

# **Report of the Director of Environment & Sport to the meeting of the Shipley Area Committee to be held on Wednesday 19 October 2016.**

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**Subject:**

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**Parks & Green Spaces Service Annual Report**

**Summary statement:**

The annual report for the Parks & Green Spaces Service reviews activity during the past year and also considers the significant issues that will have an effect over the coming 12 months with options where appropriate for future service delivery.

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## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Council's Executive on 9 October 2012 identified the Parks & Green Spaces Service to report to Area Committees through the devolution agenda.
- 1.2 The Annual Report for the Parks & Green Spaces Service reviews activity during the past year and also considers the significant issues that will have an effect over the coming 12 months and presents options where appropriate for future service delivery.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 The Parks & Green Spaces Service**

- 2.1.1 Currently sits in the Sport and Leisure Service, which is part of the Environment & Sport Department and the main function is the management and maintenance of the district's parks and green spaces. The area of land managed by the section totals over 1,000 hectares of parks/grassed areas and around 850 hectares of woodland.
- 2.1.2 In total, utilising its 95 permanent gardeners, the service manages, develops and maintains 36 parks, of which 5 have achieved Green Flag status, 115 recreational spaces (which include football, rugby, cricket, tennis and bowls facilities) and 276 play areas. Property responsibility is also held for over 50 pavilion/changing rooms, 20 lodges and 5 cafes.
- 2.1.3 The service provides support to community, voluntary and friends of groups whilst co-ordinating all sporting fixtures on playing fields within the service remit.
- 2.1.4 This service includes the following operational activities managed and delivered within Shipley Area:
- Management and development of sites including parks, buildings, sports provision and community events
  - Maintenance of Parks and recreation grounds
  - Maintenance of sports pitches and bowling greens
  - Maintenance of play areas (other than play equipment)
  - Maintenance of cemeteries
  - Winter maintenance activity to Highways, Adult & Children's Services
  - Maintenance of highway verges and green spaces vested in other internal clients
- 2.1.5 In addition to the above, the Parks and Green Spaces service is responsible for the following services, managed and delivered on a District wide basis:
- Highway weed spraying (delivered by an external contract)
  - Technical Unit (including management of play equipment repair)
  - Events relating to sports and parks (including Bingley Music Live) and development of 'Friends of' groups



- Trees & Woodlands (including highway trees)
- War Memorials
- Control and coordination of the Parks & Green Spaces Fleet

## **2.2 Managed Facilities in Shipley Area**

2.2.1 Within the constituency the following 10 main parks are managed and maintained by the service area teams with maintenance also carried out at St Ives Estate:-

2.2.2 Prince of Wales Park - Myrtle Park - Foster Park - Harden Park - Menston Park - Burley Grange Park - Crowgill Park - Northcliffe Park - Roberts Park - Greenwood Park.

2.2.3 There are also 26 recreation grounds, 37 equipped play areas, 8 MACA's (Multi Activity Communal Areas) and 7 Skate/BMX parks and a number of public open spaces. Other facilities include 20 football pitches, 10 bowling greens, 2 cricket pitches, 14 tennis courts and an aviary

2.2.4 In addition to horticultural works the service is responsible for the upkeep of the entire infrastructure (fences, walls and footpaths) and the associated structures within the above sites including 13 pavilions, 2 cafes, 3 changing facilities and 7 lodges one of which is the parks office for Roberts Park and the Shipley Area

## **2.3 New Facilities**

### **2.3.1 Completed/In Progress**

- Harden Memorial Park Play Area refurbishment - £50,000 Wren funding
- Ferniehurst Dell Sculpture Trail and Trim Trail - £45,000 funded by the Armed Forces Covenant and Town Council
- Prince of Wales Park Infrastructure Improvements - £50,000 Wren funding
- Doe Park Outdoor Centre, Denholme - New High Ropes Course £110,000
- Keighley Albion ARLFC - new changing facilities at Crossflatts Recreation Ground funded by £87,500 from Sport England.
- Foster Park Play Area new equipment funded through 106 monies £20,000
- Shipley Central Play Area £50,000 Wren funding. Collaboration between the council and local community groups to renovate the play area.
- Cliffe Avenue, replacement of shelter £10,000

### **2.3.2 Planned**

- Baildon Play Area - new play facility up to the value of £100,000 Section 106 monies and other funders
- Baildon Sports Facility improvements - £42,000 (Section 106 monies)

## **2.4 Events**

2.4.1 The Parks & Green Spaces Service stages and/or supports a high number of events throughout the year (over 150) in its parks & recreation grounds, some of



which are major District events such as the historic Bingley Show, the renowned Moscow State Circus, Keighley Show and Ilkley Carnival.

2.4.2 The Sport & Leisure events team is responsible for organising, delivering and promoting a number of prestigious events. These include Skyride, Bradford City Run and the popular Bingley Music Live festival which attracts circa 40,000 people over the weekend. In addition the team were also actively engaged in the world famous Tour de France Grand Depart and as a legacy of the Tour de France are currently involved in the series of Tour de Yorkshire cycle races.

2.4.3 Other significant events planned this year in Shipley include:

- Fun fairs at Thompson Lane Recreation Ground, Menston Park, Park Street and Myrtle Park
- Saltaire Festival, Roberts Park
- Bingley Show
- Dragon Boat Racing, Roberts Park
- Full events list at Roberts Park (bands, theatre groups and car rally)
- Galas, Carnivals and fun days at several parks/recreation grounds throughout the summer
- Teddy bear picnics
- Cycling event in various parks
- Children's summer activities – across all wards
- Boot Camp fitness at Roberts Park and Menston Park

2.4.4 All the above events create a very large footfall in our parks and green spaces from both the local community and the wider population of the district; indeed, some of the larger events attract people from all over the country.

## **2.5 Trees & Woodlands update**

2.5.1 In addition to the implementation of the day to day management of woodlands, trees in parks and the highway tree stock the Trees & Woodlands section were also involved with the following in the Shipley constituency:

- Winter floods caused the collapse of the roadway and retaining wall into the “show field” or “whippet field” (Holme House Wood) cutting the field off. Highways structures were able to repair with flood relief funds.
- Trees and Woodland service picked up management of Bingley St Ives toilets. Facilities Management are now refurbishing (joinery, locks, handles, installing sun tunnels to improve light, resin floor and painting throughout). Temporary cleaning arrangements have been put in place until a longer term solution is found.
- Unfortunately St Ives failed to retain the Green Flag award this year. To this end, Trees and Woodlands are leading a review of management, funding and partnership arrangements to raise standards and secure a long term sustainable future for the estate.



- Second full year of complete highway tree “visual tree inspection” underway. Visual tree inspections now cover Parks, Highways and Woodlands (paths and edges).

### **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **3.1 Floral Display Review update – Flower Beds/Hanging Baskets**

- 3.1.1 The Council historically has prepared flower beds and hanging baskets for summer displayed at various street scene, parks and green spaces locations throughout the District and then again in the winter for the flower beds only.
- 3.1.2 Through the 2015/16 budget setting process the council made a decision to reduce the level of funding allocated to this provision which had an effect on the appearance of flower beds and hanging baskets across the district. Hanging basket provision for summer 2016 has been handed across for local areas to fund with no baskets being provided by the department. It was also agreed to reduce the expenditure on flower beds by 80% across the district due to the closure of the central nursery with any future plant requirements being contract grown externally.
- 3.1.3 There remain a number of beds identified across the district which need to remain planted to prevent claw back of lottery grants and there is also a requirement to provide bedding to a number of graves under the perpetuity planting scheme.
- 3.1.4 As a starting point the parks team considered each flower bed and RAG rated (Red Amber and Green) them based upon a set of perception criteria to show their priority and then identified a type of treatment proposed for each flower bed based upon the rating and the available resources (See appendix 1).
- 3.1.5 However, in order to minimise the effect of the necessary saving, committee agreed that officers should consider other options/ideas and these included the following:-
- Grass over the flower beds in low priority areas
  - Reduce the size and/or density of planting in some beds
  - Continue to plant a very limited number of high profile flower beds
  - Introduce planted beds that produce colour all year round with minimal maintenance
  - Introduce a community planting and maintenance scheme through a ‘friends of the flowers’ model
  - Use precept charges to support the future cost of flower bed provision in some areas
  - Use voluntary sector groups to grow plants to support the planted beds
- 3.1.6 Members also requested a consultation exercise with various interested user groups which resulted in the following beneficial outcomes for the sites highlighted within ‘Appendix 1’ and following further meetings and discussions the following outcomes were achieved:



- Consultation carried out with Harden Parish Council and they agreed to maintain the flower beds around the war memorial and they informed us that they would be seeking some sponsorship from a local nursery. They also suggested that they would like to maintain the 2 areas to the front of the post office and would work with local businesses to promote this. Officers will continue to interact with this group and offer assistance as required.
  - At Myrtle Park a new 'park action group' volunteered to become involved and asked for permission to carry out some additional mixed planting within the bowling green and flower garden. Officers met with representatives to discuss proposals and the group has now carried out this planting which has added further colour and interest to the area. Potential for further development with partnership and a 'Friends of' group.
  - Following high level discussions Burley Parish Council agreed to maintain the majority of floral displays within the village and Grange Park. This is all linked into a potential 'CATS' transfer which has an ongoing discussion between all parties.
  - Following further consultation with Baildon in Bloom they have agreed to maintain the smaller flower beds around the area of Browgate and Hallcliffe. However, due to health & safety concerns the roundabout will still be maintained by the council and will be planted with a mix of perennial and seasonal planting.
  - Prince of Wales Park – the 'FOG' agreed to include as part of their ongoing works and potentially develop areas to create further planting opportunities. As with all groups, officers will continue to offer support in the long term future development of this park/group.
  - In Wilsden, Royd House Park, contact was made with the 'in bloom' group who volunteered to maintain and develop the flower beds within the park entrance, however, this could be included within a 'CATS' transfer as discussions are continuing with the Parish Council on this matter.
- 3.1.7 It was suggested that the timing of full implementation of the agreed changes to the floral displays across the district would be likely to take place over two winter periods, however, due to early consultation and a concerted staff effort over 90% of the new proposals have been completed this winter/spring, although it is anticipated that further development will continue through the newly formed partnerships in this area.

## **3.2 Bowling Greens - Update**

- 3.2.1 The Council has agreed savings target from the operation of bowling greens throughout the district for both 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 3.2.2 The original proposal was for maintenance savings to be achieved through a 'Community Club' model where each club would maintain the greens through their own members (e.g. mow their own greens). This option is still available to the clubs, however it was not taken up during 2015/16, but might be adopted in 2016/17 by some clubs. It will be for the clubs to determine if this is the way they wish to progress.



- 3.2.3 On the basis that all clubs continue to take the Council Services, we have agreed to step up the annual charges in line with the savings targets of £25k in 2015/16 and an additional £25K in 2016/17.
- 3.2.4 All clubs collected, recorded and paid £15 per player in 2015/16 under a mutually agreed method. A single invoice to clubs was issued in early August 2015 to an agreed sum representing all the 'pay per player' contributions at each club.
- 3.2.5 The Council will continue to set the fees for a 'pay per player' model and continue to develop the 'Community Club' model with any club that wishes to investigate that option further.
- 3.2.6 The 'pay per player' model will be £25 per player in 2016/17; the latter will be invoiced in early April 2016 to coincide with the start of the bowls season.

**3.3 Community Asset Transfers (CATS) – Town & Parish Councils**

- 3.3.1 Whilst the Service continues to work with colleagues on a number of individual CATs, predominantly around sports pitches/facilities, there is a growing interest from Town and Parish Council's in making applications covering assets across a number of different services. The most current application, from Burley Parish Council, includes buildings from both theatres and libraries together with the vast majority of the green spaces in the parish, together with the management and horticultural maintenance of the latter.
- 3.3.2 A senior officer group is currently considering the councils response to such applications with the intention of selecting one or more as pilot schemes to allow a protocol to be developed to inform the Council's future approach.

**4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 The Parks and Green Spaces Service has been given savings targets for both the current year and also for 2016/17 financial year.
- 4.2 The savings will be challenging to achieve in year, but work has commenced to deliver the saving and minimise the impact as far as possible.
- 4.3 A summary of the savings to be achieved is as follows:

<b>Parks and Green Spaces Savings Targets</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
	(K)	(K)
Review the workforce to reflect seasonal variations	65	85
Management Restructure	100	0
Bowling Greens	25	25
Achieve 100% of events at zero cost	25	50
Reduce floral displays and close the nursery	150	50
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>210</b>



## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

- 5.1 The financial risks posed are limited by the nature of the expenditure delegated. However, there is potential to reduce efficiency and overall quality of the service in specific areas if any proposed change is not considered for the wider implications. It will be important to establish a financial governance regime to devise and ensure sound stewardship of the limited resources available. This is work in progress and must be in place to support effective devolution.

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 The contents of this report are in accordance with the decisions of the Executive on 9 October 2012 and 16 April 2013.

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

- 7.1.1 Area Committee decisions will need to be made in line with Equal Rights legislation. This will require Area Committees to assess the potential equality impact of any decisions they make.

### **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.2.1 Increased local decision making has the potential to create more sustainable solutions to local issues. The proposal to move to permanently planted flower beds is more sustainable for both economic and environmental reasons.

### **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

- 7.3.1 The Parks and Green Spaces service provides a pro-active approach in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through the local deployment of its maintenance teams. Teams are based in areas in an effort to reduce travelling times with its fleet/plant resulting in reduced fuel consumption. In addition to this parks and recreation grounds/trees/woodlands provide communities with 'green lungs' which can naturally assist with the filtering of polluted air.

### **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.4.1 There are no Community Safety Implications arising from this report.

### **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

- 7.5.1 There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.

### **7.6 TRADE UNION**

- 7.6.1 Trade Unions at all levels are engaged in consultation over the proposals included in this report.





## **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

7.7.1 The information in this report is relevant to all Wards in the area.

7.7.2 Increased devolution of the services will allow the Area Committee to further address local priorities for those services within wards.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

8.1 None.

## **9. OPTIONS**

9.1 Members are asked to consider the content of this report and in particular to offer comment on the way the service engaged with other user groups to achieve a satisfactory outcome in relation to the proposed flower bed proposals.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 That Shipley Area Committee:

10.2 Note the content of this report and in particular:

- The bowls club agreement
- The outcomes following consultation around the flower bed provision.

## **11. APPENDICES**

11.1 Appendix 1 - Flower Bed reclassification proposal.

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

12.1 Document 'Q', Parks and Green Spaces Flower Beds, Shipley Area Committee, 28 October 2015.



## Appendix 1 – Shipley flower bed proposals/update

LOCATION	Number of Plants	Proposals
ARTS CENTRE	800	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Agreed as above
CULLINGWORTH CENOTAPH	200	Reduce scale and use 80/20 permanent/bedding Plants  Outcome following consultation:- Agreed as above in principle although a suggestion to include roses to be considered
HARDEN CENOTAPH	200	Reduce scale and use 80/20 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- Harden Parish Council has expressed an interest in taking on the flower beds and is looking for possible support from a local plant nursery. They have also confirmed that they will carry out the seasonal planting and maintenance of the 2 areas to the front of the post office.
MYRTLE PARK	5935	Reduce scale and use 50/50 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- Officers have provided detail (including offer to walk around) on the proposal for which beds are to be included.
WILSDEN WAR MEM	100	Reduce scale and use 80/20 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- As above
CROWGILL PARK	4300	Reduce scale and use 80/20 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- As above
NORTHCLIFFE PK	3200	Reduce scale and use 50/50 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- As above
ROBERTS PARK	5830	Reduce scale and use 50/50 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- Discussions with Shipley College and Saltaire Festival were carried out but due to Lottery guidelines it was not possible to pursue engagement. As above.



KIRKGATE SHIPLEY	1000	Reduce scale and use 80/20 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- As above
SHIPLEY CENTRE BEDS	1650	Reduce scale and use 80/20 permanent/bedding plants  Outcome following consultation:- As above
GRANGE PARK	1660	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Ongoing discussion with Burley Parish Council re they maintain and plant them.
WOODCOT AVENUE	2170	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Cllr Pollard to engage with Nuffield Health and other businesses with a view to securing sponsorship etc
NABWOOD CEM	1200	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following planting:- Saltire Methodist Church are interested on taking these beds on.
QUEENS HALL	1050	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Included in Grange Park above
SHIPLEY TOWN HL	1290	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Saltire Festival also expressed an interest adopting this area
CHARLESTOWN CEM	1600	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- As above
BAILDON RAB	600	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Baildon in Bloom expressed an interest in taking on, however, the landowners, Highways, have always said they don't want this as a sponsored site due to the erection of signs possibly causing sight line issues. In addition to this there would also be some H&S concerns for working on the roundabout. Further discussion required.
BROWGATE	1000	Reduce size and use permanent planting  Outcome following consultation:- Baildon in Bloom expressed an interest in maintaining these
BINGLEY CEM CHAPEL	400	Remove  Outcome following consultation:-



		As above
BINGLEY CEM MAIN DRIVE	400	Remove Outcome following consultation:- As above
BRADFORD OLD RD	850	Reduce size and use permanent planting Outcome following consultation:- As above
FERNCLIFFE ROAD	200	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Seed with wildflowers
MAIN STREET BINGLEY	350	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Agree to look to consider permanent planting
PRINCE OF WALES	575	Remove Outcome following consultation:- To engage with F.O.G. to include as part of their remit
ROYD HOUSE	800	Reduce size and use permanent planting Outcome following consultation:- Ongoing discussion with Parish Council re a larger Asset Transfer which would include this site
VARIOUS PLANTERS	500	Remove Outcome following consultation:- To consider permanent planting
WILSDEN CEM	100	Remove Outcome following consultation:- As above
BRADFORD ROAD	2200	Reduce size and use permanent planting Outcome following consultation:- Saltaire Festival expressed an interest in taking site on
BURLEY GRANGE	250	Remove Outcome following consultation:- As agreed with BPC in Grange Park
BURLEY GREEN	65	Remove Outcome following consultation:- As agreed with BPC
KIRKLANDS	730	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Structure of area will not allow for complete removal therefore consideration to be given to permanent planting
MENSTON MAIN ST	280	Remove Outcome following consultation:-



		As above
VARIOUS PLANTER/TUBS	1000	Remove Outcome following consultation:- As above
FERNCLIFFE ROAD	300	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Seed with wildflowers
HALLCLIFFE	200	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Baildon in Bloom to take on maintenance subject to further discussion.
MAIN ST / MYRTLE COURT	175	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Ongoing discussion with option to remove or plant with permanent scheme
NORTHGATE	350	Remove Outcome following consultation:- Baildon in Bloom to take on maintenance
VALLEY ROAD	1200	Reduce beds and look to alternative planting Outcome following consultation:- As above

