

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: October 20 2009	Meeting Name: Executive
Report title:		Time for Change Burgess Park – Report from Scrutiny Sub-Committee A	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Environment and Housing	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the executive consider the comments of the Strategic Director of Environment and Housing in response to the recommendations of scrutiny sub-committee A (set out in section 7 of the scrutiny report attached as appendix A).

BACKGROUND

2. The scrutiny report was prepared by scrutiny sub-committee A. the sub-committee decided to look at the need for improvements in Burgess Park.
3. The report supported the plan and priorities contained within the feasibility study entitled “Time for Change”.
4. The detailed recommendations of the report together with the response of officers are set out in paragraph 8 of this report.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The scrutiny review and support for the current Revitalisation project is much welcomed.
6. £6m for Burgess Park has been secured through the Mayor’s Premier Park Fund and Aylesbury New Deal for Communities. This funding must be spent by March 2012. Consultants are due to be appointed in November 09 to develop plans for phase 1 of the project (total £6m funding available) and a development/masterplan for the park which will guide any future improvements to Burgess Park.
7. In addition there is £1.4m of funding from the council and Aylesbury NDC going into the Chumleigh Gardens complex. This work will be finished in November 09 and will include a new playful landscape, children’s play area, water feature and new cafe.
8. Response to Scrutiny recommendations:

Scrutiny Report recommendations	Response
1. The sub-committee supports the plan and bid with the priorities contained within the report “Time for Change” and accept the focus on art, but considering all the information in full feels there is a need to also emphasis sports.	The new development plan for the park will include areas for sporting activity and these will be prioritised.

<p>2. The sub-committee agreed that sports activities need to be prioritised, structured and organised, presently there were limited toilets and changing facilities to service cricket, football and tennis users of the park. It would also be an attraction if fishing were available from the lake, officers to investigate this option.</p>	<p>The football pavilion houses 8 changing rooms. The tennis centre provides excellent communal changing facilities.</p> <p>Phase one of the Revitalisation project will prioritise increased access to facilities that already exist including existing sporting facilities and toilets (there are 3 sets of public toilets in the park). Improved signage will form part of this work.</p> <p>Fishing is currently available from the lake and there are a number of anglers who use the lake for this activity.</p>
<p>3. The sub-committee agreed that a tree planting scheme should be included in any discussion with designers.</p>	<p>Tree planting is likely to form part of the successful design.</p>
<p>4. The sub-committee agreed that removal of rubbish and proper maintenance of the lake could possibly allow water sports such as canoeing and sailing. Officers would need to discuss with people who fish in the lake and consider health & safety issues with water sport.</p>	<p>The lake is cleaned regularly by the council's grounds maintenance contractor. More regular inspection will be undertaken to ensure that the lake environment is clean.</p> <p>The Burgess Park Revitalisation project will address the lake environment and look at ways of increasing enjoyment and use of this facility.</p> <p>The anglers are represented on the Friends of Burgess Park and are being consulted on all developments regarding Burgess Park.</p>
<p>5. The sub-committee agreed a action plan required for works with priorities and considering public safety and that Friends of Burgess Park report should also be considered by the project team.</p>	<p>The Friends of Burgess Park are represented on the stakeholder group for the Revitalisation project. Consultation reports undertaken by the Friends have formed part of the information provided to those tendering for the design work on the park.</p> <p>Increased safety in Burgess Park is a key concern and a firm steer has been given that this should be addressed in the new design for the park.</p>
<p>6. The sub-committee agreed members also felt that park</p>	<p>The council is looking for ways to increase staff presence in Burgess Park. However</p>

<p>rangers were required for all the parks in this borough.</p>	<p>there are no plans to re-introduce park rangers. The parks rangers were replaced by community and parks wardens. There are 12 dedicated parks wardens that cover all parks in the borough.</p> <p>In addition the Aylesbury wardens do spend some time in the North of Burgess Park.</p>
<p>7. The sub-committee agreed the history of the local area should be reflected in art form contained in the park. Unique art should be featured in the park.</p>	<p>An arts strategy for the park is currently being developed. The development plan for the park will work with the idea of Burgess Park as a place for art however there are no plans to purchase works of art for the park through the £6m funding.</p> <p>Local Artist Sokari Douglas Camp has developed some sculptures in commemoration of the 200 year anniversary of the abolition of slavery. These sculptures will be placed in Burgess Park in line with the arts strategy, once a suitable location has been determined.</p>
<p>8. The sub-committee agreed that the cycle route be provided with proper lighting in areas of concern and that LED lighting be used, (lighting of trees).</p>	<p>Better lighting in areas of the park is likely to form part of the development plan for the park.</p>
<p>9. The sub-committee agreed that a play area required near to the picnic area situated at the Old Kent Road entrance to the park.</p>	<p>Improved play facilities are also likely to form part of phase one and the development plan for the park.</p>
<p>10. The sub-committee undertook to review Burgess Park and Chumleigh Gardens at the end of September/October 2009.</p>	<p>This review would be welcome.</p>
<p>11. That officers meet with users with a possibility of extended use of park during the weekends.</p>	<p>The park is currently well used at the weekends. The Burgess Park Revitalisation project aims to increase access to facilities that already exist and attract more local people to use the park.</p>
<p>12. The sub-committee agreed a management user group should be established which will have equal representation of all user groups including park management and Friends of Burgess Park reporting</p>	<p>A sports user group for the park has already formed. This group is facilitated by the council and negotiates fair usage of the Astroturf, in line with a football development plan which is a requirement of the Football Foundation's funding</p>

<p>directly with the council. Perhaps this can be a template for all parks in future.</p>	<p>(Football Foundation helped to fund the football pavilion).</p> <p>Representatives from the Friends attend this meeting and this model has been replicated in other parks such as in Peckham Rye.</p>
<p>13. The sub-committee agreed a full review of changing facilities/toilets and storage container for sports equipment is required as the present facilities do not meet the needs of the present users.</p>	<p>The council is not aware of a need to improve changing facilities in the park. The sports user group appear satisfied with current facilities.</p>
<p>14. The sub-committee agreed to consider extending and future sports usage especially key sports such as football, rugby, cricket and tennis</p>	<p>Football, rugby, cricket and tennis are very well provided for at Burgess Park. The Burgess Park Revitalisation project will aim to address the need for other sports activities in the park.</p>
<p>15. The sub-committee agreed that officers review the range of sports that could take place at the park and include user groups including football, cricket, rugby, cycling and tennis representatives.</p>	<p>Football, cricket, rugby and tennis are well provided for at Burgess Park. Other sporting activities can be considered if there is a demand from the local community. Representatives from these groups will be invited to attend the sports user group meetings.</p>
<p>16. The sub-committee agreed that officers look at the possibility of extending pitches and increased facilities as the demand for sporting activity increases, which fits in with health and youth provision aspects.</p>	<p>Please refer to response to scrutiny recommendation 14.</p>
<p>17. The sub-committee agreed the Management structure and group required for organised sports event with appropriate supervision.</p>	<p>Organised sports events are possible at Burgess Park. Events are attended by appropriate council employees such as wardens, parks community outreach officers, sports development officers.</p>
<p>18. The sub-committee agreed that management to control booking allocations with a clear procedure of pitch usage and management of the pitches and facilities on Saturday and Sunday requires supervisors to assist user groups on these days.</p>	<p>There are currently no additional resources available to supervise and assist user groups at the weekend. The Area Park Manager is on duty every other weekend.</p> <p>The council's booking system is under review.</p>
<p>19. The sub-committee agreed that officers look at the pitch allocations</p>	<p>Sporting activities are a priority in Burgess Park. Through the sports user</p>

and consider the possibility of extending pitch availability to the best locations in the park for casual users, but giving priority to sporting activities.	group the council will continue to ensure that the sports facilities meet the needs of local groups.
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Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Scrutiny Sub-Committee - minutes and reports	Scrutiny Team Room 3.16 Town Hall Peckham Road London	Fitzroy Williams Scrutiny Project Manager Tel: 020 7525 7224

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Time for Change Burgess Park – Report from Scrutiny Sub-Committee A

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Gill Davies, Director of Environment and Housing	
Report Author	Rebecca Towers, Parks and Open Spaces Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	October 12 2009	
Key Decision?	No	
Consultation with other officers / directorates / Executive member		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law and Governance	No	No
Finance Director	No	No