



## Cambridge City Council

To: Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation, Councillor  
Rod Cantrill  
Report by: Head of Active Communities  
Relevant scrutiny committee: COMMUNITY SERVICES 01/07/2010

### Performance Management Framework – Annual Report

#### Non - Key Decision

#### 1. Executive Summary

This report details work to date using the Performance Management Framework (PMF), approved on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2008, gives updates on the six previously agreed sites and makes recommendations for future use of the PMF.

#### 2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- a. Note progress to date;
- b. Instruct Officers to continue gathering data for comparison purposes;
- c. Instruct Officers to identify improvements and incorporate them into management plans;
- d. Approve the timescales for the replacement planting of the six previously approved priority sites; and
- e. To engage with stakeholders to allow them to participate in the evaluation of quality and value.

#### 3. Background

3.1 In November 2007, the Executive Councillor approved an approach to the development of a PMF, which recommended focus on the following areas: -

- Improvements in Quality;
- Delivery of Community Engagement;
- Recognition of National Good Practice and Awards;
- Support for skilled workforce;
- Improved financial management;
- Benchmarking with others;
- Developed Partnership working, and
- Increased User Satisfaction.

3.2 The PMF has three primary functions: -

- **Strategic**, focusing on long-term planning, service direction, impact and achieving collective results.
- **Development**, improving process to
  - Determine customer needs and setting standards;
  - Ensure the service delivers results;

- Improve the quality of service;
- Help setting objectives but not priority (this will be a Strategic function);
- Translate Strategy into performance measures and targets, and
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Delivery**, focusing on processes, resource planning and achieving results.

### 3.3 The PMF has created a full assessment of all Cambridge Parks & Open Spaces.

It details Quality in six outcomes: -

- Biodiversity;
- Maintenance;
- Community use;
- Attractiveness/appeal;
- Active and well being and
- Accessibility.

It details Value using nine criteria:-

- Context;
- Level of use;
- Structural make up;
- Ecological;
- Educational;
- Social;
- Amenity and
- Economic.

### 3.4 Quality Score trends

In assessing the data from 2009, results detail the key analysis of high quality sites included:

- Accessibility, Attractiveness, Community Use and Maintenance scoring highly and consistently, well exceeding the 60% accessibility threshold. This would be reflective of their central location and footfall.
- Biodiversity scored lowly on a majority of the top 10 sites. This is reflective of the formality of most of the sites (eg. Christ Pieces & Parker's Piece)
- Activity of sites was often below the 60% threshold indicating that consideration is required as to improvements for visitor experience at the park to retain interest and prolonged duration of stay.

#### 3.4.1 Low quality key analysis included

- Sites that were small and local and community based spaces with limited play equipment and appeal in terms of being a destination park offering pre-longed customer experience.
- The bottom 10 sites scored lowly in the categories of Accessibility, Attractiveness. In terms of improvement Accessibility will prove difficult to some due to location and the limitations of access on offer.
- Biodiversity was the lowest scoring category of all scoring with some of the lowest sites not even achieving 10%. Again improvements to some of the sites in terms of biodiversity will be difficult.

### 3.5 Analysis of the monitoring sheets

Part of the assessment process for quality of maintenance incorporated the Streetscene monthly monitoring assessments, these specifically looking at standards of service delivery with regards to maintenance of the spaces. (E.g. Grass cutting, Shrub bed maintenance, bin emptying etc.)

#### 3.5.1 Most frequent maintenance comments during 2009: -

- End of season football pitch renovations during 2009 were ineffective;
- Shrub bed maintenance good (best examples Petworth Street & Christ's Pieces);
- Seasonal bedding maintenance generally good;

- Street furniture on many of the open spaces is past its best and requires repair or renewal;
- Play area bark levels are low;
- Some parks seem to have a seating deficiency;
- Some shrubberies cannot be maintained effectively due to age, and
- Hoggin pathways on many sites are becoming overgrown.

### 3.6 PMF improvements to Quality

At the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009, Members approved six sites (Arbury Court, Brooks Road, Petersfield, Nunns Way Recreation Ground, Coleridge Recreation Ground & Cherry Hinton Hall) for improvement. The improvements made would take into account the PMF data with resources directed into the lower scoring categories.

3.6.1 Since this recommendation, work has commenced on improving the soft landscape elements of these parks with work already commencing on Coleridge Recreation Ground during winter 2009 to be phased over a three-year period.

3.6.2 Active Communities and Streetscene have assessed the planting on all sites and agreed a programme of works to include maintenance improvements to existing shrubberies and re-planting as required. It is anticipated that this will be delivered by the end of the planting season of March 2012.

3.6.3 A large-scale project is currently being considered for Cherry Hinton Hall. A Masterplan has been created which has involved key stakeholders throughout the process. The Masterplan was considered at South Area Committee on 13th May 2010 and approved for wider public consultation.

### 3.7 Value Score trends

In assessing the results of the 2009 data the key analysis of high value sites included:

- The top ten sites being five large formal parks and five natural open spaces.
- The value of these sites far exceeded their quality with many values 80% + and quality failing to achieve 70%.
- 54 of the 88 sites fall below 60% in terms of value, although 10 of these are 59%.

3.7.1 Low value key analysis included:

- Three sites of the bottom ten were very high in terms of quality, all were small community open spaces in the south of the city.
- The remaining seven sites were fairly even in terms of both their value and quality but are very low, ranging between 30% and 40%. The Asset Management Plan details policies for this scenario.
- Cultural and Educational contributions are low indicating that improvements need to be considered in terms of activity on these spaces where appropriate.

### 3.8 PMF Improvements to Value

Value assessment scoring is less variable than quality and the assessment cycle for value is bi-annual. A full assessment was carried out during 2009 to compliment the quality data these are available as Appendix A.

- 3.8.1 From the data collected officers were able to look at the poorest sites in terms of quality and make a judgement on which should be given priority to for improvement works, and consider where they were of equal sufficient value to the community.
- 3.8.2 At Scrutiny Committee 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009 Members approved six sites for of overall improvement, the quality and value scores at that time have been included.

Site	Quality Score %	Value Score %
Arbury Court	58	41
Brooks Road	46	44
Petersfield	49	48
Nunns Way Recreation Ground	74	48
Coleridge Recreation Ground	58	63
Cherry Hinton Hall	78	89

- 3.8.3 Further analysis has been undertaken specifically on the soft landscape areas of the six priority sites with approximate areas that require attention either through hard pruning or replanting and it is anticipated that these will be delivered during the winter 2010 planting through Streetscene maintenance budgets and the parks planting cost centre.
- 3.8.4 Below are brief summaries of the work anticipated for each of the sites with the approximate costs involved for each. The rate used for planting is £25.00 per square metre:

### 3.9 Arbury Court

This site recently received a new play installation (January 2009) and has some older planting surrounding the equipment, which requires re-defining to compliment the new play area footprint. Current boundary planting consisting of hedges requires selective pruning and thinning to remove some dead material and then infill planting to re-establish hedge line.

- Total area for consideration 158 m<sup>2</sup>
- To be replanted 30%
- To have winter maintenance carried out 70%
- Approximate funding required from existing budget £1,200

### 3.10 Brooks Road Play Area

Relatively small site requiring substantial winter maintenance work to re-generate Corylus (Hazel), Prunus laurocerasus (Laurel) and Salix (Willow) Species. As a result of this pruning there is likely to be a requirement for infill planting.

- Total area for consideration 85 m<sup>2</sup>
- To be replanted 20%
- To have winter maintenance carried out 80%
- Approximate funding required from existing budget £525

### 3.11 Cherry Hinton Hall

Works to Cherry Hinton Hall will be delivered methodically through the development of the Masterplan. There will be some extensive replanting required to address the front parterre garden (re-instating the original turning circle feature), significant tree planting across site as well as the introduction of spring & summer meadows. Other existing shrubberies, in particular towards the lake, will require

significant works and re-definition of the Masterplan is approved as many of these area border the old propagation site and the proposals are to open this central area up to the public. At present it is difficult to put a price on the works but taking into account a like for like area replacement the following funding would be required which will need to be derived through a or joint funding streams (e.g. S106, Environmental Improvement, parks budget)

- Total area for consideration 1500 m<sup>2</sup>
- To be replanted 100%
- To have winter maintenance carried out will need to consider with re-definition of beds
- Approximate funding required £37,500

### 3.12 Coleridge Recreation Ground

There has not been much investment on this recreation ground in terms of planting for several years other than the introduction of herbaceous beds to the front entrance as a result of the removal of annual bedding.

The shrubbery areas are extensive but there is the opportunity to develop a cyclical winter maintenance programme to some of the larger areas as they contain lots of plants which would benefit from coppicing. Due to the large budget required for the replanting work it is anticipated that this will require a phased approach over three seasons 2009-2011. The first phase was to address the old electric substation area in the top right hand corner of the park near to the play area and this work has been completed during the winter 2009 programme. Other areas which require replanting area around the play area itself which has become rather enclosed and the areas surround the pavilion and toilet block. It is anticipated that these two areas can be funded from the parks budget during 2010 and 2011.

- Total area for consideration 3853 m<sup>2</sup>
- To be replanted 25% (964 m<sup>2</sup>)
- To have winter maintenance carried out 75% (2889 m<sup>2</sup>)
- Approximate funding required £24,100
- Approximately a third of the area has already be replanted during winter 2009.

### 3.13 Nunns Way Recreation Ground

Much of the planting on this site is around the edge and offers protection to residential properties which border the park. It has been recognised that much of this planting requires retaining and must be carefully managed with winter pruning work. Planting should concentrate on the frontage of these shrubberies and also close to entrances.

- Total area for consideration 1250 m<sup>2</sup>
- To be replanted 15% (187 m<sup>2</sup>)
- To have winter maintenance carried out 85% (1063m<sup>2</sup>)
- Approximate funding required £4675
- Project to be delivered in two phases in winter 2010 and 2011 from existing budget

### 3.14 Petersfield

This site was one of the more major sites which scored poorly in terms of quality and value. The shrubberies are on the borders of the space but along East Road and Mill Road and therefore are highly visible. At present they are very sparsely planting but it is recommended that some of the larger specimen shrubs are

retained in order that Petersfield Mansion residents are offered some screening from the traffic whilst new shrubs become established. There is relatively little which can be done to rectify the other stock in these beds and it is recommended that a full replant is carried out. This site is a priority for Winter 2010 and a scheme will be designed during the summer months and residents informed before work commences.

- Total area for consideration 250 m<sup>2</sup>
- To be replanted 100%
- To have winter maintenance, relatively litter, some formative pruning of specimen shrubberies as required
- Approximate funding required £5000

**a) Equal Opportunities**

A Stage One Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed

**b) Financial**

Detailed in the report

**c) Staffing**

None

**d) Environmental**

None

**5. Background papers**

**6. Appendices**

Appendix A – Quality and Value Tables

**7. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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