

2016 Proposal and Integrated Impact Assessment

Informing our approach to fairness

Title of proposal	Decent Neighbourhoods
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2016 Proposal

Government cuts, heavily skewed against Newcastle and the North East, are having a damaging impact on our capacity to deliver public services and support the economy of the city. In addition, we continue to face unavoidable rising costs. By 2016, we will need to reduce the amount we spend by over £90m. This equates to a third of our current budget. The savings are unprecedented and are the most challenging the city has ever faced.

These savings cannot be made by just being more efficient. It means we will need to look at every service and decide what will be provided in the future and how. These difficult decisions will be made by applying a fairness test to every decision, analysing future needs and taking into account the views of the public expressed through the Let's talk Newcastle programme.

1. The proposal / function

1.1 Description of current service

The services we provide to all residents in neighbourhoods are currently managed in a variety of different ways:

- horticulture, grounds maintenance, maintenance of playgrounds and our arboricultural services are managed together,
- our parks service is managed alongside leisure and sport
- our 69 allotments are independently run by committees, but with support from an Allotments Officer
- local services are organised on clusters of wards, linked to neighbourhood managers. This is managed alongside the City Centre cleaning regime that operates 24/7

The service standards and the response times for most of these services are published. We have been moving to a series of Decent Neighbourhoods Standards which cover clean and tidy streets and well maintained parks and places. These are assessed by ward.

Some of these services are statutory. Grass cutting has to provide clear lines of sight on the highway, Environmental Protection legislation covers cleansing. Gullies and detritus have to be cleared under the Highways Act.

The role of local members and residents in determining how these services are delivered is limited at present.

The budgets and staffing for these functions is as follows:

	Full Time Equivalent Staff	Budget
Horticulture & Grounds Maintenance only	124	£1.406 million*
Grounds HRA contribution	0	£0.736 million
Parks & Open Spaces	26	£2.259 million
Local Services	197	£6.189 million
TOTAL	347	£10.590 million

	<p>*this figure assumes continued income of £2.2 million currently funded by the housing revenue account.</p>
1.2	<p>Description of the proposal</p>
	<p>We will bring the management of all these services into a simpler integrated structure, which will produce savings as part of these proposals. The first step will be to move to two areas, plus the City Centre. We will then integrate into a single citywide structure. Management of Parks & Countryside will be integrated in Year 1. Members are leading a group to look at how we can best align this structure with the services that Your Homes Newcastle provides, to the benefit of tenants and residents.</p> <p>A structural change is not enough to deliver the change needed. It will require staff to take on broader roles and a removal of existing demarcation. Staff will also have to take on more of an enabling role to help problem solving for residents and communities. They will have to challenge the behaviours of some residents and support others, for example where fly tipping is an issue. They will have to work very closely with dedicated enforcement staff, like Wardens, who are in turn going to be much more strongly focused on enviro crime and anti-social behaviour under the Regulatory proposals. Resources will be used flexibly where hotspots are, rather than carrying out routine maintenance. Hot spots will be reviewed by local teams. Messages will be carefully scripted, in consultation with our call centre staff, to make it clear that many issues will be dealt with routinely rather than as a priority, and this may often mean using calls as intelligence to define hotspots. The current ward-based services will be reduced with 62 posts to go in year 1. This will mean that streets are cleaned less frequently, that only offensive graffiti will be removed, that fly-tipping and rubbish in back lanes will be less easy to tackle, and that the number of times cleaning machines visit an area will reduce. So, without behaviour change, enforcement, and waste reduction we could see more litter and fly-tipping. We will have fewer people to help with floods and street gritting in winter, and we will talk to neighbouring authorities about updating our mutual aid agreements.</p> <p>Enforcement alone will not create enough of a difference to our city. If we are to save the £2-3 million currently spent on clearing the mess left by the selfishness and carelessness of a few, we have to change attitudes and behaviours. We are putting aside £150k in each of the first two years of this budget to create this change as a Council. It will have to link to other behavioural change initiatives such as personal responsibility for health and exercise. It will need care, analysis and planning, and we must give time for the results to develop before we fully reduce capacity. Some capacity will be needed to meet statutory requirements and essential maintenance such a clearing roads and gullies and emptying litter bins. This will be prioritised and retained where possible. However, by year 3, we expect to reduce the spend on these services by 62%.</p> <p>We will also need to spend the first two years of the budget period reducing the level of maintenance required for our parks and open spaces. Most grass will be cut half as often. In some areas it will be cut only twice a year. We will also use our existing resources to take out more than half of shrub beds and landscaping schemes on roundabouts and other features over the next two years. We will aim to replace these with grass and attractive lower maintenance features such as wild flowers. We will also seek wherever possible to increase the city's bio-diversity via revised maintenance arrangements and potential re-designation of green space. Some areas will need more permanent alteration, and we would look to call on asset receipts, in particular by closing Jesmond Dene nursery and depot in Year 1, to do this. The closure of Jesmond Dene Nursery and Depot would mean any floral displays across the city would be bought in as</p>

required from local allotments and firms. We would not continue with the annual planting and floral programme citywide. We will also discuss where a simpler regime could provide opportunities for the YHN gardening service and Nature's Landscapes to play a greater role as well. The tree service would be charged for, except where statutory emergency work is needed or where the contract with YHN supports tenants.

We propose that our parks are maintained to a decent standard but that, across the city some – particularly those with highest use, serving larger areas and recently invested in – are kept at a higher standard. We will develop a two tier process for maintaining our parks with standards based fully upon Green Flag principles and decent neighbourhood standards. We will reflect where possible environmental issues and wildlife habitats. Priority will be given to Category 1 parks, i.e. Ouseburn, Leazes, Walker, Exhibition, Tyne Riverside and Elswick. We will further promote use of parks linked to public health and exercise (including through a Year of Exercise and Sport in 2014), seeking commercial opportunities that will bring life and interest to all parks, and working with voluntary groups, such as Friends of Jesmond Dene, Northumberland Wildlife Trust and others. We will retain 4 Rangers for the next two years to support this work. We can make some savings in year one, particularly in grass cutting and basic maintenance, but closing Pets Corner, which is of particular benefit to children and is free and relatively accessible, is not acceptable. Equally, we will work with the Byker Housing Trust to support Ouseburn Farm, but we will reduce its grant over the next three years. We will look for alternative support for current training programmes but we will not be able to fund as now. The city has 69 allotment sites all of which are independently run by committees and support will continue. We will seek to introduce more temporary allotments as interim land uses in areas like Scotswood and more allotments and growing areas in parks and other civic green space.

Our core universal service will be focused on maintaining decent neighbourhoods across the city. We will set out what that core offer is, in the interests of fairness for all residents. We want to give local members and residents a real say in the services the Council provides. We therefore propose to work in Year 1 with three wards, starting with Blakelaw, to identify the local services spend, how local choice might add to or amend the citywide core offer, and how services might deliver the revised local offer over the following two years. There would not be new or topsliced money, but it is assumed that about a quarter of spend on decent neighbourhoods might be open to real choice (some services, like offensive graffiti removal would not be). This could mean local decisions initially on about £50k per ward for the three pilot wards.

Emergency tree work will be responded to but there will be no cosmetic work undertaken unless residents/wards pay for this. Staff will work on service level agreement contracts mainly with YHN.

At present, we have a wide variety of play areas. Current daily inspections of play grounds will become weekly. Damaged equipment will be removed with no central funds for replacement. Essential repairs will take place on tennis courts and multi use games areas to ensure health and safety standards are met. We will ensure there is access to play space for all children as now, but we will not develop new playgrounds using dedicated council resources.

We will aim to support a Year of Exercise and Sport in 2014. We want to increase users in parks, but we will have to make some increase in charges for pitches. Open air leisure and sport facilities will be retained although Grass cutting and line painting of these will be reduced to a minimum. It is expected that many pitches will be permanently marked once the alternative methods have been tested. Over the next three years we will talk to

clubs and teams to see which are able to take on line marking and/or the grass cutting for the pitches they use.

Clubs and teams which demonstrate robust accounting and committee structure will be approached to see if asset transfer might be an option.

The City Centre presents its own challenges. At present we spend some £1.4 million on cleaning and maintaining it. Much of the poorer quality and high maintenance infrastructure can be replaced through investment over the life of the Accelerated Development Zone, and through Heart of the City and Regional Growth Fund. We will work with NE1 and others to seek other opportunities for improving our city scape. For example, we are bidding for new communal trade waste bin areas. But routine maintenance needs to reduce. Other cities and towns do not put as much resource in. The enforcement and behaviour change will be even more important here. The proposals see an end to a 7 day night shift in 2013. This will reduce to 5 days per week. Resources deployed on each night will half. In 2014/15 night shift would cease.

There will be a difficult transition period to manage as we reduce from 24/7 cleaning during the first year. The support of businesses and press, and local opinion and pride will be crucial. We must work very hard as a council to secure these. One way of doing so is to be successful in hosting events like the Rugby World Cup, that bring in sponsorship and funding we can use to make the city look great.

We are very aware of the direct link between the city as an attractive place to visit and invest in and the quality of its environment. We must look for ways to use our limited resources to create jobs and social value. Our Let's Talk consultation shows there is little appetite for running universal services day in, day out. We are not ruling out innovative investment, and we will explore the use of Social Impact Bonds based on savings from behaviour change on littering. Above all, we will see if we can create new businesses and social enterprises (using a share of the receipt from selling Jesmond Dene Nursery and Depot) including a new horticultural business tying together the opportunities from local planting schemes, the promotion of gardening through the brown bin scheme, and the existing tree service, which we are actively developing.

Financial cost/benefit analysis.

	Gross saving	Implementation cost	Net saving
2013/14	£3.285m	0	£3.285m
2014/15	£1.449m	0	£1.449m
2015/16	£2.797m	0	£2.797m

Summary of financial and workforce information

Year	Split of net savings			Workforce reduction	
	Efficiency	Income	Other	No. FTEs	% workforce
2013/14			£3.285m	113.3	32%
2014/15			£1.4496m	96	27%
2015/16			£2.797m		

The total number of staff employed in Decent Neighbourhoods is 347, the reduction of 209.3 employees equates to a 59% reduction, leaving 138 employees in this area.

The profile of staff reductions is full year impact of 2013/14 in year. For the 2015/16 proposals these reductions will commence in January 2015.

We are legally required to set a one-year budget only. The figures for 2014/15 and 2015/16 should be regarded as indicative at this stage. Firmer figures for 2014/15 and 2015/16 will be published in November 2013 and November 2014 respectively.

1.3 **Ward / geographical impact**

The proposals will affect all wards in the city.

2. Evidence and research – identifying need

Information source	What has this told you?
Parks & Open Spaces	
“Green spaces, Your spaces.” Newcastle’s green space strategy	Open space standards Standards of quality and quantity The Typology of parks and open spaces Recommendations on accessibility
Playing pitch strategy	The Number of playing pitches required to support the city’s population according to Sport England
LDF & PPG17 assessment	Current standard of green space allocation and pitch requirements and parks Financial contribution for development from new development Standards for young peoples provision i.e playgrounds Standard for allotment provision
HLF grant award conditions for Ouseburn parks, Exhibition and hopefully walker park	Indicates a grant award condition to maintain the parks to Green Flag award status
Parks user counts 2009 and 2012	Indicates the approximate usage of parks
Parks user surveys 2009 – 2012	Indicates the customer perception of parks and has been the baseline upon which all parks investment has been based upon
Sport England local sports profile for Newcastle upon Tyne	Shows that adult participation in sport and active recreation is declining in Newcastle and is below the national and regional average. This is replicated by ethnicity and disability groups. Newcastle – 10.3% North East - 11% England - 11.6%

Obesity rates in the city	<p>Adult obesity rates Newcastle – 23.7% North east – 27.8% England – 24.2%</p> <p>Child obesity rates Newcastle – 21.9% North East 20.6% England 18.7%</p>
“Know your city” – a profile of Newcastle’s people	Trends in lifestyle and health. Demographics of the city
Annual playground maintenance survey	Assesses the condition of each playground in the city. In the past it has helped us prioritise the playgrounds across the city which have been required the greatest investment and support. This document helps us generate external funds much of which is already supported by ward funding
Allotment surveys 2012	Shows us the levels of use and perceptions of allotments and is managed by the individual allotment committees
Biodiversity action Plan	Sets out the councils standards to protect and enhance habitats in areas of green space, parks and open space
Current volunteer schemes	Currently successful volunteer schemes exist with Friends of Groups etc. This could be built further upon
Grounds	
National Debate	A debate on sustainability on grass cutting standards and frequencies has been taking place for some time. Public views are divided, Some support less maintenance where this improves natural habitats biodiversity.
Industry Advice/Best Practice	Expert advice and guidance confirms the arrangements required by the council in respect of its obligations around playground maintenance. In addition councils across the country are changing their grounds maintenance grass cutting equipment in recognition of revised standards and frequency of maintenance being put in place.
Recent reductions	Revised grass cutting earlier in the year was acceptable in some parts of the city, but negative feedback in others from Members and residents. Consultation must be undertaken where a citywide standard is departed from. The ward pilots will use the lessons of last year.
Local knowledge	Councils across the region have increasingly ceased direct plant and flower production and have closed facilities previously used for this purpose. Where beautification is still being delivered, plants and flowers are being procured from external sources.

NCC Officers	Assessment of the arboricultural activities currently being undertaken suggests that a proportion of the work being is merely cosmetic and relates at times to dubious concerns in respect of safety, reduced light and property damage.
Local Knowledge/ feedback from staff/ Trade Unions	Methods to improve efficiency and productivity
National Best Practice	Most local authorities contacted by council officers currently have in place a minimum of three weed killing applications in a year.
Current volunteer schemes	Currently successful volunteer schemes exist with Friends of Groups etc. This could be built further upon
Reducing Beautification	
Residents/visitor feedback	<p>The current city floral and planting programme is extremely well received. The Council receives a large number of positive responses each year as to the impact of the programme. Other residents have already queried however the cost of the operation and its sustainability bearing in mind the financial challenges facing the Council</p> <p>Residents regularly confirm the importance of the Council providing a clean, green and safe city. Lets Talk Newcastle re-iterated this.</p>
Local knowledge	Councils across the region have increasingly ceased direct plant and flower production and have closed facilities previously used for this purpose. Where beautification is still being delivered, plants and flowers are being procured from external sources.
NCC Officers	<p>A number of private sector organisations already trade in this service area and as such competition is particularly demanding. This will have a significant bearing on the financial viability of a smaller trading nursery located elsewhere following the closure of the Dene.</p> <p>It will be possible to relocate remaining staff from the Dene to other Council facilities should this complex be sold</p>
Localised Services	
Historical Data (previous BVPI)	Previous data suggested the Council is at the higher end of the spending table on frontline street cleansing services. This data is consistent with the view that the delivery of decent neighbourhoods in many parts of the city is seen as a responsibility solely of the Council
National Research	Research undertaken nationally confirms that residents are more likely to consider local environmental standards and issues than any other factor when asked to comment on the effectiveness of local councils
Newcastle Future Needs Assessment (NFNA)	This identifies areas of greatest need where remaining resources are most likely to be deployed into
Current Neighbourhood	This confirms the differing challenges and standards existing in Neighbourhood across the city in respect of the environment. This will focus both remaining resources but also the social marketing campaign in respect of

Standards	behavioural change
Previous experience of behavioural change initiatives	This confirms that bringing about the required level so behavioural change to support the council exiting from the majority of localised service provision will be difficult to achieve

3. Engagement

Date of Engagement	Details of whom you have or will engage with	Number of invited/attended	Main Issues Raised
ASAP	Brief staff, setting out the service reduction and total reduction in posts in 2016 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To inform them of the proposal and understand schedule for change and how it impacts upon them and the processes we put in place to implement. 		
TBC	Workforce & Trade Unions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of proposal and its impact 	All employees in the service	
TBC	Citywide consultation as part of 'Let's Talk' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of proposal and new service arrangements 	All residents	
TBC	Other budget workstreams, especially Public Protection and Safety; Supporting and Enabling; Services, people, Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future needs around enforcement and engagement/behavioural change 	TBC	
TBC	YHN and other Social landlords <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm new proposals and discuss potential negative impacts and methods of mitigating these 	TBC	
TBC	NE1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of the new services arrangements. Exploring opportunities of shared working and transfer of ownership 	TBC	
TBC	Emergency Services	TBC	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of proposal and new service arrangements and discussion around associated risk 		
TBC	<p>Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of proposal and new service arrangements and discussion around associated risks especially relating to impact on winter maintenance of footpaths – i.e. likelihood is more slips and trips 	TBC	
TBC	<p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to secure buy-in from universities and students in respect of behavioural change 	TBC	
TBC	<p>Representatives of the Elders Council and disability forum/groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of proposal and new service arrangements 	TBC	
2013	<p>Meet representatives from potential partners other organisations to discuss possible partnerships for the management of some areas such as Pets Corner, Benwell Nature Park, Leazes park etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will discuss the possibilities of shared management or asset transfer 	TBC	
TBC	<p>Parks and Open Space User Groups/Friends of Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of the new services arrangements. Exploring opportunities of shared working and transfer of ownership 	TBC	
2013/14	<p>Consider how best to communicate with communities to see what if any appetite there is to adopt open spaces using “adopt a plot”</p>	TBC	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will need to raise the possibilities of local land being transferred legally to residents 		
TBC	<p>Potentially talk to Oakfield College about the deletion of the training programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal and understand the implications 	TBC	
2012/13	<p>Discuss with Friends of groups based in parks to inform them more closely in the future to support the development on the parks they engage with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal and understand the implications and future changes to the areas they represent 	TBC	
2012/13	<p>Discuss with volunteer groups based in parks to inform them more closely in the future to support the development on the parks they engage with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal and understand the implications and future changes to the areas they represent 	TBC	
2013	<p>Discuss at relevant ward meetings the changes of management and maintenance in the parks within their areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal and understand the implications and future changes to the areas they represent 	TBC	
TBC	<p>Schools in the city who have links with the Dene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of proposal and its impact 	TBC	
2013	Discuss with the Freeman Committee	TBC	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To update them on the proposals and how it might impact our partnership with land management, hoppings etc 		
2013	<p>Discuss with all Allotment committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal and understand the ramifications 	TBC	
2013	<p>Discuss with the Allotment working group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal by discussing the removal of development budget and fee changes 	TBC	
2013/14	<p>Discuss with all Football teams and their governing body the FA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform them of the proposal and options available to them linked to grass cutting, asset transfer and fee changes 	TBC	

4. Assessing the impact

Impact for (staff or service users)	Assess the impact of the proposal(s) on the following specific groups and any others you can identify	Impact (actual/potential disadvantage, beneficial outcome or none)	Detail of the Impact	How will you address this or mitigate any disadvantage?
			Could the proposal(s) lead to any groups being disadvantaged or treated unfairly? Please explain why. Could the proposal reduce inequalities or disadvantage? Please explain how.	
People with protected characteristics:				
Service users	Younger people 14-25	Actual / potential disadvantage	As a result of removing the parks training function this will impact directly upon young people i.e. NEET young people. This will mean that the service will no longer be able to provide educational training activities.	Through consultation with relevant schools we will try to support links with other providers of similar skills based programmes such as FE and Horticultural colleges.
Service users	Younger people	Actual / potential disadvantage	As a result of reducing the maintenance of parks / open spaces, there is the risk that younger people will be put off or prevented from accessing these areas due to perceptions of safety. This in turn has health implications and addressing obesity amongst younger people .	We will focus on maintaining areas where significant community safety risks have been identified. We will work with our community safety team to look at ways to help people to feel safe when using parks and open spaces.
Service users	Younger people and older people (age)	Actual / potential disadvantage	By reducing the frequency of grass cutting there is the potential that younger people will be prevented from playing in some green open spaces due to risk of dangerous waste being discarded where there the grass becomes overgrown and therefore not visible. There is also the risk	Investments will still take place in ensuring green space exists which will facilitate family activity and sporting events. Enforcements and engagement activity will continue to seek to tackle dog fouling which will not be excusable due

			to health as the overgrown grass could hide dog faeces which could result in the spread of Toxocariasis.	to the length of grass.
Service users	Younger people and older people (age)	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>There is also the potential risk to the health and safety of park users particularly children and young people if only emergency repairs were to be undertaken on NCC owned facilities / equipment. If there is no routine maintenance or inspection then there is the potential for an accident to happen due to general wear of the facilities / equipment or due to intentional damage.</p> <p>Should younger people dominate some areas and anti social behaviour escalate, this will deter other age groups from using the area.</p>	<p>Where there are any areas which are seen as dangerous or could cause accident or injury these will be removed or made safe.</p> <p>Inspection regime in areas identified as essential such as playgrounds will continue.</p> <p>We will seek to develop allotment sites on some areas of parkland and transfer responsibility to allotment associations.</p>
Service users	Younger people and older people (age)	Actual / potential disadvantage	By reducing the frequency of grass cutting there is the potential that the grass clippings could mount up on pavements and therefore become a trip, slip and fall hazard for older people .	This will require greater coordination between mechanical cleansing vehicles and our grass cutting fleet. Fewer cuts should also reduce the hazard.
Service users	Younger people and older people (age)	Beneficial outcome	Emergency arboricultural works around areas where there is potentially an increased safety risk to children and young people i.e. outside schools / nurseries will be dealt with as a priority. Emergency works outside care homes where older people reside will also be dealt with as a priority.	
Service users	Younger people and older people (age)	Actual / potential disadvantage	Reduced maintenance and repair budgets for playgrounds equipment increases the risk of accidents and injuries to younger people .	Revised frequency of inspections will be published as widely as possible to advise service users of the heightened risk. Playgrounds that are regularly

				vandalised and damaged may need to have equipment removed. Residents/community groups will also be encouraged monitor equipment to protect service users.
Service Users	Young People/Older People	Actual/Potential Disadvantage	A limited detrimental impact as small groups of young and older people visit Jesmond Dene Nursery and Depot on an annual basis for information/educational purposes.	Will seek to identify external organisations/facilities who may be prepared to provide this service. If the relocation of a smaller nursery is considered to be appropriate then this could accommodate such visits.
Service Users	Younger people and older people (age)	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Reduced capacity for cleansing during the day and night will result in the reduction of resources available to respond to issues such as increased littering, fly tipping and also weather events. This could lead to accessibility problems for older people in areas that aren't cleaned or gritted. Reduced frequency of cleansing will also increase the risk of slips trips and falls due to increased littering leaf fall.	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives will seek to negate negative behaviours towards the environment whilst at the same time attract volunteers to assist in responding to weather events and local environmental challenges.
Service users	Disabled people	Actual / potential disadvantage	The reduction in parks and open space maintenance may prevent people with a disability using these facilities due to a perception or fear that their mobility will be hindered.	Allotment sites and spaces suitable for disabled people will continue to be maintained as will the sensory garden situated in Exhibition Park. Work is being undertaken to identify what support can be provided to maintain those areas with inclusive open spaces which provide facilities that are fully accessible to all.
Service Users	Disabled people	Actual/potential disadvantage	Freeman and Exhibition which are both classed as priority 1 parks contain inclusive play equipment that is suitable for use by disabled children. We currently	We will seek additional external funding to replace inclusive play equipment if broken or in need of repair.

			have no provision in our proposal to provide for the maintenance and repair of play equipment. As such there may be an impact on disabled children who may be unable to access general play equipment located within play areas.	
Service users	Disabled people	Actual / potential disadvantage	By reducing the frequency of grass cutting there is the potential that the grass clippings could mount up on pavements and therefore become a trip, slip and fall hazard for disabled people .	This is a genuine risk and will require even greater coordination between mechanical cleansing vehicles and grass cutting fleet. Again public participation in assisting/supplementing core service activity will be encouraged. Rather than individuals ringing to complain about grass on footpaths those capable of removing it personally will be encouraged to do so. This will be increasingly the case by 2016 then where there will be no street cleansing resource available to respond to these sorts of situation.
Service Users	Disabled People	Actual/Potential Disadvantage	There is a limited detrimental impact on individuals with learning disabilities who currently visit Jesmond Dene Nursery and Depot i.e. Percy Hedley School and similar institutions.	Will seek to identify external organisations/facilities who may be prepared to provide this service. If the relocation of a smaller nursery is considered to be appropriate then this could accommodate such visits.
Service Users	Disabled people	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Reduced capacity for cleansing during the day and night will result in the reduction of resources available to respond to issues such as increased littering, fly tipping and also weather events. This could lead to accessibility problems for disabled people in areas that aren't cleaned or gritted. Reduced frequency of cleansing will also increase the risk of slips trips and falls due	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives will seek to negate negative behaviours towards the environment whilst at the same time attract volunteers to assist in responding to weather events and local environmental challenges.

			to increased littering leaf fall.	
Service users	Carers	None identified	None	
Service users	People who are married or in civil partnerships	None identified	No specific impact	
Service users	Sex or Gender (Includes Transgender, pregnancy and maternity)	potential disadvantage	Within parks and open spaces there is a potential problem with women and girls feeling disproportionately unsafe in unstaffed area.	<p>We will look to bring more life to parks through use as allotments, commercial opportunities etc. We will work with the police to react to development of any hotspots.</p> <p>We will work with our community safety team to look at ways to help people to feel safe when using parks and open.</p>
Service users	People's sexual orientation	None identified	No specific Impact	
Service users	People of different races	Actual / potential disadvantage	There are particular patterns of use by BME groups in certain parks. Nunsmoor park has a strong BME use for example. A reduction in maintenance of parks and open spaces could potentially prevent the use of such areas and be a barrier to taking part in physical exercise / sport.	We will aim to work with PCT, health practitioners and other physical activity providers to ensure open space is promoted as safe and appropriate local areas for exercise.
Service users	People who have different religions, beliefs or sexuality/ People from different faces	None identified	At present, staff provide significant support to community events such as Gay Pride and the Mela.	Early joint working with communities to identify how they can play a greater role in self-managing events.
People vulnerable to socio-economic disadvantage:				
Service users	People living in deprived areas	Actual / potential disadvantage	Evidence suggests that there are higher rates of overweight and obesity amongst children in year 6 living in deprived areas . Less maintenance of parks and	We have identified the parks (Elswick and Walker) in our highest areas of disadvantage as being classed as category 1 to try to minimise this impact

			open spaces may restrict these children from taking part in physical activities / sport.	
Service users	People living in deprived areas	Actual / potential disadvantage	Research suggests that vandalism to playgrounds is more likely to occur in the more deprived areas of the City. Should equipment be vandalised and parks subsequently closed this will reduce community assets in place.	Using the Safer Neighbourhoods infrastructure in place the Council will work with key partners and, in particular, Northumbria Police to put in place many preventable measures as possible ie regular patrolling etc but will also seek to prosecute wherever possible those found to be vandalising or inappropriately using parks and playgrounds. The intended behavioural change campaign will also seek to highlight the fact that unless behaviours do change in respect of anti-social behaviour then parks facilities may be removed.
Service Users	People living in deprived areas	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Despite every effort to prioritise resources to areas of greatest need it is considered that people in deprived areas will see environmental standards reduce more so than residents in more affluent parts of the city.	Resources will be prioritised on areas of greatest need. In addition the delivery of Council's behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives.
Service users	People in low paid employment, or in households with low incomes	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>Parks and open spaces provide the opportunity for free outdoor activities. A reduction in maintenance and associate impact on safety could mean that those who rely on free activities due to their low levels of income could be put off especially for families with younger children.</p> <p>Potential increase to the cost of hiring football pitches – may have a</p>	<p>We have identified the parks (Walker and Elswick) in our highest areas of population as category 1. There will be parks, open space and playgrounds available to provide free access across the city in the city centre and in local communities.</p> <p>We will work with sporting organisations to develop further the good links between recognised teams and</p>

			disproportionate impact on people from poorer households (if this charge is passed on to individuals via increased subs). This could also result in a health and wellbeing impact.	community sport.
Service Users	People in low paid employment, or in households with low incomes	Actual / potential disadvantage	Families in this category are likely to seek access to free facilities to spend leisure time. Parks and playgrounds provide such facilities and as such if these are withdrawn such provision will be reduced. In these circumstances families may need to travel to other parts of the City to access remaining play facilities but will be restricted in doing so due to transport costs.	Using the Safer Neighbourhoods infrastructure in place the Council will work with key partners and, in particular, Northumbria Police to put in place many preventable measures as possible ie regular patrolling etc but will also seek to prosecute wherever possible those found to be vandalising or inappropriately using parks and playgrounds. The intended behavioural change campaign will also seek to highlight the fact that unless behaviours do change in respect of anti-social behaviour then parks facilities may be removed.
Service Users	People facing barriers to gaining employment, such as low levels of educational attainment	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Localised Services has been successful in the past in providing opportunities to individuals in this category. In future such opportunities will no longer be available.	Encourage external partners to provide similar opportunities to those previously offered by the Council.
Service users	Looked after children	None identified	No Specific Impact	
Service users	People facing multiple deprivation, through a combination of factors such as poor health (physical or mental) or poor housing/ homelessness	Actual / potential disadvantage	Parks and open spaces allow people in poor health to access activities e.g. walking in a safe and green environment. Reducing the levels of maintenance may prevent people from visiting parks / open spaces and undertaking in this form of exercise that may alleviate their health problem.	We have identified the parks (Elswick and Walker) in our highest areas of population as category 1. There will be parks, open space and playgrounds available to provide free access across the city in the city centre and in some local communities.
Service Users	People facing multiple	Actual /	Access to recreational quality green space	Using the safer neighbourhoods

	deprivation, through a combination of factors such as poor health (physical or mental) or poor housing/ homelessness	potential disadvantage	which is consistent with enhancing health and mental wellbeing could deteriorate if vandalism does have a negative impact on playgrounds and parks.	infrastructure in place the Council will work with key partners and, in particular, Northumbria Police to put in place many preventable measures as possible ie regular patrolling etc but will also seek to prosecute wherever possible those found to be vandalising or inappropriately using parks and playgrounds. The intended behavioural change campaign will also seek to highlight the fact that unless behaviours do change in respect of anti-social behaviour then parks facilities may be removed.
Businesses:				
Service users	Businesses providing current or future jobs in the city	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>Parks are used by many private businesses to run fitness classes, boot camps and activities for young people and adults. The reduction in maintenance and staffing may have a negative impact on managing access and issuing permits.</p> <p>Specific catering businesses may be affected by these proposals.</p>	We will aim to issue permits to as many business users of the parks as possible or work with other colleagues to ensure the correct limits are set to maintain safe access.
Service Users	Businesses providing current or future jobs in the city	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Potential loss of business confidence if environmental conditions deteriorate and have a detrimental impact on business profitability/sustainability	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives. Close working with NE1 in the City Centre.

Other potential or specific impacts:				
Service users	Cumulative or cross cutting impacts. Impacts that may affect numerous groups or whole populations.	None identified	There will be a stronger effect on access to exercise when considered in conjunction with the other proposals in workstream "Local Services – Services, People & Access"	
Service users	Cumulative or cross cutting impacts. Impacts that may affect numerous groups or whole populations.	Actual / potential disadvantage	By reducing the frequency of grass cuttings there is the potential that when grass is cut, it will have grown substantially resulting in grass seedlings being spread affecting hayfever and asthma sufferers.	High profile communications of council new services standards and implications of these. Links to Public Health team will be stronger when it is a Council responsibility from April 2013.
Service users	Cumulative or cross cutting impacts. Impacts that may affect numerous groups or whole populations.	Actual / potential disadvantage	The likely removal of nightshift in the city centre by 2016 will significantly reduce if not eliminate the Council's ability to respond to quickly and efficiently respond to out of hours emergencies	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives. We will discuss with Trade Unions alternative call-out arrangements, and explore partners resources (for example Utility Companies)
Service users	Cumulative or cross cutting impacts. Impacts that may affect numerous groups or whole populations.	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	By 2016 there will be very little gritting of footpaths or replenishing of grit bins undertaken by the council. This creates health, access and mobility issues for the majority of residents and business.	We will review how best to inform and engage local residents to support each other and whether other bodies and funding can support this. We will work with Northumbria Local Resilience Forum to review mutual aid arrangements between Council's to ensure we can respond to key local emergencies.

The impact on community cohesion:			
Assess the impact of the proposal(s) on community cohesion	Impact (actual/potential disadvantage/tension, beneficial outcome or none)	Detail of the Impact	If the answer is yes to any of the questions or you're not sure, how will you address this?
Community Cohesion	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>Could any groups see the proposal as unfair (even if you believe they are fair)?</p> <p>Could the proposal bring different groups into greater contact with each other?</p> <p>Could proposal cause or contribute to conflict or tensions between groups?</p> <p>The majority of parks deemed to be category 1 are in the City centre with one park in each of the most disadvantaged areas. It maybe seen that some areas have less provision.</p> <p>Many parks may become the focus of antisocial behaviour. The perception that parks aren't being maintained may actually attract some groups to the area further raising concerns of anti-social behaviour. As they often delineate communities there is a chance of some community tensions being acted out in them.</p>	<p>All parks, playground and green spaces will still be available with enough support to ensure they are still accessible.</p> <p>Work with partners, particularly the police and we will work with our community safety team to look at ways to help people to feel safe when using parks and open.</p>
Community Cohesion	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>The reduction in frequency of grass cutting could potentially result in people from deprived areas being unhappy that their areas is not receiving a certain standard of maintenance and the perception may be that more affluent areas are being well maintained. However, people from more affluent areas may view the reduction in grass cutting as being unfair as they pay a higher level of council tax and therefore expect their area to be maintained as it has been.</p>	<p>Communication will confirm service standards will be universal and no differing will be applied in either the most deprived or indeed the most affluent areas.</p>
Community Cohesion	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>Works to remove branches that obstruct satellite signals for residents have in the past been carried out. There will be no capacity to do this in the future and therefore, this may be a cause for tension amongst some residents.</p> <p>There is the potential to provide this service but this will be on a charged basis.</p>	<p>For cosmetic tree work, the council could offer to undertake services on an income generating basis. Alternatively residents could be sign posted to private sector arborist companies of which there are many. YHN tenants would be supported through their contract.</p>

Community Cohesion	Actual / potential disadvantage	Shrub beds were used to break up some large green areas to prevent the playing of ball games i.e. football. This was used successfully in some areas where such activities were causing a nuisance to residents. Removal of shrub beds may result in these activities taking place and therefore there is the potential for conflict between those taking part in such activities and residents.	Anti social behaviour to be tackled by enforcement resources. Alternatively the revised infrastructure replacing shrub beds could be designed to reduce this type of activity.
Community Cohesion	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	The potential reduced environmental standard experience across the city by 2016 is likely to create unrest and anxiety. Potentially particular problems will occur in terms of where and how the Council deploys its limited resources.	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives.
Community Cohesion	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	The removal of offensive graffiti will be removed as a priority. It is unlikely however that the current service standard can be sustained and therefore racist, homophobic, sexist or other graffiti that is deemed would cause offence to any section of the community will remain visible for longer periods.	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives.
Community Cohesion	Actual/Potential Disadvantage	Potential for increased community tensions in relation to asking different communities to take on responsibility for maintaining and running facilities i.e. conflict could arise if multiply interest in particular sports pitch, future management of facilities, perceptions of not being fair around allocation etc. This might directly have an impact in regards to race relations and promoting good relationships under the Equality Act.	We plan to work with our communities team to support volunteers and organisations to get involved with helping to run the type of community based activity we are proposing.

The impact on community safety:

Assess the impact of the proposal(s) on community safety	Impact (actual/potential negative impact, beneficial outcome or none)	Detail of the Impact	How will you address this or mitigate any negative impact?
		<p>Could the proposal affect actual levels of crime and/or anti-social behaviour?</p> <p>Could the proposal affect the fear of crime, the perception of crime or community confidence in an area?</p> <p>Could the proposal affect road traffic accidents?</p>	

Community Safety	Actual / potential disadvantage	<p>Engagement activity from last years budget assessments, highlighted that many resident perceive that a reduction in maintenance will mean the parks and open spaces could become no go areas for young people, older people and families and become areas for anti social behaviour to take place.</p> <p>There is a direct link to proposals under Public Protection and Safety Workstream: Safe Newcastle: Partnership, Unit and Services –</p> <p>Reduced presence in parks (linked to closure of leisure facilities, reduction in opportunities to engage in activities) could see a rise in anti-social behaviour/vandalism which may directly impact on people feeling safe and play facilities/equipment.</p>	Engage with enforcement teams, wardens and police to monitor areas where this may happen.
Community Safety	Actual / potential disadvantage	The reduction in the frequency of grass cuttings could potentially result in large piles of grass clippings and should they be left to dry out during the summer period, they could be a fire hazard. There has been a documented incident of dried grass clippings being set alight resulting in fires spreading but also causing road traffic accidents due to the smoke impeding visibility.	The build up of potentially flammable dried grass will need to be monitored by remaining staff on the grounds and prioritised for removal if there is real danger of this being ignited.
Community Safety	Beneficial outcome	Should there be any danger to the community e.g. overhanging branches / trees in danger of falling as a result of adverse weather conditions etc. and causing injury to people, these will be dealt with as a matter of priority.	
Community Safety	Beneficial outcome	By removing shrubs beds in some areas could potentially have a beneficial impact with regards to the fear of crime. Shrub beds have been used to hide in. By removing the beds it lessens the opportunity for people to either to avoid arrest or in preparation to commit a crime.	
Community Safety	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	2016 resources will result in a reduction in Gully Maintenance and therefore the risk of flooding will increase.	More targeted maintenance of locations with a history of flooding.

Community Safety	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	RTA response/this will be limited especially outside of normal working hours.	Discussion with emergency service to advise on restricted ability of council to respond.
Community Safety	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Risk of increased arson due to fly tipping. This will be of particular concern on bon fire night and the lead up to this event.	Discussion with emergency service to advise on restricted ability of council to respond.
Community Safety	Actual / Potential Disadvantage	Crime and fear will potentially increase due to the “broken window” factor whereby dirty graffiti dominated neighbourhoods further deteriorate in terms of social capital and anti social behaviour. This could create a downward spiral in relation to the quality of life in the city especially in its most deprived areas.	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives.

The impact on the environment:

Assess the impact of the proposal(s) on the environment	Impact (actual/potential detrimental impact, beneficial outcome or none)	Detail of the Impact Could the proposal cause a large change in environmental condition? Could the proposal affect the protection of or access to the natural environment? Could the proposal impact on energy use and/or other factors contributing to climate change?	How will you address this or mitigate any negative impact?
Environment	Actual / potential disadvantage	There is the potential that the perception amongst park users that the reduction in park / open space maintenance could result in access to these areas becoming more difficult due to the decrease in environmental conditions. This could be an issue for young people, older people and people with a mobility related disability.	Work with volunteers and partner agencies to monitor impact.
Environment	Actual / potential disadvantage	The lack of management of parks will very likely mean areas of habitat will be damaged and cause a long term negative impact upon the overall environment – e.g. people having unmanaged BBQ’s or fires, dogs accessing parks, some species will be lost or unprotected.	Volunteers to be supported to monitor parks activity as part of the devolution of responsibility.
Environment	Beneficial outcome	By reducing grass cutting across the city, there will be a reduction in C02 emissions from the grass cutting machinery. There would be further biodiversity benefits through the increased use of wild flower planting as earlier	

		indicated.	
Environment	Actual / potential disadvantage	Less greening of the city. Potential negative impact upon biodiversity i.e bee strategy.	Through grounds maintenance proposals relating to wild flower planting and reduced grass cutting.
Environment	Actual / potential disadvantage	The reduction of cleansing during the day could potentially result in litter bins overflowing with rubbish. As well as being unsightly, this could lead to smells and an increase in vermin such as rats.	Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives.
Environment	Actual / potential disadvantage	The reduced resources for general street cleansing will mean that there is less capacity to clear up fly tipping and this could lead to environmental standard dropping considerably.	Hazardous fly tipping i.e. where there is a risk to public health, will be responded to as a priority. Delivery of councils behavioural change, enforcement and volunteers initiatives.

We believe that the following proposal(s) will not result in any significant disadvantage for any section of our community:

- **A 50% reduction in building cleaning of facilities such as pavilions and park toilets.** It is not considered that by reducing cleaning in these areas that anyone will be disadvantaged. Areas will be still cleaned to a certain standard but less frequently and this will not prevent people from using the facilities. If there are any instances where 'emergency' cleaning is required then this will be undertaken as a priority.
- **Retaining staff for HLF funded projects.** We have 5 staff with varying length of contracts which are funded by Heritage Lottery and no costs to the city. We need to maintain these to avoid claw back on the grants. 2 park keepers contracts finish 2013, Education officer and administrator 2015.
- **Retain rangers Posts to 2015:** We will keep Ranger posts (4), their roles will ensure continuation of environmental education and continue to support volunteering roles across the city and will work with communities, residents and partners to support devolution of provision by 2016,. These posts will become a central team working across all areas rather than just in specific locations and will drive.
- **Maintaining Parks with lottery funding:** We will continue to support those parks which have had Lottery or other investment and will ensure the support of maintenance plans by ring fencing agreed resources from cuts.

Integrated Impact Assessment Review

This proposal and Integrated Impact Assessment will be reviewed and updated when consultation ends on 1 February. It will take into account feedback from consultation. This table will be completed then.

Review Date:

Officer:

Provide an update on how the proposal has progressed.

Detail of the Impact	Actions identified in Section 4	Who is responsible for this?	When will the action be complete?	Update