

**EIT Review of
Sport, Leisure and Recreation**

**Arts, Leisure and Culture Select
Committee**

Final Report

November 2010

Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Municipal Buildings
Church Road
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Select Committee membership

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Councillor Andrew Sherris (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Aggio
Councillor Cains (appointed to Committee 24 November)
Councillor Dixon
Councillor Lewis
Councillor Mrs Nelson
Councillor Mrs Walmsley
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Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank:

- Reuben Kench, Head of Culture and Leisure, Stockton Council
- Graham Clingan, Countryside and Greenspace Development Manager, Stockton Council
- Neil Russell, Leisure and Sports Development Manager, Stockton Council
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Foreword

On behalf of the Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee, I am pleased to introduce the final report of the EIT Review of Sport, Leisure and Recreation.

During the review the Committee has considered evidence that demonstrated the number of high quality leisure and recreational services that are provided in the Borough, and the high regard in which these are held.

Throughout the review the Committee has aimed to find recommendations that will wherever possible ensure that frontline service delivery continues. This has in the main been successful however due to the levels of savings that we need to find as a Council, it is clear that we will need to seek alternative providers for some services, not least elements of those currently provided directly by Sports Development. The high aspirations of our sports and leisure strategy remain unchanged.

We welcome the contribution that Tees Active has made to the review, and the suggestions that they have made. We wish them every success following the re-opening of the improved facilities, including Billingham Forum, and the increased trading opportunities that should follow. We look forward to developing further the Council's relationship with them.

I would like to thank the contribution of the Committee to the review, and the efforts of the supporting officer team, in particular the lead officer, Reuben Kench.

I commend our report and recommendations to you.



Councillor Jean O'Donnell
Chair



Councillor Andrew Sherris
Vice-Chair

Original Brief

1. What services are included?

The review covers the following functions:

- Sport development
- Sports and leisure strategy and action plans, including commissioning of services from Tees Active Limited (TAL)
- Recreational management of the Borough's parks, countryside sites and other greenspaces, including delivery of events in parks and countryside
- Green Infrastructure Strategy & Action Plan - including development of parks, greenspaces and other recreational infrastructure such as footpaths and cycle routes
- Play Strategy and Spaces for Play programme

Within the Council, responsibility for these functions is held by the following services:

- Leisure and Sports Development (DNS)
- Countryside & Greenspace (DNS)
- Care For Your Area (DNS)
- Technical Services (DNS)
- Children's Strategy (CESC).

NB. Grounds maintenance issues for parks and greenspaces will be covered by a separate review of Care For Your Area in Year 3.

The Youth Services review will cover the provision of activities in Youth Centres; reference is made in Sport and Active Leisure Strategy.)

(Due to the significant scale of capital works at TAL facilities at the time of this review, it may not be possible to fully interrogate the finances and trading profile of TAL in order to investigate opportunities for efficiencies or savings. It is proposed that the overall purpose and role of TAL is reviewed, and a subsequent piece of budget work is scheduled after the Forum reopening and the Barrage 2nd Course opening Spring 2011).

2. The Thematic Select Committee's overall aim / objectives in doing this work is:

To identify options for future strategy, policy & service provision that will deliver efficiency savings and sustain / improve high quality outcomes for SBC residents in relation to sport, leisure and recreational services. Options for increasing earned income through trading activities will also be explored.

Ensure that the different service providers and partners are complementary, with the right agencies delivering the right work to ensure that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Identify options for further improvement to the area's sport, leisure and recreational infrastructure to improve the health and social well being of residents by ensuring a seamless provision. Options for private and voluntary sector partnerships and outsourcing will be considered.

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Sports, Leisure and Recreation undertaken by the Committee during the municipal years 2010-11.
- 1.2 The review formed part of a three year programme of EIT reviews covering all services provided by the Council. The programme aims to ensure that all services are reviewed in a systematic way to ensure that they are provided in the most efficient manner, provide value for money and identify opportunities for service improvements and transformation.
- 1.3 The services under review aim to provide a wide variety of high quality and accessible leisure and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors to the Borough. Evidence received by the Committee highlights the value that residents place upon such services, and the good levels of satisfaction that have been achieved.
- 1.4 The Committee wish to explore options that will continue to maintain the quality and accessibility of the Borough's green spaces. Discussions have been held with Tees Valley Wildlife Trust in order to explore the possibility of transferring responsibility for the management of sites to the Trust, with the freehold being retained by the Council. Subject to the successful conclusion of negotiations, it is envisaged that transfer of responsibility for two sites could take place on 1 April 2011. Further consideration must be given to this issue and the precise level of savings is yet to be determined. However, the Committee agree in principle to the proposal and therefore recommend:
- 1. that the Council should transfer management responsibility for Billingham Beck Valley Countryside Park and Cowpen Bewley Countryside Park from the Council to Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, subject to agreement with TVWT, and that further consideration be given to the transfer of other countryside sites to alternative providers as appropriate;**
- 1.5 The Committee have considered the role of the Countryside Ranger team. The team undertake day-to-day management of the Council's countryside sites, visitor centre and nature reserves, and this includes the provision of various events and educational activities are provided at sites across the Borough. A number of options were considered but due to the levels of savings that will be required, the Committee consider that the Ranger Service should cease educational activity.
- 1.6 This measure would enable the Council to retain high standards of maintenance; however the cessation of community engagement activity would mean that Green Flag Standards will not be met in future. It is envisaged that the providers of non-Council managed sites will continue to provide educational activities, and course leaders will be still be able to undertake visits to Council-run sites and undertake activities without Ranger involvement. The Committee recommend:

2. that the Countryside Ranger Service be reconfigured to focus on maintenance activities in future and therefore cease educational activity;

1.7 The Countryside and Greenspace Strategy Team co-ordinate delivery of the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy and related activity, including a number of greenspace regeneration programmes, and tree and woodland management.

1.8 In order to facilitate the research work of the Team, the Professional, Consultancy & Hired Services budget has been used to undertake contributions to various projects including the Local Development Framework, and the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The majority of related work on these major strategies has been completed; however a reduction in this budget would limit the Council's capacity to return to related issues in the near future. A reduction would also reduce the Council's capacity to develop future evidence-based strategies. The Committee recommend:

3. that the £25,000 research element of the Countryside and Greenspace Professional, Consultancy and Hired Services budget be removed;

1.9 Consideration was also given to reducing the funds allocated to the Environmental Development Budget. This budget is used to undertake small scale schemes on open spaces. The budget for 2010-11 is £22,362; the Committee considered the option of reducing the budget by £15,000 from 2011-12 onwards. This would reduce the Council's ability to fund, and match fund, such projects in future, and the remaining budget could be used to cover various technical and professional fees. The Committee recognised the value placed on the schemes funded through this relatively small scale budget, however the Committee agreed to support the reduction of the budget as it currently stands and therefore recommend:

4. that the Countryside and Greenspace Environmental Development budget be reduced by £15,000 per annum;

1.10 The Committee found that the Sport Development team were heavily dependent on external funding. Out of a total of twenty-one staff, thirteen are funded by external sources, in particular NHS Stockton-on-Tees, Sport England, and the Future Jobs Fund (FJF).

1.11 The Committee recognise that the continuation of external sources of funding is not guaranteed and that the service needs to plan for the worst case scenario. Therefore it is envisaged that a remaining core team would be based around three full time, and three part time staff. This team would be unable to deliver programmes directly, and it is envisaged that the team would concentrate on strategy, research, and the commissioning of services from alternative providers.

1.12 There are elements of service delivery that could be readily provided by alternative means. This may involve partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors. However it is also recognised that some providers particularly in the VCS may need additional support in order to deliver services, and it is proposed that a re-focussed service should aim to facilitate their development. The Committee recommend that:

- 5. that, in line with the expected cessation of external funding streams for direct delivery, the Sports Development team should be reduced and re-focused in order to provide a service based on strategic commissioning as outlined in the report;**

1.13 The majority of spend in leisure services is related to the management fee provided by the Council to Tees Active for the operation of the Borough's leisure centres. The level of management fee is currently at £2,841,235.

1.14 Tees Active has been consulted as part of the Committee's review and the organisation has identified efficiencies. Subject to the generation of additional income from the delivery of the new business plans for Billingham Forum and Tees Barrage International White Water Course, measures have been identified in order to reduce costs whilst maintaining service delivery. It is proposed to merge Tees Active's river-based activities on one site at the Tees Barrage. It has also been established that once the Forum re-opens, efficiencies in relation to staffing could be made. The Committee recommend that:

- 6. that the efficiencies identified by Tees Active be supported, including the withdrawal from the Castlegate Quay facility (and its transfer to an alternative appropriate river activity tenant) and consolidation of water-based and river-related activity at the Tees Barrage location, and staffing measures linked to the re-opening of Billingham Forum;**

1.15 The Committee recognise that TAL is currently experiencing significant business disruption as a result of the work at the Forum, and the conclusion of capital schemes at Splash and The Pavilion. As noted above, additional income is projected from the re-opened Barrage and Forum, and the provision of improved facilities at Splash and The Pavilion should also lead to additional income being realised. As this will not be able to be analysed with any great certainty until 12 months of trading has taken place, it is proposed to undertake a full analysis at the end of the period 2011-12, in order to investigate the potential for further efficiencies. The Committee therefore recommend:

- 7. that a further review of Tees Active's financial position be undertaken in the summer of 2012, once the full earning potential of the new facilities has been realised and allowing for a full year of trading in the new facilities, with the expectation that further reduction in subsidy would be realised from April 2013;**

1.16 During the period of the review, work has been undertaken in order to explore the potential for TAL services to be commissioned by one or more other Boroughs within the Tees Valley. Joint commissioning may lead to substantial economies of scale, and greater potential to improve the range of services without increasing delivery costs.

1.17 Within the Tees Valley, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council is the only other Authority that has outsourced the management of its leisure facilities. The remaining authorities have retained in-house service delivery. Each Council within the Tees Valley is undertaking its own transformation process and all are at different stages. Discussions are at an early stage and it is not yet able to determine the precise level of savings that may be achieved by this process. However feedback from initial consultation has been favourable,

Members support the proposal to undertake further work and therefore the Committee recommend:

- 8. that further work be undertaken in order to explore the options for the joint commissioning of Tees Active in partnership with one or more Tees Valley local authorities.**

And

- 9. that if, following implementation of the measures in relation to improving trading (recommendation 7), and joint commissioning (recommendation 8), the consequent reduction in the Council's subsidy to Tees Active is insufficient, consideration should be given to options for service reduction.**

1.18 The Committee recognise the importance of play and its importance for children and young people in the Borough, and support the continued focus upon it within future Plan and Strategy development. However due to the uncertainties surrounding funding and the relatively small amount of Council funding involved in any investment in facilities, the Committee do not propose to make recommendations on play at this time.

1.19 A number of estimated savings will be achieved by the implementation of the Committee's recommendations. Recommendation 1 is subject to further discussion however it is projected that the saving could be approximately £25,000. Recommendation 2 would produce savings of £122,924, recommendation 3 would save £25,000, recommendation 4 would produce savings of £15,000 and recommendation 5 would produce savings of £33,880. Recommendation 6 is subject to the generation of additional income from the delivery of the new business plans for Billingham Forum and Tees Barrage International White Water Course and would lead to a saving of £200,000 based on a reduction in the level of the Tees Active Management Fee provided by Stockton Council; the element linked to the consolidation of river-based activity on the Tees Barrage site (£100,000) would be realised from 2012-13. In relation to recommendations 7, 8 and 9, the precise level of savings that will be achieved is also subject to future work.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Sport, Leisure and Recreation undertaken by the Committee during the municipal years and 2010-11.
- 2.2 The review formed part of a three year programme of EIT reviews covering all services provided by the Council. The programme aims to ensure that all services are reviewed in a systematic way to ensure that they are provided in the most efficient manner, provide value for money and identify opportunities for service improvements and transformation.
- 2.3 The topic was identified for review by the Scrutiny Liaison Forum on 10 February 2010 and was subsequently included in the Select Committee work programme by Executive Scrutiny Committee on 2 March 2010.
- 2.4 As outlined in the Original Brief, the review covered a number of service areas within the Council, and the commissioning of services from the independent leisure trust, Tees Active Limited (TAL). The Committee had reviewed Tees Active services during 2008-9, and had made a number of recommendations for service development. The Committee continue to monitor the implementation of these recommendations but recognise that funding constraints may impact upon their completion.
- 2.5 This review has close links with other EIT reviews, particularly the Built and Natural Environment review. It is proposed that a subsequent management review of staff roles and relationships will be undertaken in relation to the council's green infrastructure planning, development, management and maintenance functions, with the aim of identifying any further possible efficiency savings. This work will be informed both by this review and the Built and Natural Environment EIT Review.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Committee received a number of detailed baseline reports in order to outline the scope of relevant services in their current form. The baseline reports are attached within the Appendices as follows: Leisure and Sports Development (Appendix 1), Countryside and Greenspace – Strategy and Development (Appendix 2), Care for Your Area – Parks and Countryside Management and Maintenance (Appendix 3), and Play Strategy (Appendix 4).
- 3.2 The services under review aim to provide a wide variety of high quality and accessible leisure and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors to the Borough. A number of strategies underpin this work. These include:
- the Sport and Active Leisure Strategy 2010-14 and associated Action Plans;
 - the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan;
 - Play Strategy 2007-12.
- 3.3 As well as focusing on the recreational development of the Borough's countryside and greenspace it addresses wider issues such as biodiversity, sustainable travel, landscape and heritage and flood risk management. The current Play Strategy is overseen by the Children's Trust Board.
- 3.4 Implementation of these strategies has a positive impact upon the full range of Sustainable Community Strategy themes. For example, the provision of well-managed and accessible greenspace benefits nature and activity based tourism, encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, reduces crime and the fear of crime, provides venues for events, and provides the opportunity for enhanced community involvement in the local area. The provision of leisure centres and activities provided by Sports Development contributes to increasing the number of adults and young people taking part in sport and leisure, improved health outcomes and reducing health inequalities. Opportunities for older people, adults with disabilities, and looked after children are specifically promoted by the service. Both of these service areas aim to contribute to better use of the River Tees.
- 3.5 The Play Strategy supports the development of play, positive activities and healthy lifestyles, thereby contributing to the 'Enjoy and Achieve', 'Make a Positive Contribution', and 'Be Healthy' outcomes within the overarching Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2012.
- 3.6 In order to achieve these aims, partnership working is well developed. For example, the development of the River Tees Heritage Park has seen close co-operation between the Countryside and Greenspace Strategy Team, the community group Friends of Tees Heritage Park, Groundwork North East, and the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust. Other partners of the section include the Environment Agency, Natural England, British Waterways, Town and Parish Councils, and Sustrans amongst others.
- 3.7 The Sports Development section work in partnership with many services within the Council, and external partners include NHS Stockton-on-Tees, the local voluntary and community sector (VCS), Sport England and the education sector, including through School Sports Partnerships.

3.8 The financial position of the services under review is outlined as follows:

COUNTRYSIDE & GREENSPACE	2009/10 Budget	2009/10 Outturn	2010/11 Budget
EMPLOYEES - DIRECT	274,842	276,145	281,879
EMPLOYEES - INDIRECT	8,189	13,984	14,701
PREMISES	24,799	50,084	25,362
TRANSPORT	10,534	13,380	10,782
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	348,804	262,359	282,704
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	0	0	0
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0	0	0
SUPPORT SERVICES	30,251	79,975	11,049
CAPITAL FINANCING	0	67,353	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	697,419	763,280	626,477
INCOME	(89,759)	(198,850)	(60,104)
NET EXPENDITURE	607,660	564,430	566,373

COUNTRYSIDE PARKS (CFYA)	2009/10 Budget	2009/10 Outturn	2010/11 Budget
EMPLOYEES - DIRECT	525,473	444,079	511,159
EMPLOYEES - INDIRECT	9,319	54,601	9,612
PREMISES	146,542	125,600	143,234
TRANSPORT	24,652	16,474	17,665
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	85,860	105,790	91,050
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	0	0	2,602
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0	0	0
SUPPORT SERVICES	15,144	26,711	1,820
CAPITAL FINANCING	0	0	3,361
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	806,990	773,255	780,503
INCOME	(37,893)	(56,571)	(35,893)
NET EXPENDITURE	769,097	716,683	744,610

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT	2009/10 Budget	2009/10 Outturn	2010/11 Budget
EMPLOYEES - DIRECT	614,246	567,960	492,504
EMPLOYEES - OTHER	55,414	74,402	55,867
PREMISES	105,384	90,232	106,425
TRANSPORT	34,835	36,408	31,619
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	683,172	776,361	609,000
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	2,582,429	2,764,429	2,867,179
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0	0	0
SUPPORT SERVICES	7,930	26,848	(282)
CAPITAL FINANCING	60,321	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	4,143,731	4,336,639	4,436,501
INCOME	(535,351)	(803,837)	(831,784)
NET EXPENDITURE	3,608,380	3,532,803	3,604,717

- 3.9 In relation to the management of the Play Strategy, the only direct costs are associated with a proportion of the responsible officer's time ie. the Strategic Manager – Children and Young People. There are no capital costs, aside from the management of external grant funding. Stockton Council currently oversees a contract with Futurity Tees Valley to deliver a Mobile Play scheme, using Big Lottery grant funding worth £200,000 over 3 years and scheduled to end in September 2011.
- 3.10 In total since 2008, grant funding from the Big Lottery Fund has totalled £488,188, and the Government's Playbuilder Programme has provided funds worth c.£1.1m. Matched with other funds this has been used to develop and refurbish a range of fixed play areas across the Borough.

4.0 Evidence

Parks and Countryside Management and Maintenance

- 4.1 The Committee have considered the results of various consultations in relation to countryside and greenspace services, including the GreenSTAT survey (Appendix 5). The results highlight the value that residents place upon such services, and the good levels of satisfaction that have been achieved. In terms of satisfaction with individual parks, as may be expected, parks that have had substantial recent investment achieve high ratings (Romano Park, Ropner Park and Wynyard Woodland Park in particular). Preston Park, Cowpen Bewley and Billingham Beck also scored well. The Committee wish to explore options that will continue to maintain the quality and accessibility of the Borough's green spaces.
- 4.2 In addition to the Council owned sites that are maintained by the Parks and Countryside Section of Care for Your Area, there are a number of sites in the Borough that are managed by alternative providers. These include:
- Tees Valley Wildlife Trust – responsible for various sites including Bowesfield Nature Reserve and Portrack Marsh;
 - Forestry Commission – responsible for Coatham Wood;
 - RSPB – manages the Saltholme Wildlife Park;
 - Natural England – responsible for Teesmouth National Nature Reserve.
- 4.3 In addition, the Admiralty Ecology Site Forest School operates within the former Elementis site in Eaglescliffe. All of these providers run educational programmes, and some host public events within their sites.
- 4.4 As part of the review, discussions have been held with Tees Valley Wildlife Trust in order to explore the possibility of transferring responsibility for the management of sites to the Trust, with the freehold being retained by the Council. Particular consideration has been given to Billingham Beck Countryside Park, and Cowpen Bewley Countryside Park.
- 4.5 Benefits to the Borough would include the ongoing maintenance of these sites by a willing and able provider, and the increased opportunities for the involvement of volunteers. The Trust could benefit from acquiring another site on a long term lease. This would enhance its prospects of attracting grant funding, including funding that the Council would be unlikely to obtain.
- 4.6 This option would still be dependent on an ongoing revenue contribution from the Council, and a Service Level Agreement may be required in order for the continued provision of some services such as cleansing and horticultural services. Savings for the Council would come through rationalisation of the Countryside Ranger service (in addition to the measures proposed at recommendation 2).
- 4.7 Subject to the successful conclusion of negotiations, it is envisaged that transfer of responsibility could take place on 1 April 2011. Further consideration must be given to this issue and the precise level of savings is yet to be determined. However, the Committee agree in principle to the proposal and therefore recommend:

1. **that the Council should transfer management responsibility for Billingham Beck Valley Countryside Park and Cowpen Bewley Countryside Park from the Council to Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, subject to agreement with TVWT, and that further consideration be given to the transfer of other countryside sites to alternative providers as appropriate;**

- 4.8 The Committee further considered the role of the Countryside Ranger team. The team undertake day-to-day management of the Council's countryside sites, visitor centre and nature reserves. Various events and educational activities are provided at sites across the Borough. To illustrate this, the following attendance figures were achieved between October 2008 and September 2009:
 - Countryside events – 7638 people attending 114 scheduled events;
 - School groups – 2910 pupils attended 86 educational sessions;
 - Cubs, scouts etc – 462 youngsters attended 24 activity led sessions;
 - Community groups - 3397 people attended 85 activity led sessions such as walks;
 - Other groups & talks – 1571 people attended 95 activity led sessions such as walks.

- 4.9 Ten out of the fifteen members of staff are involved in undertaking educational and event activity to some extent as part of their duties.

- 4.10 In addition to the impact of the proposed transfer of countryside sites as outlined above, the Committee considered the options of either a partial or full reduction in the provision of educational activities. Due to the levels of savings that will be required, the Committee consider that the Ranger Service should cease educational activity and focus on maintenance-led activity.

- 4.11 It is recognised that the impact of this will lead to a reduction in staffing of four full time staff including two Head Rangers and two Assistant Rangers, and some costs in supplies and services. The total saving would amount to £122,924. This measure would enable the Council to retain high standards of maintenance; however the cessation of community engagement activity would mean that Green Flag Standards will not be met in future.

- 4.12 It is envisaged that the providers of non-Council managed sites will continue to provide educational activities, and course leaders will be still be able to undertake visits to Council-run sites and undertake activities without Ranger involvement. The Committee recommend:
 2. **that the Countryside Ranger Service be reconfigured to focus on maintenance activities in future and therefore cease educational activity;**

Countryside and Greenspace – Strategy and Development

- 4.13 The Committee considered the role of the Countryside Strategy Team. A detailed description of the team's work is included in the baseline report but this is summarised as follows:

- Coordinating delivery of the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- Developing and delivering greenspace regeneration programmes and projects in collaboration with other sections of the Council, local communities and external partners;
- Management of Council-owned trees and woodlands;
- Some aspects of open space management and development, including the title transfer of land from developers, easements, wayleaves and licence agreements, and policy development;
- Research and consultation to inform delivery of services.

4.14 In order to facilitate the research work of the Team, the Professional, Consultancy & Hired Services budget has been used to undertake contributions to various projects including the Local Development Framework, and the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The majority of related work on these major strategies has been completed; however a reduction in this budget would limit the Council's capacity to return to related issues in the near future. A reduction would also reduce the Council's capacity to develop future evidence-based strategies. The Committee recommend:

- 3. that the £25,000 research element of the Countryside and Greenspace Professional, Consultancy and Hired Services budget be removed;**

4.15 Consideration was also given to reducing the funds allocated to the Environmental Development Budget. This budget is used to undertake small scale schemes on open spaces, and has previously been used for planting trees and shrubs to restrict ball games near housing, small improvements such as seating and path works, signage and interpretation, and contributions to larger schemes such as the Thornaby Spitfire.

4.16 The budget for 2010-11 is £22,362; the Committee considered the option of reducing the budget by £15,000 from 2011-12 onwards. This would reduce the Council's ability to fund, and match fund, such projects in future, and the remaining budget could be used to cover various technical and professional fees. The Committee recognised the value placed on the schemes funded through this relatively small scale budget, however the Committee agreed to support the reduction of the budget as it currently stands and therefore recommend:

- 4. that the Countryside and Greenspace Environmental Development budget be reduced by £15,000 per annum;**

4.17 During the review, consideration was given to the role of Groundwork and the type of services that they provide. Groundwork North East is a charitable organisation that delivers a range of environmental regeneration projects across the region. There are a number of different models as to how Groundwork operates in a particular area. Some authorities provide core funding for the provision of services, whereas others including Stockton engage with Groundwork on a project-by-project basis, for example the River Corridors project.

4.18 A review took place in 2004 in order to assess the scope for the establishment of a Groundwork Trust 'north of the Tees'. The review concluded that Groundwork was:

- '[...] an effective vehicle for accessing additional financial resources;
- It can draw in additional expertise, based on national experience;
- It introduces another organisation with the capability to mobilise local community participation and capacity building;
- It is an organisation with experience of working in partnerships;
- It is independent of the local authority sector.'

4.19 However, the report also highlighted that:

'Groundwork should not and must not replace or undermine the activities and responsibilities of any existing agency or organisation. The role must be to enhance the existing activities, adding value, or to introduce solutions to known un-addressed gaps.'

4.20 The review at the time concluded that as Stockton did not have such gaps in service provision, any increase in the role of the organisation in the Borough may have led to the 'duplication of services and a false raising of expectations and aspirations amongst local communities'.

4.21 Over the past 2-3 years Stockton Borough Council has developed a closer working relationship with Groundwork. This has increased local capacity to deliver greenspace regeneration projects, and has added value to projects and programmes being delivered by the Council, including the River Corridors project. In addition they have also contributed to other projects including Harewood Pleasure Gardens in Thornaby.

4.22 The Committee found that the Council itself has an excellent track record in delivering similar greenspace regeneration schemes 'in-house'. The Council has developed sound working relationships with local community organisations and partnerships, and through partnership working has also been able to secure significant external funding (in recent years the Countryside & Greenspace team has secured £6 of external funding for every £1 of SBC capital expenditure).

4.23 It is proposed that the Council should continue to work closely with Groundwork as a project partner where this delivers added value, but that it should also retain 'in-house' capacity to develop and deliver schemes. However, the Committee agree that the Council's partnership with Groundwork should be kept under review to ensure that 'no duplication of services' emerges, and to take advantage of the wider benefits of Groundwork's status.

4.24 Discussions are also on-going to explore what opportunities might exist for collaborative working with other Tees Valley local authorities in relation to tree and woodland management, with the aim of identifying possible efficiency savings and more effective ways of working.

Leisure and Sports Development

- 4.25 The Committee found that the Sports Development team currently provide services that can be categorised as Strategy and Advisory, Commissioning, and Sports Development (development and delivery of programmes).
- 4.26 The Committee found that the team were heavily dependent on external funding. Out of a total of twenty-one staff, thirteen are funded by external sources, in particular NHS Stockton-on-Tees, Sport England, and the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) that has funded four trainee sports developments officers. Nine posts are contracted until March 2011, two posts are contracted until September 2011, one post is contracted to December 2011, and one is contracted until March 2012.
- 4.27 The Committee recognise that the continuation of external sources of funding is not guaranteed and that the service needs to plan for the worst case scenario. Therefore it is envisaged that the remaining core team would be based around three full time, and three part time staff. This team would be unable to deliver programmes directly, and it is envisaged that the team would concentrate on strategy, research, and the commissioning of services from alternative providers.
- 4.28 There are elements of service delivery that could be readily provided by alternative means. This may involve partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors. However it is also recognised that some providers particularly in the VCS may need additional support in order to deliver services, and it is proposed that a re-focussed service should aim to facilitate their development.
- 4.29 The Sports Development service has identified that the proposed approach will enable it to meet a commitment to the following three agenda areas - 1) Inspire 2) Sustain and 3) Excel:

1. Inspire

Currently there is no organisation coordinating the process of inspiring more people to be physically active and take up participation in sport. We have a large number of providers promoting their own facilities/ activities and unsurprisingly they promote their own programmes. This is a long way from the strategic approach we would advocate and could benefit from a coordinated approach led by SBC as an impartial organisation. Through our inspire agenda we are proposing the following:

- With partners (internal and external) facilitate the delivery of a range of events of varying scales (from small – medium) aimed at engaging more people to be physically active and engage in sport. These would be developed primarily with the aim of facilitating greater participation in activities/ facilities that already exist within the borough. E.g. Park Runs designed to promote running and use of our urban and country parks.
- With partners develop events which aim to inspire sports tourists to the borough, e.g. Golf, Rat Race, Triathlon. We are committed to developing a range of events that are not 'run of the mill' and will capture the imagination of people both within and beyond the Tees Valley.

- Working with the school sports partnerships to support the provision of high quality PE and out of school hours sports provision for young people
- Take a lead in facilitating what the Olympics/ Paralympics can deliver as a legacy for the residents of the borough
- With all stakeholders develop a cohesive plan for the promotion of sport & active leisure within the borough
- Work with colleagues in Children's Centres/ Early Years and Play to facilitate the development of programmes that promote active play in young children forging links between active play and sport for lifelong participation in active leisure
- Work with under-represented groups via the appropriate networks, namely older people, people with disabilities, the BME community, Children Looked After and Carers to facilitate greater participation in sport & active leisure
- Ensure our strategic plans are accessible and have the aspiration to engage our communities and make real positive differences to our communities whilst being realistic that perfection is not an option!
- Be a provider of impartial advice and guidance (or facilitate this) to organisations across the sectors/ borough on all aspects of sport and leisure provision
- Through SBC Central Communications, Public Health and colleagues in the public, private and voluntary sectors support the development and delivery of an appropriate communications plan and campaign for the borough, taking account all of the above.
- To explore opportunities for income generation through avenues such as events, coach development programmes and the facilitation of coaching programmes for children and young people.

2. Sustain

In order to maximise the number of people who sustain their involvement in sport we want to develop the sporting infrastructure within the borough and this includes the following:

- Ensure that we work closely with our strategic leisure partner Tees Active to ensure that commissioned provision meets the needs and aspirations of our community and delivers excellent value for money
- Developing voluntary sector/ community sports organisations to become vibrant, safe and effective organisations providing sports participation and competition for people of all ages and abilities
- Through advice and guidance enable the development of appropriate facilities and management regimes that facilitate ease of access and sustained participation for our communities
- Work with sustainable organisations to improve the provision of sport & active leisure, e.g. youth centres/ Uniform groups
- Support the development of coaches/ teachers/ volunteers to support the sustainability of sport in schools and in the community
- With all key stakeholders including SBC Communications and Access to Services to develop an approach to the provision of information and booking systems which maximises ease of access for participants
- Throughout 2011 develop appropriate exit strategies for the delivered initiatives which we would want to be sustained by third parties, e.g. Health Walk scheme

3. Excel

- To work with our Strategic partner Tees Active to ensure that our gifted and talented sports people are provided with as much support as is possible to enable them to achieve their goals
- Work with Schools and the School Sports Partnership to support our talented young sports people to gain access to the facilities, coaching and advice they need to progress
- To work with colleagues to attract events to the borough that promote excellence/ high performance, e.g. 2012 Training camps

4.30 The cessation of external funding should not be underestimated and the following programmes will be affected: development of services based around a life-stage model, small scale event delivery, contributing to sub-regional and regional events (eg. Tees Valley Youth Games), delivery of health interventions (eg. Active Health), dedicated work with under-11s, health walks, inclusion work with under-represented groups, women's outdoor exercise programmes, community centre based boxercise, workplace health initiatives, programmes such as sports leadership courses.

4.31 Where appropriate, the potential for other organisations to deliver these activities will be explored. The Committee noted that through improved collaboration with other sectors and an increased willingness to engage from alternative providers, it is hoped to develop partnerships in order to deliver such activities over the medium term.

4.32 Although the majority of staffing costs are met by external funding, a move to a smaller core team would lead to a saving to the Council of £33,880. The Committee recommend that:

- 5. that, in line with the expected cessation of external funding streams for direct delivery, the Sports Development team should be reduced and re-focussed in order to provide a service based on strategic commissioning as outlined in the report;**

Tees Active

4.33 The majority of spend in leisure services is related to the management fee provided by the Council to Tees Active for the operation of the Borough's leisure centres. The level of management fee is currently at £2,841,235.

4.34 Tees Active has been consulted as part of the Committee's review and has been asked to identify efficiencies. The Committee noted that Tees Active has been commissioned to manage the improved Tees Barrage International White Water Course, following the completion of the upgrade works. Billingham Forum is currently closed due to extensive refurbishment. New business plans for these facilities have been developed and are based on the re-opened centres raising income totalling £1.1m.

4.35 Subject to the generation of this income, measures have been identified in order to reduce costs whilst maintaining service delivery. It is proposed to merge Tees Active's river-based activities on one site at the Tees Barrage. Negotiations have taken place in order to secure a new tenant for Castlegate

Quay Watersports Centre. Subject to this being agreed, savings for 2011-12 would be invested in alterations at the Barrage site. Savings of approximately £100,000 could be achieved from the following year.

- 4.36 It has been established that once the Forum re-opens, efficiencies in relation to staffing could be made. During the period of closure, arrangements were made to retain staff and provide services at alternative venues, and the re-opening will provide the opportunity to review staffing arrangements, with a view to making a potential saving of approximately £100,000.

6. that the efficiencies identified by Tees Active be supported, including the withdrawal from the Castlegate Quay facility (and its transfer to an alternative appropriate river activity tenant) and consolidation of water-based and river-related activity at the Tees Barrage location, and staffing measures linked to the re-opening of Billingham Forum;

- 4.37 Tees Active is committed to funding prudential borrowing repayments in order to fund a proportion of the costs of the Forum, Pavilion and Barrage works, and the full cost of the development of Splash. This therefore reduces the proportion of the management fee that is available for operational purposes to approximately £1.9m.

- 4.38 The Committee recognise that TAL is currently experiencing significant business disruption as a result of the work at the Forum, and the conclusion of capital schemes at Splash and The Pavilion. The loss of income and redeployment of staff from the Forum, and the three month extension to the works period, will lead to a cost of £1m; current TAL predictions suggest that this cost will be contained.

- 4.39 As noted above, additional income is projected from the re-opened Barrage and Forum, and the provision of improved facilities at Splash and The Pavilion should also lead to additional income being realised. As this will not be able to be analysed with any great certainty until 12 months of trading has taken place, it is proposed to undertake a full analysis at the end of the period 2011-12. The Committee therefore recommend:

7. that a further review of Tees Active's financial position be undertaken in the summer of 2012, once the full earning potential of the new facilities has been realised and allowing for a full year of trading in the new facilities, with the expectation that further reduction in subsidy would be realised from April 2013;

- 4.40 At present, Tees Active manages all of the Borough's leisure centres on behalf of Stockton Council, and also operates a leisure centre under a specific contract in Berwick-upon-Tweed. During the period of the review, work has been undertaken in order to explore the potential for TAL services to be commissioned by one or more other Boroughs within the Tees Valley.

- 4.41 Joint commissioning may lead to substantial economies of scale, and greater potential to improve the range of services without increasing delivery costs.

- 4.42 Within the Tees Valley, Redcar and Cleveland are the only other Authority that has outsourced the management of its leisure facilities. The remaining authorities have retained in-house service delivery. Each Council is undertaking its own transformation process and all are at different stages.

Discussions are at an early stage and it is not yet able to determine the precise level of savings that may be achieved by this process. However feedback from initial consultation has been favourable and the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services is to lead on this process. Members support the proposal to undertake further work and therefore the Committee recommend:

8. that further work be undertaken in order to explore the options for the joint commissioning of Tees Active in partnership with one or more Tees Valley local authorities.

- 4.43 The Committee have given consideration to the option of reducing the subsidy for Option 3 users of Tees Active facilities. Option 3 Cards are available free to Stockton-on-Tees Borough residents who receive a number of benefits or who participate in education.¹ Option 3 card holders are entitled to up to 50% discount on selected activities at participating Leisure Centres. Option 3 prices are available at all venues but there are some exceptions by activity, for example Option 3 is not offered on any power boating at Castlegate Quay and certain other sailing and paddling activities.
- 4.44 Option 3 has been developed as part of TAL's pricing structure in order to maximise opportunities for all sectors of the community to participate in healthy leisure activity. In the first five years of operation, the number of Option 3 users increased by 46% which was four times the rate of increase for general users. TAL pricing structure specifically provides Option 3 to target disadvantaged members of the community in order to meet the social aims of the organisation and indeed the Council. This is a scheme that private providers would not normally provide.
- 4.45 However, the Committee note that with regard to fitness activities, for instance, there is significant downward pressure in the market with low cost gyms now growing in popularity across the country. The Option 3 offer would be well placed to counter other low cost operators, should they reach Teesside.
- 4.46 The Committee have considered the issue but have decided that the Option 3 subsidy should be retained at the current level. During 2009-10, income worth £680,000 was generated via Option 3, and had these users paid the standard rate an additional £300,000 would have been generated. However it is not possible to accurately predict the level of income that would be achieved either by a reduction, or the complete removal, of the level of subsidy. It is likely that the number of users would fall and it would significantly offer the character of leisure provision in the Borough. Projected figures show that the additional income could be between £30,000 and £300,000.
- 4.47 As a result of the future review of TAL's finances and trading position, joint commissioning, a reduction in service delivery, or a combination of these, it may be possible to achieve savings of between approximately £200-250,000. It is recognised that reductions in service provision would become increasingly contentious. The Committee recommend:

¹ Residents are entitled to Option 3 if they receive or are the following: Income Support; Pension Credit; Working Family Tax Credit; Housing Benefit; Incapacity Benefit; Job Seekers Allowance; Invalid Care Allowance; Council Tax Benefit; Y.T. Placements / Apprenticeships; War Disablement Pension; Full Time Students in Further Education; Disability Living Allowance; Industrial Injuries Benefit; School or college attendees under 18, whose parents receive any of the above benefits.

- 9. that if, following implementation of the measures in relation to improving trading (recommendation 7), and joint commissioning (recommendation 8), the consequent reduction in the Council's subsidy to Tees Active is insufficient, consideration should be given to options for service reduction.**

Play Strategy

- 4.48 The Committee considered the role of play and the play strategy. The Stockton-on-Tees Play Strategy 2007 – 2012 is overseen by the Children's Trust Board. The overall aim of the strategy is to meet the play and learning needs of children and young people through the development of locally based, easily accessible play facilities across the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees both through the extension of existing provision and the development of new facilities.
- 4.49 The Committee found that play areas are integral to the strategy in the form of free imaginative space as well as more structured play environments. All play provision should challenge children and young people whilst ensuring their safety. Within the strategy, where support is provided directly by staff employed either by the local authority or another organisation, they will be appropriately trained, qualified and have Criminal Records Bureau checks completed to allow them to undertake their roles appropriately.
- 4.50 The responsibility for the implementation of the strategy rests with multi-agency Play Partnership that includes the voluntary and community sector.
- 4.51 The Play Strategy has supported the development and refurbishment of over 15 Play Areas across the borough plus the creation of a mobile play scheme through grants from both the Big Lottery Fund Children's Play Programme and the Department of Children Schools and Families Playbuilder Programme (now allocated under the Department for Education). Both of these grants end in 2011; a further 7 Plays Areas will be completed before the Playbuilder funding ceases in March, and the Children's play programme funding continues until September.
- 4.52 The Children's Trust Board, through the strategy has supported the development of play and positive activities as part of the "Enjoy and Achieve", "Make a Positive Contribution" and the "Be Healthy" priorities by supporting healthy lifestyles.
- 4.53 Play has also been a theme delivered through the Extended Schools agenda in supporting schools to delivery a range of activities outside of normal school hours. This has seen schools operating in cluster groups and opening up their premises at the end of the school day, at weekends and during school holidays. The Extended Schools finances are however due to end on 31st March 2011 and discussions are ongoing with schools as to how this agenda can be continued.
- 4.54 Positive Activities have been a significant element in the delivery of youth services, both in terms of the in-house youth work service and in supporting voluntary and community groups to deliver a wide range of activities, often to targeted groups. The in-house youth work services have been reviewed as part of the EIT Review of Youth Services, which has been undertaken by the Children and Young People Select Committee.

- 4.55 The Children's Fund has provided financial support to a range of voluntary sector providers in delivering a broad range of activities under the headings of positive activities and play, over a number of years. This funding is also due to come to an end on 31st March 2011 and at this stage it is not clear what future funding may be available. This will have an impact on a number of voluntary sector providers and in the overall delivery of services.
- 4.56 The Children's Trust Board is presently reviewing its priorities for 2011-2013 as part of the delivery of a new Children and Young People's Plan. Although the board have not yet formally agreed the final priorities, it is likely that supporting play and positive activities will figure to some extent in supporting key outcomes for children, young people and their families within the new plan.
- 4.57 The Play Strategy is now due for revision; grant funding previously available is due to end in 2011, and the future direction will be to ensure that where gaps in provision are identified, that the resources available resources are used to reduce inequality of access for children and young people through the refocusing of mobile play facilities and / or the securing of new revenue and capital funding opportunities. This can be achieved through the continuation of partnership working where the ethos and culture of the principles of play are shared and services are provided in a manner that avoids duplication.
- 4.58 The Committee recognise the importance of play and its importance for children and young people in the Borough, and support the continued focus upon it within future Plan and Strategy development. However due to the uncertainties surrounding funding and the relatively small amount of Council funding involved in any investment in facilities, the Committee do not propose to make recommendations on play at this time.
- 4.59 A number of estimated savings will be achieved by the implementation of the Committee's recommendations. Recommendation 1 is subject to further discussion however it is projected that the saving could be approximately £20-25,000. Recommendation 2 would produce savings of £122,924, recommendation 3 would save £25,000, recommendation 4 would produce savings of £15,000 and recommendation 5 would produce savings of £33,880. Recommendation 6 is subject to the generation of additional income from the delivery of the new business plans for Billingham Forum and Tees Barrage International White Water Course and would lead to a saving of £200,000 based on a reduction in the level of the Tees Active Management Fee provided by Stockton Council; the element linked to the consolidation of river-based activity on the Tees Barrage site (£100,000) would be realised from 2012-13. In relation to recommendations 7, 8 and 9, the precise level of savings that will be achieved is also subject to future work.
- 4.60 The recommendations have been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and this has been judged to have an overall score of 70 (ie. neutral impact). The full EIA is available on request.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Committee have considered a range of services that are concerned with providing high quality leisure and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the Borough. It is clear that these services are well-regarded and valued by users.
- 5.2 The Committee have sought to identify options that would maintain service delivery wherever possible, however due to the financial position facing the Council, it has been necessary to restrict the scope of service provision in some areas.
- 5.3 It is also clear that further savings could be achieved through a range of measures which become increasingly difficult. Some of these options have been considered during the review, for example the subsidy for Tees Active Option 3 users, however others would need further consideration as appropriate.

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What influences impact on the service(political social economical, technological)</p> <p>How does the service perform</p> <p>What does inspection tell us about this service</p> <p>What resources are used</p>	<p>a much broader contribution to the strategic objectives of the Council and as such we have now established strong relationships with colleagues within Health, Education, Regeneration, Countryside/ Green-space, Planning, BSF, Children's and Adults Social Care, Asset Management, Events to name a few.</p> <p>Prior to 2008 the partnerships were limited primarily to Health and Schools and as such the impact the service was able to have was limited to these particular agendas.</p> <p>Although the service does still engage in the direct delivery of a number of physical activity/ sports programmes, it has become much more accomplished in the role of facilitator and enabler, supporting other delivery agencies, e.g. sports clubs/ schools/ community groups to deliver high quality and sustainable programmes that meet the needs of the local community.</p> <p>The service is strongly influenced (as expected) by the strategic objectives of the Council and as such develops initiatives/ opportunities in conjunction with partners that aim to use sport to contribute to better outcomes for local people, particularly around health, education, social inclusion, regeneration, liveability and economic development. We do not have a sports for sports sake ethos as this is difficult to justify when funded through the public purse.</p> <p>The service was rated as excellent through the nationally recognised standard for Sports Development, Quest, achieving 89% across a number of standard criteria. It is felt that were we to undertake Quest again the service would attain a higher mark still having implemented an improvement plan formulated in response to the last assessment in 2008.</p> <p>Through Quest inspection and Internal Audit the service is rated highly and improving due to the implementation of improvement plans from internal and external inspection.</p> <p>The Leisure & Sports Development Service has an annual resource allocation of 530,000 which is utilised for the delivery of a wide range of initiatives along</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What assets are used to deliver the current service</p> <p>Are there any limitations or barriers affecting the delivery of the service</p> <p>If the service is outsourced or provided by a third party, how are service standards monitored</p> <p>Could the service be provided through a different mechanism</p>	<p>with the employment of the core staff team.</p> <p>The assets utilised to deliver the service are primarily the built leisure facilities, urban parks and schools although greater emphasis is being placed on the role the River Tees can play. It is hoped that schools will play a much bigger role in the provision of community sport in future through the BSF programme.</p> <p>Not really due to the service operating primarily as facilitators/ enablers</p> <p>Some of the leisure facilities are outsourced to Tees Active and this was addressed in the 2008/09 ALC's review of Tees Active</p> <p>If some elements of the service was to be delivered through a different mechanism, e.g. third party provider then tight controls would have to be implemented to ensure that the strong primary focus on contributing to e.g. social outcomes was not subsumed into a business model concerned primarily with income generation. That's said there are elements of the service, i.e. the direct delivery that could lend themselves to delivery through a different mechanism. Other elements would be costly to provide externally (although could be) namely the provision of advice and guidance for major and minor projects and the delivery of events provided by the L&SD team</p>
<p>Customer Baseline</p>	<p>Who are the customers what are their needs now</p>	<p>As one of the key aims of the service is to drive up participation by all in sport, active leisure and physical activity, all sectors of the community are potentially our target audience. Clearly those who are currently meeting the recommended levels of sport/ physical activity per week (adults – 3-5 x 30 mins per week/ children – 1 hour per day) are not our focus as we want to provide support and interventions that appeal to those who are currently not engaged at the required levels.</p> <p>Even though the majority of the adult population know that physical activity is important to maintain good health, participation rates are lower than we would like them to be. We are constantly consulting with target groups to identify needs and also researching good practice from other areas of the country to</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<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 your users</p> <p>How are these services promoted / marketed</p>	<p>identify good practice that can be replicated in Stockton.</p> <p>Service users are consulted periodically about the service and how it might be improved. Any initiatives we implement are based upon identified need or they are developed to allow a commissioned approach to service delivery to take place, e.g. the 'Playing Out' initiative, the 'Club Booster' programme and the 'Over 50's Green Exercise programme'.</p> <p>In general satisfaction with the service provided by the Leisure & Sports Development Service is good. This is demonstrated periodically through programme assessments and through the 2008 Quest Assessment which featured focus groups of stakeholders providing feedback on the service.</p> <p>We have well established IT systems which enable easy communication with customers as and when required (databases) which have been established over a period of years. These have proven to be great channels for communicating key messages but also for enabling two way dialogue between the service and its users. E.g. We regularly consult and liaise with a high number of sports clubs (70+) via email keeping them up to speed with developments and opportunities which may benefit their organisation. Leisure & Sports Development is also well on in the process of establishing a Community Sports Network for the borough which once in place will ensure that all organisations with a role in the delivery of community sport/ active leisure and regularly updated on news and opportunities which can benefit their organisation.</p> <p>The services provided by the Leisure & Sports Development Team are marketed in a number of ways, but mainly the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly press releases about initiatives/ opportunities • SBC website via the Leisure & Sports Development pages • Direct e-mailings/ e-shots • Stockton News • The provision of leaflets/ posters which are widely circulated through our good relationships with Comm's/ Tourism, etc

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	What do Viewpoint Surveys/ internal audit reports tell us about the service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio <p>Internal Audit and external inspection via Quest has told us that the service is good</p>
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>As we are looking to improve efficiency and work more in an enabling and facilitating capacity we are keen to ensure that we support and where appropriate up skill delivery organisations. By developing a stronger and more robust community sports offer the service will enable more people from across the borough to access a range of sports/ active leisure provision. In terms of access to sport & leisure provision the groups which are typically under-represented include people with disabilities, people from the BME community, people on low incomes, young people looked after and carers. Although we have an officer (for Inclusion) working to increase participation by under-represented groups there is still some way to go before we are where we want to be in terms of people accessing leisure provision within the borough. We are also keen to work more closely with the broader voluntary sector to ensure that we support an improved offer across the diverse communities of the borough. I would not say that there are areas of the voluntary sector that don't engage although I do think this engagement can be greatly improved and will be a key plank of the Community Sports Network once it is established.</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>The customers of the future are primarily the same as today, namely local people/ groups. However one area where the service may diversify and thus attract additional customers is through the provision of events. Events not only have the capacity to attract paying customers from the borough but they also attract customers from outside the borough.</p> <p>The provision of events and how they can contribute across a number of agendas (health, economic development/ regeneration, perception of the</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<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>	<p>borough, etc) is an area of real potential expansion for the service, which will open the door to potential new customers and potential new income streams.</p> <p>Research will demonstrate that sport & active leisure are considered important by local people. Despite the economic climate and times of financial difficulty people will still require leisure activities to engage in during their spare time. Thus the requirement for high quality, value for money voluntary sector sports provision is going to be even more important in the coming years and as such we will be working hard with our voluntary sector to ensure provision and access continues to improve.</p> <p>Complaints/ compliments indicate that the service is meeting the needs of the customers.</p>
<p>Aims & Objectives</p> <p>Baseline</p> <p>Challenge</p>	<p>Is the service required by statute</p> <p>Is there a statutory level of service</p> <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>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>The service operates proactively to contribute to the strategic objectives of the Council, although will and does react positively to changing trends and new opportunities where appropriate.</p> <p>The service is needed as it is one of the few services which can genuinely make a positive contribution to a wide range of strategic objectives of the Council</p> <p>If the service was not provided it is likely that the following would materialise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower numbers of young people participating in the 5 hour offer and limited support for school age children re links into community sport • A lower % of the adult population participating in 3x30 mins per week • Less people volunteering in sport • A decrease in the amount of external funding attracted for sport/ active leisure

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>How would the service react to new pressures what capacity would be required to deal with additional / new demands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decrease in the numbers of people from hard to reach groups being engaged in sport, e.g. disabled, BME, children looked after, etc • A decrease in the number of sports events provided within the borough • Decreased support for older people to maintain their physical activity levels • The removal of the service which focuses efforts on coordinating the provision of sport & active leisure across the borough (across the public, private and voluntary to ensure the sum is greater than the parts) would lead to disorganisation, competition and duplication • A decrease in S106 funds for sport • The need to appoint additional consultants for initiatives such as BSF and other potential capital developments • No support available for organisations seeking Council advice support for sporting initiatives. <p>The service is extremely flexible and adaptable and has demonstrated this over the past two years with the significant changes to its core agendas. It is felt that within reason the service could react to changing priorities without the need for additional staffing and or resources. E.g. The service has taken the lead in the Take to the Tees initiative in 2010 and has undertaken this with the current staffing compilation and this has been achieved without downscaling in other service areas. The services approach to commissioning has led to the maintenance of productivity without the need for additional resource.</p>
<p>Aims & Objectives Challenge</p>	<p>Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc</p>	<p>As the services main focus is on facilitating and enabling improvement and change with regards to the sport & active leisure provision in the borough, there are no other agencies providing a similar service in the borough. There are clearly a number of professional providers of sport & active leisure within the borough but their focus is on delivery and income generation (primarily) and not community focussed development.</p> <p>The closest initiative to what is delivered via L&SD is the School Sports Partnership however their focus is solely on young people and is primarily focussed with the development of initiatives which take place within school</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
		sites.
<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. statutory,</p>	<p>The services delivered through the L&SD service and the work we are doing in trying to coordinate provision across the borough are designed to contribute holistically to the overall aims of the Council. This is particularly around policy agendas such as health & well being, children and young people, economic regeneration, social inclusion, adults and older people.</p> <p>Examples of how the service contributes to key policy areas can be seen as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & Young People – significant work undertaken with schools and voluntary sector organisations aimed at increasing engagement in sport/ active leisure by children and young people. Working with BSF team on development of new schools • Adults/ older people – development of initiatives such as the women’s running network, the health walk scheme and the falls programmes delivered within the boroughs care homes • Social Inclusion – Development of a range of initiatives supporting people with disabilities, people from the BME communities to become involved in sport • Economic Regeneration – Development of a range of initiatives/ events including the Stockton Triathlon, River Rat Race and Take to the Tees and the employment of trainees through the Future jobs fund • Culture & Leisure – providing leisure provision that meets the needs and aspirations of our communities • Liveability – Ensuring that provision of sports facilities is appropriate and meets the needs of our communities • Tourism – The development of a range of activity tourism initiatives aimed at attracting people to visit, stay and spend money in the borough, e.g. Golf Week, Cricket 6’s, Rugby 7’s, Take to the Tees. <p>Policies/ Plans and Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Strategy

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>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"> • The Sport & Active Leisure Strategy – 2010-2014 (and associated appendices) • The PE & Sport Strategy for Young People • Be Active, Be Healthy – Dept of Health • Regional & Sub Regional Facilities Strategy • The Regeneration Strategy (SBC) • The Olympic & Paralympic Games Opportunities Plan <p>No political judgements/ decisions over and above the norm</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>What is the Councils commitment to</p>	<p>Costs of the service annually of £530,000 (Revenue)</p> <p>As above</p> <p>Apart from the management fee provided to Tees Active (£2,841,235.00 per annum – and identified in 2008/09 ALC's Review) the only other 3rd party expenditure is £12,000 allocated to Tees Valley Sport, the County Sports Partnership. It is currently unclear how the new Government views the County Sports Partnership and thus there longevity is unknown.</p> <p>With regards to contracts the L&SD service has a number of contracts/ service level agreements which are due to finish within the next 12-18 months. These arrangements are with the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport England – Delivery of the Community Investment funded initiative aimed at increasing participation by over 16's. This is an existing commitment which will be completed in the Autumn of 2011. • NHS Stockton – Funding for a number of health interventions including: Weight Management, Stepping out in Stockton, Cardiac Rehab. The availability of these funds is determined by NHS Stockton on an annual basis. <p>The major contract which sits within the L&SD service is the TAL contract</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>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>which was examined in detail through the recent Scrutiny Review. This contract is worth £2,841,235.00 per annum. Tees Active has been through an ALC's review in 2008/9 and an action plan for service improvement has been put in place.</p> <p>Although L&SD has no formal charging policies they do at times charge for certain activities where there is a direct costs for its provision (e.g. facility hire) although charges are normally made on a break even basis. However the charging for selected activities may be an area for potential income generation in the future.</p> <p>With regards to Gershon, L&SD have followed guidance set out via SBC.</p> <p>The current financial climate will affect L&SD as all other services with the Council. However this impact will potentially be significantly less than services that rely on income for their survival as we are not currently reliant upon income generation. We will however need to adapt our ways of working in the face of new financial challenges which we view as an opportunity for transformation rather than a threat.</p>
<p>Financial / Resource Considerations Challenge</p>	<p>How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall?</p>	<p>As stated previously the service is highly rated through Quest Assessment and was the subject of 2009 Internal Audit Inspection. Leisure & Sports Development has led in the process to lever in over £2.5m of external funding for capital and revenue programmes since 2008 and has an opportunity to lever in more over the next 8 months.</p> <p>This external investment along with the facilitative/ enabling and delivery work we undertake in the community which has stood up to external and internal inspection would suggest that we do offer a good service. Stakeholders through the Quest Assessment have validated the notion that we are an excellent service, although there is always room for improvement and there are definitely new ways of working to be explored that can yield efficiencies and provide even better value for money for SBC.</p>

Appendix 2 - Countryside and Greenspace – Strategy and Development Baseline Report

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>Countryside & Greenspace – Strategy & Development Team (see structure on p14)</p> <p>The service was formed as part of a restructure of the Council’s Parks and Countryside Team in 2007. The new team’s remit is to provide a strategic framework for management/development of the Borough’s countryside and greenspace, and to deliver associated projects and programmes. The team also has responsibility for the management of Council-owned trees and woodlands.</p> <p><u>IMPORTANT: The team does not have responsibility for the day to day operational - management of parks and greenspaces (except for trees and woodlands). This is undertaken by Care For Your Area.</u></p> <p>The draft Green Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan provides the overarching strategic framework for the work of the team, with a new Tree and Woodland Strategy also due to be prepared during 2010/11.</p> <p>The team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate development and delivery of the Borough’s Green Infrastructure Strategy, and other related plans and strategies • Take a lead role on the development and delivery of projects and programmes, securing significant external funding for capital projects • Project manage major schemes, including associated consultation work • Establish and contribute to project partnerships • Help to deliver improved green infrastructure through the planning and development process, e.g. by helping to secure S106 contributions • Liaise with developers, utilities and other third parties regarding open space issues; e.g. overseeing the title-transfer of open space to the council and advising on easements, wayleaves and licence agreements • Influence delivery by inputting to other plans and strategies, including the LDF and development briefs • Respond to requests from the public, elected members, community organisations and other sections of the council, and provide specialist advice and information • Promote the use and countryside and greenspaces

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What influences impact on the service(political social economical, technological)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support community participation in greenspace development and management <p>In addition the Tree and Woodland staff have specific responsibilities for the management of all Council-owned trees and woodlands, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inspecting the health and condition of all tree stock • scheduling tree and woodland management works • responding to public requests and enquiries • providing consultation services to other sections of the council e.g. insurance, planning • preparing and implementing new planting schemes. • appointing external arboricultural contractors and managing contract performance <p>The team relies heavily on other services in the Council to support this work, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Design (landscape design, delivery of green infrastructure through the planning / regeneration process), • Spatial Planning (development of strategies and policies to deliver new and improved green infrastructure) • Care For Your Area (practical implementation and on-going management), • GIS (e.g. mapping services, data analysis) • Legal and Land and Property (e.g. open space management issues, development of S106 Agreements, title-transfer of public open space) • Children Education & Social Care (e.g. strategic planning for play through the Play Partnership, development of Play Strategy and involvement with grant-funded programmes such as Playbuilder and BIG Lottery Childrens Play Programme) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic priorities identified by the Council and through the LSP • Changes in Council and government policy / legislation • Views / priorities of elected members • Requests, suggestions and project proposals from residents and community organisations • Opportunities and threats that emerge through the planning and development process • Environmental factors, such as weather conditions and habitat change <p>Service contributes to various National Indicators, e.g. NI197 (% of local wildlife sites in positive</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Challenge	<p>How does the service perform</p> <p>What does inspection tell us about this service</p> <p>What resources are used</p> <p>What assets are used to deliver the current service</p> <p>Are there any limitations or barriers affecting the delivery of the service</p> <p>If the service is outsourced or provided by a third party, how are service standards monitored</p> <p>Could the service be provided through a different mechanism</p>	<p>management) and NI199 (Children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas). The Council uses a GreenSTAT survey to seek the public's views on parks and greenspaces, and the corporate Place Survey also provides data on public satisfaction.</p> <p>No recent inspections undertaken</p> <p>See Financial / Resource Considerations below</p> <p>Greenspaces and trees. Office accommodation for staff</p> <p>The Borough has many high quality greenspaces, but significant improvements and developments could be carried out if additional resources were made available.</p> <p>Many projects are implemented by external contractors, partner agencies or by other sections of the Council. Most tree management works are implemented through the Council's Arboricultural Contract - currently delivered by Tilhill. Performance / delivery are monitored against agreed project specifications or service standards.</p> <p>Many areas of work could be partially or entirely delivered through external organisations or partnerships. For example, third sector organisations such as Groundwork and Tees Valley Wildlife Trust already help to develop and deliver environmental regeneration projects. Similarly, Parish/Town Councils and community organisations also play an important role in the development of many schemes and with an appropriate level of support could play a greater role in the future.</p> <p>The former Community Forest partnership provided another potential delivery model, with neighbouring local authorities and other agencies combining resources to 'outsource' development of environmental regeneration projects to an external project team.</p>
Customer Baseline	Who are the customers what	All residents, businesses and visitors to the Borough who actively use greenspaces. Also all those who

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>How do you communicate with your users</p> <p>How are these services promoted / marketed</p> <p>What do Viewpoint Surveys/ internal audit reports tell us about the service?</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</p> <p>Drop-in sessions</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Annual newsletter</p> <p>Presentations to Are Partnership Boards, town/parish councils and community meetings</p> <p>As above</p> <p>Viewpoint survey on Trees (2008) revealed that:</p> <p>55% respondents were satisfied with how the Council looks after trees and only 11% were dissatisfied (remainder expressed no preference or didn't know)</p> <p>96% of people think trees are important in the urban environment</p> <p>88% people prefer to live in a street with trees</p> <p>88% of people think more trees should be planted</p> <p>94% people think trees should be protected during new development & regeneration</p> <p>81% people think trees cause no problems to them</p>
<p>Customer Challenge</p>	<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>The 2008 Sport Recreation and Leisure Survey suggests that around 30% of local residents do not use parks or greenspaces.</p> <p>In addition there are clearly large numbers of local residents not actively engaged in projects being developed and delivered by the Countryside & Greenspace Strategy & Development Team, and there is scope for increased community participation in this work, or for more projects to be genuinely led by local communities.</p> <p>No</p> <p>The service aims to deliver a highly functional, attractive and accessible green infrastructure network across the whole Borough. This extends well beyond meeting the recreational needs of customers. The</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<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>	<p>team aims to improve overall environmental quality, contributing to economic regeneration & people's broader health & quality of life.</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. <p>The section receives largely positive feedback, demonstrating that the services are very well-received by the public, elected members and partner organisations. The section receives a small number of formal complaints (5 in 2009/10) and we give these and all other feedback very careful consideration, using this information to review our processes and procedures. It should also be noted that many complaints/comments stem from residents not being satisfied with the information given or the ultimate course of action, rather than dissatisfaction with the way the team undertake their duties.</p>
<p>Aims & Objectives Baseline</p>	<p>Is the service required by statute</p> <p>Is there a statutory level of service</p>	<p>Occupiers Liability Act – places a duty of care on the Council as a landowner to ensure that trees and woodlands are managed in such a way as not to cause an unacceptable risk to persons on its land.</p> <p>Highways Act – covers certain aspects of tree management, e.g. powers to serve notices on landowners adjoining a public highway should their trees be considered hazardous to users of the highway.</p> <p>Town & Country Planning Act - includes provision for tree preservation orders and protection of trees in conservation areas to ensure enjoyment by the public.</p> <p>Legislation also covers some other areas of work: e.g. provision of allotments and 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> <p>Generally proactive in relation to project delivery, although this can be responsive – e.g. in relation to</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Challenge	<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>requests from local communities and partners, or when opportunities arise through the planning/regeneration process or introduction of funded programmes. Trees are inspected on a cyclical programme and appropriate management/maintenance works prioritised and implemented. Tree work may also be carried out in response to public requests, where this represents appropriate management /maintenance.</p> <p>Yes. Green infrastructure needs to be planned and managed effectively if it is to deliver the full range of social, economic and environmental benefits. On-going management of greenspaces, trees and woodlands requires the specialist knowledge of officers within this team and in other key services such as CFYA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer improvements or changes made to the Borough's greenspaces • Reduced ability to deliver improvements through partnership working and by influencing other strategies and plans • Reduced ability to deliver improved green infrastructure through the planning and regeneration process • Less capacity to support community-led projects • A less strategic, less coordinated, less professional approach to countryside and greenspace management and development • Reduced ability to provide specialist advice/services – e.g. in relation to title-transfer of open space, tree & greenspace management, funding, project management and so on <p>Would need to consider in relation to specific pressures</p>
Aims & Objectives Challenge	Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc	Other local authorities structure these service areas in different ways. Some outsource project development / landscape design / project management functions to Groundwork, Wildlife Trusts or to other organisations/partnerships on a similar model to Community Forest Teams or other 'landscape-scale partnerships'. Potentially a greater role for community organisations and town/parish councils.

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
<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. statutory, policy, function , other services</p> <p>Are there any political judgements / decisions involved in determining the level of service</p>	<p>Service contributes to all 8 strands of Sustainable Community Strategy and many aspects of the 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 • Draft Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy • Local Development Framework • Tees Valley Biodiversity Action Plan • Stockton on Tees Play and Play Area Strategies • Sport & Active Leisure Strategy • Proposed Heritage Strategy • Draft Tourism & Visitor Strategy • Stockton Climate Change Action 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</p>		

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information																																														
<p>Considerations Baseline</p>	<p>What are the costs of the service / Capital and revenue costs</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="813 339 1877 675"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Revenue Expenditure 2010/11</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Employees</td> <td>296,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Premises</td> <td>25,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transport</td> <td>11,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supplies & services</td> <td>283,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Support services</td> <td>11,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>626,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less Income</td> <td>- 60,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Net expenditure</td> <td>566,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Supplies and services includes: tree/woodland management & maintenance works, project costs, research, consultation and contributions to partnership initiatives (see below)</p> <p>Support services includes technical recharges</p> <p>Sources of income set out below under 'charging policies'</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="813 922 1883 1217"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4">Capital Expenditure 2007/8 to 2010/11</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Total Spend</th> <th>SBC Funding (see note)</th> <th>External Funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2007/08</td> <td>66,000</td> <td>-14,000</td> <td>-52,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2008/09</td> <td>748,000</td> <td>-31,000</td> <td>-717,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009/10</td> <td>1,222,000</td> <td>-309,000</td> <td>-913,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010/11 & Future Years</td> <td>1,526,000</td> <td>-257,000</td> <td>-1,269,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>3,562,000</td> <td>-611,000</td> <td>-2,951,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note: SBC funding includes Capital Programme & Community Participation Budget</p> <p>Capital funds are used to deliver a wide range of green infrastructure projects, currently with a particular focus on park regeneration projects and development of outdoor play spaces.</p>	Revenue Expenditure 2010/11		Employees	296,000	Premises	25,000	Transport	11,000	Supplies & services	283,000	Support services	11,000	TOTAL	626,000	Less Income	- 60,000	Net expenditure	566,000	Capital Expenditure 2007/8 to 2010/11					Total Spend	SBC Funding (see note)	External Funding	2007/08	66,000	-14,000	-52,000	2008/09	748,000	-31,000	-717,000	2009/10	1,222,000	-309,000	-913,000	2010/11 & Future Years	1,526,000	-257,000	-1,269,000	Total	3,562,000	-611,000	-2,951,000
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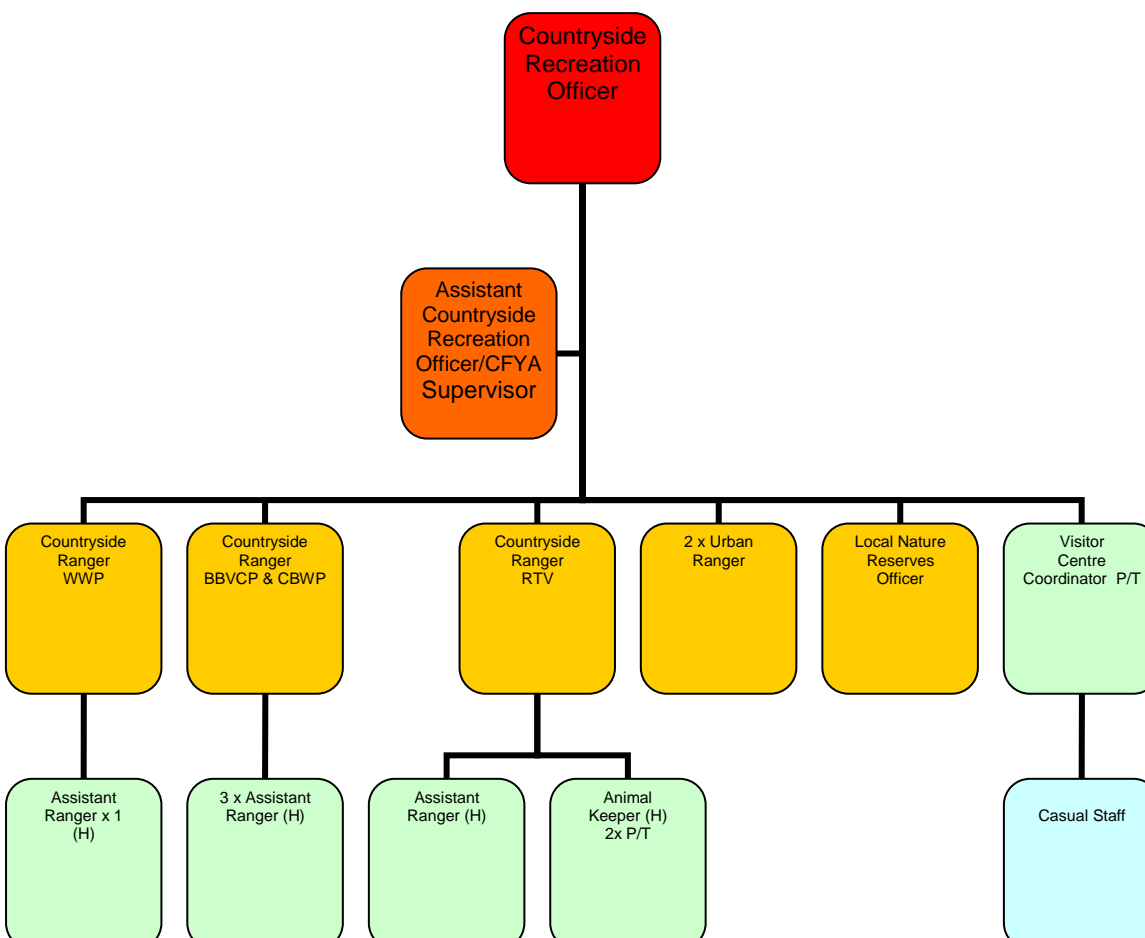
Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What is the level of 3rd party expenditure</p> <p>What contracts or other arrangements are in place (spend analysis)</p> <p>What is the Councils commitment to contracts / other arrangements</p> <p>Do you have any charging policies</p> <p>How 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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree management and maintenance works through external contractor - up to value of approx £150K per annum. Existing contract with Tilhill Forestry to March 2011 with option to extend for one further year. • Stockton River Corridors Project - partnership agreement with Groundwork, British Waterways and Environment Agency with financial contribution currently approx £13,656 per year. SBC also provides in-kind support by providing office accommodation for officer (initially for 2 years and currently reviewed on annual basis). • River Routes in Stockton – £335,862 partnership project with SBC contribution of £7,872 in year only with 3-year programme • Tees Heritage Park – approx £600K partnership project with SBC contribution of approximately £150K LTP funding and approx £10K for access works (2 year project) • Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership – MoU in place for provision of services, in relation to the Tees Valley Biodiversity Action Plan and work relating to National Indicator 197. SBC and other Tees Valley local authorities contribute £5,300 per year (3-year agreement) <p>Yes – provision of arboricultural services. This includes Service Level Agreements with education centres (e.g. schools, sure start etc); direct recharges for services to Tri-Star, and Planning Section; plus incomes from Highways, Housing Open Space. Additional charges are made to all departments where applicable in response to arboricultural service requests.</p> <p>Savings identified and delivered in 2009/10 by cutting back tree planting programme, and further savings made by reduced need for tree watering due to wet weather. Carried out initial VFM exercise to anticipate possible impacts of 2%, 4% and 6% budget cuts.</p> <p>Reduced ability to deliver capital projects and programmes, due to limited SBC and external funding, e.g. park regeneration projects, play area improvements, and various green infrastructure projects. Also reduced ability to undertake revenue-funded activity, including tree management and maintenance, survey and consultation work and research, and to fund design and feasibility work (e.g. as undertaken by Urban Design Team).</p> <p>Potential impact on partnership activity - both in terms of any financial contributions and any reduction</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
		in staff resources would limit our capacity to build and influence partner activity.
Financial / Resource Considerations Challenge	<p>How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall?</p> <p>Do external contracts offer value for money?</p>	<p>For projects over the past 4 years the service has secured in excess of £6 external funding for every £1 of SBC capital expenditure.</p> <p>Many partnership projects have also delivered excellent value for money, especially the Stockton River Corridors Project which has secured around £800,000 of external funding in 2 years, with SBC contributing less than one-tenth of this in revenue funding.</p> <p>Contracts are awarded on the basis of price and quality, and in accordance with the corporate procurement policy. Smaller items purchased on basis of demonstrating value for money or quotations.</p>
Service Drivers	<p>What do we need to change and why?</p> <p>What are the main drivers of change?</p>	<p>We need to continually review the nature of work undertaken and the processes and approaches used - to ensure service responds to local needs and delivers high quality and value for money services.</p> <p>The new Green Infrastructure Strategy and proposed Tree and Woodland Strategy will provide the overarching frameworks for the work of the team over future years, and the new Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group will play a key role in reviewing and revising the Action Plan which this team will play a key role in delivering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in local, sub-regional and national policies and priorities • Need to deliver value for money • Need to adapt to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances (e.g. adaptation to climate change, changing public and community expectations, factors relating to local economy and so on)

Appendix 3 - Care for Your Area – Parks and Countryside Management and Maintenance Baseline Report

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> <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

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What influences impact on the service(political social economical, technological)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <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

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Challenge		<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] --- ACSO[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 --- R5[Local Nature Reserves Officer] CO --- R6[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] R6 --- CS[Casual Staff] </pre>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What assets are used to deliver the current service</p> <p>Are there any limitations or barriers affecting the delivery of the service</p> <p>If the service is outsourced or provided by a third party, how are service standards monitored</p> <p>Could the service be provided through a different mechanism</p>	<p>The Service manages 851 hectares of public open space comprising: (2,102 acres)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Country Parks with visitor centres and associated visitor facilities Wynyard Woodland Park (including Planetarium) Billingham Beck Valley Country Park Cowpen Bewley Country Park • 9 Urban Parks Great North Park Ropner Park JWP Preston park Village Park Littleboy park Newham Grange Park Romano Park Grangefield Park • 13 Local Nature Reserves • 17 Local wildlife sites (formally sites of nature conservation importance, protected by legislation) <p>Sheer size and logistics of sites makes maintenance difficult, if extra resources were available the already high quality greenspaces could be improved providing an enhanced countryside experience for users</p> <p>Not applicable</p> <p>The service could be partially or entirely delivered through further partnership working and leasing options with external organisations such as</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
		<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 your users</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 Website Annual newsletter Presentations to Area Partnership Boards, town/parish councils and community meetings Face to face discussions Events, Schools Interpretation Leaflets Consultation Noticeboards</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>How are these services promoted / marketed</p> <p>What do Viewpoint Surveys/ internal audit reports tell us about the service?</p>	<p>Stockton News Press Releases</p> <p>As above</p> <p>The service is effective contributing to various National Indicators, e.g. NI197 (% of local wildlife sites in positive management) and NI199 (Children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas). The Council uses a GreenSTAT survey to seek the public's views on parks and greenspaces, and the corporate Place Survey also provides data on public satisfaction</p> <p>During 2009 overall visitor numbers attending our principle sites exceeded 850,000, this information is extrapolated by undertaking four monitoring periods throughout the year, Some key information is detailed below highlighting the success of the Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89.37% of visitors to parks and open spaces live within the borough • The top 5 reasons listed for visiting a park are : to get some fresh air 52.79%, for a walk 40.84%, walk the dog 37.36%, visit the play area 32.29% and to see birds and wildlife 29.01% • 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 <p>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</p>
Customer	Are there customers	No

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Challenge	<p>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>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>	<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> <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</p> <p>Baseline</p> <p>Challenge</p>	<p>Is the service required by statute</p> <p>Is there a statutory level of service</p> <p>Is the service responsive</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> <p>Generally proactive in relation to project delivery, although this can be responsive – e.g. in relation to</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>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>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	<p>Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc</p>	<p>The Council's Events & Sports Development Team's Tees Valley Wildlife Trust</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</p> <p>There is potentially a greater role for community organisations and town/parish councils involvement</p>
Relevance / Context Baseline / Challenge	<p>How does the service fit with the overall aims of the Council</p>	<p>Service contributes to all 8 strands of Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan.</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>How does the service contribute to key policy areas</p> <p>What policies, plans and strategies impact on the service e.g. statutory, policy, function , other services</p> <p>Are there any political judgements / decisions involved in determining the level of service</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 • 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>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>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>What is the level of 3rd party expenditure</p> <p>What contracts or other arrangements are in place (spend analysis)</p> <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>Premises - £125,600 Transport - £16,745 Supplies - £105,790</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</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>
Financial / Resource Considerations	How can you demonstrate that the	Benchmarking exercise with other Tees Valley Councils

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Challenge	<p>service is cost effective overall?</p> <p>Do external contracts offer value for money?</p>	<p>No external contracts</p>
Service Drivers	<p>What do we need to change and why?</p> <p>What are the main drivers of change?</p>	<p>Encourage and develop further usage by residents, visitors and educational organisations</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
<p>Challenge</p>	<p>current service</p> <p>Are there any limitations or barriers affecting the delivery of the service</p> <p>If the service is outsourced or provided by a third party, how are service standards monitored</p> <p>Could the service be provided through a different mechanism</p>	<p>The Strategic Manager for Children & Young people is responsible for the management of the Play Partnership and implementation of the Play Strategy and associated action plan.</p> <p>Grant funding from the Big Lottery Fund has been awarded to Futurity Tees Valley to provide a mobile Play Scheme for the borough. The local authority through the Strategic manager Children & Young People allocates the grant funding as the responsible body, but the recipient of the grant allocation is Futurity.</p> <p>The management of the Play Strategy and Action Plan is not required to be provided via Children & Young People's Strategy, however currently the responsibility for children's play is with the Director of Children's Services.</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 your users</p> <p>How are these services promoted / marketed</p> <p>What do Viewpoint Surveys/ internal</p>	<p>No direct provision of service from C&YP Strategy. The focus of the work is through the Play Partnership, and ensuring that there is an up to date Strategy and Action Plan.</p> <p>The Customers are The Big Lottery (in relation to the required project monitoring, quarterly / annual reporting. And the recipients of grant allocations Futurity Tees Valley. Note in the last 2 years this has also included the Borough Council (Development and Neighbourhood Services), and community based projects. The grant funding that was centrally available through the DCSF (now DfE) ends in March 2011, and is no longer ring fenced, and the grant allocation from the Big Lottery ceases on 30 September 2011 (3 years funding).</p> <p>No direct provision of service from C&YP Strategy.</p> <p>No direct provision of service from C&YP Strategy.</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	audit reports tell us about the service?	
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>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>	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</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>Is the service responsive or proactive or a mixture</p> <p>Is the service needed</p>	<p>Not in relation to the role of the Children & Young People's Strategy Team.</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Mixture in that it reacts to government's guidance on children's play and then sets a strategy for local implementation.</p> <p>In line with the Government guidance and the requirements of the national Play Strategy, the local authority it is good practice to have locally devised Play Strategy.</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<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>No direct provision of service from C&YP Strategy</p> <p>No direct provision of service from C&YP Strategy</p>
Aims & Objectives Challenge	<p>Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc</p>	<p>No direct provision of service from C&YP Strategy</p>
Relevance / Context Baseline / Challenge	<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</p>	<p>It is not possible to separate out the Service form that provided by Countryside and Greenspace, so the contribution is the same in that it contributes to all 8 strands of Sustainable Community Strategy and many aspects of the Council Plan.</p> <p>The Play Strategy 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 • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stockton on Tees Play Area Strategies • Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	<p>impact on the service e.g. 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 • Sport & Active Leisure Strategy <p>The current Play Strategy is endorsed by Cabinet.</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>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 where the service planning to meet future Gershon efficiency targets?</p>	<p>Costs associated with officer time</p> <p>No capital budget (outside of the grant allocations).</p> <p>Contract with Futurity Tees Valley (via Big Lottery Grant Funding; £200,000 over 3 year ring fenced).</p> <p>Above contract to 30 September 2011.</p> <p>None, the strategy is about free Play for children & young people.</p> <p>N/A</p>

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
	How will the current financial climate affect the service?	The ring fencing of funding may be removed, or funding could be reduced or removed.
Financial / Resource Considerations Challenge	How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall? Do external contracts offer value for money?	The project is monitored by the local authority on behalf of the Big Lottery Fund. The contract for the mobile play scheme is monitored within the guidelines stipulated by the Big Lottery Fund. There is currently 14 left out of a total of 36 months to run on this contract.
Service Drivers	What do we need to change and why? What are the main drivers of change?	We need to review the current Children's Play Strategy to reflect the National Play Strategy and other national guidance. The new strategy will provide a framework to deliver on the children's play agenda that includes both fixed play (parks and green and other open spaces) and other wider play opportunities for children and young people. The play strategy has links to the new Green Infrastructure Strategy and proposed Tree and Woodland Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in local, sub-regional and national policies and priorities • Need to deliver value for money • Need to adapt to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances (e.g. adaptation to climate change, changing public and community expectations, factors relating to local economy and so on)

Appendix 5 - Countryside & Greenspace Survey & Consultation Findings

Results from a number of surveys and consultations can be used to inform the EIT review; for example, by highlighting how any changes in service delivery may impact on customers and how services might best be developed in the future to meet their needs and aspirations.

Brief details are given below with more detailed information available via the website:

www.stockton.gov.uk/countrysidegreenspaceyourviews

Background information on the surveys and consultations is provided in **Appendix 5 A**.

In addition to this Borough-wide research a number of more detailed consultations have been undertaken in relation to individual project proposals.

1. Use of the Borough's parks and open spaces

Sport, Recreation and Leisure Survey (2008):

- 70% of residents had used the Boroughs' parks, greenspaces or natural areas in the past year.
- 18.5% did not visit any outdoor areas for leisure.
- 'Walking and/or enjoying outdoors/nature' was the favourite leisure activity amongst the sample overall, referred to by 61% of all respondents as one of the activities they most like to do in their leisure time².
- The majority of adults visit these spaces to enjoy the outdoors/nature (52%); to walk (56.8%); to walk with the dog (21.5%); or take children to play areas (29.8%). *GreenSTAT* data also suggests that these activities are the most popular, although the percentage figures vary.

Children and Young People's Parks and Greenspaces Consultation (2009):

- When visiting parks most children and young people like to: Hang out with friends (19%); chase/run (15%); use the play area (15%); and play ball games (14%).

The *Sport Recreation and Leisure Survey (2008)* also gave residents the opportunity to say why they didn't use parks and other types of open spaces. The vast majority said this was due to personal reasons (e.g. poor health, lack of time or no interest) rather than factors relating to the actual spaces. However, from this survey and other feedback received, it is known that in some cases people are discouraged from accessing parks and open spaces due to issues such as: poor access, perceptions of anti-social behaviour and a lack of information.

² The other most popular activities were: Watching films (56%); shopping (55%); visiting pubs & restaurants (52%)

2. Overall satisfaction parks and open spaces

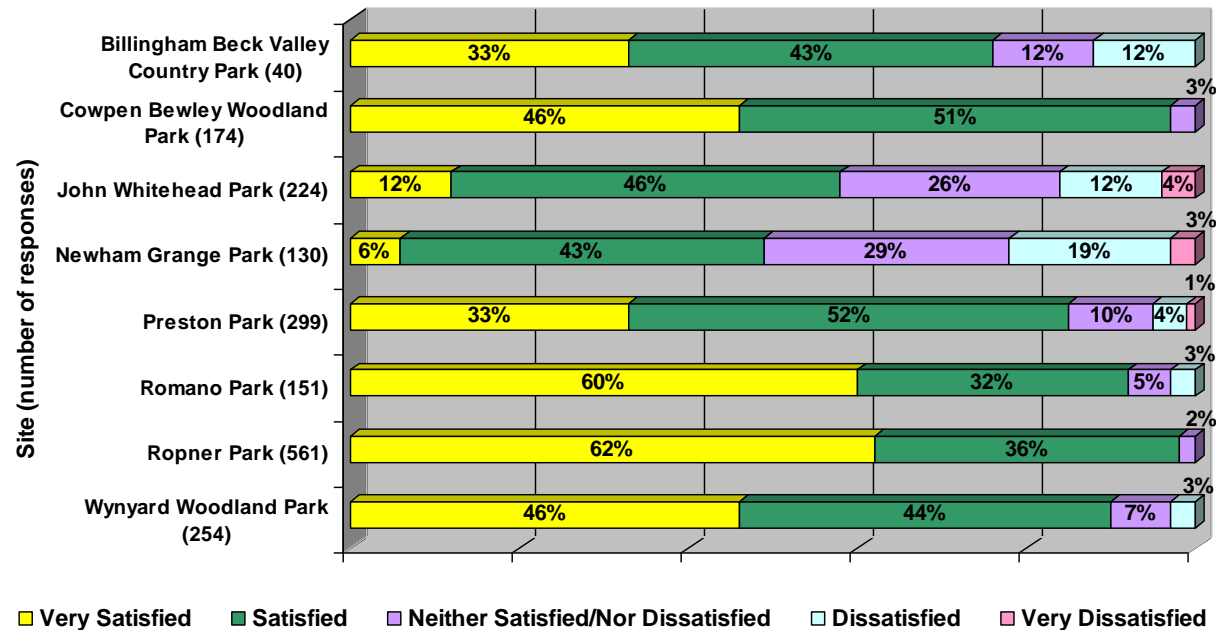
Ipsos MORI Place Survey (2008):

- 60% satisfied with parks and open spaces

GreenSTAT Surveys (2009/10):

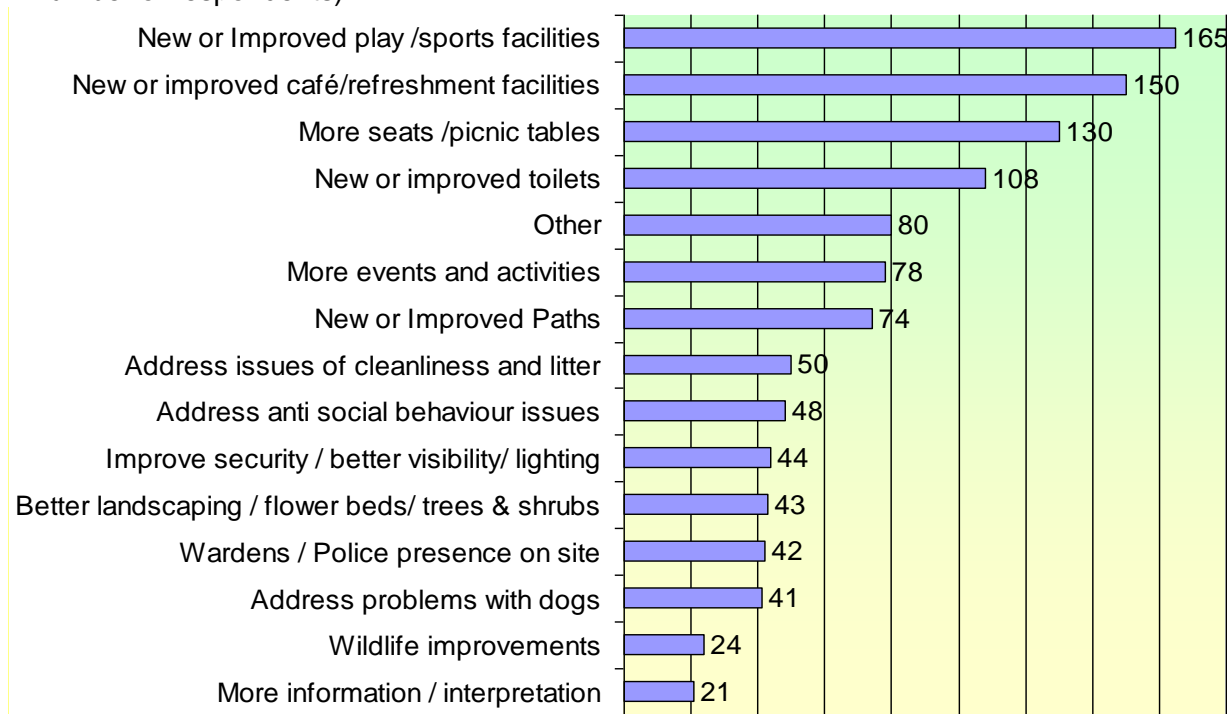
- 77% of park or greenspace users satisfied

The *GreenSTAT Surveys* also provide detailed information on the public's satisfaction with individual parks and open spaces. This reveals quite wide variations in satisfaction levels. For example, the following chart shows people's 'overall impression' of some of the Borough's major parks (data from all surveys up to September 2010):



3. Improving our parks, greenspaces and play spaces

The *GreenSTAT Survey* asks ‘Can you think of anything that would encourage you to use the park or open space more often, or stay for longer?’ Of the 2427 completed questionnaires up to September 2010, 48% of respondents have said ‘yes’. These were the main issues raised (by number of respondents):



Further information on what improvements people would like to see in their local parks and open spaces was also derived through the *Children and Young People’s Parks and Greenspaces Consultation (2009)* and *‘Your Local Green Spaces’ Consultation (2009)*. Play provision for all age groups, but particularly for older children and young people emerged as priorities, as well as improved footpaths and allotments, and more seating/picnic areas.

4. Trees and Woodlands

Viewpoint Survey (2008):

- 55% respondents were satisfied with how the Council looks after trees and 11% were dissatisfied (remainder expressed no preference or didn't know).
- 96% of people think trees are important in the urban environment.
- 88% people prefer to live in a street with trees.
- 88% of people think more trees should be planted.
- 94% people think trees should be protected during new development & regeneration.
- 81% people think trees cause no problems to them.

Appendix 5 A: Background information on the surveys and consultations

Sport, Recreation and Leisure Survey (2008): Carried out by NWA Social & Market Research on behalf of Stockton Council this survey involved face-to-face interviews with 2705 adult residents of the Borough. Approximately 100 interviews were undertaken in each of the 26 wards in the Borough.

Viewpoint Survey on Trees (2008): A questionnaire sent to all 1417 members of the Borough's Viewpoint Panel. A total of 685 questionnaires were completed (a response rate of 48%).

Children and Young People's Parks and Greenspaces Consultation (2009): Carried out by consultants A4e this consultation involved a series of workshop sessions in local schools, asking children and young people to give their views about local parks and play areas. A total of 1,391 children and young people were involved in this work and 1087 questionnaires were completed.

'Your Local Greenspaces' Consultation (2009): From April to June 2009 Stockton Council, in partnership with Tees Valley Rural Community Council, the Environment Agency and Groundwork organised a Borough-wide consultation exercise to gain an improved understanding of how people view their local green greenspaces and countryside. This included 22 drop in-sessions and other meetings with community organisations. The public were invited to record their views and ideas using maps and questionnaires.

GreenSTAT (on-going): A national on-line survey operated by the charity Greenspace, which gives residents and users of parks and greenspaces the opportunity to comment on the quality of their open spaces and how well they feel they are being managed and maintained. By September 2010 a total of 2427 questionnaire had been completed.