

Borough consultation on a new Green Spaces Management Strategy 2014

objective:

How do we manage green spaces better – meaning better quality and more efficiently”

This strategy development exercise is being managed by the commissioning team with the positive support of the Environment Portfolio Holder

Why this, why now?

Implementation of Council’s objectives, which acknowledge the importance of green spaces in the opinion of the community and the wider general public; while at the same time striving to find more effective ways of delivering them, the mission of the commissioning team.

Definitions:

Green spaces – owned or managed by borough or parishes (excludes privately owned or HCC owned land)

Management strategy – any combination of management contract or agreement involving another local authority (other than BDBC) ,volunteers, private sector or 3rd sector

Ownership – public land vested in a local authority - ownership change is not the primary focus of this consultation but is not precluded.

Form of consultation

A series of consultation meetings is being held in December and January with the following interested parties:

Hants Wildlife Trust Representatives of voluntary conservation groups
Town & Parish Councils Representatives of sports users of green space
Residents Groups and Community associations

The consultation asks three questions:

1. **What are the issues** to be considered if management of a green space is to be transferred? Summary of these from initial meetings will be circulated

2. **What alternatives are there** to the current management arrangement and what are factors to be considered?
 - no change: management by LA with or without volunteer group contribution
 - transfer management to a constituted body (which could be private or 3rd sector)
 - transfer ownership/management to an existing or newly constituted charitable trust
 - transfer ownership/management to another public body (parish, county etc.)

1. **What are the next steps?** Further detailed submissions are invited, reduced range of options to be put to portfolio holder in Spring. A pilot project is suggested.

Natural Basingstoke Response

The indications are that the consultation process is effective in teasing out many of the issues to be considered when reviewing such options. (One which may or may not emerge is the potential divergence of views of the various bodies consulted due to their limited perspective and experience).

The review of options, or combinations of options, requires considerably more thought and discussion than is possible in a brief consultation as currently being held.

The considered input of Natural Basingstoke members to this review process has been offered to the officers involved by the end of January.

How would members like to conduct the process of examining options and establishing those which are viable options and those which we do not see as viable and why?