

Parks & Cleansing Commissioning Review

Summary of Stage 3 Benchmarking / Comparison

Stage 3 Process

This stage of the Review followed the Commissioning Process by examining the following:-

What Needs to be done

- Data Comparison - compared the current service model, outputs and cost performance with others where possible.
- The above data was difficult to obtain as many authorities have drastically reduced their revenue budget for Parks and therefore comparison data of 'like for like' services is questionable.
- Best Practice - assessed whether there are better ways to deliver the desired outcomes.
- Due to the austerity pressures put upon councils as indicated above Parks services have in some cases had in excess of over 50% in their revenue budgets.
- Decisions made to meet the savings have not been implemented to meet 'best practices' in some cases it has just been a mathematical exercise to offset the savings.
- Many authorities made hard decisions without formal consultation, such as closing their bowls greens overnight, clubs were told to finance the greens themselves or face complete closure.
- Swansea in line with many other councils had already commenced alternative management of bowls greens and other sport facilities such as local football pitches.
- We have just completed the first year of many football clubs taking on self-management agreements of sites, the next stage will be to discuss lease for such facilities.

Questions asked

- What are other providers (whatever and wherever they are) doing to deliver the outcomes?
- What innovation is there in service design, delivery etc in this area? Albeit most have just been reactive to meet the budget reductions
- What does the evidence from case studies, research, user feedback from elsewhere tell us?
- How does performance compare with similar Councils?
- How does unit cost (or similar financial assessment) compare with similar Councils?

How achieved

- Service areas under review and interested services worked together on the questions
- Input from commissioning support team on the performance and funding questions
- Product written up and fed into the next stage

Work undertaken

A list of all the topics reviewed are detailed below. However, full copies/details of the various reports, schemes and best practice contained within are available to view if required via two Lever-Arch Files which is available at Home Farm Depot

FILE A - Data Comparison Summary

A1. Rank Order List for Local Environmental Management System (LEAMS) returns for Wales 15/16

A2. Rank Order List for Fly tipping returns for Wales 15/16

A3. Customer Satisfaction Report for Parks & Open Spaces 2012

A4. Customer Satisfaction Report for Parks & Open Spaces 2008

A5. APSE Consultancy Review on Parks & Open Spaces 2009

A6. APSE members enquiry data into best practices

A7. APSE – Tree Services Best Practise

A8. APSE – State of the Market Survey 2016 – Local Authority Parks & Green Spaces Services

A9. APSE - State of the Market Survey 2016 – Local Authority Street Cleansing Services

A10 Grounds Maintenance Contract for Bishopston School, demonstrates the Parks Service was competitive and successful against the private market in obtaining the contract

FILE B - Sources used to identify wider best practice

B1. Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) Report
'Park Life, Street Life: Managing demand in the public realm'

B2. Heritage Lottery Funding commissioned report 'State of UK Public Parks 2016'

B3. Association of Public Service Excellence APSE – Member enquiries portal

B4. The Parks Alliance – Parks The National Playground 'Growing The Next Generation'

- B5. Nesta – Learning To Rethink Parks
- B6. CABE Space – Paying For Parks (English authorities)
- B7. Nesta – Rethinking Parks – Exploring New Business Models For Parks In The 21st Century
- B8. Environment Services Associate – Public Realm Services – Making The Right Choice