

5 July 2021

TITLE OF REPORT: Programme of Improvement of Green Spaces within Gateshead**REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Strategic Director, Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities**

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the programme of improvement of green spaces in Gateshead. A full report on this programme will be brought to OSC later in the year for their consideration and scrutiny.

Background

1. OSC have requested as part of their 2021-22 work programme a report on the programme of improvement of green spaces within Gateshead.
2. This report is to introduce an outline of the areas and themes that will be covered in detail in the full report into OSC in the Autumn and to hear from scrutiny committee members the particular areas of interest they would want included or a particular focus on.

Programme of Improvement to Green Spaces

3. The borough of Gateshead stretches almost 13 miles along the south bank of the river Tyne and covers 55 square miles, making it the largest of the five Tyne and Wear authorities. Around two thirds of the borough is rural. The definition of Green spaces referred to in this report includes;
 - general open green spaces owned or managed by the council across the borough, including estate greens,
 - 28 parks and 120 fixed play sites, with a range of facilities, managed by Gateshead Council,
 - over 20 Countryside sites including meadows, woodlands, local nature reserves and sites of special scientific interest, and
 - the green spaces owned and/or managed by our partners such as Durham Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission, local conservation groups, the National Trust and Woodland Trust.
4. *Appendix 1* to this report lists the proposed programme of improvement of green spaces to be presented to OSC in the Autumn.

5. OSC will receive a full report and presentation including;
 - update on the current programme of improvements already underway for 2021-22,
 - planned improvements or projects which are in development, subject to approval of external funding bids or that require permissions to proceed, and
 - future plans and longer term ambitions to further improve our green spaces in Gateshead.
6. Emerging themes from the overview of the programme of improvement to our green spaces are;
 - External funding opportunities
 - Investment / Service Improvement
 - Partnerships & projects
 - Policy developments

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC:
 - (i) consider the planned programme of improvement of green spaces outlined in Appendix 1
 - (ii) identify any areas they feel they require more detail or require further scrutiny to be brought back to OSC in the Autumn.

Contact: Phil Hindmarsh

Ext: 7445