

Appendix 2 - Baseline Report - Parks & Countryside Management & Maintenance (CFYA)

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
<p>Description of Current Service Baseline</p>	<p>Who provides the service?</p> <p>History how service was formed and why it exists</p> <p>How is the service provided</p>	<p>Stockton Borough Council, Care For Your Area Services</p> <p>The 'Parks & Countryside Service' prior to 2004 fell under the CESC structure, when it was transferred to Direct Services. The P&C service as now exists ensuring the Bio-diversity statutory duty for the Council is managed and complying with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act) & also to provide a range of non-statutory services.</p> <p>In 2007 following a Direct Services restructure two new independent team's were formed 'Countryside & Greenspace' & 'Parks & Countryside Team, the P&C team carry out the day to day management of all the Countryside sites, visitor centres and Local Nature Reserves</p> <p>The team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project manage minor schemes, including associated consultation work • management planning in countryside sites, having the following key aims: <p>To demonstrate a structured, methodical and professional approach to the management, maintenance and stewardship of the Councils Urban and Countryside Parks</p> <p>To ensure that the opportunities are provided for recreation and the promotion of healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>To develop educational usage.</p> <p>To conserve and sustain the character and component parts of the designated landscape of the Park.</p> <p>To conserve wildlife and increase biodiversity.</p> <p>To maintain and encourage community involvement and define common objectives</p> <p>To inform and guide present and future managers and their staff and ensure continuity</p> <p>To monitor and assess change on site.</p> <p>To cost work and set priorities for development</p> <p>To assist in bidding for funds.</p>

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	<p>What influences impact on the service(political social economical, technological)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help to establish and contribute to project partnerships, e.g Hardwick In Partnership, Heritage Park, etc • work in collaboration with volunteers to carry out day to day project or tasks and actively encourage partnership working services • influence delivery by inputting to other plans and strategies • undertake educational functions offering an out of classroom experience e.g Orienteering, Craft Fayres, Animal & Wildlife, Wildflower & Trees etc • undertake a programme of countryside events • actively engage with 3rd party organisations <p>The service actively consults, supports and relies on other service's within the Council e.g Countryside and Greenspace, Technical Services, Urban Design, CESC, Land & Property, Sports Development etc.</p> <p>A large number of factors can influence and impact on the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legislative changes (Bio-diversity) • Requests, suggestions and project proposals from residents and community organisations • Service Requests from Elected Members • Changes in Council and government policy / legislation (Health agenda) • Environmental factors; weather conditions, habitat change, climate change • Demographic changes. • Recreational preferences may change, at present it is very much in the public eye to use countryside sites for leisure and fitness pursuits • Educational changes to the national curriculum • Enviromental awareness

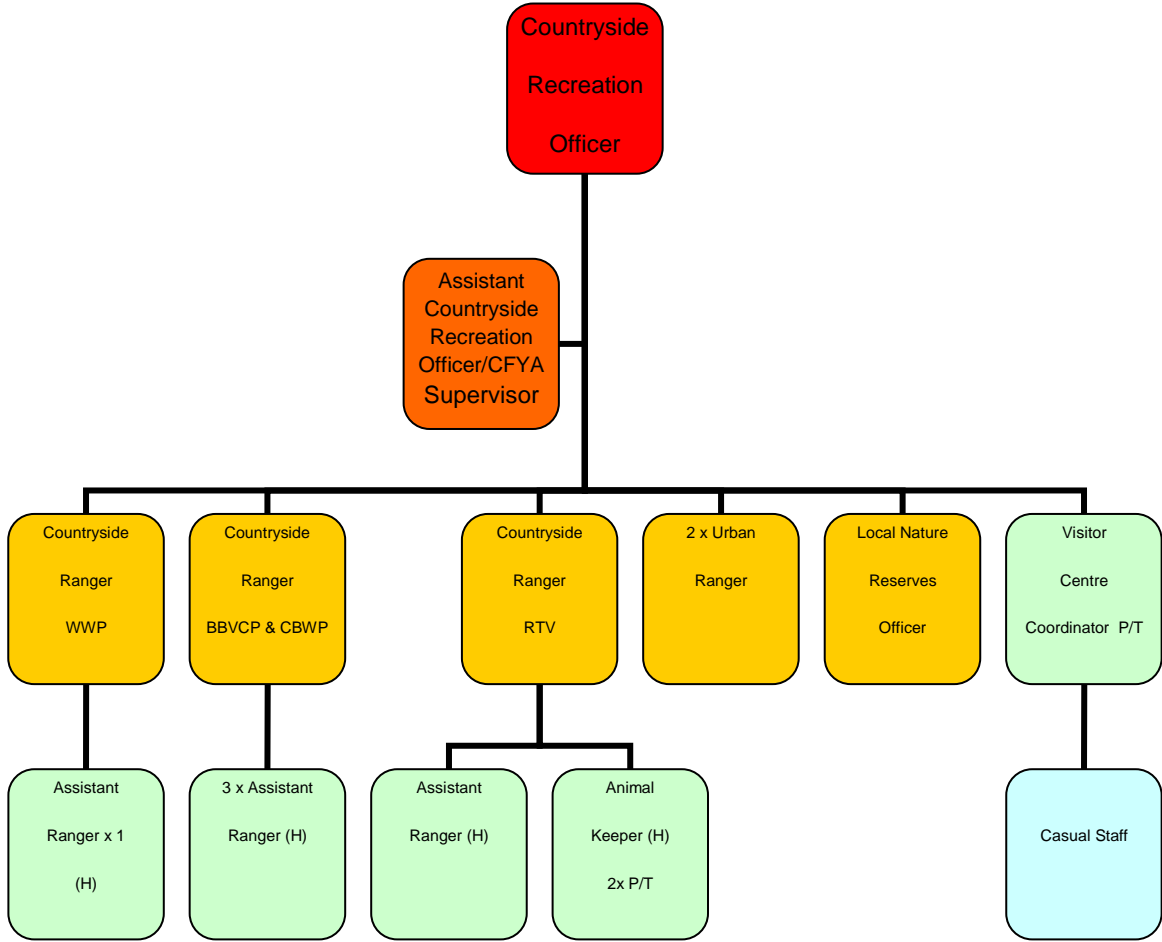
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	How does the service perform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2004 the Parks & Countryside service has played an important role in the Council being successful in gaining prestigious awards. • The service currently has 6 Green flag awards, • Entente Floral, • Britain In Bloom • Northumbria In Bloom • Communities In Bloom, • Reporting via NI 197 <p>This is a frontline service which fits into several council and government policies and obligations, extremely positive feedback has been received as detailed in the successful entries and awards above.</p> <p>Attendance figures for events and activities lead by the ranger service within Parks and Countryside</p> <p>Attendance figures for activities led by the Parks and Countryside staff are also monitored, with a total attendance for the period October 2008 to September 2009 of 21,479.</p> <p>This can be broken down by activity :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countryside events – 7,638 people attending 114 scheduled events • School groups – 2,910 pupils attending 86 sessions • Cubs, scouts etc – 462 youngsters attending 24 led sessions • Community Groups – 3,397 people attending 85 led activities / talks etc • Other groups and talks – 1,571 people attending 95 led activities / talks etc • Volunteer attendance - 1,987 whole volunteer days of attendance over 394 days worth of groups

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Challenge	<p>What does inspection tell us about this service</p> <p>What resources are used</p>	<p>No recent inspections undertaken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current staffing structure of the service is detailed below, numbering 14 full time, 4 part time officers and 13 casual staff • The Care For Your Area staffing structure is detailed at the foot of this document • The Service currently has 119 registered volunteers, of which 84 have been actively involved in projects within the last six months • Care For Your Area’s horticultural services team undertake a large element of the grass cutting and strimming operations within the parks • CFYA’s cleansing services carry out regular litter picking operations routinely or supplementary operations as a result of specific service requests or problems identified on site. • CFYA’s highways services carry out any larger on site civils works which is beyond the remit or capacity of the Parks & Countryside staff or volunteer groups • The Asset Management team within Care For Your Area undertake regular inspections of the hard landscaped areas and play facilities. • The Council’s arboricultural team

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		<p>Current staffing provision. Full CFYA service on page 16. (NB. this does not include the Planetarium Director)</p>  <pre> graph TD CO[Countryside Recreation Officer] --- ACSRO[Assistant Countryside Recreation Officer/CFYA Supervisor] CO --- R1[Countryside Ranger WWP] CO --- R2[Countryside Ranger BBVCP & CBWP] CO --- R3[Countryside Ranger RTV] CO --- R4[2 x Urban Ranger] CO --- RO[Local Nature Reserves Officer] CO --- VCC[Visitor Centre Coordinator P/T] R1 --- AR1[Assistant Ranger x 1 (H)] R2 --- AR2[3 x Assistant Ranger (H)] R3 --- AR3[Assistant Ranger (H)] R3 --- AK[Animal Keeper (H) 2x P/T] VCC --- CS[Casual Staff] </pre>

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	<p>Could the service be provided through a different mechanism</p>	<p>The service could be partially or entirely delivered through further partnership working and leasing options with external organisations such as</p> <p>Tees Valley Wildlife Trust 3rd Sector organisations (Friends / Supporters Groups) Tees Valley Councils</p>
<p>Customer Baseline</p>	<p>Who are the customers what are their needs now</p> <p>How are service users consulted and how do their views shape delivery</p> <p>How satisfied are the customers</p> <p>How do you communicate with</p>	<p>All genders, age groups, educational providers, residents, businesses and both regional and national visitors to the Borough who actively use greenspaces, or who benefit in other ways from having attractive, diverse and functional green infrastructure.</p> <p>A variety of methods are used, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GreenSTAT surveys • Project-specific consultations • Viewpoint Surveys • Tell Us Surveys (feeds into NI 199) <p>Feedback helps to inform development of plans and strategies, identify local priorities for action, and shape the development of individual projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ipsos MORI Place Survey 2008: 60% satisfied with parks and open spaces • GreenSTAT surveys 2009/10: 77% of park or greenspace users satisfied <p>Letters / surveys delivered to households in the vicinity of proposed projects Drop-in sessions</p>

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		<p>40.84%, walk the dog 37.36%, visit the play area 32.29% and to see birds and wildlife 29.01%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 75% of visitors rate the design and appearance of parks and open spaces as either good or very good • Over 76% of visitors rate the standard of cleanliness and maintenance as either good or very good • Over 81% of visitors rate the range of visitor facilities as either very good, good or fair • Over 75% of visitors rate the standard of trees and horticulture as either very good or good • Over 90% of visitors rate the protection of nature and wildlife as either very good, good or fair • Over 86% of visitors rate the provision of facilities for parents and children as either very good, good or fair • Over 78% of visitors are either very satisfied or satisfied with their overall impression of parks and open spaces • During the summer 18.72 % of people visit a site every day, 28.23% on most days and 28.81 % visit every 2-3 days
Customer Challenge	<p>Are there customers who could use the service but don't</p> <p>Are there customers using the service who shouldn't be</p> <p>Who are the customers of the future and what are their needs</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>The service aims to deliver a highly functional, attractive and accessible green infrastructure network across the whole Borough. This will help to meet everyone's needs – social, health, environmental and economic</p>

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	<p>What is likely to impact on demand for these services in the future</p> <p>What do complaints/compliments tell you about these services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in demand for outdoor recreation and play provision • Increased ambition or requirement to conserve and enhance biodiversity • Increased need for functional green infrastructure to help the Borough adapt to the impacts of climate change; e.g. trees and water to moderate urban temperatures and greenspaces/river corridors designed to reduce flood risk. • Uncertain financial climate • Cheaper leisure pursuits are being sought at present <p>Very well received since April 09 there have been seven compliments received with no justifiable complaints logged.</p>
<p>Aims & Objectives Baseline</p> <p>Challenge</p>	<p>Is the service required by statute</p> <p>Is there a statutory level of service</p>	<p>The Council does have some statutory responsibilities for the conservation of wildlife species and habitats. Legislation also covers some other areas of work: e.g. provision of allotments and protection of trees. Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 the Council must have regard for biodiversity in the delivery of all Council services and functions.</p> <p>No</p>

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	<p>Is the service responsive or proactive or a mixture</p> <p>Is the service needed</p> <p>What would happen if the service was not provided either in whole or part</p> <p>How would the service react to new pressures what capacity would be required to deal with additional / new demands</p>	<p>Generally proactive in relation to project delivery, although this can be responsive – e.g. in relation to requests from local communities and partners, or when opportunities arise through the planning/regeneration process or introduction of funded programmes</p> <p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer improvements or changes made to the Borough’s greenspaces • Significant reduction in resident satisfaction in the services we provide • Reduced ability to deliver improvements through partnership working and by influencing other strategies and plans • Local economy would suffer • Parks would degenerate leading to potential loss of Green Flag awards • Health & well being of current users will be affected • Statutes / legislation would not be met as no-one co-ordinating bio-diversity • The service would not be able to fulfil our Educational role • There are significant assets within our Parks which would deteriorate if effective management systems are not in place <p>There is limited scope to increase the level of service without deploying additional resources or increasing 3rd party sector partnership working.</p>
Aims & Objectives Challenge	Who provides a similar service to this using a different	The Council’s Events & Sports Development Team’s Tees Valley Wildlife Trust

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	<p>delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc</p>	<p>Other local authorities structure these service areas in different ways. Some outsource project development / landscape design / project management functions to Groundwork, Wildlife Trusts There is potentially a greater role for community organisations and town/parish councils involvement</p>
<p>Relevance / Context Baseline / Challenge</p>	<p>How does the service fit with the overall aims of the Council</p> <p>How does the service contribute to key policy areas</p> <p>What policies, plans and strategies impact on the service e.g.</p>	<p>Service contributes to all 8 strands of Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan.</p> <p>Contributes to several policy areas, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regenerate the Borough through the delivery of major local and sub-regional projects • Improve and promote a sustainable transport network • Make the Borough a cleaner, greener and more attractive environment • Tackle climate change through carbon reduction and resilience to extreme weather events • Highlight and celebrate our heritage • Increase participation in sport and active leisure • Reduce health inequalities by adding 'life to years and years to life' • Reduce levels of obesity in children, young people and adults • Further develop Community Engagement infrastructure and activity <p>Several, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy

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	<p>statutory, policy, function , other services</p> <p>Are there any political judgements / decisions involved in determining the level of service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy • Local Development Framework • Tees Valley Biodiversity Action Plan • Stockton on Tees Play and Play Area Strategies • Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC Act) • Care For Your Area Business Unit Plan <p>Yes - levels of revenue and capital funding are determined by Cabinet and decisions on Council policy have an impact on the nature of service provision</p>
<p>Financial / Resource Considerations Baseline</p>	<p>What are the costs of the service</p> <p>Capital and revenue costs</p> <p>What is the level of 3rd party expenditure</p> <p>What contracts or other arrangements are in place (spend analysis)</p>	<p>For 09/10</p> <p>Total Expenditure - £773,255</p> <p>Total Income - £56,571</p> <p>Net Cost of Service - £716,683</p> <p>Broken down further to determine costings for specific areas:</p> <p>Salaries - £444,079</p> <p>Premises - £125,600</p> <p>Transport - £16,745</p> <p>Supplies - £105,790</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p>

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	<p>What is the Councils commitment to contracts / other arrangements</p> <p>Do you have any charging policies</p> <p>How have Gershon efficiency savings impacted on the service and how were the service planning to meet future Gershon efficiency targets?</p> <p>How will the current financial climate affect the service?</p>	<p>None</p> <p>Yes – charge for school groups 75p per head per half day £1.50 per head per full day Events which require craft activities eg costs of materials only</p> <p>For the financial year 2009/10 Council agreed to limit the annual increases in the services Resource Allocation (RA) to 1%, which was below the Gershon inflation guide of 2.5% for that year. This has forced services to drive down costs to generate the desired efficiencies required to meet the gap between inflation and the limit on RA.</p> <p>This will be and has been an annual task that is undertaken when setting estimates but at this stage it is difficult to identify specifically how these targets will be achieved in future years due to the ever changing demands on the services</p>
<p>Financial / Resource Considerations Challenge</p>	<p>How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall?</p> <p>Do external contracts</p>	<p>Benchmarking exercise with other Tees Valley Councils</p> <p>No external contracts</p>

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	offer value for money?	
Service Drivers	What do we need to change and why? What are the main drivers of change?	Encourage and develop further usage by residents, visitors and educational organisations

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