

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	
<b>Subject:</b> Green Spaces: The Benefits for London	<b>Public</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>	
<b><u>Summary</u></b>		
<p>A report entitled ‘Green Spaces: The Benefits for London’ was published by the City of London Economic Development Office and Public Relations Office on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July. The report was presented to Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013. At the Committee it was agreed that the report should be presented for further discussion to the Open Spaces Committee.</p>		
<b>Recommendation</b>		
That this report is received for information.		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Economic Development Office commissioned BOP Consulting to carry out a literature review of the research relating to the benefits to residents, workers, businesses and visitor of green spaces. The full report is included at Appendix One.
2. The report found compelling evidence for the benefits of green spaces. These were classified as environmental benefits, physical and mental health benefits, economic value and social benefits.

### **Current Position**

3. At the Open Spaces Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2013 the report was received, and Members of the committee requested that further time was made available to the discussion of the content and implications of the report. The following areas are suggested for discussion.

## **The role of the City of London in providing green space for Londoners**

4. The City of London has, since the nineteenth century, played a key role in conserving green spaces in Greater London and beyond. In the short term, work is being carried out to promote the role of the City of London in protecting and managing green spaces through the Identity Project, which is being overseen by a Members Working Group.
5. The Committee could consider the medium and long term role of the City of London in providing green space in London. In the past acquisition of land, for example Stoke Common, bought from South Buckinghamshire District Council in 2007. The London Green Grid, using the methodology laid out in the London Plan identified green space deficiencies in several areas of Greater London and opportunities for the development of new green spaces in the south-east and north-west of the city. How could a long term strategic plan for the City of London's role in green space be developed?

## **The threats to green spaces in London**

6. The Committee regularly considers the risks faced in the management of existing green spaces. However, green spaces in London face several long term threats including the impact of pests and diseases, the impact of increased development in the vicinity of green spaces and the impact of changes to the climate. Consideration could be given to how the strategic management of the City of London's green spaces should address these risks.

## **How Open Spaces can promote specific benefits**

7. The report highlights several specific groups which benefit from access to green spaces in urban areas, particular children and the mentally ill. The Committee may wish to consider how the Open Spaces can maximise use of their sites by these groups. How could our activities in these areas be developed in a strategic and sustainable way?

## **Conclusion**

8. The report provides useful evidence to demonstrate the crucial role the open spaces maintained by the City of London play in provide a range of benefits to London and the surrounding areas.

## APPENDIX ONE: Green Spaces: The Benefits for London

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