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Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Item 4

6th February 2020

Report by Councillor Kenny McLean, City Convener for
Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm

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GLASGOW OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

Purpose of Report:

To advise Committee of post consultation revisions to the Open Space Strategy, the ongoing work in preparation of associated Planning Guidance and the OSS Delivery Plan, Governance arrangements and to seek approval to adopt the Open Space Strategy.

Recommendations:

That Committee approve:

- adoption of the revised Glasgow Open Space Strategy and its use in providing strategic direction on the work of council services on open space matters;
- the work identified as necessary to ensure the City's open spaces can deliver maximum benefit for the city's people and environment; and
- joint DRS/NS working to ensure open space issues and opportunities inform better decision-making across the Council and to establish governance arrangements for the OSS, including monitoring.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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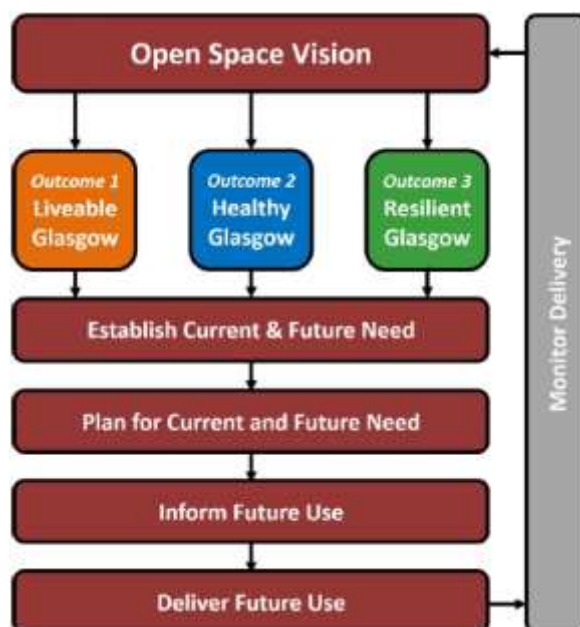
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 A Draft Open Space Strategy (OSS) for Glasgow was published for public consultation on 15 October 2018 for 8 weeks. The Strategy sets out a process which first identifies how open space can be used to enhance our quality of life and environment. Then it identifies the actions through which these benefits can be designed and delivered. The process is illustrated in the diagram below.



- 1.2 As well as consultation on the OSS itself, views were sought on supporting productions including a series of Local Context Analysis (LCA) documents and on the Council's Open Space Map (OSM). The LCA documents were drafted to illustrate how some key aspects of the OSS could be delivered throughout the City and the consultation sought reactions to these illustrations. The OSM represents an audit of the different categories of Open Space and identifies their locations throughout the city. Comments on all elements of the OSS have informed drafting a final version of the [Glasgow Open Space Strategy 2020](#).
- 1.3 Subsequent to the consultation, the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced a legislative requirement for planning authorities to prepare and publish an open space strategy, stating that it should provide a strategic framework of the Council's "policies and proposals for the development, maintenance and use of green infrastructure ... including open spaces and green networks". The Act's provisions in relation to open space strategies are yet to be implemented - the Scottish Government has stated they are likely to be enacted in 2021. However, the draft that has been prepared is consistent with the intention and expectations of the Act and any new duties or scope that emerge can be accommodated through future revisions if necessary.
- 1.4 There has been liaison and co-production with Neighbourhoods and Sustainability (NS), Glasgow Life and with other relevant council services throughout OSS production process. The OSS will help co-ordinate the roles, policies and strategies of a number of Council services with open space

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responsibilities, e.g. NS operational responsibilities with DRS' planning role. The strategic nature of the OSS means that it is not designed to deal with the day-to-day management and maintenance of the parks and open spaces.

2 Consultation Revisions

- 2.1 Just over 200 responses were made to the consultation, split almost equally between responses from individuals and responses from organisations, such as community councils, amenity groups, housing associations and the development industry. All but one of these were in support of the OSS although many included constructive proposals on how the document could be improved.
- 2.2 Almost half of the responses were in relation to the Open Space Map and paras 5.1 - 5.3 below provide further information on how these submissions will be progressed. Other comments were not directly related to the OSS itself (e.g. were in relation to maintenance of a specific open space) and have been passed onto the relevant service department for consideration.
- 2.3 The remaining comments have been taken into account in revising the draft OSS. Many sought relatively minor changes to the text, and these have been made wherever possible/appropriate. Significant changes have been made to the OSS in response to other comments and changes in the wider context, including:
- The OSS consultation used the Local Context Analysis as a way to engage on large areas based upon collated open space data for these areas. A number of comments queried the scale of these areas in terms of practicality and as a result the analysis has now been re-run down to a Ward basis and the results incorporated into the OSS;
 - the declaration of a climate emergency by the Council – open spaces have a key role to play in providing for both carbon savings and in helping the city adapt to inevitable climate change. A number of changes to the text and diagrams have been made to reflect this changing context;
 - additional text on how open spaces can help enhance biodiversity, taking account of the publication of the City's Pollinator Plan and the Council's declaration of an ecological emergency;
 - changes in relation to the way in which the OSS Delivery Plan (see section 3 below) will be produced, presented to the public and used. This includes more detail on the stages during which public engagement on the OSS Delivery Plan will be undertaken;
 - highlighting that a cautionary approach should be taken before identifying open spaces as redundant as we may not yet be aware of all the ways in which we might need to use open space in the future;
 - changes to the Quality Assessment Matrix used to determine the quality of "Community Spaces", those open spaces to be used to meet the OSS Accessibility Standard;
 - the role of the public and community groups in managing and taking responsibility for open spaces in their areas;
 - a greater recognition of the benefits of trees and a commitment to work to significantly increase their number over the next 5 years; and

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- the preparation of an easy-read, summary OSS document.

3 Preparation of the OSS Delivery Plan

- 3.1 The Final OSS commits the Council to a number of actions (set out in the OSS Action Programme). Each of these have been informed through analysis of 15 Key Factors that each relate to one of the three Vision Outcomes identified in the diagram at Para 1.1. Each Factor helps to demonstrate both current and future needs for open space in the city and will inform specific work to help deliver the OSS Vision outcomes of a more liveable, healthy and resilient Glasgow.
- 3.2 Parallel work is ongoing through the EU's Horizon 2020 Connecting Nature programme which has provided funding and expertise to aid the Council in exploring how to design and deliver on the outcomes and will result in the production of an "OSS Delivery Plan". The funding amounts to around £900,000 investment running until June 2022. It should be noted that the UK Government has given an assurance to guarantee Connecting Nature funding under all Brexit eventualities.
- 3.3 The OSS Delivery Plan will be of critical importance in delivering the OSS Vision Outcomes. It will direct future decisions on open spaces, including: whether they should be enhanced or used for other open space purposes; where priorities for maintenance may lie; and where opportunities may exist to plant trees or let them regenerate naturally. It will also identify where new open spaces should be created and where using existing open spaces for other purposes may be appropriate, with money generated targeted towards the OSS Delivery Plan.
- 3.4 Work is currently underway on some of these 15 Key Factors and consideration is being given to how to proceed with others – including how best to engage with local communities and other organisations (housing associations, Community Councils and other local stakeholders) to establish aspirations for open spaces in their areas.
- 3.5 The OSS Delivery Plan will be made available in the form of an on-line interactive map and will set out how open spaces should be used in specific parts of the City. Comments received on the LCAs will help inform preparation of the OSS Delivery Plan. It is anticipated that the OSS Delivery Plan will be brought before committee for approval in 2022 aligned to the Horizon 2020 workstreams. Thereafter, it will require to be monitored and kept up-to-date as our understanding of what different open spaces can provide develops.

4 Delivery

- 4.1 The OSS provides a framework for a co-ordinated approach, across all Council Services, to ensure our open spaces are designed to deliver optimal outcomes for people and nature. It will be used by all parts of the Council when making decisions on how we should plan for, use and manage the City's open spaces in future.

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4.2 Delivering the OSS will have budgetary implications and the Final OSS sets out a variety of ways in which limited resources can be used most effectively, including:

- working to maximise opportunities for external collaboration, including working with partners, such as the NHS, to deliver mutually supporting aims;
- supporting community groups to manage open spaces through asset transfer, participatory working and/or co-production;
- identifying options for maintaining open spaces less intensively – eg growing trees can reduce grass cutting that generate benefits for biodiversity;
- investigate where our open spaces might be able to generate income – e.g. by generating renewable heat or energy; and
- through the OSS Delivery Plan, identify whether there may be open spaces that are not needed to meet current or future need and where income may be generated from their sale.

4.3 Along with responding to the budgetary context, the OSS also highlights a need for the Council to more fully recognise and reflect the value of open space in decisions on budgets and in other decision making processes. To this end, it is proposed that DRS and NS work together to:

- develop protocols to give greater visibility to open space issues as a means of better informing decision-making across the Council; and
- establish governance arrangements for the OSS, including monitoring its delivery and providing biennial updates to Committee.

4.4 The planning system also has a key role to play in delivery, with the City Development Plan (CDP) establishing the role open space should play in creating successful places while also setting expectations for protection and creation of existing and new, or enhanced, open spaces to support new development. The OSS establishes open space standards (accessibility, quality and quantity) for the City and these will be incorporated into planning guidance. As a result, Supplementary Guidance SG6: Green Belt & Green Network and SG12: Delivering Development (which deal with open space protection and with developer contributions for open space) are in preparation and will be published, in 2020, for public consultation. Once adopted, they will be used to help deliver the standards and other aspects of the OSS.

4.5 The OSS will also align with spatial Planning Guidance documents such as the River Clyde Development Corridor Strategic Development Framework (SDF). The OSS and Clyde SDF will align work streams to identify opportunities to create new and enhance existing Open Spaces along the river corridor.

5 Open Space Map and Future Changes

5.1 The CDP protects the categories of open space shown on the Council's Open Space Map. The Open Space Map was first produced in 2009 and requires regular updating to identify and protect new open spaces and to reflect where existing open spaces might have been lost. The consultation attracted a

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number of comments on the Map. The vast majority of these related to the former school playing fields at Clouston Street, currently categorised on the Open Space Map as playing fields.

- 5.2 Designating a space on, or removing a site from the Open Space Map can have significant implications for how planning applications are determined and for the future of that space. As a result, it is essential that decisions on what is included on the Open Space Map are transparent and accountable. To this end, it is proposed to develop a new protocol for dealing with amendments to the Open Space Map, including:

- the role of officers, including making changes to the map to reflect circumstances on the ground (for instance where a new open space has already been created or has been re-developed through a development application). Work is currently underway to update the Open Space Map and will require to be undertaken on an ongoing basis, and shall be reported to all members prior to formal adoption; and
- potentially significant changes (adding, altering or removing larger spaces) will be presented to relevant Committees for noting and approval on a yearly basis.

- 5.3 Under this structure, the comments made on the Open Space Map during consultation on the OSS (changes were sought at 18 locations, including Clouston Street), will be put before this Committee in Spring 2020. Each proposed revision will be supported by individual investigation and consideration. Through this process, Committee can endorse the most recent iteration of the Open Space Map for use with the CDP to inform planning decisions.

- 5.4 In the longer term, the Open Space Map will be informed by the OSS Delivery Plan and associated Connecting Nature work, with Open Space Map showing the existing, on-the-ground position and the Delivery Plan showing what is proposed. There will be a requirement for an ongoing staff resource to keep both up-to-date and accurate.

6 Next Steps

- 6.1 The OSS was reported to Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee on 26th November last year. If members of this Committee are satisfied with Open Space Strategy as now revised following public consultation and scrutiny by the Policy Committee it will be adopted and become operational. Once adopted, the OSS will be used to inform decision-making on open space matters. Planning guidance will help deliver aspects of the OSS and CDP Supplementary Guidance 6 (Greenbelt and Green Network) and 12 (Delivering Development) will be produced for public consultation, with a view to having them adopted for use later this year. Work will continue to produce an OSS Delivery Plan through the Connecting Nature project and this will involve engagement with local communities and organisations, government agencies and others, as well as ongoing liaison with council officers on the climate and ecological emergencies.

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- 6.2 Work will continue to deliver the actions set out in the OSS Action programme and DRS and NS will establish governance and monitoring arrangements for the OSS, including arrangements for biennial progress reports.

7 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: The financial implications will be considered as the strategy is implemented.

Legal: The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires planning authorities to produce an open space strategy but it is not yet clear whether this iteration of the OSS will meet legislative tests. This will require to be kept under review. In the short term staff will be diverted from production of the City Development Plan 2 Main Issues Report to support this work.

Personnel: There will be personnel implications in delivering the OSS, monitoring delivery and in keeping associated resources, such as the Open Space Map, up-to-date

Procurement: None

Council Strategic Plan: Specify which theme(s) and outcome(s) the proposal supports

Supports Priorities:15, 21, 38, 44, 63, 67, 69, 71, 72, 75, 76, 83, 87, 88,

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22 The OSS will play a role in enhancing access to and quality of Open Space in the city which will have a direct impact upon improving health and tackling health inequality. It also establishes a structure through which communities will be able to have greater influence over how their open spaces operate and are used.

What are the potential equality As outlined above

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impacts as a result of this report?

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

Sustainability Impacts:

<i>Environmental:</i>	The OSS is embedded in protecting and enhancing environmental performance of the city and has been updated to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency.
<i>Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:</i>	The OSS is intrinsically linked to the Placemaking approach set out in the CDP which seeks to promote greater social cohesion and strengthen local communities as well as tackle health inequalities. No reserved contracts are anticipated at this stage
<i>Economic:</i>	The OSS sets out a strategic context for directing investment in open spaces and the green network to yield longer term financial and societal benefits
Privacy and Data Protection impacts:	None.

8 Recommendations

8.1 That Committee approve:

- adoption of the revised Glasgow Open Space Strategy and its use in providing strategic direction on the work of council services on open space matters;
- the work identified as necessary to ensure the City's open spaces can deliver maximum benefit for the city's people and environment; and
- joint DRS/NS working to ensure open space issues and opportunities inform better decision-making across the Council and to establish governance arrangements for the OSS, including monitoring.