



COMMITTEE TITLE: Clean & Green Committee

DATE: 11 September 2023

REPORT TITLE:	Hutton Country Park Management Plan
REPORT OF:	Marcus Hotten, Director of Environment

REPORT SUMMARY

The report seeks approval to undertake consultation to develop a vision statement for Hutton Country Park. This will be the keystone of developing a 10-year management plan for the site that aligns with the strategic objectives of the Council's Corporate Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

R1. ^(OBJ)To delegate authority to the Director of Environment to undertake consultation on the development of the Hutton Country Park Management Plan.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure a long-term strategic plan is developed for Hutton Country Park that aligns with the Council's broader corporate aims.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Hutton Country Park has been owned by Brentwood Borough Council since 1997. It is a Local Nature Reserve, supporting a vast array of native flora and fauna and is thus managed as an area of conservation value in what is otherwise an area of vast intensive arable land and urban expansion. The park covers 37.4 hectares, containing a large area of semi-natural grassland, an area of ancient oak and hornbeam woodland, ponds, wetland and the River Wid, which forms the northern boundary.

Responsible enjoyment of the site by the public is valued and encouraged as it is ideal for pleasant strolls, nature watching and dog walking. Pedestrian access to the park may be gained from Sunray Avenue and Goodwood Avenue. Access can also be gained from Wash Road where there is a small car park.

Hutton Country Park is a highly regarded assets by residents, operated by the Council to ensure that the country park remains not only safe to use but also well maintained. It is important that there is a focused forward-thinking plan in place to direct resources and highlight areas for improvements within the country park.

The provision of a 10 year management plan with structured programmes for improvements for the country park will assist this Council in the focusing and directing resources where they are needed, manage resident expectation with regard to future provision and improvements, and also ensure that value for money is obtained with the works undertaken. It will further, provide a plan for seeking appropriate funding, grants, and planning development contributions.

An important keystone of the any management plan is to develop a vision for the site that is ambitious but also reflective of stakeholders and local residents. This initial stage will require consultation with park users, members, and key stakeholders such as the Forestry Commission, Active Essex and Natural England.

A further report will be brought back to the committee setting out progress on the development of the management plan and seeking approval of the vision statement.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer
Tel & Email : 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

The cost of the consultation and development of the vision for the country park would be met within existing budgets.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Joint Acting Up Director People & Governance & Monitoring Officer
Tel & Email 01277 312500 / claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

Any work undertaken by the Council, either by itself or in partnership will be in line with statutory legal guidance.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 Consultation will be undertaken within exiting staff resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

None.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Consultation will play an important part of the developing an appropriate vision, and will be appropriate to the specific stakeholder, consisting of meetings, workshops and on-site engagement.

9.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health

Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place

Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

None identified

REPORT AUTHOR:

Name: Marcus Hotten

Title: Director - Environment

Phone: 01277 312500

Email: Marcus.hotten@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

None