

| Report for: | Health and Wellbeing Board |
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| Date of Meeting: | 8th June 2021 |
| Subject: | **Director of Public Health - Carole Furlong’s Annual Public Health Report 2021:**  Let’s go outside - using nature to recover |
| Responsible Officer: | Carole Furlong - Director of Public Health |
| Public: **Yes** |  |
| Wards affected: **All** |  |
| Enclosures: **None** |  |

| Section 1 - Summary and Recommendations |
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**Report for Information**

The report is titled ‘Let’s go outside - using nature to recover’ and it describes the wealth of Harrow’s green spaces and enjoying it and doing things in it can support our wellbeing.

After a year where we have all spent much time in our homes and many people have suffered hardship and loss getting outside and seeing nature is a positive opportunity.

This report is therefore first and foremost for the residents of Harrow, who we hope will be inspired by the possibilities listed here to make the most of the range of green spaces on their doorstep as we come out of lockdown. We have tried to showcase the variety of opportunities available in the borough and hope that people find something that excites them.

This report is also for all health and wellbeing partners, anyone working with the public and for those working in service commission and public strategy. We hope that by outlining the benefits of green space on physical and mental wellbeing as well as the greater benefits to society, they will be inspired to enthusiastically promote green spaces to their clients and consider green space in their own projects.

**Recommendations:**

**Recommendations for us at the council and led by me Carole Furlong**

1. To have a conversation with our residents about how we can use green spaces to make us happier and more healthy
2. To ensure that access to green space is factored into decisions on new developments as stated in the Harrow Local Plan and by supporting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process for large housing and mixed-use developments which:
   1. Prevent green space being unjustifiably lost to construction or new development
   2. Increase provision of green space within new developments
3. To do more to promote use of green space as a key tool in tackling some of the inequalities within Harrow
4. To support maintenance and protection of existing green space in Harrow in accordance with Harrow Local Plan objectives
5. When resources allow to ensure and promote accessibility to green spaces by improving paths, signposts, and information on local green spaces, particularly in areas of Harrow with limited green space
6. To help Council staff to promote the use of green spaces to stay active, and how the natural environment can improve our mental wellbeing

**Recommendations for you our residents**

1. To find out where your nearest green spaces are and how you might get there
2. To get out and enjoy green space as a place to observe nature, to connect with friends and unwind from the stresses of the day
3. To use green spaces around your home more for leisure, exercise or growing, ideally by building into your weekly routine

## Section 2 – Report

### Financial Implications/Comments

There are no specific financial implications contained within the report, however it should be noted that there has historically been no dedicated budget for improvements around pathways or access for parks and open spaces. Works which have been undertaken have been funded via specific projects as part of the Green Grid or from limited Capital investment.

Any specific recommendations will need to be considered on a case by case basis subject to the identification of funding sources, including potential external funding sources.

### Any longer term and ongoing funding requirement will need to be considered as part of the Council’s annual budget setting process.Legal Implications/Comments

The terms of reference for The Health and Wellbeing Board include

Develop and deliver a programme of work based on the Joint Commissioning priorities and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

· Shape future years joint commissioning

· Share Commissioning Intentions and common priorities

· Govern and quality assure the Health and Wellbeing Board work programme

· Be aware and discuss emerging policy and strategy

This report is in keeping with the overarching principle in the Local plan of enhancing residents’ access to open space.

### Risk Management Implications

None Identified.

### Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

This report aims to reduce inequalities by improving and promoting access to green space for everyone in Harrow and by supporting a process for carefully considering access to green space in decision making in adherence with the Harrow Local Plan.

### Council Priorities

Please identify how the decision sought delivers these priorities.

1. **Improving the environment and addressing climate change**

This report aims to highlight the benefits and support awareness and enjoyment of green space in Harrow. The recommendations commit to supporting and protecting green space provision in synergy with the Harrow Local Plan objectives.

1. **Tackling poverty and inequality**

The recommendations commit to a series of action to improve access for all to green space and with particularly emphasis on areas with higher health inequalities in the borough.

1. **Building homes and infrastructure**

The recommendations commit improving access for all to green space and reviewing how we can do this to reduce health inequalities in the borough. The report recommends that we maximise green space in new developments in synergy with the Harrow Local Plan objectives.

1. **Addressing health and social care inequality**

The recommendations commit to improving access for all to green space and reviewing how we can do this to reduce health inequalities in the borough.

1. **Thriving economy**

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance (Council and Joint Reports)

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|  |  |  | on behalf of the\* |
| Name: Donna Edwards |  |  | Chief Financial Officer |
| Date: 01 June 2021 |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | on behalf of the\* |
| Name: Sharon Clarke |  |  | Monitoring Officer |
| Date: 03 June 2021 |  |  |  |

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|  |  |  |  |
| Name: Paul Hewitt |  |  | Corporate Director people Services |
| Date: 03/06/2021 |  |  |  |

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Anna.kirk@harrow.gov.uk