



# HILLINGDON

LONDON

## Policy Overview Committee Review Scoping Report 2014/15

### **Review of the Cleaning and Maintenance Schedule for Hillingdon's Footpaths and Bridleways**

#### **Aim of review**

There have been a number of reports to the Council from residents in relation to the condition and cleanliness of the footpaths and bridleways in certain parts of the Borough. Although this does not appear to be a Borough-wide issue, it is still an issue of concern for those residents that are affected as it can prohibit use of the affected bridleways and footpaths.

Given the impact that the cleanliness of the Borough has on residents' enjoyment of Hillingdon's green spaces, this single meeting review proposes to evaluate the cleaning and maintenance arrangements currently in place.

To meet this aim, the following Terms of Reference are proposed:

#### **Terms of Reference**

1. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the arrangements currently in place with regard to the cleaning and maintenance of footpaths and bridleways in the Borough;
2. To gather evidence in order to gain an understanding of the effectiveness of the current cleaning and maintenance arrangements;
3. To identify any improvements that could be made to the current cleaning and maintenance arrangements whilst being mindful of resource restraints;
4. To review the reporting process available to residents who have identified areas to be cleaned or maintained; and
5. To identify alternative human resources that could be utilised on a routine basis to improve the cleanliness of footpaths (e.g., Street Champions, Neighbourhood Watch).

#### **INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS**

The public right of way network is 69 miles long and includes 366 footpaths, 11 bridleways and 10 byways open to all traffic. Bridleways and footpaths provide residents with an opportunity to exercise and enjoy Hillingdon's amenity space at no cost. However, this enjoyment can be impacted by the proliferation of litter along the routes and poor maintenance which makes them difficult to access and/or negotiate.

Currently, the Council does not have a standardised cleaning and maintenance regime with regard to its footpaths and bridleways. Instead, the Council is reliant on reports being made about specific incidents by officers and residents and responsive action is then taken to remedy the issue once it has been identified. Although it is accepted that it would be far too resource intensive to instruct officers to undertake routine checks of all of the footpaths and bridleways in the Borough, consideration could be given to how targeted work could be undertaken without additional cost implications and within existing budgets.

The Committee will hear evidence on the current procedures that are in place and the challenges being faced. This single meeting review will offer Members the opportunity to comment on these procedures and help to identify possible improvements.

## **EVIDENCE & ENQUIRY**

### **Witnesses and timeframes**

This is a single meeting review meaning that the Committee will base its recommendations on the findings of a single witness session. Unfortunately, it would not be possible to expand the review any more than this as its final report must be considered by Cabinet prior to the end of this municipal year. The timeline set out below will ensure that the Committee's report will be considered by Cabinet on 23 April 2015.

The suggested witnesses for these sessions and the suggested dates are set out below:

<b>Session Information</b>	<b>Suggested Witnesses</b>
<b>Agree Scoping Report</b> <i>(20 January 2015)</i>	Officers will be present at the meeting to present the scoping report
<b>Witness Session</b> <i>(25 February 2015)</i>	§ Green Spaces, Sport and Leisure Senior Manager § Waste Division Manager § Service Manager Street Scene & Traffic Manager § Tidy Harefield Group § Ramblers Society
<b>Consideration of Draft Final Report</b> <i>(25 March 2015)</i>	The draft final report will be presented by the Democratic Services Officer.

In addition to formal witness sessions, the Committee may wish to consider undertaking a site visit. This will ensure that Members are able to get a full understanding of the issues that are experienced by residents using the footpaths and bridleways in the Borough. In addition, given the impact that off-road vehicles can have on the state of footpaths and bridleways (and the inconvenience this can cause residents), the Committee may want to consider the associated maintenance implications.

### **Risk Assessment**

Relevant officers have been advised that this review is proposed and are aware of the possible implications on their workload.