



# Neighbourhood Services Strategy 2024 - 2027

## STRATEGY AIMS:

The Neighbourhood Services Strategy focuses on the quality of the public realm that residents see every day in the community where they live, as they move around the borough and specific locations that they may visit from time to time. Although a key part of the strategy will refer to maintenance operations and standards it will also draw in other elements that contribute to resident's experience and perception of their local environment and the wider borough. The strategy will also consider the related benefits of good quality and accessible open spaces, parks and play areas on both physical and mental wellbeing.

## ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Start Life Well	Live and Age Well	Prosper and Flourish	Clean and Tidy	A Strong and Sustainable Council
Free access to parks, open spaces, and equipped play areas is essential to children's healthy development and wellbeing. They create safe spaces for children to meet and play with friends, have fun, develop social skills and learn about the environment. These facilities have been available to many generations and can often be taken for granted, and as they are not statutory services can often suffer from lack of investment.	The need to access well maintained publicly owned spaces and facilities is important to residents of all ages and impacts on every aspect of their day to day lives. Where they live, work, travel or spend their leisure time and their physical and mental wellbeing will be influenced by their surroundings.	The delivery of capital projects will improve a range of facilities in the borough's towns and villages. Their longer-term success will be influenced by the surroundings in which they are situated. A safe and well-maintained public realm supports the successful operation of these facilities and the way they are perceived by residents and visitors.	The provision of street cleansing services is a statutory service although there is a large degree of latitude as to the level of service provided. The presence of litter, graffiti, dog fouling, and fly tipping in the public realm directly impacts on how residents feel about their local area, in terms of quality of life, safety and a sense of community.	The council is adapting its approach to service provision due to the impacts of climate change, the need to be more sustainable and the development of new technology. This includes a more biodiverse approach to open space maintenance, increasing reuse and recycling, and adopting an increasing number of operational electric vehicles.

## PRINCIPLES

Principle 1	Principle 2	Principle 3	Principle 4	Principle 5	Principle 6
To develop an open space maintenance programme that can be delivered consistently with the available resources. This would include 14 grass cuts per year, shrub pruning once per year, maintain the current quality of parks, open spaces and cemeteries. There will also be a move towards a more biodiverse approach to grounds maintenance where appropriate. Review the partial ban of herbicides in order to address the maintenance issues that have been experienced this year.	To use available funding to carryout refurbishment of 3 play areas and the installation of safety surfacing at 14 play areas. Future funding will only allow one play area each year to be refurbished and a limited safety surfacing programme. Should other sites become unserviceable or vandalised beyond repair it will be removed and not replaced (unless external funding streams can be identified).	The council has invested in two tree teams who are currently working through a backlog of general work requests and dealing with trees affected by Ash Dieback. With the current resources available it will take two to three years to move from a reactive tree maintenance regime to a more programmed approach.	To develop a street cleansing regime that can be delivered consistently with the available resources. This will include daily cleansing of town centres, weekly emptying of litter bins, twice yearly road sweeping, deployment of barrow operatives, and a reactive approach to street cleaning in other areas. We will continue to promote the work of volunteers who are an essential part of keeping the borough clean and tidy.	Carryout an assessment of the long-term infrastructure investment required for parks, formal open spaces and cemeteries. Current funding levels are insufficient to maintain infrastructure such as paths, walls and structures in parks and open spaces. We will continue to try and secure external funding where possible through various bids and grants.	Consider the impact of other services on local neighbourhoods such as highways, the ASB team, Enforcement/ Parking services, Housing associations, private landowners, etc.



## ACTIONS

Principles	Actions and timescales	Survive: Years 1 - 2 – Quarter to be delivered 2024/25, 2025/26	Strive: Years: 3 - 5	Thrive: Years 6 - 10
<b>Principle 1</b>	Identify sites throughout the borough where maintenance standards can be changed to enable a more biodiverse environment to be established	Quarter 4 2024/25	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Develop supporting communications and interpretation programme	Quarter 4 2024/25	Ongoing	Ongoing
<b>Principle 2</b>	Review current level of play provision, quality and capital investment required	Quarter 3 2024/25		
	Set out programme for rationalisation and improvement	Quarter 3/4 2025/26	Commence programme	Review
<b>Principle 3</b>	Ascertain how many more trees will require removal due to Ash Dieback	Quarter 2/3 2025/26	Subject to assessment	Review
	Ascertain ongoing demand for responsive tree works and current backlog	Quarter 3/4 2025/26	Subject to assessment	Review
	Develop proactive tree maintenance programme	NA	Programme developed	Ongoing
<b>Principle 4</b>	Set cleansing frequencies based on budget/ resources	Quarter 3/4 2024/25	Improve standards if budget/resources increase	Review
	Increase number of volunteers to assist with local litter picking activities	Quarter 3/4 2024/25	Ongoing	Ongoing
<b>Principle 5</b>	Complete assessment of all non-adopted assets / budget requirements	2025/26	Review	Review
	Develop programme based on available budget	NA	2027/28	Review
<b>Principle 6</b>	Identify other service providers that impact on local neighbourhood standards	Quarter 3/4 2025/26		
	Develop shared work programmes	Quarter 3/4 2025/26	Review	Review

Measure of success	Performance indicator/outcome	Outturn position 2023/24	Survive: Years 1 - 2	Strive: Years 3 - 5	Thrive: Years 6 - 10
Performance measure	Number of pieces of play equipment in use across the borough	New Measure			
	Number of trees with Ash Dieback to be removed	New Measure			
	Number of outstanding treesworks to be completed	New Measure			
	Number of volunteer groups in operation	New Measure			
	Number of street cleansing operations completed as scheduled including fly tip removal	New Measure			
	Number of grounds maintenance operations completed as scheduled	New Measure			
	% increase in biodiversity across the borough	New Measure			
	Number of non-adopted assets in need of repair/replacement	New Measure			
	Ward walkabouts to be used to resolve day to day service delivery issues	New Measure			

