

# Report of the Parks & Green Spaces Service – to the meeting of the Bradford East - Area Committee to be held on 23rd July 2013



---

## Subject:

**Parks & Green Spaces Overview**

## Summary statement:

The Council's Executive has identified the Parks & Green Spaces Service to report to Area Committees through the devolution agenda.

This report outlines the basis on which the Parks and Green Spaces Service operates in the Bradford East Area

---

Ian Barstow  
Director Environment & Sport

## Portfolio:

**Environment & Sport**

Report Contact: Phil Barker  
Phone: (01274) 432515  
E-mail: [phil.barker@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:phil.barker@bradford.gov.uk)

## Overview & Scrutiny Area:



Suzan Hemingway, City Solicitor

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's Executive has identified the Parks & Green Spaces Service to report to Area Committees through the devolution agenda.

The overall budget for the service area is set through the Council formal procedures and levels of budget provision will need to be reviewed, subject to any savings requirement placed upon the Council in future years.

This report outlines the basis on which the Parks and Green Spaces Service operates in financial year 2013/14 and seeks area committee member views on the current position

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Parks & Green Spaces section sits in the Sports and Leisure Service, which is part of the Environment & Sport Directorate and the main function is the management and grounds maintenance work across the district's parks, open spaces and woodlands. This service includes the following –

- Maintenance of Parks and recreation grounds
- Maintenance of sports pitches and bowling greens
- Maintenance of play areas
- Grave digging and cemetery maintenance
- Winter maintenance activity to Adult & Children's Services
- Maintenance of highway verges throughout the district.

- 2.2 In addition to the above the district wide weed spraying contract is managed by this service.

In total the service manages and develops 36 parks, 115 recreational spaces and over 188 play areas. The service also provides support to voluntary groups, friends of groups and assists with all sporting fixtures on playing fields within the service remit.

- 2.3 The Parks & Green Spaces Service is co-ordinated by the Area Parks Managers who are based in each area, which is the same as the area constituency boundaries.

The service is currently delivered on an area basis. There are 5 contractual areas, Bradford West, Bradford East, Bradford South, Shipley/Bingley and Keighley/Ilkley.

- 2.4 The Area Managers report directly to the Principal Manager Parks & Green Spaces who in turn reports to the Assistant Director Sports & Leisure. Within each area there is at least one operational depot, (2 in Shipley/Bingley and Keighley/Ilkley) where all the staff and plant are based, however, some area managers are based at satellite offices.

- 2.5 A key partner group are 'Friends of' groups and at the present time there are 18

such active groups who play an important role in various parks throughout the district

2.6 **Bradford East Area** – Within the Bradford East constituencies there are 4 main parks that are maintained by the service area teams:-

Peel Park (Green Flag)  
Bowling Park  
Bradford Moor Park  
Eccleshill Park

There are also 11 recreation grounds, 19 equipped play areas, 11 MACA's and 4 skate/BMX parks. Other facilities include, 40 sports pitches, 4 cricket pitches, 5 tennis courts and 10 bowling greens.

In addition to the general grounds maintenance works the service is responsible for the upkeep of all the associated structures within the above sites such as, pavilions, changing facilities, etc.

2.7 Relationships/Contacts

- Portfolio Holder
- Elected Members
- Bereavement Services
- Adult Services
- Children's Services

### 3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Service Delivery Plans

The following summarises the delivery of the Parks and Green Spaces Service. This includes Parks, Playing Fields, Recreation Grounds, Cemeteries, Highway Verges, Roundabouts and Town gardens. There are 6 Green Flag awards (Lister, Peel, Harold, Central Park Haworth, Roberts, St Ives) and in addition to this there are numerous sponsored roundabout sites, and Bradford City Centre.

The delivery options that the service has adopted were designed to deliver the budget measures approved by Council

The service will deliver a reduced number of floral displays and move to a more sustainable planting scheme that adds further biodiversity across the area. This will include:

- Reduction in the use of annual spring bulbs.
- Adding bio-diversity by developing some flower beds into a mix of herbaceous and annual planting.
- Maintenance regimes will continue at current levels

The service has also adopted alternative management arrangement for parks

and green spaces. There will be a reduction in some direct maintenance and the creation of wild flower meadows adding biodiversity. This will include.

- No reduction in grass cutting frequency, subject to seasonal variation.
- Reduced maintenance of some high manual input grass areas, such as bankings and around some obstacles. Some bankings will be taken out of mowing regimes and developed as wildflower areas.
- Natural or wild flower areas will be established for low use grass areas.
- Reduction in the number of ornamental areas maintained on the weekly standard.
- Variation in the number/day/time of cuts allowing best use of staff resources in line with bowling green usage.
- Amendments to surface maintenance and marking regime of sports pitches to maintain service levels with reduced input.

3.2 At the moment the service delivery is aligned to areas as opposed to wards and is dictated by the needs of the service in those specific areas. Some user groups already have an input to how the service is delivered such as 'friends of groups, and they also have access to grant funding to which the council is not eligible to access and this could possibly be extended to other groups such as:

- Area Coordinators office
- Local Community groups
- In Bloom groups
- Village Societies

## **4. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

### **4.1 Resource allocation for Bradford East Area**

The indicative resources allocated and available is £347,000 (net of income) for 2013/14. This is approximately 18% of the overall Parks and Green Spaces allocated budget.

The central depot in the Bradford East area is Peel Park and all operations are run from this base. The staff base consists of the Area Parks Manager, the Assistant Park Manager and 19 full time operational staff. In addition to this up to 3 seasonal workers are employed on annual basis.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

5.1 The financial risks posed are limited by the nature of the expenditure delegated. However, there is potential to reduce efficiency and overall quality of the service in specific areas if any proposed change is not considered for the wider implications. It will be important to establish a financial governance regime to devise and ensure sound stewardship of the limited resources available. This is work in progress and must be in place to support effective devolution.

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 The contents of this report are in accordance with the decisions of the Executive on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and 16<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 An increased level devolution of the services will allow the Area Committee to further address local priorities for those services.

### **7.2 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

Area Committee decisions will need to be made in line with Equal Rights legislation. This will require Area Committees to assess the potential equality impact of any decisions they make.

### **7.3 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

Increased local decision making has the potential to create more sustainable solutions to local issues.

Contact the Sustainability Co-ordinator (Policy), on Bradford 434123 or e-mail [jamie.saunders@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:jamie.saunders@bradford.gov.uk) for further guidance.

### **7.4 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

The Parks and Green Spaces service provides a pro-active approach in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through the local deployment of its maintenance teams. Teams are based in areas in an effort to reduce travelling times with its fleet/plant resulting in reduced fuel consumption. In addition to this parks and recreation grounds/trees/woodlands provide communities with 'green lungs' which can naturally assist with the filtering of polluted air.

### **7.5 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Community Safety Implications arising from this report.

### **7.6 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.

### **7.7 TRADE UNION**

There are no Trade Union implications.

### **7.8 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

The information in this report is relevant to all Wards in the Bradford East area.

**7.9 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS  
(for reports to Area Committees only)**

Include details of contribution to priorities within the Area Committee's Action Plan. For further guidance contact the relevant Area Co-ordinator

**8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

There are no not for publication documents.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Bradford East Area Committee notes the content of this report and comments on future presentation of information and when it needs to be brought forward to this committee.

**10. APPENDICES**

None

**11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.