

**Table 5.2** Public space integrated strategies

| No. | Authority                        | Inspiration | Name of integrating strategy/ document  | Details  |
|-----|----------------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| 1   | Newcastle City Council           | Best Value  | Best Value Pilot for Integrated Environmental Services                        | Unified public space budgets and restructured the council so that the public space management processes are all covered in a single council green paper known as an Urban Housekeeping Plan, that unifies other public space initiatives |
| 2   | Dartford Borough Council         | Best Value  | Street Scene Best Value Review  | Unites most public space types, but excludes parks. Mainly maintenance and regulation/enforcement based  |
| 3   | Harlow Council                   | Best Value  | Urban Landscape and Street Scene Best Value Review & Service Improvement Plan | Addresses most management processes. Excludes parks and highways   |
| 4   | Lancaster City Council           | Best Value  | Maintaining the Environment Best Value Review Improvement Plan                | Coordination document to improve integrated working, at early stages   |
| 5   | London Borough of Waltham Forest | Best Value  | Street Scene Best Value Review  | Unites public space types, mainly maintenance based  |
| 6   | Leeds City Council               | Best Value  | Parks and Countryside Best Value Review                                       | Brings together different public space management processes. Green space biased  |
| 7   | Westminster City Council         | Internal    | West End Public Spaces Report   | Management plans including detailed analysis of several high profile public spaces and districts. Includes all four management processes   |
| 8   | Bristol City Council             | Internal    | City Centre Strategy  | Brings together different initiatives that while limited by area do cover several public space types and a range of management processes   |
| 9   | Oxford City Council              | Internal    | Public Realm Strategy   | The only document supplied with public realm in the title, with detailed strategies for designing and managing public space  |

even here strategies rarely covered the full range of spaces encompassed in the definition of public space adopted for the research. Table 5.2 summarises these integrated strategies which were of two types.

First, some local authorities have achieved an integrated strategy through changes in public space management structures or through specific public space initiatives. These tended to be internally inspired, mainly through local authority members and officers with a passion and dedication for the public realm. Most of these strategies were for the city centre public realm, and therefore covered a limited range of public space types.

Westminster City Council, for example, had commissioned the West End Public Spaces Report, which was one of the few documents to describe management plans covering investment, coordination, regulation and maintenance concerns. However, the report concentrated in detail on only a few high-profile public spaces, while not discussing lower profile or residential public spaces. Bristol City Council’s City Centre Strategy was primarily urban design based and limited to central Bristol, but encourages the coordination of activities, and is regularly updated on issues of public space maintenance and investment. Finally, Oxford City Council have produced a Public Realm Strategy for the city centre that includes a history and analysis of Oxford’s public realm. While the emphasis of this is also primarily on design, clear aims for maintenance and investment are established.

Second, following recent public space-specific best value inspection processes, six local authorities had something approaching a comprehensive strategy for managing public space. Of these, only one – Newcastle City

Council – have what can be described as a completely integrated strategy for their public space that has also been implemented. Amongst the rest, by way of example, Harlow Council could demonstrate that internal restructuring meant that public space issues were all covered within one directorate with responsibility for the range of public space management processes. The London Borough of Waltham Forest had adopted a holistic definition of public space, and referred to a wide range of public space management processes with a particular emphasis on urban design in their Street Scene Best Value Review.

For their part, and resulting from their choice as a national exemplar – as a Best Value Pilot for Integrated Environmental Services – Newcastle City Council have been able to unify public space budgets and restructure the council so that the public space management processes are all covered in a single green paper known as the Urban Housekeeping Plan. The plan takes a deliberately holistic definition of public space, and demonstrates how public space management services are delivered and what the council’s future plans for public space are.

### Local authority public space initiatives

Although most local authorities in England do not have an integrated strategy for managing public space, there are nevertheless a wide range of initiatives increasingly being adopted by local authorities to deliver the better management of their public spaces. Moreover, many of these