

CARDIFF ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2022-2027

CULTURE & LEISURE (COUNCILLOR PETER BRADBURY)

AGENDA ITEM: 5

Reason for this Report

1. To inform Cabinet on the development of an updated Allotment Strategy for the city and to seek approval for its publication.

Background

2. Cardiff Council owns and manages 28 Statutory Allotment sites located across Cardiff, providing 3,461 lettable plots, with 2,398 individual named plot holders, some of whom hold more than one plot.
3. Cardiff's Allotment Strategy was first adopted in 2004 and a group of Site Representatives had been involved in its development, monitoring and ongoing review.
4. The original Strategy was subject to reviews in 2010 and 2014, resulting in the updating of action plans.
5. Key achievements of the strategy since 2004 have included:
 - The introduction of Local Management of allotment sites by Site Associations
 - The successful removal of the Allotment subsidy to secure allotment budgets
 - Programmed plot clearance to increase capacity
 - The introduction of pro-active management of the waiting list (closing over-subscribed lists if more than 50% of plot capacity, reviewed monthly, and regular cleansing of the list to check all those on the list want a plot)
 - The introduction of a more structured Local Management agreement to encourage greater participation from sites
 - The removal of routine waste collections from sites to encourage re-use and recycling
 - Partnership working and the development and delivery of projects including, the War Veterans Project at the Leckwith Drovers Site, the Action For Children Project at the Colchester Avenue site and the

emerging partnership with Travis Perkins that will see infrastructure improvements to sites, in areas of deprivation.

6. Engagement with the allotment community has been a key feature of, and integral to the review. A Strategy Review Group, led by Councillor Jane Henshaw, Assistant Cabinet Member for Local Environment, supported by site representatives and officers was established, to inform its development.
7. A comprehensive consultation exercise with allotment tenants was undertaken in the autumn of 2021. This exercise generated 499 responses, a 20% response rate. The outcomes from the consultation exercise that saw an overall increase in satisfaction when compared with the 2018 exercise are set out in Appendix 3 of the draft strategy document, at Appendix A.

Issues

8. The Strategy has been developed to address the key issues raised by the review group and outcomes from the consultation exercise involving tenants and site representatives, as set out below:
 - Lack of site representation on some sites
 - Lack of investment in allotment infrastructure, leading to a backlog of repairs
 - Allotment notices and procedures (which impact on turnover of tenancies)
 - Use of scarce resources (water/soil/peat)
 - Satisfying demand for plots, particularly owing to post pandemic interest in allotment gardening
 - Improving accessibility of allotments in terms of proximity and suitability
9. The Strategy also seeks to address the need to adapt the service to our changing climate linked to the Council's One Planet Strategy. There is also an opportunity to contribute to the Nature Recovery agenda by enabling local sites to utilise ground unsuitable for cultivation to support wildlife and biodiversity.
10. The updated Strategy has three key aims:
 - To make the best use of available resources
 - To provide a sustainable allotment service
 - To ensure allotment gardening is accessible
11. The Strategy document provides a full overview of the service and the constraints within which it currently operates. It highlights areas of concern which require further consideration to adapt the service to meet current and future needs, which include:
 - Reviewing allotment charging mechanisms

- Reviewing the supply and use of treated water for irrigation to reduce the cost of wastage and increase the use of collected rainwater
 - Addressing the use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers by plot holders, with a view to reducing and eventually eliminating their use
 - Improving cultivation methods to enhance the conservation of soil and improve the growing medium
 - Encouraging the intergenerational transfer of skills
 - Improving support for site-based volunteers, including Site Representatives
12. The action plan, attendant to the strategy document has been designed to drive the delivery of thirty-four actions categorised in the short, medium and long term, and in order to achieve strategy aims.
13. Critical to the success of the strategy will be the continued engagement of the allotment community and the progress against the delivery of the action plan will continue to be monitored through a review forum of nominated Site Representatives who will make up the Strategy Review Group.

Reason for Recommendations

14. To ensure that the key issues, challenges, and opportunities facing Cardiff's allotment service are addressed.

Financial Implications

15. This report does not identify any additional financial implications. The strategy delivery plan includes a number of actions and objectives which are assumed to be met within the available budget resources or through any additional grant funding opportunities that become available.

Legal Implications

16. The Allotments Act 1908 to 1950 provides the legal framework for allotments, which includes a duty upon local authorities to provide allotments. The strategy annexed to this report set out the Council's aims and objectives for providing this service.

Equalities & Welsh Language

17. In considering this matter the decision maker must have regard to the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties Councils must, in making decisions, have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. Protected characteristics are: (a) Age, (b) Gender reassignment, (c) Sex (d) Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality, (e) Disability, (f) Pregnancy and maternity, (g) Marriage and civil partnership, (h) Sexual orientation (i) Religion or belief –including lack of belief.

18. When taking strategic decisions, the Council also has a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage ('the Socio-Economic Duty' imposed under section 1 of the Equality Act 2010). In considering this, the Council must take into account the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers ([WG42004 A More Equal Wales The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act 2010 \(gov.wales\)](#)) and must be able to demonstrate how it has discharged its duty.
19. An Equalities Impact Assessment aims to identify the equalities implications of the proposed decision, including inequalities arising from socio-economic disadvantage, and due regard should be given to the outcomes of an Equalities Impact Assessment, detailed at Appendix B.
20. The decision maker should be mindful of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

21. The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, and is globally responsible. In discharging its duties under the Act, the Council has set, and published well-being objectives designed to maximise its contribution to achieving the national well-being goals. The wellbeing objectives are set out in Cardiff's Corporate Plan 2020 -23.
22. When exercising its functions, the Council is required to take all reasonable steps to meet its wellbeing objectives. This means that the decision makers should consider how the proposed decision will contribute towards meeting the wellbeing objectives and must be satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to meet those objectives.
23. The wellbeing duty also requires the Council to act in accordance with a 'sustainable development principle'. This principle requires the Council to act in a way which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Put simply, this means that Council decision makers must take account of the impact of their decisions on people living their lives in Wales in the future. In doing so, the Council must:
 - Look to the long term
 - Focus on prevention by understanding the root causes of problems
 - Deliver an integrated approach to achieving the 7 national well-being goals
 - Work in collaboration with others to find shared sustainable solutions

- Involve people from all sections of the community in the decisions which affect them
24. The decision maker must be satisfied that the proposed decision accords with the principles above; and due regard must be given to the Statutory Guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers, which is accessible on line using the link below: <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/statutory-guidance/?lang=en>

Policy and Budget Framework

25. The decision maker must be satisfied that the proposal is within the Policy and Budget Framework, if it is not then the matter must be referred to Council.

HR Implications

26. There are no HR implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

Property Implications

27. There are no further specific property implications in respect of the Cardiff Allotment Strategy 2022-2027. The Strategic Estates Department will continue to assist and advise the Parks and Harbour Authority where necessary in supporting delivery in relevant areas and on any property related activities which affect allotment land and provision. Where there are property transactions or valuations required to deliver any proposals, they should be done so in accordance with the Council's Asset Management process and in consultation with Strategic Estates and relevant service areas.

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is recommended to approve the Cardiff Allotment Strategy 2022-2027.

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Neil Hanratty Director Economic Development
	4 March 2022

The following appendices are attached:

Appendix A - Cardiff Allotment Strategy 2022-2027

Appendix B - Equalities Impact Assessment