prominent position in the centre of the park, with a similarly large tarmac surfaced car park (85 spaces plus 6 blue badge holder spaces), plus informal overflow parking within the low timber bollards alongside the long, wide access road serving the same from the northern site boundary. The football pitches host three Sunday football leagues and parking need is greatest at this peak time.

Immediately north west is the palisade fenced boundary of the Sydney Russell Secondary School and playing fields. To the north and south, single block depth cul-de-sacs jut into the park edges, where street parking is an issue for residents and commuters, with boundaries defined by low timber bollards set in to the park to the north and by a mismatched range of trip rails and knee rails of various periods to the south.

The central pavilion/changing block is in a poor state of repair and is subject to anti social activity and vandalism (people accessing the roof to smash skylights, graffiti). It is also a building of low efficiency and functionality, and is poorly sited.

Left: The mural on the roof of the central sports pavilion and changing block

Significance

This area is significant as the dominant use of the central part of the People's Park and is a key part of the 1935 layout. It bears little relationship to other landscape layers, although it incorporates relics of the pre-20th century agricultural field pattern which once characterised this part of the site.



Above left: Football pitches

Above right: Football parking

Left: Access road to car parking

Area 4: Gores Brook

Description, condition and management issues

The eastern part of the site is formed by the course of the Gores Brook tributary of the River Roding which is now culverted. Only a shallow depression along its alignment and one on the site of the old estate pond and sluice now mark its presence, although loose groupings of very mature willow and poplar trees hint at former river bank vegetation. Much of this area is otherwise defined by intensively managed grassland associated with sports pitches, and which is poorly drained in places. Review of Environment Agency mapped data shows that the area falls within an area at risk of surface water flooding and ground water flooding.

Boundaries to this part of the site are largely 'open' – low bollards and knee rails. Pitch markings partly extend over the course of the brook.

Significance

This area is significant in terms of its remnant historic landscape pattern and legacy - the course of the Gores Brook can still be traced as can remnant structural landscape features associated with it. Much of this character area's significance is more associated with its opportunity in terms of multi-functional green infrastructure and water storage and in creating a new aesthetic and visual focus for the site through restoration and de-culverting of the Gores Brook.



Above: Mature poplars and willows which mark the eastern bank of the old Gores Brook in the south eastern corner of the site

6.0 Why now?

Barking and Dagenham has been identified as a priority area for new homes and jobs to allow London to grow.

Land availability, good location and green space network are strengths of the borough making it well suited to housing delivery. Significant potential has been identified at London Riverside, which would see 25,000 new homes and 14,000 jobs created along the Thames, with key sites at Barking Riverside, which could accommodate 10,000 new homes. Barking Town Centre has also been identified as a Housing Zone, with potential for 2,295 homes and supporting facilities. Supported by potential new transport links including an extension of the Overground to Barking Riverside and a new High Speed 1 station at Beam Park, these interventions could see the borough's relatively stable population grow by 60,000 people by 2025.

The borough has objectives to create attractive and sustainable places to live. At this important point of change, it is the ideal time to consider and address the needs of the existing population and the potential pressures of a new population to address low satisfaction for parks and green spaces, build community ownership and use of the Park and create places that promote a pride and sense of belonging, as well as spaces with greater resilience to change.

Key aspects of the borough's Strategic Vision and Priorities are also highly relevant:

Encouraging civic pride, specifically through protecting, promoting and investing in green spaces and reaching high aspirations for every child, plus encouraging the local community to take pride in their green spaces.

Enabling social responsibility, specifically through ensuring that children reach their potential. The educational and play value of green spaces such as Parsloes Park is key here.

Growing the borough. Investment in green space to create attractive environments is a key part of this.

Furthermore the site has been identified as a priority green space project in the All London Green Grid. Enhancements to sports provision on site have been identified in the latest edition of the borough's *Playing Pitch Strategy* (London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, 2015), specifically a football hub and cricket provision.



Above: An existing image from Parsloes Park where the old paddling pool used to be located.

7.0 Towards a masterplan

New funding opportunities have recently been identified that present the potential to improve Parsloes Park and distinguish its offer as a destination park in the borough.

These include:

Community sports hub – The borough’s recently adopted Playing Pitch Strategy sets the vision for a modern, sustainable and well-used community sports facility. A Football Foundation bid for £1m funding is being prepared and progressed. This presents an opportunity to deliver high quality pitches and facilities that reach and provide for a wider audience.

Youth Zone – The borough are in negotiations with OnSide, a charity that provides inspiring, safe and affordable places for young people to go. The proposals for approximately £3m investment in a youth zone facility would contribute to a greater range of facilities in the Park and expand user groups. The proposals are at an early pre-planning stage.

Heritage Lottery Funding – early discussions have identified interest in a ‘Parks for People’ bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, possibly in 2016. This would potentially provide capital and revenue funding for

the Park’s heritage (as part of the Passelewe and Fanshawe family estates and the later People’s Park heritage) to be revealed and reinterpreted.

There is an opportunity to integrate all of these proposals to enhance the benefits to be secured from the scheme in a coordinated and sustainable way, to respond to, conserve, enhance and interpret the best of the park’s heritage and make the site’s history relevant to modern users. This masterplan approach will also enable a comprehensive consideration of the park in the context of future growth, pressures and demands, to ensure it is resilient, adapted and capable of being managed in sustainable ways. Many of these objectives are consistent with a conservation and landscape led approach and with the principles of sympathetic landscape management. The masterplan therefore occurs at a very timely point in the life of Parsloes Park.

The masterplan proposals set out in the following sections have been informed by engagement with a wide range of professional and community stakeholders, whose contribution is gratefully acknowledged.



- ① 3G/All weather pitches
- ② Multi-functional park hub
- ③ Informal play
- ④ Re-wilding The Squatts LNR
- ⑤ Restoration of People's Park
- ⑥ Flexible events space
- ⑦ Wetland
- ⑧ Proposed Youth Zone
- ⑨ New road access
- ⑩ Restored paddling pool

Above: Initial conceptual masterplan visions for the park
(Ordnance Survey base mapping: Crown copyright and database right, 2015)

8.0 Statement of Significance

Through masterplan development, stakeholder and community engagement, the following qualities and aspects of Parsloes Park have been identified as significant in framing proposals for the park's restoration and regeneration. This statement of significance considers historic, evidential, aesthetic and community values.

Heritage, memory and local associations:

- "... In the summer we lived in the park." (A local resident)
- The importance of the site in terms of its architectural and design evolution - Parsloes House was at the forefront of design tastes and fashion for over 300 years in successive evolutions from Tudor to English Gothic and its surrounding landscape reflected this, evolving from functional Deer Park to picturesque landscape parkland.
- The associations with prominent local families such as the Fanshaws, with Parsloes having formed the centrepiece of their estates in the area, and latterly with the Denman family, descended from Thomas Denman, Lord Chief Justice and a prominent figure in the early 19th century Abolitionist movement.

- The bold vision for the People's Park in the 1920s and 1930s and the progressive approach advocated by the London County Council in securing much of the site as a vital green lung for the Becontree Housing Estate when the old landed estate of Parsloes had fallen into irrevocable decline.

- A key memory of members of the local community is the presence of the flamingos in the lake, today commemorated in the Tom Berry mural opposite the Gale Street entrance to the park. Other aspects of the site such as the One o'Clock Club, old paddling pool and play facilities, the lake and the tea pavilions/huts were noted as valued features of the People's Park.

- Other local associations include the lost Gores Brook which runs through the site, now culverted and existing only in memory.



Above: Parsloes Mansion, 1920s

8.0 Statement of Significance

Aesthetic and experiential quality:

- The site has provided inspiration for artists at numerous stages in its evolution, notably the picturesque painting from the Gores Brook of 1867 and a series of ‘naïve’ paintings of the then new People’s Park by Henry James Taylor in 1938.

-In the People’s Park era the formal flowerbed area at Gale Street and the rose gardens made a fitting entrance to the park greeting and delighting visitors with a blaze of colour. These, the lake and the cherry tree avenue overlaid upon the ancient parkland ride to the lost house and the wilderness expanse of The Squatts created a rich and varied landscape experience.

Wildspace and living landscapes:

- The Squatts LNR has considerable ecological interest and the lake continues to support a great diversity of bird species, whilst the ornamental grounds of the People’s Park are characterised by an eclectic range of tree species, some of which are rare in the Greater London context, and which have bat potential.

- The site today reads as a landscape ‘palimpsest’ of many layers, with no one layer completely erased – old field boundaries including ancient multi stemmed coppiced trees near The Squatts, remnants of the 18th and 19th century landscape park and avenue, the buried heritage associated with the mansion and its pleasure grounds, home farm, carriage drive and the lodge house, plus the surviving and partly lost features of the People’s Park itself. The site bears witness to almost every stage of the last 400 years of its long evolution.

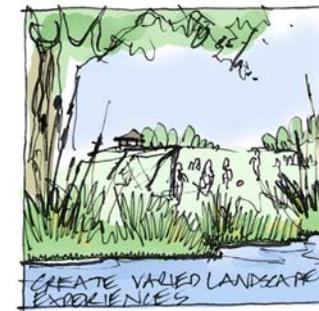
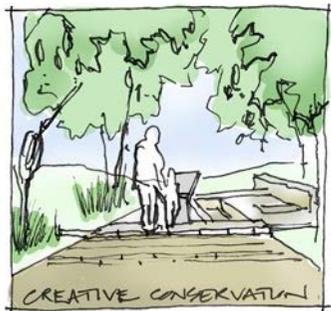


Above: Parsloes in 1867



Above: Flamingos, mural by Tom Berry

9.0 Masterplan vision and concept



The masterplan vision for Parsloes Park seeks to embody many of the best aspects of the 1935 design intention for the site as a park for play and a green space to walk upon. It is based on the idea of creative conservation – conserving and finding viable futures for the best surviving aspects of the park’s heritage and interpreting the rest. The five key aspects of the masterplan concept are shown in the images above.

Key aspects of the masterplan vision and supporting aims and objectives are as follows:

To conserve, enhance and restore

- The landscape legacy of the 17th-18th century avenue and the surviving features of the 18th and 19th century landscape park.
- The wildspace quality and the landscape experience and biological diversity of The Squatts Local Nature Reserve, seeking to restore lost aspects of this once diverse London heathland mosaic, such as ponds and scrapes.
- The ‘lost’ Gores Brook which runs through the site, as an informal recreational/amenity and ecology focus for the eastern part of the site.



Above: Parsloes Park, Masterplan

(Aerial photography: © GetMapping 2015, GeoSys 2015, Intermap Earthstar Geographics 2015 and Microsoft Corporation 2015)

9.1

Masterplan vision and concept

Creation of an appropriately naturalistic riverine environment of meanders, riffles and offline ponded areas, to create multi-functional space for water and to minimise the possibility of extreme flooding events.

- The horticultural excellence, colour and diversity of the original People's Park, in a modern idiom which is financially sustainable and appropriately adapted to modern management and resource availability/resilience whilst responding to the original layout.
- The design intent for the People's Park, bringing this up to date for the needs of 21st century users – restoring the formal approaches and gardens from Gale Street with more modern, climate change adapted planting which responds to fewer available management resources, restoring and creating safe access to the lake and restoring designed vistas to the original pavilion.
- The 1930s cottage ornee style pavilions, bringing these back into active and viable use as part of the park hub/exhibition space and as café/tea pavilion for the restored water play area.

To improve and create

- A much improved sense of welcome and arrival - Legible, interesting and relevant interpretation and way finding of a unified and harmonious design, both within the site and from nearby points of arrival such as the London underground stations, to promote walkable routes to and around the park, and to bring the site's heritage to life in ways meaningful to modern users.
- A visually and physically connected series of landscape experiences, through re-wilded areas, new and sensitively sited copses and woodlands and appropriate low-level landshaping to create visual interest and new vantage points.
- Increased resilience and flexibility – lower intensity landscape management to create more interesting/rich landscape experiences; adapted spaces with greater microclimate variation and shading and cooling to address climate change.
- A series of incidental destinations and points to stop off along the way – seats and street furniture to take advantage of prospects/restored views, essential park infrastructure such as cycle parking, bins etc, safe, clearly marked (and where appropriate lit) hierarchy of park paths.

9.2

Masterplan vision and concept

- A much more appealing environment for a range of different user groups, matched to the essential facilities to increase footfall and make people stay longer, so that Parsloes becomes a 'destination park'. As part of this a rethink of the approach to play – incidental and natural/wild play to maximise play value so that the whole park becomes playful/a place for play.
- Linked to the above, essential facilities for a visit to the park for a range of user groups – a new park hub which consolidates existing facilities and addresses notable gaps in existing provision – sports changing, toilets, showers, café, exhibition and lettable events space/revenue generation potential.
- Opportunities for community and volunteer involvement, such as community archaeology /big dig to reveal buried heritage, a community garden to provide a potential supply chain of local produce for an on site café. This could also be used to develop partnerships with Dagenham Farm Growing Communities and local organisations such as Company Drinks.
- A consolidated, higher quality and more flexible formal sports offer, which link to reconfigured and more flexible arrangements for parking, will help address peaks and troughs in the park's use.
- A series of flexible external events spaces, linked to variations in landscape management (meadow grass cuts) to create a hierarchy of spaces for a range of programmed and pop up events.

To recognise and value

- The landscape palimpsest of the site which displays its evolution from the 17th to 20th centuries.
- The significance of Parsloes Park as a bold and visionary People's Park, ensuring that all design interventions contribute to this and the original 1935 design intention of the park for play so that it once again forms the centre piece of the Becontree community.

10.0 Detail areas



Detail areas

The masterplan has been designed to respond to, conserve and enhance aspects of the site's significance described in the previous sections, as well as to address operational and site quality issues revealed through survey and consultation. Detail of the design proposals and rationale are provided in relation to the specific character areas of the site, in the rest of this section.

11.0 Historic Park Core



Above left: Woodland rides and avenues

Above: Revealing buried heritage. St Paul's Cathedral

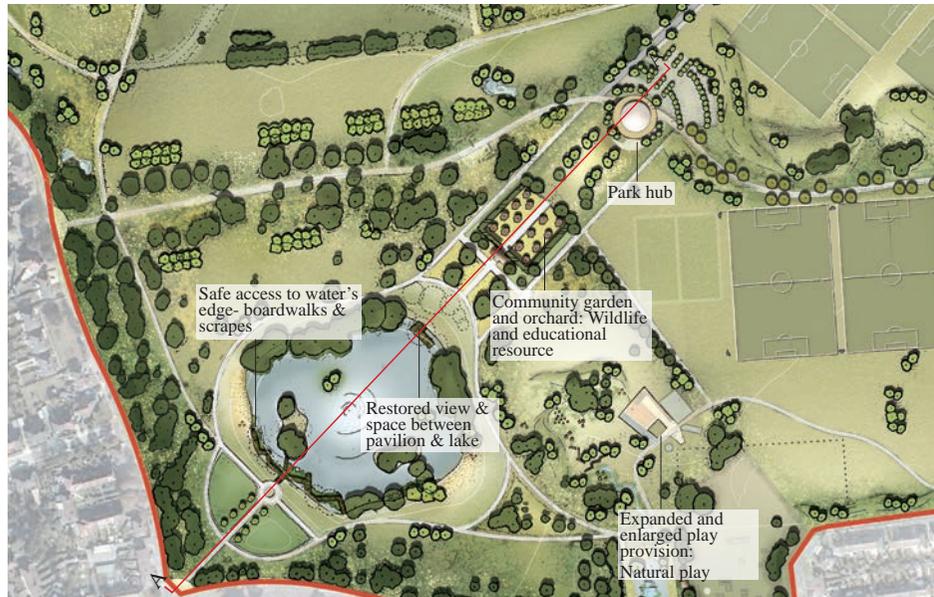


Left: Potential landscape experience of the avenue

Key aspects/rationale:

- Replacement of disparate, discontinuous and varied boundary fencing with **open boundaries** reinforced with **gentle landshaping** and copse/clump tree planting to control inappropriate uses/access. Mark historic entrance off Gale Street with combination of parkland rail to recall parkland heritage and new paved feature as well as **marking and interpreting** footprint of the former lodge.
- Re-alignment of path on the original carriage drive route and top dressing, with an appropriate **parkland/countryside** style surface treatment, plus provision of benches and bins at appropriate intervals in a style recalling those of the originals (O'Brien Thomas or similar). **Interpret and reveal footprint** of the **lost mansion** as part of the works (option to create subtle landform variation and 'boardwalk' areas over the archaeology).
- Creation of new meadow and seeded areas to mimic the colour and diversity of the old cherry avenue, whilst considerably **extending the season of interest**, plus low level landshaping to define spaces.
- New larger grade native tree planting using historically appropriate species (small leaved lime *Tilia cordata* or sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*) to create two new outer rows to the avenue, to **reinforce** the formal feature and to **secure** the feature for the longer term.
- **Conservation and enhancement** of The Squatts LNR to increase its diversity and ecological/amenity interest, including reinstatement of some of the former ponds in their historic locations. Whilst such ponds are likely to be perched/of puddled construction due to the level of the water table, which creates water flow issues, they also bring ecological benefits (dragonflies/insects)
- Creation of **active frontages** with Gale Street and Porters Avenue, including an appropriate site for the proposed Youth Zone which meets OnSide's objectives and also creates a gateway that integrates well with the park.

12.0 People's Park



Above: Enlivening the People's Park



Above: Regents Park Hub



Above: Waterlow Park Community Garden



Above: Managed, safe access to the lake



Section A-A

People's Park

Lake

Pavilion

Hub

Carpark

Key aspects/rationale:

- Restored gateway and approach from Gale Street main entrance with new signage and way marking, restoration of former Rose Garden with new meadow and herbaceous drift areas to extend season of interest, reduce intensity of management and to **increase resilience to drought/climate change**.
- Repair and top dressing of primary path network, with a key path to the hub and to the **northern boundary to be lit** to provide safe after hours access (low level LED lighting or similar).
- Restore vistas to lake and create managed physical access at safe points to the lake through shallows/scrapes, new areas of **boardwalk** and beach areas, with appropriately detailed knee/trip rail and use of dense reed/rush planting to warn of hazards in relation to deep water, supported by appropriately placed signage. Pull back fencing in all other areas to the lake perimeter to increase **connection with water**/reclaim usable space within the park.
- Restoration of the 1930s pavilion – flexible configuration - a lake facing tea hut/shelter as per its original use, or exhibition space/shelter for school visits to adjoining **community garden**, reinstating the original façade and roof detailing and removing the unsympathetic extensions and making good.

Creation of access to the new park hub behind via a new community garden on the sheltered former bowling green site – orchard, apiary, **flower meadow** and raised bed areas (potential school groups/outdoor classroom)

- Creation of a **multi-functional park hub** as central focus for the site and as focus for restored historic designed views, to face onto both the People’s Park and the sports park/pitches.
- Restoration and re interpretation of the 1930s former paddling pool as a **natural water play garden**, creating more flexible and multi-functional, interactive play opportunities. Restore and reinstate the 1930s tea pavilion and its external detailing as tea/cold drinks/ices kiosk and **sheltered seating** plus toilets/baby changing, plus Wifi and external sheltered terrace seating (trees/shade sail) to provide essential facilities for families to visit.
- Extension and enhancement of the existing older childrens’ play area to create an expanded suite of **natural play** provision to maximise play value (replacing existing kit with natural play pieces as it wears out) to create a continuous trail or swathe of play from the water play to the hub via the lake and supported by bespoke/incidental play pieces throughout the park. Restoration of the existing play area behind the pavilion to parkland, along with the former depot site.
- Restoration and reinstatement of the two former **drinking fountains** to the lake perimeter path, to adapt these to modern use (wheelchair accessible, filling water bottles for runners etc).

13.0 Sports Park

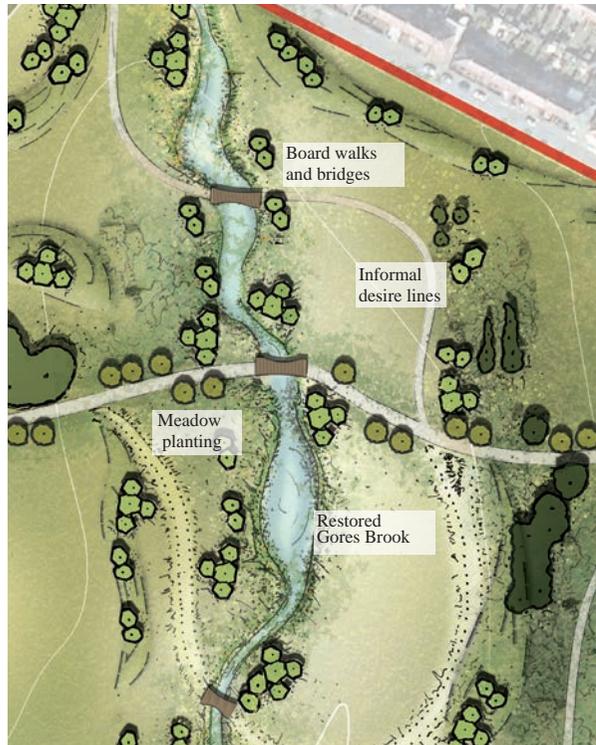


Above: Option for the hub building; a partially buried 'green' building on two levels, with functional components such as sports pitch changing (to replace the 1970s central changing block), toilets and showers in the lower level (option for kiosk facing on to pitch side), with upper level accessed via equal access ramps and formed by destination café, viewing terrace for full site surveillance, flexible exhibition/events/lettable space, public toilets and park staff office/accommodation (exact form/uses to be set by future Activity and Business Planning).

Key aspects/rationale:

- **Consolidation** of the dominant existing pitch provision upon a smaller footprint offering higher quality, more flexible provision to address wear and tear and peaks/troughs in usage. Maintaining the existing 7 adult pitches in the northern part of the site, plus an area for informal kickabout/junior pitches east of The Squatts LNR.
- Space for **informal cricket provision** as identified in the playing pitch strategy. Discussions with the English Cricket Board have identified that a minimum of 40m stand-off is required from any cricket provision and adjacent properties.
- As part of the approach to **flexible** use, provide for 2 lit '3G' pitches (all weather artificial turf pitches) in the southern/central part of the site, away from ecologically sensitive receptors and to avoid adverse impacts upon residential amenity.
- **Remove** the existing 1970s changing block and **restore it's site to parkland**, removal of the existing car park and access road (and restoration as before), relocating the access road and flexible parking integrated with 'woodland and trees' alongside the eastern boundary of Sydney Russell School and integrated with the new park hub.
- Remove the existing poorly drained easternmost pitches on the site of the culverted Gores Brook to **facilitate restoration** of the same, and replace these with an informal kickabout area near the existing changing block site.
- Creation of areas of low level landscaping and tree planting to create **microclimate** in the context of prevailing wind. Also opportunities for spectating and alternative prospects and vantage points in this open and exposed part of the site, plus provision of benches and bins of an appropriate style.
- Creation of a **variety of access links** to a new perimeter path/5km park run route to also connect the principal spaces/character areas within the site.

14.0 Gores Brook



Above: Enhance landscape variety and ecological diversity. The Squatts LNR - Meadow, copse, ponded areas

Key aspects/rationale:

- **Daylighting the Gores Brook tributary** and associated river restoration broadly on its original alignment but also creating new additional **meanders and riffles** (to slow the passage of water in times of flood), plus on and off line ponded areas/scrapes for habitat and additional water storage. One of these could be located in the depression visible immediately east of the northern poplar clump which marks the site of a lost pond and sluice.
- Creation of new **riparian habitat** – reed, rush, wet meadow and new willow, alder and poplar riverbank tree planting to accent the river and to complement and reinforce the surviving mature former riverbank trees on site.
- Creation of **safe points of access** to and **contact with the water**, in the form of boardwalks and bridges, linked to a wider path and desire line network (surfaced/mown).
- Provision of **appropriately sited benches** and bins. Benches should be sited to take advantage of restored riparian views and across the park/distant views to the hub – a modern reflection of the view captured in the painting of 1867.

15.0 Proposals- Risks, issues and opportunities: Assessment of potential impacts

With a site as large and diverse as Parsloes Park, the broad compass of the restoration proposals and the variety of existing and potential user groups, there is a clear need for careful consideration and progression of proposals to avoid potential conflicts. These are discussed below in relation to the following key themes:

- Environmental (archaeological/hydrological) risks associated with the scheme
- Access, safety, use and misuse
- Balancing competing drivers (heritage, ecology, recreation and visitor management; Sensitive integration of new facilities.)

| Issue | Potential source of impact/risk | Recommendations |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Environmental (archaeological/hydrological) risks associated with the scheme | <p>Archaeology and heritage significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential damage to buried heritage at mansion/home farm/lodge sites, plus to historic build-up of carriage drive • Impact on buried heritage associated with ponds and former pleasure grounds/gardens of the mansion • Determination of the most appropriate approach to heritage restoration (as opposed to reconstruction) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological watching brief, plus scope for appropriately supervised community archaeology projects to increase local involvement and interest. Scope to increase the current documentary record in relation to Parsloes/exhibition material for Valence House/ the potential park hub. Potential need to further refine design to reflect findings and weave into a future Interpretation Strategy for the site. This could also make links with Discover ME (historical treasures of Metropolitan Essex) • Sensitive design (overlay paving) in relation to carriage drive and entrance features, recording and interpreting remains and ensuring paving build up does not disturb buried remains. Where remains are to be revealed ensure an appropriate programme of stabilisation, protection and presentation with an archaeologist. • In respect of the approach to heritage restoration, the masterplan has been developed on the basis of best practice conservation principles of restoring to the most complete surviving design layer (in this case the 1930s People's Park). A creative conservation approach has been employed, conserving the best features of this and the earlier landscape park, whilst interpreting lost heritage. |

15.1 Proposals- Risks, issues and opportunities: Assessment of potential impacts

| Issue | Potential source of impact/risk | Recommendations |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>Ecology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential protected species issues (in particular bats) in relation to buildings to be demolished/ altered • Avoiding net loss of heathland habitat • Potential conflict between historic landscape / designed view restoration and habitat interest (trees with bat and other habitat interest) • Addressing problem species (Canada geese etc) <p>Hydrology and flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to consult with the Environment Agency on flooding and Water Framework Directive issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for species surveys in areas of potential (roof voids/soffits) of buildings subject to works (species survey window limitations to be factored in). This should also include trees subject to potential works (e.g. vegetation clearance to restore designed views/sight lines). • For heathland habitat diversification works (flower rich meadows and pond restoration), these should be supported by expanded areas of re-wilding and long grassland, to connect areas and help avoid fragmentation. • As part of detailed design and construction/aftercare to establishment, implement measures to control and discourage Canada Geese (such as low level netting/mesh to establishment of low level lakeside planting/avoid bankside erosion). Linked to programme of education for visitors. <p>•Need for early consultation with the respective teams within the Environment Agency, to determine the scope of the local Flood Risk Assessment and Water Framework Directive assessments that will be required.</p> |
| Access, safety, use and misuse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-social use increases resulting from boundary treatment alterations • Vandalism of new facilities/provision/ structures • Integration of sensitively designed safe, equal access and avoidance of user conflict to path networks • Issues around access to water and particularly areas of deep water at the lake | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace fenced boundary enclosures with appropriate defensive treatments which still maintain aesthetic quality and permeability (landshaping, long grass areas and tree planting, allied to existing timber bollards, to physically discourage unauthorised vehicular access). The same treatment should be employed to the external edges of new car parking provision. Ensure appropriate type of fencing where it is needed e.g. in relation to water play garden for very young children, whilst maintaining good visual permeability. • Two principles should be employed to avoid vandalism: 1) Good design which foresees and designs out potential problems and 2) linking proposals to an organised programme of events and activity planning in which the local community is fully immersed and involved (as part of the ongoing activity planning and audience development work). In relation to 1), this masterplan sets out the first principles for good, inclusive design. Building briefs will need to be developed with external funders for the next stage e.g. for the hub (consideration of issues such as night time use/ shuttering when out of hours, use of long overhangs/brise soleil structures or similar to rooflines to discourage climbing onto roofs, appropriate lighting, |

15.2 Proposals- Risks, issues and opportunities: Assessment of potential impacts

| Issue | Potential source of impact/risk | Recommendations |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | <p>visual permeability and natural surveillance).With regard to 2), development of a parallel activity plan and audience development study (linked to on-going community engagement) to inform the next phase of design development as part of funding applications to Heritage Lottery Fund and others is a key recommendation falling out of this masterplan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regard to sensitively designed safe and equal access and avoidance of path user conflicts, the following points will be relevant: Use of low level lighting to selected paths (away from areas of habitat potential as far as possible) to avoid light spill/urbanising influences. Integration of Disability Discrimination Act requirements in relation to equal access seamlessly with other path surfaces and as part of landscaping/gradient design generally, to avoid additional foci for potential vandalism, such as handrails. Ensure that path repairs/surface top dressing are of an adoptable standard for cycling and that key shared use commuting routes are wide enough for pedestrians and cyclists/pushchairs/wheelchairs (2.4m and appropriately signed – markings in paving or similar). •Access to water: Use of boardwalks and knee rails plus appropriate planting to create physical distance to water’s edge to areas of deep water at the lake, as well as creation of safe access by terracing/beached areas. Supported by appropriate signage, plus discreet fencing integrated with planting to areas where access is to be restricted. Use of appropriate riparian planting and controlled access points to the restored Gores Brook. |
| Balancing competing drivers (heritage, ecology, recreation and visitor management); sensitive integration of new facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making heritage of the earlier landscape park and the People’s Park relevant to modern users and the local community. • Park hub – consideration of visual and archaeological impact; avoiding competing facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making heritage and interpretation relevant to modern users should be a central part of an Interpretation Strategy to be delivered for the next phase /for grant funders requirements, linked to audience development and activity planning. Interpretation should seek to be flexible, available in a variety of formats whilst not dating/remaining timeless, as well as linked to way-finding – heritage trail/guided walks/programming. It should focus as much on the social aspects of the park’s history/local memory and associations as on bigger picture history. Seek to set the history of Parsloes in other cultural contexts e.g. the Denman family and abolitionist movement could be linked to country-wide programmes such as Black History Week and other events. • Continue to work with the key stakeholders and user groups engaged with the masterplan, such as Sydney Russell School. There is potential to link heritage interpretation, the proposed community garden and outdoor classroom/ natural play to aspects of the school curriculum. |

15.3 Proposals- Risks, issues and opportunities: Assessment of potential impacts

| Issue | Potential source of impact/risk | Recommendations |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>Parallel works being developed by other partners: Youth Zone, Football Foundation Bid, plus cross reference to drivers for other scheme elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on Metropolitan Open Land | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating the park hub and related contemporary features should be subject to a good building design brief, drawing on the framework set by this masterplan, and sensitive to the landscape and heritage context. Further site investigations and archaeological studies will be required to inform siting and design. The level of design documentation for the eventual planning application should be informed by local validation requirements, and may include consideration of potential landscape and visual impact. The same principles apply to the Youth Zone to be delivered by others. The exact mix of facilities in the hub will be determined by building brief development and the Activity Plan. Catering provision and any future concessions/ leases will need to be carefully considered to avoid competition and conflict between different facilities in the park and with any offer in the Youth Zone. For instance the 1930's tea huts are likely to be more appropriate for hot and cold refreshments, ices and snacks with more of a full service offer in the hub which is likely to have a longer day time and seasonal use span. With regard to the parallel works (Youth Zone, Football Foundation bid), discussions have taken place with the organisations developing these proposals. The masterplan and the Football Foundation proposals are closely aligned and the masterplan has set out recommendations for a sensitive and appropriate location for the Youth Zone ('like for like' development footprint, with the old depot site instead remediated, capped and restored to parkland). These should form part of a building brief for the Youth Zone proposal. <p>OnSide Youth Zone Planning Considerations: An alternative location for the proposed OnSide Youth Zone has been considered which would meet the operational requirements of the charity as well as responding to planning challenges. Initial planning discussions with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham have supported the potential of the alternative location in principle, and the location has been discussed with OnSide with regard to their principles for Youth Zone site selection and siting. The location on the corner of Gale Street and Porters Avenue would benefit from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential to integrate the Youth Zone offer into the Parsloes Park masterplan in terms of increased visibility and reduced conflict of user activities for example in terms of play offer and the heritage potential of the pavilion. A less sensitive context in terms of residential neighbours and effect on amenity for example relating to the presence of a dual carriageway and the level of street activity compared to Ivy House Lane; A more appropriate location in terms of scale, opposite the three storey Porters Avenue Health Centre; Better public transport connections, walkable from Becontree tube station and with a number of bus routes adjacent; <p>Proposals would need to take into account the scale, visibility and location of the Youth Zone when considering how appropriate development proposals are in Metropolitan Open Land. The potential to bring forward a leisure use as part of a holistic masterplan for the Park would be an advantage for a future proposal. The sensitivity of residents at properties on Gale Street would need to be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The masterplan has set out options for the most sensitive and appropriate siting of the lit 3G pitches to minimise impacts on residential amenity and ecology. With regard to Metropolitan Open Land, the detailed form and exact footprint of new build versus demolitions will need to be carefully considered (and informative for the building briefs) with any footprint increases considered sensitively in context and appropriately justified as part of the pre application process. |

16.0

Delivery plan

This section sets out an initial delivery plan for the masterplan proposals, considering outline costs, likely funding streams and next steps.

Outline capital costs:

Below are set out outline/ballpark capital costs for the main elements of the scheme, based on Arup's recent knowledge of delivering comparable works on similar schemes. These will need to be developed and refined further and an itemised cost plan developed, as design proposals advance for individual funding bids.

- Park hub, including excavation and landscaping/integration works: **£1.5million – £1.8 million**
- Refurbishment and conversion of 2No existing pavilions: **£500,000**
- Demolitions: **£200,000-£300,000**
- Pathworks (repair and top dressing, new paths): **£750,000 - £1million**
- Vegetation clearances and crown lifting/tree surgery to lake, plus re profiling and boardwalk: **£250,000 - £300,000**
- Tree planting and structural landscape planting: **£200,000**
- River restoration scheme: **£600,000-£1million, depending on scope**
- Site signage, way-marking and interpretation: **£50,000**
- Street furniture: **£50,000**
- Water play and new plant: **£300,000-£350,000**
- Natural play provision: **£250,000**
- 2No 3G pitches at **£600,000 each: £1.2million**

16.1

Delivery plan

Total estimated capital costs would be between **£6million and £7million**, exclusive of contingency sums (typically 10%), professional fees (around 8% in addition in respect of landscape, architectural and engineering design and contract administration, plus professional fees in respect of the Construction Design and Management Regulations and supporting surveys – ecology, archaeology, site investigations). Main contractor’s preliminaries would also need to be factored in, as would any enabling works not listed above plus remediation of contaminated land. Aspects such as landform/landshaping design would need to be costed as more detailed design was worked up based on the material and volumes involved.

Funding streams:

Due to the varied nature of the works they will need to be delivered through more than one funding stream. Scoping of potential delivery models and discussion with the client has identified the following as the most likely models:

- Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund Parks for People Funding
- Veolia Environmental Trust Funds
- Big Lottery Reaching Communities (Green Angels)
- Environment Agency Funding
- Football Foundation Funding

Below is a summary of the funding streams, key requirements and issues, aspects of the masterplan scheme which could be eligible for funding and recommendations for what needs to be happen next.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)/Big Lottery Fund Parks for People Funding:

This funding stream offers grants of up to £5million for capital works (and for revenue activity for a period of 10 years after practical completion, tied to a Management and Maintenance Plan developed in an HLF compliant format) for heritage restoration and conservation works in primarily urban parks. The funding stream also funds complementary capital works which support and enhance essential infrastructure to sustain the park, subject to HLF’s approved purposes and demonstrating delivery of their outcomes, which are:

- Heritage will be better managed
- Heritage will be in a better condition
- Heritage will be identified/recorded
- Heritage will be better interpreted/explained
- People will have developed skills
- People will have learnt about heritage

16.2 Delivery plan

- People will have changed their attitudes/behaviour
- People will have had an enjoyable experience
- People will have volunteered time
- Environmental impacts will be reduced
- More people and a wider range of people engaged with heritage
- The local community will be a better place to live, work or visit
- The local economy will be boosted
- The park and organisation will be more resilient



Above: Sketch proposal for the water play area

16.3 Delivery plan

Clearly the masterplan would be able to **deliver significantly** upon these outcomes, as it enables **greater understanding and appreciation** of the park's heritage, as well as forming the framework to **facilitate activities** to encourage volunteering and conservation of heritage, and a **range of community development projects** which could have a significant positive impact. Other aspects which would support the case for Parsloes Park are its **heritage value** and potential, recognised in its long and eventful chronology, significance and inclusion upon London's Local Parks and Gardens Register. It is also recognised as a priority urban greenspace for investment in the All London Green Grid, which would further help its viability.

The masterplan has been designed with HLF funding criteria in mind. Aspects of this masterplan report could readily form key parts of the baseline for the Conservation Plan which would be required to form a key part of a bid to the Parks for People Fund. The **heritage evolution and evaluation, landscape characterisation, statement of significance and heritage risk**, opportunity and impact assessment developed for this masterplan document could all form **key parts** of the **Conservation Plan**, to form a compelling and persuasive document to secure funding, as well as to help develop a scheme which could ultimately secure Green Heritage accreditation as part of the Green Flag scheme.

Issues and considerations:

There are two funding windows and decision periods per annum. The overall process can take **2 years or more** before works start on site and requires **significant time commitments** and professional advice. Funding is delivered in three separate phases or rounds. **Round one** is concerned with assessing a scheme's potential or feasibility and securing a decision in principle, to release development funds for detailed design development in round two. A successful **round two** pass will secure the capital funding for the implementation phase (round 3) and for ongoing revenue/management activity, drawn down in phases. Considerable formal consultation needs to take place in the form of design reviews (linked to project work stages) with the HLF grants case officer and a monitor appointed by HLF as a critical friend for the scheme. Match funding would need to be provided by the council. For grants of less than £1 million, this is at least 5% of the cost of the Round Two phase and 5% of the cost of the delivery phase. For grants of £1 million and over this is at least 10% of the cost of the Round Two phase and 10% of the delivery phase.

What could be funded?

The following components of the masterplan could all demonstrate excellent and monitor-able performance with regard to the HLF's outcomes, and should form the primary foci for a future bid:

- **Restoration of key aspects of the People's Park** – lake, path network, formal gardens and original pavilions, plus the water play

16.4 Delivery plan

- Aspects which provide a more **sensitive design response to the site's heritage** – natural play; restoring the old depot area to parkland
- Design and delivery of signage, **interpretation materials** and **way-marking**, plus street furniture
- **Restoration** of the avenue and the carriage drive, plus enhancements to The Squatts Local Nature Reserve
- **Archaeological works** to reveal, conserve and interpret the site's hidden heritage, including potential community archaeology projects
- **Restoration of 'lost' features** such as the Gores Brook
- Aspects of the hub building, particularly those parts which could form an educational or interpretive focus, or provision of exhibition space to tell the site's story. It should be noted that the hub would potentially need to be co-funded with Football Foundation bid funding, to cover areas outwith HLF's areas of interest such as sports changing rooms and facilities.

Funding could also be used for the following:

- Professional fees in respect of design, contract administration and specialist surveys
- Development and delivery of an interpretation strategy, audience development strategy and park business plan/activity plan (including further work with user groups)
- Subject to resource needs and making a compelling business case with HLF as part of a bid, additional staffing for the park, often a community ranger and/or park officer (subject to specific HLF guidance, approvals and input to recruitment). On costs/salary costs could be funded for the 10 year life of the grant.

Recommendation:

To advance pre application discussions with the HLF using this masterplan as a basis, with a view to developing a Round One application to gain a decision in principle, as soon as possible.

16.5

Delivery plan

Reaching Communities Fund (Green Angels):

Reaching Communities funding is for projects that help people and communities in the most deprived Lower Super Output Areas in England.

Early discussions have highlighted that the Reaching Communities fund could be an eligible funding pot for Parsloes Park. Postcodes adjacent to Parsloes Park are eligible for funding and the **boundaries of deprived areas would be considered** by the Big Lottery Fund where it can be demonstrated that the beneficiaries are located in eligible areas. Since the fund targets those living in disadvantaged areas and the masterplan has the potential to improve community cohesion and improve learning opportunities and health and wellbeing benefits, the objectives of the project would align well. Reaching Communities funding has successfully been secured and delivered in collaboration with the Land Trust for the Green Angels environmental training programme for Liverpool Festival Gardens which received £139,000. The Green Angels scheme aimed to boost the quality of life for local communities by providing introductory training opportunities in subjects such as countryside management, parks maintenance, business skills, environmental education and horticulture.

Issues and considerations:

Grants are available from £10,000 upwards and funding can last for up to five years. There is no upper limit for total project costs.

Funding of more than £500,000 is available and should be discussed with the Big Lottery Fund to understand how appropriate the project is. Projects should complement or fill gaps in local strategies where appropriate. Communities should be involved throughout the life of the project. The fund is **primarily a revenue programme**, covering salaries, running costs and a contribution towards core costs and equipment for up to three years. Up to £100,000 is also available through the Reaching Communities building fund for land, buildings or refurbishment capital for up to two years. The proportion of funding for revenue and capital is optional as long as a minimum of £100,000 is requested for land and building work. There are no deadlines for applications. Building on success at Liverpool Festival Gardens where 200 applications were received, the Land Trust wants to roll out the Green Angels environmental training programme further with potential links to schools, businesses and social enterprises.

What could be funded?

Revenue funding could be sourced to **set up activities and management**, for example those associated with the Park hub or education initiatives. A Green Angels environmental training programme could also be funded with the opportunity to build upon the Land Trust's experience at Liverpool Festival Gardens. This could include associated revenue or equipment funding to launch the building and deliver project activities such as marketing or salary costs, training or monitoring.

16.6 Delivery plan

There is also potential to apply for Reaching Communities buildings funding to part fund the Park hub, noting that construction is only funded in exceptional circumstances, for capital costs such as building and engineering works or professional fees. Funding for the monitoring and evaluation of the project has the potential to act as evidence for future funding bids.

Recommendations:

In order to navigate the three stage application process (approximately 18 months in total), **early sign up should be sought with the Big Lottery Fund** on the principles and objectives of the project and areas to be funded. This should include initial development of activity planning and a business plan for the Park. The Big Lottery Fund should be contacted in the first instance to confirm eligibility. Discussions should demonstrate that the project would benefit a deprived community and that beneficiaries are located in close proximity to the Park. The areas to be funded should clearly respond to local strategies and initiatives as well as an activity plan and consultation strategy developed for any Heritage Lottery Fund bid. It should be noted that there is potential for HLF to co-fund staffing.

Veolia Environmental Trust Funding:

Parsloes Park lies in close proximity to a Veolia site qualifying for the Landfill Communities Fund. The fund covers community buildings and rooms, outdoor spaces, play and recreation and projects supporting biodiversity, all of which align with the Parsloes Park masterplan. The project emphasis on community consultation, building community users and financial sustainability (amongst others) align with the objectives of the fund, which are set out below:

- Community consultation with **evidence of support and need**
- A **wide range** of community users
- **Good use of volunteers**, with relevant qualifications being sought
- A wide range of **fund-raising** activities
- Value for money
- **Sustainability** for the future
- Completion within an expected timeframe – public amenity projects must be completed within 12 months and biodiversity projects within 18 months.

16.7 Delivery plan

Issues and considerations:

A maximum of £75,000 is available for projects that have already secured 20% of the total cost. Since eligible projects must have a total cost of under £500,000, the phasing and delivery of the different elements will need to be developed to justify an application.

For awards of £40,000 and above, an independent third party contributor will need to reimburse the landfill operator the 10% shortfall to release the grant. This contribution can be made by another funder, a local council or an individual.

What could be funded?

Given the total cost requirement set out above, this fund could be **most valuable for discrete areas of the Parsloes Park masterplan** which may not qualify under other funding streams. Funding the delivery of a **community garden or community orchard** for example would provide a distinct area of the Park where the community could take ownership of development and delivery, with benefits associated with building social capital and volunteer time. This type of project could additionally harness Veolia's social responsibility objectives cost savings from the lending of specialist equipment for works as well as staff time.

Recommendations:

Applications must demonstrate that 20% of funding has been secured as part of the application. It is therefore recommended that opportunities and areas for funding through Veolia are scoped as applications for other funding sources are progressed. The fund is highly competitive and in-principle support should be sought from Veolia before applications are prepared.

A funding bid for the community garden should be developed in partnership with Dagenham Farm Growing Communities and Company Drinks (local food production and supply chains). Working with these organisations and local school groups would maximise the project's positive impact, as would work with the Sycamore Trust and local access groups.



Above: Waterlow Park community garden, including planting beds adopted by local school sites.



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16.8

Delivery plan

Environment Agency Funding:

Parsloes Park lies within an area identified as being of **at risk of flooding** (surface and ground water flooding, covering 1 in 30 year and 1 in 100 year events). These relate principally to the site of the lost pond near the Gale Street entrance, the lake and the culverted course of the Gores Brook. This is reflected by observations on site through the latter part of 2015 where ground water flooding was evident in relation to the ‘lost’ course of the brook (near and around the poorly draining eastern football pitches), and from anecdotal evidence from community stakeholders.

A **naturalistic approach** is recommended to dealing with the water resources of the site, seeing them as a **primary opportunity** for **multi-functional green infrastructure**, such as opening up the Gores Brook and creating space for water and riffles/meanders to slow the passage of water to the nearby urban areas. This would create benefits not only in terms of water storage and proactive flood risk management, but also landscape character, biodiversity and amenity, as well as creating microclimates and safe environments for play – a **recreational focus for a part of the site which lacks one**, as well as also restoring aspects of historic landscape character. The evidence of flood risk on site would create a compelling case for capital funding to help deliver the river restoration works.

Immediately south of the site in the opened section of the Gores Brook, **invasive species** such as Himalayan Balsam were evident on a site visit in October 2015. It is likely that these would spread along the watercourse, creating a potential case also for funding through the Environment Agency’s implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the purpose of which is to bring the UK’s rivers into good ecological status.

Issues and considerations:

Initial discussions have also suggested funding from the Environment Agency for scoping surveys to determine the type of capital works interventions required and to help with development of studies to assist with design and to secure the required consents for such works. It should be noted that capital works for river restoration could also potentially be co-funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (restoration of key features of the site’s heritage and which could contribute to a number of their stated outcomes). As part of such a bid and to support parallel planning applications a local flood risk assessment would be required for works in the flood plain. It is likely that a **Water Framework Directive checklist** would also be required for this stage. Proposals would **therefore need to be joined up with a future HLF bid** and would also need to **secure consensus** within the relevant organisations in the Environment Agency (fisheries, biodiversity, hydrology and development management).

16.9 Delivery plan

What could be funded:

Initial discussions with the Environment Agency have suggested considerable interest in the site and for a role for them as a joint Delivery Partner going forward. The evidence of flood risk on site would create a **compelling case for capital funding** from the Environment Agency (financed through Central Government, local levies, partnership funding and other sources) to help deliver the river restoration works, as a key part of managing such risk and to help the discharge of local authority responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

Recommendations:

Pursue scoping and research funding application to develop the capital project further. Engage with key Environment Agency stakeholders at **all stages of the development of a parallel HLF bid** so that co-funding opportunities and a range of partnership delivery roles are factored in from the outset. This should include joined up liaison with all of the relevant individual departments in the Environment Agency, so that any risks or conflicts to development of the project are identified and ironed out at an early stage.



River restoration © Copyright Rob Noble

17.0 Management Strategy



Above: Habitat creation and enhancement options,
The Squatts Local Nature Reserve

Consideration has been given to **sustainable and reduced expenditure** futures for the park which positively respond to the site's character and the conservation objectives in this masterplan. Given the current stage of design development and the fact that the design is likely to evolve further during the forthcoming funding bids and activity planning/business planning, a detailed 10 year Management and Maintenance Plan is not appropriate at the time of writing.

Therefore the focus here is on **effective and sustainable** management models, drawing from successful local and recent case studies, notably Beam Valley Parklands, where the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham has been working successfully with the Land Trust to secure the site's on-going management. The borough and the masterplan team have had initial discussions with the Land Trust regarding Parsloes Park. The Land Trust have interest in the site and the proposals and they consider that the project is a good match with their charitable objectives.

The Land Trust:

The Land Trust is an **independent Charitable Trust**, managing open spaces on behalf of and with local communities to provide cost effective management solutions for open space and green infrastructure. Primary foci include **protection of asset value** in green spaces and delivering a wide range of **community benefits**, such as harnessing social capital. Other key aspects of their experience include designing economic, efficient and risk-minimising specifications to deliver and manage green spaces.

Various options are available as part of an approach to working with the Land Trust on long term management of green space sites such as Parsloes Park. These include:

17.1

Management Strategy

- Taking land (whether a site or parts of a site) into their ownership to manage it in perpetuity;
- Acting as an interim manager on sites until an economically viable end-use is identified;
- Offering design services to ensure that on-going management is cost-effective;
- Involving landowners, the local community and other stakeholders in the development of appropriate maintenance plans and management regimes; and
- Providing specialist advice and consulting services, pioneering good practice.

The Trust was established in 2004 to own and **manage land in perpetuity** for **public benefit** by (then) English Partnerships (now the Home and Communities Agency - HCA), in response to the need for a new organisation that could work with private and public sector partners to provide a secure and sustainable exit strategy for brownfield land, land created through development or regeneration, and areas of public open space. They took ownership of 1,000 hectares of land and secured foundation capital for their operations before becoming an independent Charitable Trust in 2010. Currently over 60 sites are in their management.

Cost modelling and funding:

As the proposals for Parsloes Park evolve in detail it will be essential to develop a clear and full understanding of the long-term costs of managing and maintaining the Park in perpetuity. This includes looking at all the management and annual maintenance needs as well as future requirements for capital replacement. This would form a **strong foundation** for modelling future funding needs and options. This stage would consider the scope for both **endowment** and/or **service charge** opportunities that might come forward through the planning process as well as looking at **other revenue funding** streams that might be available via rents, income, grants and commercial opportunities as well as existing local authority budgets.

Key aspects of this stage would typically include:

- Analysis of on-going costs and modelling of future resource needs;
- Analysis of funding options linked to potential future development and London Borough of Barking and Dagenham budgets; assistance with leveraging funding;
- Presentation of overall costs and funding needs to provide in-perpetuity management of the Park.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Acknowledgements

Arup are grateful for the contribution made by the following organisations/ stakeholders in developing the masterplan:

- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- Greater London Authority
- Environment Agency
- Football Foundation
- Sport England
- English Cricket Board (ECB)
- Local football leagues
- Sydney Russell School
- Bethel Church
- Sustrans

Appendix 2

PARSLOES PARK

People's Park Alive



London Borough of Barking of
Barking and Dagenham

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Parsloes Park - People's Park Alive

Community engagement summary report | December 2015

ARUP



Community engagement

1.0 Introduction

This report summarises the approach and feedback received as part of community consultation exercises to inform the development of proposals for the Parsloes Park masterplan and management plan that meet current and emerging needs and aspirations. The community engagement undertaken was seen as the first steps of a longer term strategy for engagement during the lifetime of the project to restore and regenerate Parsloes Park. The approach therefore aimed to set the tone for engagement and begin to gather relevant information that could support future funding applications.

The objectives of community engagement for this project were:

- To raise awareness of the project to restore and enhance Parsloes Park;
- To communicate the intrinsic value of Parsloes Park and its potential for enhancement;
- To encourage a better understanding of the Park, its heritage, habitat, wildlife and the need for financial sustainability;
- To reach out to groups who currently under-utilise the Park and understand their desires and aspirations;
- To engage potential new users and begin to grow the audience for the Park;
- To encourage a sense of local ownership of, and pride in, the Park;
- To encourage the local community to get involved with the long-term future of the project; and
- To feed into future funding applications for the delivery of masterplan proposals and on-going management and maintenance.

Many of these objectives are also applicable to the longer term engagement opportunities that would be available during the restoration of Parsloes Park.



Parsloes Park

Overview

Masterplan consultation

Masterplan consultation

Parsloes Park

The importance of Parsloes Park in the heart of the borough has long been recognised.

It's our largest park, at 58 hectares, just over seven times the size of the Olympic Stadium!

The park was once one of the most popular in the borough, with many opportunities for play, a rich assortment of plants and flowers in and around the lake and gardens, and family events.

Today, we're working to explore opportunities to re-design Parsloes Park in a financially sustainable way.

Its central location and good transport links means that Parsloes Park has the potential to become a destination for people once more, reaching more of the community for a wider range of activities and experiences.



Masterplan

We've appointed [Arup](#) to lead on masterplanning the regeneration and restoration of Parsloes Park.

This is an opportunity to address a number of priorities for people including:

- healthy living
- opportunities for sport, play and recreation
- managing flood risk
- transition to low carbon lifestyles through encouraging active travel.

These priorities will be addressed while conserving and enhancing the park's heritage and biodiversity assets.

Consultation – We want your views

We're at the very start of this process and it's important to understand and incorporate the views of local people who both use the park and live in the area, into the longer term vision for the Park.

As part of this process, we would really like to hear your views on the park, including how you use it and what improvements you would like to see.

[Parsloes Park online consultation](#) →

This consultation closes on Sunday 31 January 2016.



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2.0 Approach

The approach to community engagement responded to challenges including longer term aspirations and requirements for engagement, a project programme over Autumn and Winter when the Park is less well used, limited recorded information on existing users and managing community expectations to reflect the need for realistic, financially sustainable and deliverable proposals.

The approach to engagement followed two stages:

- information gathering and awareness raising; and
- an engagement event held on Saturday 12th December.

Information gathering and awareness raising

This part of the approach intended to introduce the community to the project at an early stage and to serve as a record of feedback during the project, gathering feedback that could inform later stages.

Information about the project was provided on the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham website at www.lbbd.gov.uk/parsloespark

Left Consultation website and engagement event at Dagenham Library

and an online consultation was made available for the community to submit their views from 12th November 2015 and will close on 31st January 2016. A copy of the masterplan consultation questions is shown opposite. The website was accompanied by press releases and social media posts including a residents newsletter, local press, Facebook and Twitter.

An interim report dated 11th December recorded a total of 45 responses, which are summarised in section 3.0 Feedback.

Engagement event

An engagement event was held between 10:00 and 16:00 on Saturday 12th December at Dagenham Library. The event communicated the work undertaken to date and emerging proposals. The event was advertised through local press, social media, a flyer drop to around 11,000 homes in Parsloes, Alibon and Mayesbrook wards and posters sent to Children's Centres, Community Safety ward panel members, Libraries, Leisure centres, Eastbury Manor House, Valence House and Relish cafe.

Exhibition boards were displayed explaining the project and proposals and representatives from the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and Arup were available to speak to members of the community. Approximately 25 people visited the exhibition and verbal and written feedback was gathered through discussions and feedback forms. As of 21st December, a total of 16 feedback forms and two feedback emails had been received.

3.0 Feedback

The majority of people visiting the engagement event who filled in a feedback form stated that they were supportive of the initial proposals.

Website

An interim report provided data on the usage of the Park and improvements that people would like to see.

- 38% of respondents used the Park daily and 27% used the Park weekly;
- 34% of respondents used the Park for leisurely strolls of dog walking, 20% used the Park for getting from A to B and 19% of respondents used the Park for play, games or recreation.

Social media

Comments received on social media posts included:

- suggestions for improvements relating to opportunities for play, maintenance and cleaning, a dog park, pull up bars, toilets and a youth centre;
- concern about the removal of some facilities and equipment from other parks in the borough (such as Valence Park); and
- memories of the park including the flamingos, formal gardens, paddling pool and play areas.

Engagement event

The feedback provided at the engagement event included:

- The Park has been overlooked for too long;
- the Park needs to be upgraded;
- support for bringing the Park back to its former glory;
- support for preventing the Park from being left in disrepair; and
- one comment suggested that the proposals had too little play opportunities for children aged 2 to 10 years.

The majority of people completing feedback forms used the Park for leisurely strolls or dog walking (nine respondents).

Changes suggested included volunteering opportunities, more activities for children and women.

Suggestions for improvements included:

- more seating;
- cafe / team rooms and toilet facilities;
- improvements to planting including flowers, indigenous trees and planting;
- opening up the Gores Brook and areas of wetland;
- improvements to the lake and exploring opportunities for fishing;

“A wide-ranging plan to make very good use of the Park and make a more coherent space. Lots of opportunities for education and fun.”

4.0 Next steps

- sports facilities including tennis courts, a cricket ground, outdoor gym.
- play facilities and more activities for children including climbing rocks, see-saw, swings and skate park.
- improvements to cleaning and maintenance including provision of litter and dog bins; and
- live concerts.

Areas identified to be prioritised for improvements included the childrens' play area, the Gores Brook and areas of wetland, trees, paddling pool / skate park, tennis courts, safety and security improvements (such as CCTV or measures to reduce perceived intimidation of some users).

Feedback will continue to be collected through the website until 31st January 2016. The feedback provided will inform the development and refinement of the masterplan and management plan.

In addition to the community engagement set out in this summary report, stakeholder engagement has been undertaken with representatives of the local interest groups and users adjacent to the Park, Council officers, potential delivery partners and statutory consultees for future proposals (such as the Environment Agency and Natural England).

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CABINET**11 July 2017**

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: Debt Management Performance and Write-Offs 2016/17 (Quarter 4) | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment | |
| Open Report | For Information |
| Wards Affected: None | Key Decision: No |
| Report Author: Gill Hills, Head of Revenues, Elevate East London | Contact Details: Tel: 0208 724 8615 E-mail: gill.hills@elevateeastlondon.co.uk |
| Accountable Director: Kathy Freeman, Finance Director | |
| Accountable Director: Claire Symonds, Chief Operating Officer | |
| Summary | |
| <p>This report sets out the performance of the Council's partner, Elevate East London, in carrying out the contractual debt management function on behalf of the Council. This report covers the fourth and final quarter of the financial year 2016/17. The report also includes summaries of debt written off in accordance with the write off policy that was first approved by Cabinet on 18 October 2011 and with an updated version having been approved by Cabinet on 25 April 2017. Overall performance of Elevate East London is good, with most targets being met or exceeded.</p> | |
| Recommendation(s) | |
| <p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the contents of this report as it relates to the performance of the debt management function carried out by the Revenues and Benefits service operated by Elevate East London, including the performance of enforcement agents; and (ii) Note the debt write-offs for the fourth quarter of 2016/17. | |
| Reason | |
| <p>Assisting in the Council's Policy aim of ensuring an efficient organisation delivering its statutory duties in the most practical and cost-effective way. This ensures good financial practice and adherence to the Council's Financial Rules on the reporting of debt management performance and the total amounts of debt written-off each financial quarter.</p> | |

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council's joint venture company, Elevate East London LLP (Elevate), operates the Council's Revenues, Benefits, General Income and Rents Service. The service is responsible for the management and collection of the Council's debt. It also collects rent on behalf of B&D Reside. Council debts not collected by Elevate are not included in this report, for example parking and road traffic debt (prior to warrants being granted) and hostel and private sector leasing debt.
- 1.2 This report sets out performance for the fourth quarter of the 2016/17 financial year and covers the overall progress of each element of the service since April 2016. In addition, it summarises debts that have been agreed for write off in accordance with the Council's Financial Rules. All write offs are processed in accordance with the Council's debt management policy.
- 1.3 The performance of Elevate East London has seen improvements in collection. The targets for Council Tax arrears, Business Rates, leasehold collection, and general income were all met. The targets for Council Tax and Rent collection were missed, but considering the effect of welfare reform performance has nevertheless improved year on year. The table below compares performance between 2015/16 and 2016/17. Rent collection is not comparable as the method of measurement has been changed.

| Service | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | Increase / decrease |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|
| Council Tax current year | 94.80% | 95.50% | 0.70% |
| Council Tax arrears | £2,276,112 | £2,302,662 | £26,550 |
| General Income | 95.60% | 97.78% | 2.18% |
| Leaseholders | 96.86% | 98.64% | 1.78% |
| Community Care | 75.14% | 82.94% | 7.80% |
| Business Rates | 98.20% | 98.30% | 0.10% |
| Commercial Rent | 96% | 97.50% | 1.50% |

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 Table 1 below sets out the performance achieved for the main areas of debt for quarter four, 2016/17. The percentage collection is shown alongside the amount collected, the total collected for these lines of debts is also shown.

Table 1: Collection Rate Performance – 2016/17

| Type of Debt | Year-end target | Year-end Performance | Variance | Actual collected £m | 2015/16 percentage | 2015/16 Cash collected |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Council Tax | 95.60% | 95.50% | -0.1% | £63.707m | 94.8% | £60.146 |
| Council Tax Arrears | £1.992m | £2.303m | +£0.311m | £2.303m | N/A | £2.276 |
| NNDR | 98.2% | 98.3% | +0.1% | £58.035m | 98.2% | £55.634 |
| Rent | 98.16% | 96.75% | -1.41% | £101.422m | N/A | £101.380 |
| Leaseholders | 98.00% | 98.64% | +0.64% | £4.151m | 96.86% | £3.818 |
| General Income | 95.60% | 97.78% | +2.18% | £101.186m | 95.6% | £99.388 |
| Total | | | | £330.804m | | £322,642 |

Council Tax Collection Performance

2.2 Council Tax collection ended the year 0.1% (£67k) below the profile target at 95.5%. This is 0.7% above last year and the equivalent of £433k additional revenue. It represents a real improvement and a continuation of the year on year improvements seen over recent times

2.3 Council Tax collection remains challenging with Council Tax Support (CTS) claimants having reduced by 1,491 since the start of the year or 12.45%. This reduction in CTS payments has resulted in an increase in the amount of Council Tax to be collected from those residents most likely to be in financial difficulty. The typical methods of enforcement (enforcement agents and committal) are least effective with these residents. A longer-term approach has been adopted, allowing them more time to catch up with their arrears before facing enforcement action.

Council Tax Arrears

2.4 By the end of year £2.303m had been collected; this is £0.311m above the target of £1.992m.

2.5 As with in-year Council Tax, a more proactive approach taken in 2015/16 has been continued into 2016/17. This approach, which allows taxpayers to catch up and take a more holistic view of their debt, has resulted in a significant rise in arrears collection.

2.6 Council Tax collection for all prior years continues and is classified as arrears. Whilst pursuit of these debts does not cease, the older the debt becomes the harder it is to collect. In many older cases the debtor has absconded and cannot be traced. The table below shows the collection rates for each year in which the debt is raised and what percentage has been collected over time.

2.7 The Council Tax team focus on collecting both current and arrears debts to ensure that customers do not accrue unmanageable Council Tax arrears. Since the introduction of CTS this has become a vital part of the service and every effort is made to help customers bring their accounts up to date in the shortest possible period.

Table 2: Cumulative Council Tax Collection

| Quarter 4 - 2016/17 | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Year | Charge Year (Current) | Year 1 (Arrears) | Year 2 (Arrears) | Year 3 (Arrears) | Year 4 (Arrears) | Year 5 (Arrears) | Year 6 (Arrears) | Year 7 (Arrears) |
| 2009/10 | 92.9 | 95.0 | 95.7 | 96.1 | 96.4 | 96.6 | 96.8 | 96.9 |
| 2010/11 | 92.9 | 95.0 | 95.7 | 96.1 | 96.3 | 96.6 | 96.7 | |
| 2011/12 | 94.1 | 95.7 | 96.3 | 96.6 | 96.8 | 97.0 | | |
| 2012/13 | 94.6 | 96.2 | 96.6 | 96.9 | 97.1 | | | |
| 2013/14 | 94.1 | 96.0 | 96.6 | 96.9 | | | | |
| 2014/15 | 94.3 | 96.1 | 96.7 | | | | | |
| 2015/16 | 94.8 | 96.4 | | | | | | |

Business Rates (NNDR) Collection Performance

- 2.8 The NNDR collection rate achieved 98.3% by the end of the fourth quarter. This is 0.1% above the target of 98.2%.
- 2.9 It was reported in the report for each previous quarter of 2016/17 that collection was adversely affected by new businesses starting in the borough increasing the net collectable debit. These in year changes created a charge to the end of the year, but, as NNDR is payable monthly and there is a lag before payments start, this lowered the collection rate in earlier quarters. This meant that these payments came through in quarter 4 so that the target was not only met, but exceeded representing an excellent outcome for the year.

Rent Collection Performance

- 2.10 As at the end of the year rent collection had reached 96.75% which while below target of 98.16% it was up 0.25% on last year against a backdrop of continually falling HB. The proportion of the rent paid by HB was 49.17% in 2015/16 compared to 51.33% in 2014/15. In 2016/17, it fell further to 46.36%. The HB caseload has fallen this year from 11,980 in March to 11,495 in March, a fall of 485 or 4.1%.
- 2.11 Although rent collection was challenging in 2016/17 the HRA budget of £90,538 was exceeded by £330k.
- 2.12 The reduction in housing benefit claimants has affected rent collection, however Barking and Dagenham is not alone in facing this challenge. The table below contains data obtained from the DCLG showing the number of housing benefit claimants between March 16 and February 17. These figures are affected in some cases by the universal credit roll out, the demography of the borough and the speed of processing, but still shows that the reductions in claimants in Barking and Dagenham are not out of the ordinary.

| London Borough | Mar-16 | Feb-17 | Variation | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Hounslow | 21,290 | 17,181 | -4,109 | -19.3% |
| Croydon | 34,540 | 28,153 | -6,387 | -18.5% |
| Sutton | 11,805 | 9,701 | -2,104 | -17.8% |
| Southwark | 35,113 | 30,650 | -4,463 | -12.7% |
| City of London | 976 | 865 | -111 | -11.4% |
| Merton | 12,721 | 11,904 | -817 | -6.4% |
| Lambeth | 38,292 | 36,076 | -2,216 | -5.8% |
| Richmond upon Thames | 9,320 | 8,880 | -440 | -4.7% |
| Hammersmith and Fulham | 19,054 | 18,237 | -817 | -4.3% |
| Barking and Dagenham | 21,753 | 20,824 | -929 | -4.3% |
| Kensington and Chelsea | 16,892 | 16,219 | -673 | -4.0% |
| Bromley | 18,228 | 17,512 | -716 | -3.9% |
| Lewisham | 33,773 | 32,454 | -1,319 | -3.9% |
| Wandsworth | 25,771 | 24,864 | -907 | -3.5% |
| Waltham Forest | 24,779 | 23,951 | -828 | -3.3% |
| Islington | 29,819 | 28,871 | -948 | -3.2% |
| Greenwich | 27,269 | 26,526 | -743 | -2.7% |
| Kingston upon Thames | 9,098 | 8,852 | -246 | -2.7% |

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Camden | 26,299 | 25,618 | -681 | -2.6% |
| Ealing | 32,548 | 31,719 | -829 | -2.5% |
| Haringey | 34,289 | 33,432 | -857 | -2.5% |
| Tower Hamlets | 35,654 | 34,768 | -886 | -2.5% |
| Hillingdon | 20,403 | 19,914 | -489 | -2.4% |
| Newham | 35,438 | 34,648 | -790 | -2.2% |
| Hackney | 40,753 | 39,879 | -874 | -2.1% |
| Brent | 36,247 | 35,492 | -755 | -2.1% |
| Redbridge | 18,665 | 18,358 | -307 | -1.6% |
| Harrow | 16,335 | 16,112 | -223 | -1.4% |
| Enfield | 34,342 | 33,973 | -369 | -1.1% |
| Barnet | 30,013 | 29,845 | -168 | -0.6% |
| Havering | 14,522 | 14,445 | -77 | -0.5% |
| Bexley | 14,075 | 14,046 | -29 | -0.2% |
| Westminster | 23,963 | 24,084 | 121 | 0.5% |
| Total | 804,039 | 768,053 | -35,986 | -4.5% |

2.13 Throughout the year the rent team sought to meet these challenges by:

- Following a comprehensive continuous service improvement plan;
- Deploying of additional resources;
- Promoting DHP applications where possible;
- Carrying out regular rent campaigns - on the door step, by telephone, by text and by email;
- Targeted outbound telephone calls to tenants in arrears;
- Process automation to maximise the time available to focus on dealing with tenants in arrears; and
- Debt segmentation for targeted action.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

2.14 Elevate promotes DHP whenever possible and as a result 92% of the budget was utilised in 2016/17. A portion of the available DHP budget is allocated to Housing. Work continues with Housing to help them to utilise this funding going forward.

Reside Collection Performance

2.15 In addition to collecting rent owed on Council tenancies, Elevate also collects the rent for the B&D Reside portfolio.

2.16 Rent collection, excluding former tenant arrears, performed well with a collection rate of 99.54%.

Leaseholders' Debt Collection Performance

2.17 At the end of the year collection reached 98.64%, with a total of £4.151m having been collected, this is 0.64% above target. Continued good performance is supported by early contact with those tenants falling behind with payments.

General Income Collection Performance

- 2.18 General Income is the term used to describe the ancillary sources of income available to the Council which support the cost of local service provision. Examples of areas from which the Council derives income collected by Elevate include: social care charges; rechargeable works for housing; nursery fees; trade refuse; hire of halls and football pitches. The One Oracle financial system is used for the billing and collection of these debts and to measure Elevate's performance.
- 2.19 At the end of the year collections in this area remained strong reaching 97.78% with £101.186m collected.

Adults' Care and Support: – Collection of Care Charges (Community and Residential)

- 2.20 The Council introduced a new Care and Support Charging policy for 2015/16 following the implementation of the Care Act 2014.
- 2.21 Collection of debt for Community and Residential Care is reported separately. Residential care debt which the Council has secured by way of a property charge under its Deferred Payment scheme, is not included in these figures. The agreed measure for 2016/17 is the amount collected against the in-year debt that has been invoiced.
- 2.22 The current year collection rate for Community Care was 82.94% which was 2.94% above target for the year. The collection rate in 2016/17 for arrears cases was 87.35%, the year before this was 87.24%. For Residential Care charges the in-year collection rate was 82.64% and 94.85% for arrears.
- 2.23 The debt recovery process for these debts is similar to that of other debts, but with extra recognition given to particular circumstances. To ensure that the action taken is appropriate and to maximise payments, each case is considered on its own merits at each stage of the recovery process and wherever possible payment arrangements are agreed. In addition, a further financial reassessment of a client's contribution is undertaken where there is extraordinary expenditure associated with the care of the service user. The relevant procedures have been updated to take account of the Care Act.

Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) – Road Traffic Enforcement

- 2.24 This recovery work only includes debts due to Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) for parking, bus lane and box junction infringements once a warrant has been obtained by Environmental and Enforcement Services (Parking Services) from the Traffic Enforcement Centre (TEC). Elevate enforce these warrants through enforcement agents acting on behalf of the Council and closely monitor the performance of these companies.
- 2.25 Overall collection rates on PCNs are reported by Parking Services. Elevate's collection performance is measured only when a batch of warrants has expired, i.e. after 12 months. Since April 2016 until 31 March 2017, 22 batches of warrants have expired for which the collection rate is 15.2% this is an increase in collection from

the previous year which was 14.6% The total amount of cash collected through enforcement of road traffic warrants that expired in the year is £780,713.

Housing Benefit Overpayments

- 2.26 By the end of the fourth quarter collection totalled £5,003,680 with £11,994,351 having been raised in new overpayment debt. A driver of the increase in invoicing is the receipt by the Benefits Service of a high volume of cancellation notices from the DWP following an exercise to identify discrepancies within customer's applications. The total outstanding housing benefit overpayment debt for the council stands at £22,865,214 with approximately 65% of this debt being actively recovered via arrangements, tracing, letters to customers and through the referral of debts to a debt recovery agencies. As a result of two DWP fraud investigations a total £752k of debt has been created. These are part of a larger multi-borough investigation which has also increased the level of overpayments to be collected.
- 2.27 Collection at the end of the fourth quarter stands at 41.7% which is up from 37.8% at the end of quarter 3. The target is 42%, was therefore just missed.
- 2.28 The introduction of Real Time Information (RTI) by the DWP has greatly improved the timeliness and accuracy of information received by Local authorities regarding benefit claimants. Previously, Local Authorities relied upon the claimant to provide information to them regarding any changes in their circumstances, since the introduction of RTI this reliance has significantly reduced and claims can now be updated in a timely fashion. However, this resultant effect of this is to increase the amount of overpayment created.
- 2.29 Housing benefit is funded by central government and is claimed back by Local Authorities via the subsidy claim. Where benefit has been overpaid the full amount paid is claimed through the subsidy claim and the overpayment collected and retained by the Local Authority.
- 2.30 The data below has been obtained from the DCLG and shows the creation of overpayment by London boroughs from 2014/15 to 2015/16. Data for 2016/17 will not be available until September 2017.
- 2.31 The data shows that Barking and Dagenham saw an increase of 61% in overpayment between the two years. However, these figures are affected by the demography of the borough, speed of processing and whether RTI is being used to adjust claims in a timely manner. Elevate utilises RTI effectively and therefore benefit payments are more accurate and the correct level of overpayment is created.

| Authority | Created (000) | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | Variation | Percentage |
| Waltham Forest | £9,003 | £15,542 | £6,539 | 73% |
| Barking and Dagenham | £6,593 | £10,603 | £4,010 | 61% |
| Tower Hamlets | £10,929 | £17,386 | £6,457 | 59% |
| Camden | £5,555 | £8,561 | £3,006 | 54% |
| Croydon | £13,368 | £20,246 | £6,878 | 51% |
| Greenwich | £5,029 | £7,378 | £2,349 | 47% |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|------|
| Lewisham | £9,024 | £12,494 | £3,470 | 38% |
| Bexley | £3,736 | £5,042 | £1,306 | 35% |
| Ealing | £10,746 | £14,427 | £3,681 | 34% |
| Brent | £14,537 | £19,363 | £4,826 | 33% |
| Hounslow | £7,909 | £10,493 | £2,584 | 33% |
| Sutton | £4,266 | £5,482 | £1,216 | 29% |
| Hackney | £12,466 | £15,902 | £3,436 | 28% |
| Hillingdon | £6,578 | £8,230 | £1,652 | 25% |
| Redbridge | £5,783 | £7,216 | £1,433 | 25% |
| Wandsworth | £11,549 | £14,135 | £2,586 | 22% |
| Southwark | £10,560 | £12,727 | £2,167 | 21% |
| Bromley | £5,683 | £6,583 | £900 | 16% |
| Merton | £5,279 | £5,968 | £689 | 13% |
| Richmond upon Thames | £2,974 | £3,332 | £358 | 12% |
| Kingston upon Thames | £3,588 | £3,903 | £315 | 9% |
| Westminster | £7,776 | £8,075 | £299 | 4% |
| Islington | £7,116 | £7,312 | £196 | 3% |
| Enfield | £9,309 | £9,482 | £173 | 2% |
| Hammersmith and Fulham | £7,827 | £7,849 | £22 | 0% |
| Lambeth | £13,352 | £13,350 | -£2 | 0% |
| Newham | £13,213 | £12,811 | -£402 | -3% |
| Harrow | £5,714 | £5,487 | -£227 | -4% |
| Haringey | £14,281 | £13,293 | -£988 | -7% |
| City of London | £177 | £154 | -£23 | -13% |
| Kensington and Chelsea | £4,986 | £4,281 | -£705 | -14% |
| Barnet | £10,723 | £8,855 | -£1,868 | -17% |
| Havering | £4,820 | £3,909 | -£911 | -19% |

Enforcement Agent (Bailiff) Performance

2.32 Enforcement agent action is a key tool for the Council to recover overdue debts but is only one area of collection work and is always the action of last resort.

2.33 Information on the performance of the enforcement agents is set out in the table below by type of debt for the whole of 2016/17.

Table 3: Enforcement Agent Collection Rates – 2016/17

| Service | Value sent to enforcement agents £ | No. of cases | Total collected by enforcement agents £ | 2016/17 Collection rate % |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Council Tax | £4,941,845 | 8481 | £476,718 | 10% |
| NNDR | £1,598,404.25 | 420 | £396,435.70 | 24.80% |
| Commercial Rent | £47,242.87 | 14 | £47,242.87 | 100.00% |
| General Income | £107,498.08 | 163 | £49,136.91 | 45.71% |

Debt Write-Offs: Quarter 4 2016/17

2.34 All debt deemed suitable for write off has been through all the recovery processes and is recommended for write off in accordance with the Council's policy. The authority to "write off" debt remains with the Council. The value of debt recommended to the Chief Operating Officer and subsequently approved for write off during the fourth quarter of 2016/17 totalled £65,656. The value and number of cases written off in each quarter of 2106/17 is provided in Appendix A. The total amount for the year was £452,888. The level of write-offs was lower in 2016/17 compared to earlier years as resource was focused on collection.

2.35 Ninety-one debts were written off in quarter four for which the reasons are set out below. The percentage relates to the proportion of write offs by value, or by number:

Table 4: Write off numbers – 2016/17 Quarter 4

| Absconded/not traced | Uneconomic to pursue | Debtor Insolvent | Deceased | Other reasons |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------|---------------|
| £1,980.16 | £15,766.68 | £21,433.04 | £1,109.93 | £25,366.67 |
| | 24.01% | 32.64% | 1.69% | 38.64% |

| Absconded/not traced | Uneconomic to pursue | Debtor Insolvent | Deceased | Other reasons |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------|---------------|
| 1 | 70 | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| 1.10% | 76.92% | 5.49% | 5.49% | 10.99% |

(The 'other reasons' category includes examples such as: where the debt liability is removed by the Court or the debtor is living outside the jurisdiction of the English Courts and is unlikely to return).

2.36 The figures in Appendix B show the total write-offs for 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17.

3. Options Appraisal

3.1 This is an information report.

4. Consultation

4.1 This report has been prepared by Elevate and finalised with the agreement of the Finance Director.

5 Financial Issues

Implications completed by: Stephen Hinds, Chief Accountant.

5.1 Collecting all sums due is critical to the Council's ability to function. In view of this, monitoring performance is a key part of the monthly meetings with Elevate.

- 5.2 The monthly meetings between Elevate and the Council focus on the areas where the targets are not being achieved and discuss other possibilities to improve collection.
- 5.3 At the end of quarter 4, collection on Council Tax, and Rents were behind the profiled target. It is extremely important that performance improves in the future to prevent the Council from suffering a financial loss. All other areas exceed the targets and this should be congratulated.
- 5.4 Elevate deployed additional resources to improve collection on Council Tax and there is a service improvement plan in place to improve collection on Rent.
- 5.5 The level of write offs at the end of quarter four is £452,888. It is important that bad debts are written off promptly for budgeting purposes so the Council can maintain appropriate bad debt provision.
- 5.6 If debts are not promptly collected, this will have an adverse impact on the Council's overall financial position. Increases required to the Council's bad debt position are charged to the Council's revenue accounts and reduces the funding available for other expenditure.

6. Legal Issues

Implications completed by: Dr. Paul Field, Senior Corporate Governance Lawyer, Law & Governance

- 6.1 Monies owned to the Council in the form of debts are an asset that has the prospect of a payment sometime in the future. The decision not to pursue a debt carries a cost and so a decision not to pursue a debt is not taken lightly.
- 6.2 The Council holds a fiduciary duty to the ratepayers and the government to make sure money is spent wisely and to recover debts owed to it, insofar as possible. If requests for payment are not complied with then the Council seeks to recover money owed to it by way of court action, once all other options, such as pre-action correspondence and arrangements to pay are exhausted. While a consistent message that the Council is not a soft touch is sent out with Court actions there can come a time where a pragmatic approach has to be taken with debts as on occasion they are uneconomical to recover in terms of the cost of pursuing the debt outweighing the benefit to be obtained, or where the tenant is not of financial means to pay. The maxim *no good throwing good money after bad* applies. In the case of rent arrears, the court proceedings will be for a possession order and money judgement for arrears. However, a possession order and subsequent eviction order is a discretionary remedy and the courts will more often than not suspend the possession order on condition the tenant makes a contribution to their arrears.
- 6.3 Whilst the use of 12 month Introductory Tenancies may have some impact in terms promoting prompt payment of rent, people can still fall behind and get into debt.
- 6.4 In almost all cases, the best approach is to maintain a dialogue with those in debt to the Council, to offer early advice and help in making repayments if they need it and to highlight the importance of payment of rent and Council tax. These payments ought to be considered as priority debts rather than other debts, such as credit

loans as without a roof over their heads it will be very difficult to access support and employment and escape from a downward spiral of debt.

- 6.5 The decision to write off debts has been delegated to Chief Officers who must have regard to the Financial Rules.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

- **Appendix A** – Debt Write Off Table for 2016/17, with a summary table and details for each quarter provided.
- **Appendix B** – Total debts written off in 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17.

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Table 1: 2016-2017 Write off summary:

| Write Offs £ | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------|---------|-------------|----------|----------|
| Quarter 1 Totals | 32,219 | 19,825 | 18,229 | 5,192 | 0 | 23,685 | 99,150 |
| Quarter 2 Totals | 117,682 | 12,105 | 0 | 16,005 | 0 | 109,190 | 254,982 |
| Quarter 3 Totals | 12,630 | 12,637 | 7832.03 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33,100 |
| Quarter 4 Totals | £17,517 | £28,241 | £12,913 | £6,986 | £0 | £0 | £65,656 |
| 2016-17 Totals | £180,049 | £72,808 | £38,973 | £28,183 | £0 | £132,875 | £452,888 |

Table 2: Debts Written Off during Qtr 1 2016/17

| Write-offs: £ | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|--------|
| Apr-16 | Under 2k | 17,795 | 7,987 | 14,663 | 0 | 0 | 1,781 | 42,226 |
| | Over 2k | 3,773 | 0 | 3,566 | 5,192 | 0 | 21,904 | 34,435 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 21,568 | 7,987 | 18,229 | 5,192 | 0 | 23,685 | 76,661 |
| May-16 | Under 2k | 9,789 | 6,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15,990 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 9,789 | 6,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15,990 |
| Jun-16 | Under 2k | 862 | 3,114 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,976 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 2,524 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,524 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 862 | 5,637 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6,500 |
| Quarter 1 Totals | | 32,219 | 19,825 | 18,229 | 5,192 | 0 | 23,685 | 99,150 |

Table 3: Count for Quarter 1 2016/17

| Write-offs £ | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-------------|------|-------|
| Apr-16 | Under 2k | 66 | 23 | 45 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 135 |
| | Over 2k | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 10 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 67 | 23 | 46 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 145 |
| May-16 | Under 2k | 26 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 39 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 26 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 39 |
| Jun-16 | Under 2k | 6 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 31 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 6 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| Quarter 1 Totals | | 99 | 65 | 46 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 219 |

Table 4: Debts Written Off during Qtr 2 2016/17

| Write-offs £ | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|----------|---------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jul-16 | Under 2k | 31,785 | 5,529 | 0 | 2,777 | 0 | 0 | 40,090 |
| | Over 2k | 2,572 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 109,190 | 111,762 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 34,357 | 5,529 | 0 | 2,777 | 0 | 109,190 | 151,852 |
| Aug-16 | Under 2k | 10,720 | 255 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10,976 |
| | Over 2k | 70,229 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 70,229 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 13,228 | 0 | 0 | 13,228 |
| | Total | 80,949 | 255 | 0 | 13,228 | 0 | 0 | 94,432 |
| Sep-16 | Under 2k | 2,376 | 6,321 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8,697 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 2,376 | 6,321 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8,697 |
| Quarter 2 Totals | | 117,682 | 12,105 | 0 | 16,005 | 0 | 109,190 | 254,982 |

Table 5: Count for Quarter 2 2016/17

| Write-offs £ | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Jul-16 | Under 2k | 71 | 34 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 107 |
| | Over 2k | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 26 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 72 | 34 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 25 | 133 |
| Aug-16 | Under 2k | 30 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33 |
| | Over 2k | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Total | 51 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 55 |
| Sep-16 | Under 2k | 18 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 18 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 43 |
| Quarter 2 Totals | | 141 | 62 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 25 | 231 |

Table 6: Debts Written Off during Qtr 3 2016/17

| Write-offs | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|----------|-------------|----------|---------------|
| Oct-16 | Under 2k | 16 | 5,673 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5,689 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 3,615 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,615 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 16 | 9,288 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9,304 |
| Nov-16 | Under 2k | 4,688 | 2,174 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6,862 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 4,688 | 2,174 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6,862 |
| Dec-16 | Under 2k | 7,926 | 1,176 | 7,832 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16,934 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 7,926 | 1,176 | 7,832 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16,934 |
| Quarter 3 Totals | | 12,630 | 12,637 | 7,832 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33,100 |

Table 7: Count for Quarter 3 2016/17

| Write-offs | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Oct-16 | Under 2k | 4 | 12 | 0 | 0 | | | 16 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | | | 1 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 0 |
| | Total | 4 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Nov-16 | Under 2k | 15 | 10 | 0 | 0 | | | 25 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 0 |
| | Total | 15 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| Dec-16 | Under 2k | 13 | 2 | 24 | 0 | | | 39 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | 0 |
| | Total | 13 | 2 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 39 |
| Quarter 3 Totals | | 32 | 25 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 81 |

Table 8: Debts Written Off during Qtr 4 2016/17

| Write-offs | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| Jan-17 | Under 2k | 4,747 | 3,565 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8,312 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,256 | 0 | 0 | 4,256 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 4,747 | 3,565 | 0 | 4,256 | 0 | 0 | 12,568 |
| Feb-17 | Under 2k | 9,953 | 626 | 698 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11,276 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 22,888 | 12,215 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35,103 |
| | Total | 9,953 | 23,514 | 12,913 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 46,379 |
| Mar-17 | Under 2k | 2,817 | 1,162 | 0 | 2,731 | 0 | 0 | 6,710 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 2,817 | 1,162 | 0 | 2,731 | 0 | 0 | 6,710 |
| Quarter 4 Totals | | £17,517 | £28,241 | £12,913 | £6,986 | £0 | £0 | £65,656 |

Table 9: Count for Quarter 4 2016/17

| Write-offs | | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|----------|----------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Jan-17 | Under 2k | 21 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 21 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Feb-17 | Under 2k | 36 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 39 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | Total | 36 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 41 |
| Mar-17 | Under 2k | 16 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| | Over 2k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Over 10k | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 16 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Quarter 4 Totals | | 73 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 91 |

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Table 1: Debts written off during 2011/12

| Write Offs | Housing Benefits | General Income Debts | Former Tenant Arrears | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|----------|------------|
| 2011/12 Totals | £260,487 | £145,284 | £987,383 | £2,808 | £205,789 | £772,683 | £2,374,434 |

Table 2: Debts written off during 2012/13

| Write Offs | Housing Benefits | General Income Debts | Former Tenant Arrears | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------|-------------|----------|------------|
| 2012/13 Totals | £110,876 | £141,896 | £886,890 | £23,360 | £1,015,408 | £569,842 | £2,748,272 |

Table 3: Debts written off during 2013/14

| Write Offs | Housing Benefits | General Income Debts | Former Tenant Arrears | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|----------|------------|
| 2013/14 Totals | £141,147 | £256,804 | £806,989 | £8,681 | £80,755 | £221,380 | £1,515,756 |

Table 4: Debts written off during 2014/15

| Write Offs | Housing Benefits | General Income Debts | Former Tenant Arrears | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|----------|------------|
| 2014/15 Totals | £291,469 | £88,675 | £1,163,134 | £3,166 | £205,007 | £517,201 | £2,268,652 |

Table 5: Debts written off during 2015/16

| Write Offs | Housing Benefits | General Income Debts | Former Tenant Arrears | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 2015-16 Totals | £211,930 | £141,411 | £693,017 | £6,075 | £549,051 | £741,557 | £2,343,041 |

Table 6: Debts written off during 2016/17

| Write Offs | Housing Benefits | General Income | FTA | Rents | Council Tax | NNDR | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 2016-17 Totals | £180,049 | £72,808 | £38,973 | £28,183 | £0 | £132,875 | £452,888 |

CABINET**11 July 2017**

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: Teresa Greene Community Centre: New Lease Arrangement | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment | |
| Open Report with Exempt Appendix 1 (relevant legislation: paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended) | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: Village | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Andy Bere, Asset Strategy Manager | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3047 E-mail: andy.bere@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Director: Andrew Sivess, Head of Assets and Investments | |
| Accountable Strategic Director: John East, Strategic Director Growth and Homes | |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>In December 2010, Cabinet agreed to lease several Community Centres on 30-year lease terms at peppercorn rents as part of its future management arrangement of community centres. Teresa Green was one of eight community centres subject to this arrangement and a 30-year lease term was agreed in 2011</p> <p>In 2016, the Council were approached by the Community Association with a proposal to undertake significant maintenance of the building (new windows, boilers and flooring) estimated to be in the region of £100k - £150k, in return for a longer lease of 50 years.</p> <p>The details of the site, its use, the works proposed by the Community Association and the financial impact on the Council are outlined in this report.</p> <p>A new arrangement would be progressed based on a market rental valuation being obtained and the longer-term development potential of the site, whilst having regard to its current viability and the community benefits it provides. The Community Association have been made aware of the market rent (as outlined in Appendix 1) and formal negotiations have commenced.</p> <p>Under the Council's Constitution, the granting of a new 50-year lease requires Cabinet approval.</p> | |
| <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <p>(i) Agree to the surrender of the existing lease and the granting of a new 50-year lease based on the terms outlined in the report, in accordance with the Council's Land Acquisition and Disposal Rules; and</p> | |

- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Growth and Homes, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of Law and Governance, to negotiate and finalise terms and execute all the legal agreements and other documents on behalf of the Council.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In December 2010, Cabinet agreed to lease a number of Community Centres on 30-year lease terms at peppercorn rents as part of its future management arrangement of community centres.
- 1.2 The transfer to various community associations allowed the Council to realise financial savings and allow the Community Associations greater autonomy over the running of the Centres. One of the 8 centres included within the report was the Teresa Greene Community Centre in Leys Avenue Dagenham (Village Ward). A 30-year lease term was agreed in 2011.
- 1.3 The site is on the Leys Estate surrounded by a mix of 2 storey houses and 3 storey flats. It comprises the main building with a large hall, small hall and ancillary rooms (kitchen, wc's etc) – building and site plans are attached at **Appendix A and B**. There is an external garage (suitable for the storage of a minibus type vehicle) and outdoor space to the front, side and rear of the building, some of which is used for outdoor play space by the pre-school who use the site and is equipped with various children's play equipment.
- 1.4 The building is 470 sq.m and the overall site is 0.8 acres.
- 1.5 Whilst some building works were carried out prior to the original leases in 2010/11, the building was largely let in its existing condition. The building is showing signs of significant wear and tear and the Community Association has pledged to secure funding to carry out the works listed above over a period of time and some quotes have already been obtained to arrive at the estimated figures.
- 1.6 The Council's Land Acquisition and Disposal Rules (paragraph 2.2, Chapter 4, Part 4 of the Council Constitution) require the granting of any new lease over 20 years to be approved by the Cabinet.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 In 2016, the Council was approached by the Community Association managing the Teresa Greene Centre with proposals to invest in the building and undertake a number of significant repairs, including new windows, replacement boilers, radiators and new flooring and matting, estimated to be in the region of between £100k - £150k.
- 2.2 In committing to this investment, the Community Group (a registered charity) requested that consideration be given to the granting of a new 50-year lease in order to or a lease structure that protects the Council's position and with rent review periods to be agreed. The lease would also have provision to ensure that the

proposed works are carried out within a reasonable time, to ensure that the investment is delivered.

- 2.3 This new arrangement would therefore see grant a surrender of the existing lease and the granting of a new lease for the 50-year term and give the Community Association the security they have requested and allow them to secure long-term funding to invest building. The Community Association have suggested that having a well-maintained building would encourage further lettings (and further income) and help develop further community activities.
- 2.4 Discussions with the Community Association indicates that the Centre has a number of regular users, including a Karate club, several dance schools, nursery and playgroup provision for children as well as religious worship.
- 2.5 In addition, the Centre is used for commercial lettings such as parties, wedding receptions etc, various community meetings and other activities such as outdoor sports, summer barbecues and Christmas events. The Council has been provided with financial data from the Association on income and outgoings.
- 2.6 The Leys Estate is currently being regenerated which will increase the number of residents in the Leys area and provide a different mix of residential accommodation.
- 2.7 There are no immediate plans to redevelop this site but any new lease would effectively preclude any redevelopment until c2067 and a 50-year lease would assist in retaining the facility for community use in the meantime.
- 2.8 The original leases in 2010/11 were granted at a peppercorn as part of the overall Council strategy of managing community centres and the Community Association has benefitted from this since the granting of the original lease.
- 2.9 Subsequent leases within the commercial portfolio have, however, been granted based on market terms and to agree anything different for this letting would move away from this arrangement and set a precedent for future requests.
- 2.10 A market valuation has been obtained, based on the following terms:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Term | 50 years |
| Rent Reviews | 5 yearly, to be agreed as either Market Value or an RPI increase from the last review |
| Repairs | Tenant responsibility for internal and external repairs |
| Alienation | No sub-letting, other than by way of hiring |
| Alterations | With Landlord's consent |
| Permitted uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The promotion of community participation in positive activities particularly but not exclusively, for the benefit of Barking and Dagenham residents by the provision for community, cultural, social and educational activities. ▪ To advance the education of young people and adults, through the provision of cultural facilities and programmes, in order to encourage their independence. ▪ To promote such other charitable and community activities as may be determined that benefit the local community. |
| Security of | Outside the security of tenure provisions of the landlord and Tenant |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| tenure | Act 1954 (ie – no automatic rights to renew at the end of the lease term). |
| Break clause | To be agreed |
| Rent free period | To be agreed and subject to the level of works finally agreed. |
| Market rental valuation | See Appendix C (this document is in the exempt section of the agenda as it contains commercially confidential information (relevant legislation: paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972) and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.) |

- 2.11 Officer are also currently developing a rent subsidy scheme previously endorsed by the Cabinet (Minute 51, 22 October 2013 refers) which gives community and voluntary groups occupying Council commercial premises an opportunity to apply for a rent subsidy based on the activities of the group and the extent to which they meet the Council's priorities. Should any application made by the Association be successful, the Group would see any rent payments reduced accordingly.

3. Options Appraisal

- 3.1 The current lease to the Community Association has approximately 24 years remaining and if the Council was to decline the proposal for a new 50-year lease it is anticipated that community provision at the Centre would continue, at least in the short / medium term.
- 3.2 However, the building is in need of investment and the proposal from the Community Association would enable the necessary improvement works to be carried out, as well as maintaining the Council's stated objective of community centres being run by the local community.
- 3.3 The Centre provides a range of community activities serving a locality which does not have any similar centre nearby. Therefore, any loss of this facility would leave residents of the area with no local community provision of this nature.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 A report outlining the above proposed arrangement was discussed at the Property Advisory Group (part Members, part officer composition) in December 2016 and approval sought to progress the deal, subject to agreed lease terms and a market valuation. The proposal was also endorsed by the Capital and Assets Board on 17 May 2017.
- 4.2 Consultation with officers within the Culture and Sport Service have indicated no objections to agreeing a longer lease for the site.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Lance Porteous, Principal Accountant, Finance

- 5.1 This report is seeking to grant a 50-year lease to a community association (Teresa Green) in return for a market rent as set out in Appendix A. As this property previously only received a peppercorn rent, this decision would increase the income

of the Council's commercial portfolio and will incur little additional cost, as repairs will be the tenant's responsibility.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Erol Islek- Senior Property Solicitor- Law & Governance

- 6.1 According to the Council's Constitution (paragraph 2.2, Chapter 4, Part 4 – Land Acquisition and Disposal Rules) leases over 20 years could only be granted with Cabinet approval.
- 6.2 The Council is required to obtain best consideration in the disposal of its assets. A disposal also includes the grant of leases. The Council has the power to enter into the proposed long lease but must do so in compliance with law and the Council's acquisition and land disposal rules. The Council's disposal powers are contained in section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 also provides local authorities with a general power of competence. Under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has the power to dispose of land in any manner that they wish which includes the grant of a lease. One constraint is that the disposal must be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable unless there is ministerial consent or the transfer is to further local wellbeing. An independent valuation has been carried out to ensure the annual rent is what could be achieved considering the current market conditions.
- 6.3 The Council is at liberty to proceed with this matter. The Legal Practice should also be consulted for the preparation and completion of the necessary legal documentation.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Contractual Issues** – Other than the property related lease arrangements outlined within the body of this report, there are no further contractual issues.
- 7.2 **Corporate Policy and Customer Impact** – The Community Association provides a range of services to the local community to further their social wellbeing.
- 7.3 **Crime and Disorder Issues** – This new arrangement will secure the future of the site and present any crime or security issues associated with having an empty building, should the Community Association decide to vacate the premises rather than invest.

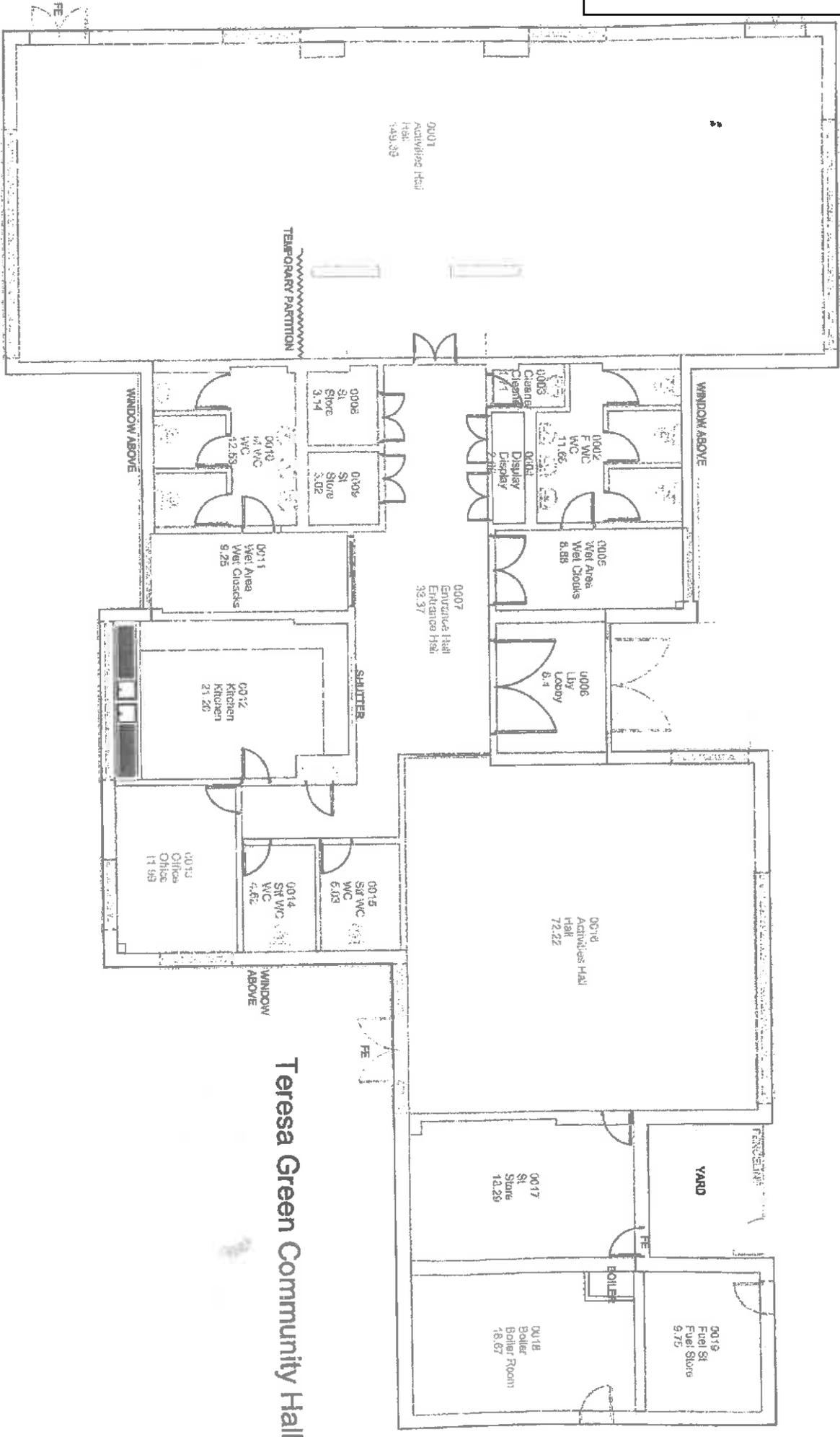
Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

- **Appendix A:** Building Plan
- **Appendix B:** Site Plan
- **Appendix C:** Market Rental Valuation (Exempt document)

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APPENDIX A



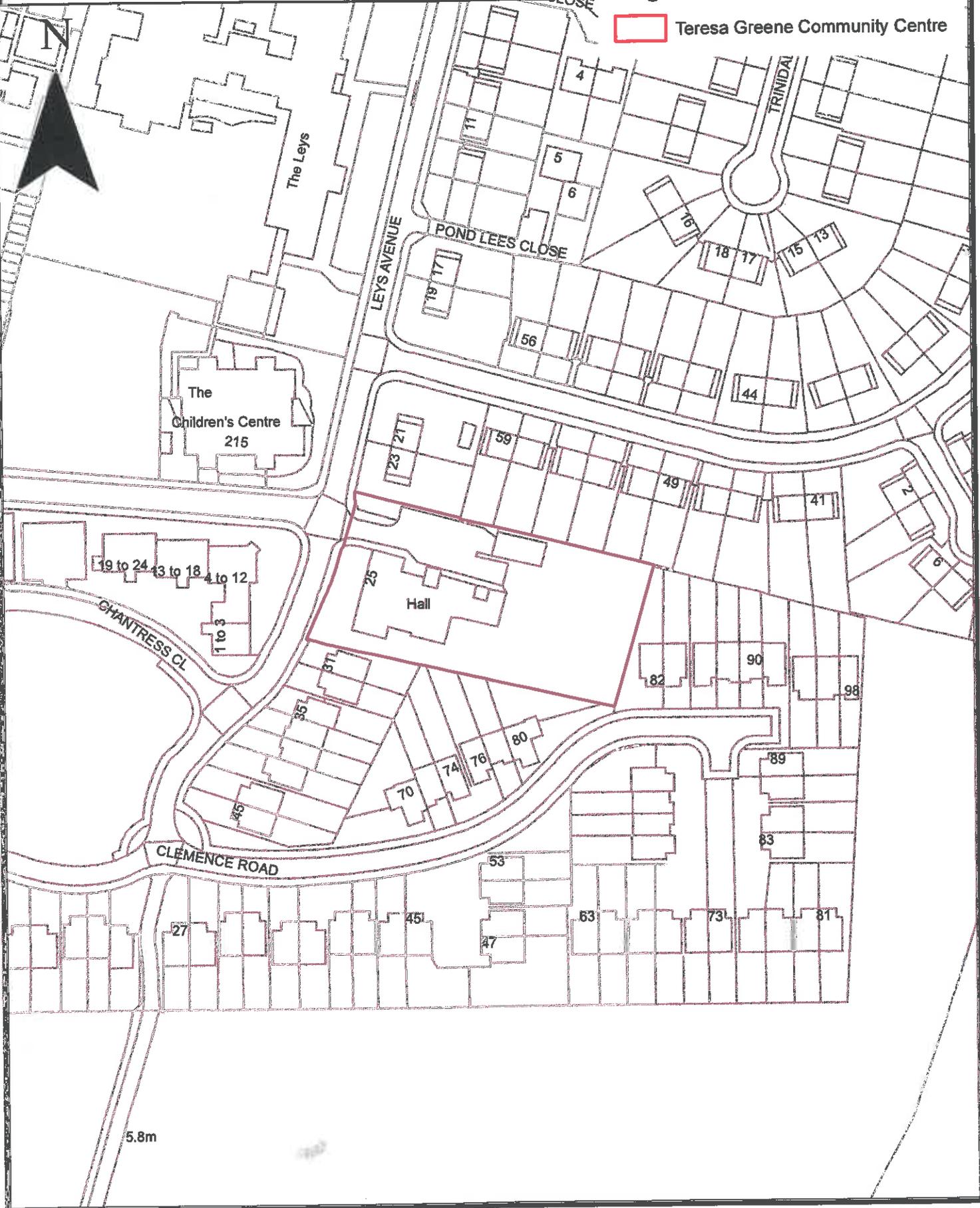
Teresa Green Community Hall

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APPENDIX B - TERESA GREENE CENTRE

Legend

 Teresa Greene Community Centre



Teresa Greene Centre, Leys Avenue, Dagenham, RM10 9YP

Property Services, Barking Town Hall, Barking, IG11 7LU

Scale (based A4 Paper):-1:1,250


**London Borough of
Barking & Dagenham**

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CABINET**11 July 2017**

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title: Barking and Dagenham Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/2019 | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion | |
| Open Report with Confidential Appendix 2 (Appendix 2 contains confidential information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure) | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: Yes |
| Report Author: Matthew Cole, Director of Public Health | Contact Details: E-mail: Matthew.cole@lbbd.gov.uk Telephone: 020 8227 3657 |
| Accountable Director: Matthew Cole, Director of Public Health | |
| Accountable Strategic Director: Anne Bristow, Strategic Director, Service Development and Integration | |
| <p>Summary:</p> <p>A new Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan has been developed by the Borough's multi-agency Prevent Strategy and Steering Group with oversight from the Community Safety Partnership.</p> <p>The Strategy and Delivery Plan takes account of the Council's legal duties to prevent extremism and extremist violence. It follows the Local Authority Prevent Duty Guidance, Channel Duty Guidance and the Counter Terrorism Local Profile to put forward four local priorities with actions to deliver these within the lifespan of the Strategy. The priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham. • To develop links with the voluntary and community sector to empower them to support the local Prevent programme. • To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation. • To put in place mechanisms which prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support. • To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause. <p>The Prevent Strategy sits alongside a wider range of strategies and priorities within the Council's broader cohesion agenda. 2017 will see the publication of an Equality and Diversity Strategy for the Borough and the development of a separate Cohesion Strategy.</p> <p>The Prevent programme will be bolstered by a broader range of initiatives to build</p> | |

cohesion, support civic society, and develop the voluntary and community sector in the Borough. The Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will connect with these initiatives to ensure maximum reach and impact of Prevent activities and messages.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Agree the Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/2019 attached at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Service Development and Integration, in consultation with the Community Safety Partnership and the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion, to review the Strategy and Delivery Plan considering new levels of risk in the borough and make appropriate changes in response.

Reasons:

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities (include local authorities, NHS trusts, schools and providers of certain services to those authorities) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (known as the Prevent duty).

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) has four key areas to address the threat from terrorism: Prevent, Pursue, Prepare and Protect.
- 1.2 The Prevent Strategy was published by the Home Office in 2011, its aim is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- 1.3 The 2011 Home Office Prevent Strategy set three strategic objectives:
 - To respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
 - To prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
 - To work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.
- 1.4 In April 2015, the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) in the Home Office re-designated Barking and Dagenham a Prevent priority borough. The process of selection is restricted, but the criteria for selection is based on presence and/or activities of extremists and vulnerability of groups or institutions to extremism as identified by the Police.
- 1.5 The Borough's status as a Prevent Priority Borough provided funding from the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism for a Prevent Coordinator for Barking and Dagenham, who was appointed in August 2015. In addition to this, further funding

was secured from the Home Office for several Prevent projects taking place between 2015/16.

- 1.6 Prevent is a fluid and fast-moving policy area that is responsive to real world events. The current threat level for international terrorism in the UK has been classified as Severe since August 2014. London, as a diverse and large global city, has higher-levels of risk than other parts of the UK as London is a more natural target for extremist activities and acts of terror. Levels of local Prevent activity and levels of vigilance change to reflect the wider national and regional context.
- 1.7 Of particular concern and priority at a national level is to tackle Muslim extremism which has risen with the growth of extremist groups elsewhere in the world. Small parts of the Muslim community in the UK are not integrated into the wider British Society and radical views and activities are present in these isolated and segregated pockets. Channel referrals from universities, schools, and hospitals show that radical views are reaching young people. Radicalised British Muslims have travelled to Iraq, Syria, and Libya with the intent to join violent jihadist groups.
- 1.8 However, while there is a clear threat from Muslim extremism it is important that Prevent engages and works well with the Muslim community. Otherwise it can be viewed as a counter-productive policy and means of surveillance that results in mistrust and disengagement from a key part of society Prevent needs to work with. Therefore, other agendas such as community cohesion, integration and inclusion are important and relevant to Prevent and should guide how it operates at a local level.
- 1.9 Several recent UK terror attacks including the murder of Jo Cox MP, Westminster Bridge, Manchester, London Bridge, and Finsbury Park have put the national Prevent Strategy in the spotlight. It is therefore very important and timely to be updating and strengthening our approach.
- 1.10 Following recent events Cabinet should be assured that the robustness of the local Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will be reviewed to ensure that our risk-based approach is proportionate and appropriate with necessary actions/responses to deal with local and sub-regional issues.
- 1.11 Further reviews of the Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will likely be required during the life of the Strategy and Delivery Plan. On 21 July, using the Queen's Speech, the Government confirmed its intention to review its counter-terrorism strategy. While we await further developments on the future of Prevent and more detail about the approach the Government will take in the next Parliament, we will continue to deliver the Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan presented at Appendix 1.

2. Priorities and Objectives

- 2.1 The four objectives of the local Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/19 are set out below (and are set out in more detail, along with specific actions and success measures, at Appendix 1).

2.2 Priority 1: To work in partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham

To ensure that all young people, parents and carers, and staff in public and other services (e.g. local authority, schools, NHS, voluntary organisations) are aware of the potential issues around extremism and radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham and our local response. The areas of focus are:

- To increase the understanding of partners of the local threats and vulnerabilities in relation to extremism and terrorism.
- To ensure there is understanding of the Prevent strategy across the specified authorities identified by the 'Prevent Duty'.
- To increase the representation of faith and community groups at the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group.

2.3 Priority 2: To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation

In implementing the Prevent Duty, we are ensuring that partners adopt a complete approach to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism. When a potential extremism or radicalisation issue is identified, we need to ensure there is compliance with the referral pathway and escalation process. Furthermore, we need to ensure that individuals/agencies/organisations involved in the referral are supported through the process to manage the concern or issue. Lastly, vulnerabilities related to the concern or issue need to be addressed through existing mechanisms or otherwise. The areas of focus are:

- To develop links with the voluntary and community sector to empower them to support the local Prevent programme.
- To develop an early intervention and identification process which raises potential concerns of extremism or radicalisation.
- To ensure that partners consider a complete approach when implementing the Prevent duty.
- To support partners to embed the Prevent Duty across all relevant organisations.

2.4 Priority 3: To put in place mechanisms that prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support

The focus of this priority is to ensure that individuals who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism are provided with comprehensive support. Where people are identified as at risk, we will assess the nature of that risk and develop appropriate support interventions in response. The areas of focus are:

- To continue to ensure that support offered by partners is appropriate for each individual.
- To ensure that information is shared between partners to address any concerns.
- To identify third sector capacity to increase the range of support available.

2.5 **Priority 4: To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause**

The Council has the statutory duty to work in partnership towards the reduction and prevention of crime. We will look at the range of tools and powers to address issues of extremist activities wherever they present.

In addition, we must continue to ensure that our staff are adequately supported to recognise extremist activity and associated material as part of detection when undertaking their day-to-day tasks within the community. The areas of focus are:

- To continue to respond to actions of those promoting violent extremism wherever it may present.
- To develop positive relationships with our community by using Prevent projects.
- To ensure that staff are aware of the actions of potential extremists or terrorists and know how to respond.

3. **Delivery of the Strategy**

- 3.1 Each action within the Delivery Plan has been assigned to the relevant senior officer of the relevant agency/partner. Once the programme of action is agreed, the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group will set target completion dates for each of the actions. This will give partners flexibility to re-prioritise actions in light of the current context and imperative to respond to those incidents and their aftermath.
- 3.2 Delivery of the Strategy will be monitored annually through the Community Safety Partnership. Separately, the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion will periodically review progress.
- 3.3 Implementation of the Strategy and Delivery Plan will be driven and managed by the Director of Public Health (whose remit covers Prevent and other aspects of community safety) with delivery capacity from the Borough's Prevent Co-ordinator, and with support from the Community Co-ordinator.

4. **Monitoring of delivery**

- 4.1 The Prevent Strategy and Steering Group, which is accountable to the Community Safety Partnership, is responsible for delivery of the Strategy. The Steering Group has representation from the Local Authority, Police, probation, health, education services and the voluntary and community sector all of whom share ownership of the Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- 4.2 There will be appropriate reporting to other key bodies (such as the Children's Partnership, Safeguarding Adults Board, and Local Children's Safeguarding Board) for actions that cut across different remits and policy areas.

5. **Options appraisal**

- 5.1 Having an up-to-date Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan is crucial to meeting our statutory obligations, even more so following the discovery of extremist activities in

the Borough. For this reason, this report does not propose alternative options. Therefore, Cabinet is asked to agree the Strategy and Delivery Plan at Appendix 1.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 In developing this Strategy and Delivery Plan there has been no formal consultation with stakeholders or residents.
- 6.2 Partner organisations involved in the Prevent Programme have inputted into the development of the Strategy through the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group.

7. Financial Implications

The financial information is contained at Appendix 2. This information is confidential as it has been given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure.

8. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Dr Paul Feild, Senior Governance Lawyer

- 8.1 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities (include local authorities, NHS trusts, schools and providers of certain services to those authorities) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (known as the Prevent duty).
- 8.2 The duty does not confer new functions on any specified authority. The term “due regard” as used in the Act means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.
- 8.3 The Prevent Duty Guidance in England and Wales, published under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Act, was issued to assist authorities to interpret the duty and develop local action plans. The Strategy and Delivery Plan attached at Appendix 1 follows that guidance.
- 8.4 Authorities will be expected to work in partnership with the organisations identified in the report with the common objective of advancing the Prevent duty and its agenda. The Home Office will have the power to review the delivery of this duty and the power to intervene if it considers it appropriate to do so. It will thus be a necessary part of the Borough’s strategy to ensure that it is being effective in the implementation and setting itself and its partners specific targets within its action plan compliant with the statutory guidance.
- 8.5 Cabinet should also note the Council’s duties under the Equality Act 2010 which are relevant to preventing isolation and exclusion, and ensuring cohesion and good relations between people of different characteristics.
- 8.6 In support of meeting the legal responsibilities outlined above it is critical that the borough has robust, compliant, and up-to-date policies and procedures some examples being:

- employment procedures for example whistle blowing and confidential reporting of extremist views
- measures to ensure prevention of facilities for radicalization, so that contracts, leases, letting, and license agreements ensure that Council properties are not used contrary to the Prevent Strategy and
- establish robust information sharing protocols and agreements

8.7 Finally, a key additional consideration is the safety and security of the teams working on the Prevent agenda, not only in terms of personal security but also the data held. It will be of the most sensitive nature with details of individuals and sources of intelligence. For example, intervention in safeguarding matters could place the team's operatives at greater risk of being in harm's way. Their safety, their clienteles' and integrity of data sources needs to be at the forefront of service planning. So the need to identify risk, the minimisation action, its implementation and entrenched best practice will be a clear and paramount managerial responsibility

9. Other Implications

9.1 **Risk Management** - The current threat level for international terrorism in the UK has been classified as Severe since August 2014. The threat level briefly moved to Critical immediately after the Manchester attack in May 2017. The threat-level highlights the importance of the Prevent agenda as the first line of counter-terrorism intelligence and prevention of extremism and radicalisation at local level.

The local Prevent Programme takes a risk-based approach. Following recent events and the heightened levels of risk at a regional and sub-regional level it is prudent to reflect on our approach to Prevent. For this reason, the report proposes that Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Service Development and Integration, with the Community Safety Partnership, to review the Strategy and Delivery Plan considering new levels of risk in the borough and make appropriate changes in response.

Once that process is complete, the Strategy and Delivery Plan will be subject to usual monitoring and evaluation through the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group and Community Safety Partnership, the local bodies responsible for meeting the Borough's Prevent Duty.

9.2 **Staffing issues** - The local Prevent programme is managed by the Prevent Co-ordinator, a post funded by the Home Office. The Borough is working to secure further funding for additional Prevent-related posts to give extra capacity to the local Prevent programme.

In supporting the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy, the Council have been offered funding for a period of 12 months to employ a Community Co-ordinator. Their role will be to promote cohesion, develop an understanding of the drivers, prevalence, and wider harms of extremism in Barking and Dagenham, to share this knowledge with the Council and Home Office, and shape local strategies such as the Community Cohesion, Hate Crime and Prevent Strategies as well as the Borough Manifesto.

The Prevent Co-ordinator and Community Co-ordinator roles are considered distinct and complementary to each other and will therefore cross several work-streams.

Beyond the immediate staffing resources to deliver Prevent and related programmes, statutory guidance puts an expectation on local authority staff and its contractors to understand Prevent and to be able to recognise key signs of vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism. To meet this expectation relevant staff have completed awareness training and training about how to make referrals through the Channel programme. The training programme is ongoing to improve knowledge and awareness across the partnership.

9.3 Corporate Policy and Customer Impact - The Council has a clear vision of One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity. This vision also underpins the Prevent Strategy, which acknowledges that all sections of our community have a role to play in tackling extremism.

The Prevent Strategy has links and dependencies with several other key Strategies and plans as follows:

- Cohesion Strategy, a policy that is in development and will strengthen/complement our approach to Prevent, the Strategy will outline our approach to improving cohesion and community relations.
- Borough Manifesto, which sets out high-level aspirations to improve the borough and outcomes for its residents.
- Equality and Diversity Strategy, which outlines how we promote and advance equality, diversity, inclusion, and fairness.
- Culture Strategy, which outlines our approach to culture, heritage, and community events.
- Hate Crime Action Plan, which sets out our approach to tackle hate crime, bring perpetrators to justice and support victims and their families.

Prevent has been operating in a context of increasing islamophobia across the UK, and perhaps through targeting of Muslims Prevent has contributed to negative views about Muslims and Islam. Critics of the national Prevent Strategy have highlighted concern that the Prevent has fuelled islamophobia, infringed on human rights, disproportionately targeted Muslims, and led to mistrust between individuals and public authorities.

When carrying out prevent activities we should be cautious and sensitive to how Prevent is perceived by the Muslim community and ensure our approach is non-discriminatory.

Through Prevent projects we aim to build positive relationships with all parts of the community and present Prevent as a positive programme that all people can engage with and work with.

9.4 Safeguarding Children - The Prevent duty is relevant to the Council in respect of fulfilling safeguarding responsibilities in that there should be clear and robust safeguarding policies to identify children at risk. The grooming of children and young people for the purposes of involving them in extremist activity is child abuse and child protection procedures should be followed when there are concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation or has already been radicalised.

In Barking and Dagenham, we follow guidance issued by London Councils in their LSCB Safeguarding Children from Extremism Report¹. In addition, both Ofsted and the Department for Education provide separate guidance for schools which has been extensively used across Barking and Dagenham.

- 9.5 **Health** - The Prevent strategy provides support for health professionals to understand and identify factors that could suggest a child, young person or their family may be vulnerable to, or involved with extremism. The support is not exhaustive, and all or none of these factors may be present in individual cases. Furthermore, the presence of these factors does not mean that an individual is automatically at risk of exploitation for the purposes of extremism. The accepted view is that a complex relationship between the various aspects of an individual's identity determines their vulnerability to extremism.

Colleagues from North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) and Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) are already incorporated into the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group and are implementing the Prevent Duty.

There are established links with mental health teams including Home Treatment teams in providing support to the Channel Panel. There will be continued efforts to provide training to General Practices and associated colleagues over the coming year.

- 9.6 **Crime and disorder** - The Prevent Strategy falls under the remit of the Community Safety Partnership and is a key plank of the overall work being done in the Borough to keep residents safe. Prevent work depends on effective partnerships and productive co-operation. The Police play a prominent role in the local Prevent programme. The Community Safety Partnership is used to ensure effective co-ordination with the Police and other partners and effective co-ordination of all work related to crime and safety.
- 9.7 **Property and assets** - The strategy identifies the need to ensure extremist speakers are not provided with a platform to promote their rhetoric. Ensuring that there is a pathway to report any concerns of extremist speakers to the police will be key in ensuring this. In addition, work has already been completed in libraries to confirm that internet filtering on websites is in place and we have taken all reasonable steps to ensure such premises cannot be used to access extremist material.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/2019
- **Appendix 2:** Financial implications (confidential document)

¹ http://londoncp.co.uk/files/sg_ch_exposed_extrem_ideology.pdf

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Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017 - 2019



Key population and demographic facts

**Did you know
LBBD has...**

201,979
Residents
7th smallest population in London



54,912
under 16s



Highest proportion in London and the UK

126,143
16s to 64s



4th lowest proportion in London

20,924
over 65s



10th lowest proportion in London

33
average age



Lower than London average (35.9)

59.8
male healthy life expectancy



Below London average (63.6)

58.5
female healthy life expectancy



Below London average (63.7)

54%
achieving 5 A* to C GCSEs



Below London average (60.9%)

11.3%
have no qualifications



Above London average (7.4%)

85.3
births per 1000 women of childbearing age



Above London average (65.6)

75.9
crimes per 1000 people



Around London average (76)

£288,960
median house price (all types)



Below London average (£490,718)

18.5%
English not first language



Below London average (22.1%) for aged 3+

7.8%
unemployment



Above London average (5.4%)

66.4%
employment



Below London average (73.6%)

13.5%
DWP benefits claimants



Above London average (9.6%)

49.3%
BME population



Below London average (55.1%)

30%
born abroad



Below London average (36.7%)

4.7%
Nigeria most common birthplace outside the UK, followed by India and Pakistan



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Council vision and priorities

One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity

Encouraging civic pride

Build pride, respect and cohesion across our borough

Promote a welcoming, safe, and resilient community

Build civic responsibility and help residents shape their quality of life

Promote and protect our green and public open spaces

Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child

Enabling social responsibility

Support residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community

Protect the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe

Ensure everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it

Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential

Fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families

Build high quality homes and a sustainable community

Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities

Support investment in housing, leisure, the creative industries and public spaces to enhance our environment

Work with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs

Enhance the borough's image to attract investment and business growth

Well run organisation

A digital Council, with appropriate services delivered online

Promote equalities and diversity in the workforce and community

Implement a 'smarter working' programme, making best use of accommodation and IT, allowing Members and staff to work flexibly to support the community

Continue to manage finances efficiently, looking for ways to make savings, generate income, and be innovative in service delivery.

Growing the borough

See also:

— Corporate Delivery Plan 2017/18

— Borough Manifesto

Foreword



Barking and Dagenham is a vibrant and diverse borough which has seen significant change over the last decade, with ambition to continue to grow over the next decade. The potential for growth in Barking and Dagenham is exciting, bringing with it significant opportunities, including building new homes and attracting new businesses, which will encourage more people to live, work and invest in our borough. These are clearly exciting times for us. Yet we are also mindful that as our community continues to grow and become more diverse, there will be a minority of people who will use these opportunities to attempt to divide the community and promote extremist ideas. This can manifest itself in many ways, including racist far-right groups, as well as those who pervert Islam for violent ends.

There are many contributing factors as to why somebody may be drawn into extremism, and ensuring those individuals are given support and a 'way out' is one of the main drivers of the Prevent Strategy. Barking and Dagenham Council recognises, values and welcomes the diversity of people

living, working and visiting our Borough. We are committed to promoting equality and tackling social exclusion and discrimination.

Building strong and resilient communities is at the forefront of this strategy, but the Council and partner agencies cannot do this alone. We need the whole community to challenge hate speech and intolerance. We are always available for advice and we hope that local private and community venues will seek our guidance and support when presented with individuals or groups promoting hatred and intolerance.

We are committed to ensuring that the wider community has an understanding of the Prevent Strategy through education and effective communication. We will continue to deliver training and awareness sessions throughout the borough to all services.

The key to successful delivery of Prevent in Barking and Dagenham will be continued partnership working with cabinet colleagues, the Metropolitan Police Service, the National Probation Service, North East London NHS Foundation Trust, the Council for Voluntary Services and various community services and religious organisations. Through this partnership working we can promote cohesion, and we are confident we will support individuals, the community and organisations against the threat of extremism and the many forms it can take.

Cllr Sade Bright
Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion

Local context

In the space of two decades the Borough has changed from being a largely homogenous White British working-class community to a diverse and multi-cultural community. This is the result of Barking and Dagenham's proximity to inner-London and relative affordability. Immigration from the EU and from the rest of the world has been a significant factor in the demographic change of the borough, but it is important to note that inward migration has also come from elsewhere in London as part of the growth of the city and from elsewhere in the UK. This type of migration has typically been from British born, second generation migrants.

In 2017, 49% of the population is BME and more nationalities, cultures and faiths are represented than ever before. 30% of the population was born outside of the UK and for 18.5% of residents English is not their first language.

Because of its scale and pace, the impact of this change should not be underestimated. In this period, we have witnessed an emergence of far-right political views. Islamophobia and anti-immigration sentiment are the manifestations of a community that is coming to terms with diversity and multi-culturalism. Community cohesion and good community relations in the borough are mostly good, we work hard to ensure the borough is inclusive, welcoming, and friendly. However, pockets of extremism persist and sometimes surface.

Reflecting this presence of extremism, and the vulnerability of our community to extremism, in 2011, 2013, and again in 2015, Barking and Dagenham was designated priority status for Prevent by the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism. During that time, we have been operating a local Prevent programme with support from the Home Office. The objectives of the programme so far have been to identify and respond to signs of radicalisation, engage the community with anti-extremism messages, and develop robust procedures for effective partnership working.

We take a risk-based approach to Prevent and we are vigilant and mindful of the issues within our community. National and regional context influences our approach too. Prevent is a fluid and fast-moving policy area that is responsive to real world events. The current threat level for international terrorism in the UK has been classified as Severe since August 2014. Several recent UK terror attacks including the murder of Jo Cox MP, Westminster Bridge, Manchester, London Bridge, and Finsbury Park have put the national Prevent Strategy in the spotlight. It is therefore very important and timely to be updating and strengthening our approach to be sure that levels of local Prevent activity and levels of vigilance change to reflect risk.

The local Prevent Strategy sits alongside a wider range of strategies and priorities within the Council's broader cohesion agenda. 2017 will see the publication of an Equality and Diversity Strategy for the Borough and the development of a separate Cohesion Strategy. The local Prevent programme will be bolstered by a broader range of initiatives to build cohesion, support civic society, and develop the voluntary and community sector in the

Borough. The Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will connect with these initiatives to ensure maximum reach and impact of Prevent activities and messages.

National context

Over the last 15 years Barking and Dagenham has become one of the fastest-changing communities in Britain both in terms of growth and diversity.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a statutory duty for a number of organisations to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. These organisations include education establishments, local authorities, prisons, probation services, NHS trusts, and the Police.

The Prevent Strategy, published by the Home Office in 2011, is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This includes non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. It also states that preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism requires challenge to extremist ideas. In particular, this is important where ideas are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. Prevent work addresses all forms of terrorist threats to the UK.

The 2011 Home Office Prevent Strategy has three specific strategic objectives:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support. And;
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

In 2015, under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Act, the Government published The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales to assist authorities to interpret the duty and develop local action plans. The guidance identifies best practice for each of the main sectors and describes ways in which they can comply with the duty. It includes sources of further advice and provides information on how compliance with the duty will be monitored. The Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan below follows this guidance and our partners follow complementary sector-specific guidance that was issued separately.

A number of national initiatives have been developed which are designed to support vulnerable individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. This includes the Channel programme.

Channel is also part of the statutory duty and is the support mechanism which is offered to individuals who have been identified due to the vulnerability of being drawn into terrorism. Referrals can be made by any statutory, non-statutory or voluntary service or by members of the public. In figures recently released by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) over 1000 referrals were made by schools from England and Wales in the year 2015/16.

Following the receipt of a referral, an assessment is made by the police to determine their suitability for the Channel programme. Whatever the reasons for their referral, Channel is completely voluntary and support can come from a range of services including housing, social services or employment, to more specialised support around the discussion of ideologies with one of the Home Office intervention providers.

Nationally, the emphasis has been on those who travel to places of foreign conflict and participate with extremist groups particularly in Syria and Iraq, the concern being that those individuals may seek to organise attacks or radicalise others in the UK.

The series of attacks in Europe and the UK have highlighted the threat from international and domestic terrorism. These incidents have also been used to supplement an Islamophobic narrative for extreme right-wing groups. These groups prey on the fear generated by terrorist incidents and seek to commit criminal acts in pursuit of their agenda

Terrorism takes many forms and in recent years there has been an increase in terrorist groups from various ideologies using social media as a means of transmitting their message to an international audience. Terrorist groups are now able to produce slick and professional propaganda aimed at enticing young people to their cause. Over 4000 websites each week are removed by the Counter Terrorism Internet referral unit.

Of particular concern and priority at a national level is to tackle Muslim extremism which has risen with the growth of extremist groups elsewhere in the world. Small parts of the Muslim community in the UK are not integrated into the wider British Society and radical views and activities are present in these isolated and segregated pockets. Channel referrals from universities, schools, and hospitals show that radical views are reaching young people. Radicalised British Muslims have travelled to places such as Iraq, Syria, and Libya with the intent to join violent jihadist groups.

However, while there is a clear threat from Muslim extremism, it is important that Prevent engages and works well with the Muslim community. Otherwise it can be viewed as a counter-productive policy and means of surveillance that results in mistrust and disengagement from a key part of society Prevent needs to work with. Therefore, other agendas such as community cohesion, integration and inclusion are important and relevant to Prevent and should guide how it operates at a local level.

Governance



The Barking and Dagenham Prevent Strategy and Steering group has been established to lead the development and delivery of the strategy and delivery plan, with representation from the Local Authority, Police, probation, health, education services and the voluntary and community sector.

To support individuals who may be drawn to terrorism, the Barking and Dagenham Channel Panel meets monthly. This panel is chaired by the Local Authority and includes representation from both the MPS Local Basic Command Unit and its SO15 (counter-terrorism command) Channel Police Practitioners, and the Panel is able to call upon other representatives where required.

The Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of statutory partners of the Council, the Police, the Probation Service, the Fire Brigade and Health Services. Having a Community Safety Partnership is a legal requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the partnership has a legal duty to work together in order to prevent and reduce crime and disorder in the local area.

The Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has strategic responsibility for the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group and Channel Panel. The success measures listed in the delivery plan will be reported to the CSP on an annual basis.

Both the Prevent Strategy and Steering group and Channel panel are linked to a number of boards and groups. This includes but is not limited to;

- Children's Partnership;
- Safeguarding Adults Board;
- Local Safeguarding Children's board; and
- Community Tension Monitoring Group.

Links to other strategies and plans

There are a number of national, regional, and local documents that have influenced the development of Barking and Dagenham's Prevent Strategy.

National

Prevent Strategy 2011
Revised Prevent Duty
Guidance: for England and
Wales 2015
Channel Guidance: for
England and Wales 2015

Regional

London Child Protection
Procedures
Pan London Safeguarding
Adults Procedure
Counter Terrorism Local
Profile

Local

Education Strategy 2014/17
Children and Young
People's Plan
Barking and Dagenham
Community Safety Plan
Licensing Policy
Housing Strategy
Community Safety Strategic
Assessment
Corporate Performance
report.
Corporate Plan 2017/18
Borough Manifesto
Hate Crime Action Plan
Equality and Diversity
Strategy 2017/21
Culture Strategy
Cohesion Strategy

The linked strategies and plans shall be under constant review during the 2017-2019 period.

Vision

Our vision is for Barking and Dagenham to be a borough where individuals are protected from becoming drawn into terrorism or violent extremism.

Priorities

1. To work in partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham.
2. To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation.
3. To put in place mechanisms that prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.
4. To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause.

Objectives

By 2019 we will have achieved the following:

- Partners and residents will have a clear understanding of the Prevent Strategy and how it is implemented in Barking and Dagenham.
- Partners and residents understand why intervention is required, and are able to confidently identify factors around radicalisation and extremism and share their concerns.
- Enhance community cohesion through communications and Prevent projects.

The following action plan covers the activity to be completed to March 2019.

Priority 1: To work in partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham.

To ensure that all young people, parents and carers, and staff in public and other services (e.g. local authority, schools, NHS, voluntary organisations) are aware of the potential issues around extremism and radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham and our local response.

The perspectives of those who may be affected by these issues, including venues, faith communities and local organisations, will be key contributors and we shall use existing mechanisms such as the Community Tension Monitoring process to identify, monitor and respond to Prevent related issues.

Barking and Dagenham's interrupted Prevent status has meant a need to provide Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify individuals being drawn into terrorism. The core training product for this is the Home Office Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP). Increasing the number of trained staff, particularly in safeguarding roles, is a key part of this priority.

We have already completed a great deal of work in this area, with staff from every school in the borough having received the WRAP training. Over 1,400 school staff have received the training, with a further 600 staff across other sectors.

| # | Action | Owner |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Increase the understanding of partners of the local threats and vulnerabilities in relation to extremism and terrorism | | |
| 1 | All Local Counter Terrorism Leads across statutory services have access to the East London Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLTP). | Prevent Coordinator and Schools Prevent Officer |
| 2 | Key officers and partners (including schools) are informed via redacted CTLTP briefings. | Prevent Coordinator and Schools Prevent Officer |
| 3 | The effectiveness of Prevent Case Management data is analysed and provided to Counter Terrorism leads and relevant service managers. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 4 | Publish Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan, and other key information about Prevent, on the Council's website so that it is readily available to partners and others. Publicise where and how these documents and information can be accessed by stakeholders. | Prevent Coordinator |
| Ensure there is understanding of the Prevent strategy across the specified authorities identified by the 'Prevent Duty' | | |

| # | Action | Owner |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | Home Office approved Prevent E-learning package is delivered across Local Authority achieving 70% compliance amongst front line staff | Prevent Coordinator and Learning and Development Team |
| 6 | The Health, Safety and Wellbeing audit is used to identify and respond to gaps in Prevent implementation in schools | Health and Safety Advisor |
| 7 | Staff are given the opportunity for a greater understanding of terrorism, extremism and the groups that operate through training and development. This is available across statutory services. | Prevent Coordinator and Learning and Development Team |
| Increase the representation of faith and community groups at the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group | | |
| 8 | The perspectives of those that may be affected by these issues, including venues, faith groups and local community organisations contribute to the local Prevent delivery. | Prevent Strategy and Steering Group |

Priority 2: To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation

This priority focuses on early intervention and appropriate preventative measures.

In implementing the Prevent Duty, we are ensuring that partners adopt a complete approach to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism. When a potential extremism or radicalisation issue is identified we need to ensure there is compliance with the referral pathway and escalation process. Furthermore, we need to ensure that individuals/agencies/organisations involved in the referral are supported through the process to manage the concern or issue. Lastly, vulnerabilities related to the concern or issue need to be addressed through existing mechanisms or otherwise.

This is not solely focused upon individuals, but premises and organisations too. For example, venues where there is internet access need to ensure that appropriate filtering is in place, to prevent access to extremist material.

We know we cannot achieve this priority with organisations working in isolation. As such, we are committed to strengthening accountability and embedding a common ownership of

the Prevent agenda through engagement with political leaders, chief executives, boards, directors, managers, senior leaders and other partners.

| # | Action | Owner |
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| Increase the community role in tackling extremism | | |
| 9 | Use appropriate opportunities during the Council's Summer of Festivals to communicate with residents about anti-extremism and anti-terrorism messages. | Community Coordinator, Prevent Coordinator, Communications Team, Events Team |
| 10 | Facilitate and support community-led events and activities that build inclusion and cohesion. | Prevent Coordinator and Community Coordinator |
| 11 | Link Prevent projects and related activities to community development initiatives to extend reach of Prevent into the community. | Prevent Coordinator with Community Enterprise Team |
| 12 | Work with community leaders to develop influential community voices and share communications responsibilities with the Council and its partners. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 13 | Develop communications campaigns to spread messages of inclusion, cohesion and non-violence | Strategy and Programmes Director |
| 14 | Work with the voluntary and community sector to build trust and confidence in Prevent to enhance its reputation as an effective programme | Prevent Coordinator and Police Prevent Liaison Officer |
| 15 | Consult with local stakeholders on the development of a new model for local delivery of Prevent that strengthens relationships and empowers community groups and organisations to support the Prevent programme | Prevent Coordinator and Police Prevent Liaison Officer |
| 16 | Consult with the local voluntary and community sector on their training and development needs around Prevent and Channel, and provide learning and development sessions accordingly. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 17 | Link Prevent projects and related activities to the deliverables of the Cohesion Strategy and Culture Strategy and Hate Crime Action Plan ensuring all community engagement opportunities are maximised | Strategy and programmes Director with other relevant Commissioning Directors |
| Develop an early intervention and identification process which raises potential concerns of extremism or radicalisation | | |
| 18 | Review and update the Prevent referral pathway and share across partners. | Director of Public Health |

| # | Action | Owner |
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| 19 | Review and update the Channel referral pathway and share across partners. | Director of Public Health |
| 20 | Ensure that Prevent and Channel referral pathways, processes, and procedures are integrated into the operations of the Community Solutions Service Block (service to launch from 1 st October 2017). In particular, ensuring that Prevent and Channel functions and responsibilities currently executed by the MASH and Adults Intake Teams are maintained and developed during and after transition into Community Solutions. | Director of Public Health, with relevant Commissioning Directors and Operational Directors |
| 21 | Hate crime perpetrators are reviewed to identify potential Channel or Prevent referrals. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 22 | All organisations work together to ensure that the Channel Panel receives all identified concerns. | Channel Panel |
| Ensure that partners consider a complete approach when implementing the Prevent duty | | |
| 23 | Ensure partners and their venues have correct website filtering in place, in particular schools and colleges. | School Head teachers |
| 24 | Publicly owned venues do not provide a platform for extremist and are not used to disseminate extremist views. | School heads, library managers, facilities managers |
| 25 | Prevent is considered around schools safeguarding, taking into account out of school settings which provide support to young people. | School and College Safeguarding leads and Home Education Team |
| 26 | The principles of Prevent are included in new service contracts and policies are updated to reflect this to ensure our contracted services are aware of the Prevent duty. | Customer Services, contracts and business improvement |
| Support partners to embed the Prevent Duty across all relevant organisations | | |
| 27 | Periodic briefings to political leaders, chief executives, boards, directors and managers to ensure they are actively engaged and uphold the principles of the Prevent duty. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 28 | Inductions provided to portfolio holders and any new members of the partnership who are actively engaged | Prevent Coordinator |

| # | Action | Owner |
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| | with the Prevent duty. | |

Priority 3: To put in place mechanisms to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support

The focus of this priority is to ensure that individuals who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism are provided with comprehensive support. Where people are identified as at risk, we will assess the nature of that risk and develop appropriate support interventions in response.

The introduction of the Prevent duty has made the Channel programme statutory. Channel is the process of protecting individuals who may be vulnerable to becoming involved in terrorism or violent extremism. The multi-agency Channel panel, chaired by the Local Authority, is in place to protect and divert people away from the identified risk at an early opportunity.

Channel is a voluntary programme and is at the discretion upon the individual, or if they are under 18 years old, the individual's next of kin. At each panel, a judgement is made on the necessity for the individual to enter, remain or to exit the Channel process. This judgment is based upon the extent of the extremism concern and whether suitable support is in place.

Identifying the most appropriate engagement activities to address an individual's needs and vulnerabilities will require a greater understanding of the range of community and partnership resources locally available.

| # | Action | Owner |
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| Continue to ensure that support offered by partners is appropriate for each individual | | |
| 29 | To monitor the referral pathway to the Channel Panel, which supports or refers individuals who are at risk. Review submitted to CSP. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 30 | The Channel Panel continues to operate effectively within the guidance. This is reviewed and audited. | Channel Panel Chair |
| Ensure that information is shared between partners to address any | | |

| # | Action | Owner |
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| concerns | | |
| 31 | To ensure effective information sharing agreements are in place between partners to record information, share it, understand its significance and acted upon. | Prevent Coordinator Schools Prevent Officer Prevent Lead, Barking, Havering, & Redbridge University NHS Trust (BHRUT) Prevent Lead, North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) National Probation Service (NPS) |
| Identify third sector capacity to increase the range of support available | | |
| 32 | There are a number of commissioned projects available to those on the Channel programme. | Service Improvement Officer (Youth Offending Service) |

Priority 4: To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause.

Extremism of any form seeks to cause discord within the community. The Council understand how important it is to respond to the harmful activities of extremist individuals or groups who seek to spread or incite hatred. These groups must not consider Barking and Dagenham as a potential area in which to recruit the disenfranchised.

As a responsible authority, the Council has the statutory duty to work in partnership towards the reduction and prevention of crime. We will look at the range of tools and powers to address issues of extremist activities wherever they present.

In addition we must continue to ensure our staff are adequately supported to recognise extremist activity and associated material as part of detection when undertaking their day-to-day tasks within the community.

This priority will also support the development of positive relationships with schools, faith groups and the wider community, by using Prevent projects to enable engagement and challenge extremism.

| # | Action | Owner |
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| Continue to respond to actions of those promoting violent extremism wherever it may present | | |
| 33 | Events or activities of extremism which pose a risk to public order are disrupted. If this is not under council control, advice is provided to the property owner. | Schools Prevent Officer |
| 34 | Our communications in responding to extremism, wherever it presents, is timely and supports the community by rejecting hate. | Prevent Coordinator, Communications Manager |
| Develop positive relationships with our community by using Prevent projects. | | |
| 35 | Members of our community are aware of the need to reject stereotypes, challenge extremist behaviour and be able to form a basis of counter narrative against extremism. | Prevent Coordinator |
| 36 | PSHE lessons are utilised to ensure young people in our borough have critical thinking skills to reject generalisations and stereotypes which are the basis of extremist rhetoric. | PSHE Coordinator, School Head teachers, Prevent Coordinator |
| Ensure that staff are aware of the actions of potential extremist or terrorist and know how to respond. | | |
| 36 | Staff in specified roles have received training to enable them to identify circumstances of hostile reconnaissance. Training is delivered to specified roles and 80% compliance achieved. | Civil Protection Manager, SO20 local lead |
| 37 | Staff in specified roles are aware of the use of leaflets and stalls to convey messages of hate and intolerance and can respond and refer as appropriate. Training is delivered to specified roles and 80% compliance achieved. | Street enforcement, SO20 local lead |

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