

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of the budget proposals and consider mitigating action.

Outcome	Southampton is a modern, attractive city where people are proud to live and work
Code	AMC 3
Name or Brief Description of Proposal	<p>Joining together the Parks and Open Spaces and some Housing teams to work more efficiently.</p> <p>This proposal is about a service redesign to enable income generation but will result in a reduced service in parks outside the city centre and the Common.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • joining together housing and grounds maintenance teams, • identifying overlaps and reducing post numbers in parks teams; • increasing income and reviewing the frequency of maintenance and alternative provision and funding, • utilising other funding sources wherever appropriate.
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>The Parks and Grounds Maintenance team currently delivers the following activities in support of sustaining and developing Southampton as a ‘green city’:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and stewardship of parks resources and assets • Grass maintenance • Shrub & hedge maintenance • Litter removal and disposal 	

- Seasonal bedding & floristry
- Sports pitch maintenance
- Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for Housing and Schools grounds maintenance
- Tree management, risk assessment, maintenance and planning advice
- Landscape design & construction
- Play area design, installation, inspection & maintenance
- Stewardship of SSSI's, SINCS, and areas of importance for wildlife
- Conservation of biodiversity, and provision of ecological advice to other departments and key stakeholders
- Allotment provision & maintenance
- Capital improvements programme
- Supporting Friends and Community Groups
- Promotion and interpretation of the city's parks and green spaces
- Green space policy development, communication and green infrastructure planning
- Provision of community events and support of large events and festivals
- Design, installation and maintenance of specialist horticultural features
- Cafes and concessions.

District Teams carry out grounds maintenance activities (e.g. grass cutting, hedge maintenance, shrub maintenance, weed control, litter picking and bin emptying, play area inspections) within the city's parks and green spaces on behalf of range of land-holders including Housing, Highways, Leisure, Children's Services and Property Services.

Specialist Citywide Teams provide Parks maintenance, maintenance to sports pitches and schools grounds, Landscape services, Tree Services, Allotment services, Ecology services, Environmental education (Forest Schools), Park improvement and Play Area services.

These services are supplied to standards currently published to customers through the team's 'Service Promises'. Current public satisfaction levels with the city's parks and green spaces stand at 82%, (a reduction of 9% since 2013/14) there are currently over 25 Friends groups actively engaged in helping improve their local green spaces.

The service is provided city wide to all residents and visitors to the city.

Summary of Impact and Issues

Due to reduced levels of staff and resourcing, standards of maintenance within non- Housing Revenue Account (non-HRA) areas will reduce from currently delivered levels and 'Service Promises' will need to be significantly re-developed.

<p>Central Parks and The Common will continue to be maintained at a standard but this is likely to have greater impacts on the remaining 49 parks within the city.</p> <p>Reduced maintenance standards will have an impact on our ability to retain and achieve new Green Flag Awards (currently there are 9 parks being maintained at a standard which achieves Green Flag status).</p> <p>Reduced maintenance to Sites of Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) is highly likely to result in objections to housing schemes from Natural England as it forms part of the mitigation for increased population and its impact on European protected sites.</p>	
Potential Positive Impacts	
None.	
Responsible Service Manager	Nick Yeats Landscape and Development Manager
Date	12 October 2016
Approved by Senior Manager	Paul Juan Acting Service Director – Adults, Housing and Communities
Date	13 October 2016

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	The elderly and families with young children particularly benefit from the opportunity parks present for free, healthy and sociable recreation and exercise, and therefore may be disproportionately impacted by any significant reduction in maintenance standards of local parks and green spaces.	Work with users and Friends groups to ensure facilities offered by local parks and green spaces that are most valued by local users are identified and safeguarded, and that opportunities for local volunteers to actively engage in care of green spaces are identified in management plans and fully supported.
Disability	Encroaching vegetation has the potential to restrict use by disabled users.	Set up reactive team to deal with worst areas of encroachment and growth to keep routes open and compliant with

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		Equality Act 2010 wherever possible.
Gender Reassignment	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Race	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Religion or Belief	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Sex	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Sexual Orientation	No identified negative impacts.	N/A
Community Safety	<p>Reduced standards of maintenance and less money available for the upkeep of parks infrastructure could be perceived as parks being less well cared for.</p> <p>If not carefully managed this potential, combined with a reduction of a visible staff presence in parks could lead to an undermining of the public's perception of parks as safe places to be and potential increases in levels of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).</p> <p>Longer grass is likely to make clearance of dog waste more difficult for owners and therefore there is likely to be more dog waste in parks. Longer grass will also make it more difficult to identify hazards, such as broken glass, which could put users at risk.</p> <p>Overgrown bushes have the ability to harbour drug dens</p>	<p>Ensure effective local networks are in place with Police and local Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's), to ensure local intelligence from staff and users relating to community safety issues are quickly acted on.</p>

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
	and reduced staff numbers will mean a reduction in the ability to clear needles in a timely manner, placing users at risk.	
Poverty	Individuals or families on low incomes particularly benefit from the opportunity parks present for free, healthy and sociable recreation and exercise, and therefore may be disproportionately impacted by any significant reduction in maintenance standards of local parks and green spaces.	<p>Work with users and Friends groups to ensure facilities offered by local parks and green spaces that are most valued by local users are identified and safeguarded, and that opportunities for local volunteers to actively engage in care of green spaces are identified in management plans and fully supported.</p> <p>Continue to direct developer contributions to provide quality facilities within the city's parks that are free at the point of delivery and appeal to all ages and sectors of the local community.</p>
Other Significant Impacts	No identified negative impacts.	N/A