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Parks and green space strategy ready to get green light from Cabinet

Release Date: 03-Jan-2008

Bristol's Cabinet members are set to consider the council's ambitious 'Parks and Green Space Strategy' when they meet on Thursday, January 10, 2008.

The strategy sets out how - with significant annual investment and sound management - the city's parks and open, green spaces could look in 20 years' time.

If given to go-ahead, over the next five years the council, with its partners, could be in a position to invest at least £2m a year on a range of popular park improvements - such as new play spaces, sports facilities, toilets and cafes, access improvements, wildlife areas and park keepers. This could mean each year Bristol would see as many as 20 parks and green spaces significantly improved, which would directly benefit local communities across the whole of the city.

The strategy has been drawn up following massive public consultation and linking the strategy to other key elements of the council's work, such as the Area Green Space Planning process and Planning Policy Guidance 17. The strategy has also been developed in conjunction with the emerging Bristol Development Framework, which sets out the council's long term plans for the city and recognises the importance of green space to local communities.

The strategy aims to bring the city's parks and green spaces up to a good standard over a 20 year period, this could cost in the region of £87m. In order to achieve this figure, the report outlines potential capital being raised through a combination of sources, from Section 106 contributions to grants and existing resources and capital from alternative use of some areas of open space.

In order to deliver the first phase of the strategy, the report suggests the appointment of a 'Strategy Delivery Team' of council officers to drive the key elements of the strategy forward.

Councillor Rosalie Walker, executive member for Health, Culture and leisure, said: "This strategy is hugely important for the city. I'm passionate about our parks and share many people's desire to see further improvements and better maintenance. Parks and green spaces are for everyone to enjoy and that's why we need to get this strategy right - for now and for future generations.

"By adopting this parks and green space strategy we are looking to the future with an eye on our core polices, including: building balanced and sustainable communities; promoting public health, supporting young people's play and enabling economic regeneration in some of Bristol's most deprived areas.

"The success of this strategy is crucial and by bringing together a team of experienced officers I am sure we will be able to move quickly to implement the strategy.

"I will be urging Cabinet colleges to take a critical look at this strategy and see the potential investment benefits for the city and local communities."

Author:

Helen Hewitt Tel: 0117 922 2646

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