

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Street Scene Services Service Plan 2010-11

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Service Plan covers the activities of the Community Services department, which is responsible for the street scene related functions of the Council.

Within the Community Services department, the Street Scene section delivers the following street scene services:

- Management and maintenance of parks, children's play areas, public open space and recreation grounds;
- Management of outdoor recreation facilities;
- Management, maintenance and enforcement of pay and display systems on car parks;
- Management, maintenance and operation of Clitheroe & Whalley CCTV system;
- Street furniture – bus shelters, roadside seats, litter bins, etc;
- Street Services Agreement/Public Realm – functions as Agents for Lancashire County Council;
- General Works Department – maintenance work across the Council's services;
- Management of Salthill Depot;
- Cleaning of public conveniences;
- Street naming & house numbering – NLPG;
- Engineering services – capital and revenue work;
- Culverts and watercourses – land drainage responsibilities;
- Flood and water management responsibilities;
- Responding to highway enquiries on land charge searches.

Key Objectives

The services outlined above help the Council to achieve its corporate objectives of 'protecting and enhancing the existing environmental quality of our area'. The service's key objectives are:

- to help people feel their environment is healthier and cleaner;
- to be a well managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs;
- to ensure continuous improvement;
- to reduce the levels and perceptions of crime and disorder;
- to conserve our countryside, the natural beauty of the area and enhance our built environment;
- to provide a high quality environment.

Key Policies and Strategies

The Street Scene Services section works to all appropriate Council policies and strategies and these help to ensure the Council's Ambitions and Objectives are met. The following is a list of policies and strategies relating to this section:

- Corporate Strategy Action Plan 2009-2011;
- Ribble Valley Citizens Charter;
- Lancashire Local Area Agreement;
- Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy.

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Working in Partnership

The Street Scene Services section works in partnership with Lancashire County Council to deliver locally a number of services under the Street Scene and Public Realm Agreement.

The Clitheroe & Whalley town centre CCTV system is managed, maintained and operated by the Street Scene section on behalf of the Ribble Valley Crime Reduction Partnership.

The Grounds Maintenance and General Works team carry out a range of work for Parish and Town Councils as well as other essential organizations.

Providing Service Excellence in Response to our Diverse Communities

Ribble Valley is the largest district council in terms of area in Lancashire and within its boundaries includes a range of geographically and socially diverse communities. In an effort to provide services that best meet the needs of these diverse communities the Street Scene Services section will carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) in the following area(s):

- car parks and pay and display;
- children's play areas.

Statement of Equality

As part of RVBC, the Community Services department wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment and the provision of services. Our commitment to equal opportunities is shared equally by both Councillors and staff. All employees within the Street Scene Services section are aware of the Council's equal opportunities policy, and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.

Health and Safety

The role of the Health and Safety Advisor is to formulate policies on health and safety and engender these into the Council's workforce, raising awareness and promoting a positive health and safety culture through the establishment and by the creation and monitoring of relevant performance standards.

The primary focus of the post during 2010/11 is to continue to advise CMT and Service Managers on the effective management of the Health, Safety and Welfare of employees for which they have responsibility and to reinforce the importance of Leadership, Management Competence and Worker Involvement in line with the Health and Safety Executive's new Strategy.

2. RESOURCES: FINANCE

How much does your service cost?

It costs £872,970.00 to provide the street scene services for Ribble Valley Borough Council.

3. RESOURCES: STAFF

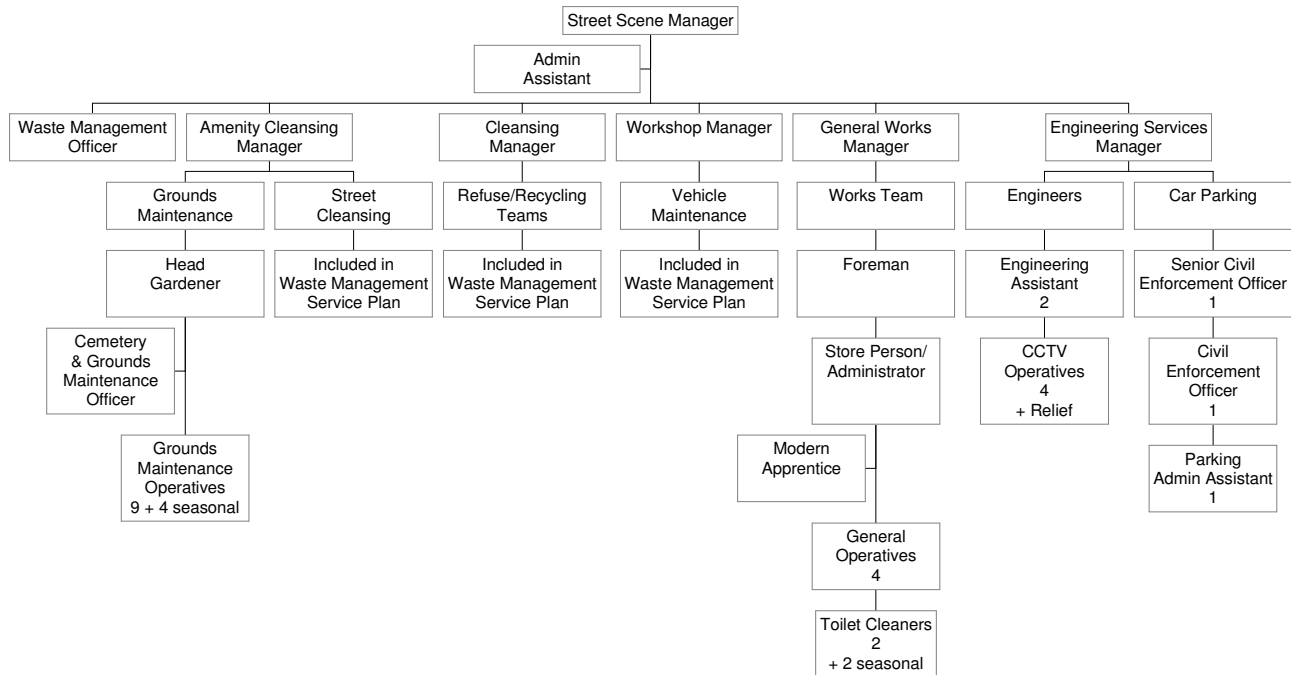
How many members of staff does your service employ?

The Street Scene Services section has 29 permanent employees and up to 4 temporary seasonal employees carrying out the wide range of services set out in this plan.

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SERVICE STRUCTURE



The Street Scene Services section has identified the following HR issues;

- the age profile of the workforce is increasing and will lead to a number of members of staff retiring within a short period of time in the not too distant future.
- the health and well being of staff needs close monitoring by way of routine health checks particularly for front line staff.
- a structured training programme should be established to improve skills and better flexibility within the workforce in order to adapt to changing workloads in different service areas. Funds will be required in order to do this.
- a scheme of succession planning for key posts that may become vacant due to retirements or promotion should be introduced.
- the effect of reductions in budgets could lead to redundancies which is likely to affect morale and productivity within the workforce.

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4. RISKS

The Street Scene Services section is subject to a number of operational risks. These are assessed using a traffic-light system. The red risks are those that have been identified as high-level risks. The red risks for this service are outlined below:

RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROLS
Users of the Council's land and premises such as car parks, play areas, etc having trips and falls resulting in compensating claims.	Assets need management and inspection system in place and sufficient funding to carry out necessary maintenance.
Abuse and assault on frontline staff such as Civil Enforcement Officers.	Provide training to deal with violence at work. Have an effective communication system in place. Compliance with Lone Worker Policy. Have procedures in place to deal with abusive and aggressive customers.
Serious injury to members of staff whilst carrying out their work.	Provide all staff with adequate appropriate training and PPE. First Aid training for staff. Have an effective communication system in place.
Disruption to services due to inclement weather.	Business continuity plan in place and tested.

5. SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Experienced workforce delivering well regarded front line services;
- High quality CCTV system in Clitheroe & Whalley helping keep levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in these areas very low;
- Successful pay and display system of charging for parking on designated short and long stay car parks which contributes significantly to the Council's income;
- Parks and open spaces with potential for improvement and increased usage.

Weaknesses

- Only minimum staff resources available to deliver services with no spare capacity for developing new initiatives or extending services;
- Still none of our parks meet the Green Flag Award standard;
- Difficulties in recruiting qualified and experienced staff;
- Age profile of staff increasing;
- Reduction in funding due to future budgeting issues.

Opportunities

- Some external funding available to compensate for cuts made to work in capital programme;
- Development of more 'Friends of...' groups to support initiatives designed to improve parks and open spaces.
- Consider outsourcing of frontline service delivery to private sector;
- Form partnerships with other authorities to deliver services;
- Extend scope of work for LCC under Public Realm initiative;
- Increased income from higher parking charges and charges being introduced on more car parks.

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Threats

- Reduction in budgets likely to affect quality of services;
- Loss of key experienced staff due to retirement leading to post being vacant or removed from the establishment;
- Continuing increase in fuel costs having to be met from reducing budgets;
- CCTV system becomes less effective due to no programme of camera replacement following cuts in capital spending;
- Children's play areas deteriorate due to reduction in spending;
- More claims for compensation due to reduction in spending on maintenance of land and buildings;
- Ability to meet the minimum requirements for statutory service provision in challenging financial times.

6. KEY SERVICE ISSUES OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS

The following key service issues arising over the next three years will be reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy as appropriate.

- the effect of cuts in budgets on the sections ability to provide cost effective and efficient front line services;
- restructuring of staff resources to better reflect current needs and trends;
- reduction in capital spending on maintaining services;
- increasing sickness absence in an aging front line workforce.



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7. ACHIEVEMENTS

This is an update of the Action Plan proposed in the service plan for 2009/10.

Street Scene SP Action Plan 2008/10

Action	Description	Expected Outcome	Linked PIs	Status	Progress	Due Date	Start Date	Completed Date	Milestone	Milestone Completed	Assigned To	Latest progress update from assigned user
08-SS 02 To Allocate Names to Unnamed Streets and Addresses to Properties	Compile a list of names for allocation to new and existing unnamed streets by April 2008. Allocate street names and addresses as required to complete LLPG for Ribble Valley.	All streets in Ribble Valley to be named and properties having clearly identified addresses.			0 %	31 Mar 2009	01 Apr 2008				Graham Jagger	07 Jan 2009 Now being led by Colin Hirst (Forward Planning Manager).
08-SS 01 To Ensure that the Council's Cycling Strategy is Implemented	To assist with the improvement of cycle trails in Gisburn Forest (£20k in capital budget).	More people participate in cycling. Cycling tourism is increased. Improvements to health.			100 %	31 Mar 2009	01 Apr 2008	01 Dec 2008			Graham Jagger	31 March 2009 New cycle tracks in use

Other key achievements of the service include:

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8. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS & TARGETS

The Street Scene Services section is responsible for the following performance indicators:

Street Scene										
PI Code	Short Name	2008/09	2009/10		Annual 2010/11	Annual 2011/12	Current Performance	Trend	Expected Outcome	Latest Notes
		Value	Value	Target						
NI 189	Flood and coastal erosion risk management	40%			No data for this range		?	?		50% according to DIH (Lancashire CC data - 80%)

9. COMMITMENT TO SERVICE EXCELLENCE – LISTENING TO OUR CUSTOMERS

The Street Scene Services section is focused on delivering excellent services to its customers and is keen to gain feedback from customers on a regular basis. In the latest independent survey carried out a while ago now 73.5% of residents surveyed said they were satisfied with our parks and open spaces. This meant we had the highest satisfaction rates of councils in Lancashire and the third highest in the north west. Nationally we were rated 96th out of 352 local authorities.

10. BENCHMARKING, OTHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MODELS AND COMPARISON METHODS

There are no systems in place to carry out benchmarking of performance with other local authorities on the services included in this service plan.

11. FINDINGS OF RECENT INSPECTIONS

There have been no recent inspections of the street scene services.

12. INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OR CHANGES TO SERVICE DELIVERY

At present there are no plans to change service delivery.

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13. WHAT ACTIONS WILL WE TAKE TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICE?

The following Action Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Corporate Ambition/ Objective:

Key Service Objective	Action	Outcome	Target	Links	Responsible Officer	Resource requirements
To be a well-managed Council providing efficient services based on identified customer needs.	To prepare options appraisals for the following service areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parks, open spaces and grounds maintenance.• Car Parks and charging for parking.• General Works Section.• Engineering Services.	To agree which services are to be provided in the future, how they will be provided and at what cost.	1 st report to Committee on 18 th May 2010. Follow up reports to subsequent Committee. Inclusion in 2011/12 Budget.		Graham Jagger Street Scene Manager	Officer time and Committee timetable.

During the first half of 2010/11 all service areas are to be the subject of a review and options appraisal so that Community Services Committee can develop an objective view about each service and its future within the range of services provided by the authority.

In relation to Street Scene Services, there will be detailed options appraisals produced for: -

- Parks, open spaces and grounds maintenance;
- Car parks and charging for parking;
- General works section;
- Engineering services.

It is intended that the outcome of these reviews and options appraisals will feed through into the 2011/12 budget process.

A review and options appraisal for the Clitheroe & Whalley CCTV System has already been done and the recommendations of Community Services Committee on 9th March 2010 (Min 828) are being acted upon.

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Appendix A

14. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Summary of Estimated Financial Resources 2010/11 – Street Scene Services	
EXPENDITURE	Street Scene Services
Employee Related Expenditure	1,064,580
Premises Related Expenditure	780,760
Transport Related Expenditure	142,500
Supplies & Services	107,340
Third Party Payments	10,000
Support Services	528,700
Capital Financing Costs	192,900
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,826,780
Other Grants & Reimbursements & Contributions	-45,840
Customer & Client Receipts	-441,140
Oncosts Recovered	-330,080
Miscellaneous Recharges	-1,149,650,
TOTAL INCOME	-1,966,710
NET EXPENDITURE	860,070
Estimated Inflation at 1.5%	12,900
ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF SERVICE INCLUDING INFLATION	872,970

Ideas for Efficiencies and Savings (Possible Areas for Reduction and Possibilities of Shared Working)

The options appraisals being prepared will cover this issue and make recommendations where considered practical and appropriate.

Potential cost pressures

A major element of the cost of providing these services is for the employment of the staff to manage, supervise and deliver those services. Staff pay appears, in the short term at least, to be likely to remain static. If sickness absence levels increase and temporary staff have to be brought in to maintain the services, then operating costs will increase. It is, therefore, essential to ensure sickness absence is monitored and managed, action is taken to ensure the health of key staff is monitored by offering health checks to all staff, and there is a plan to deal with the ever increasing age profile of the staff.

The services rely heavily on the vehicles, plant and equipment needed to carry them out. Delaying the replacement of essential vehicles is only increasing operating costs, and building a major problem for the future when they have to be replaced because they no longer work. These services cannot be provided without the equipment needed to do so.

Fuel prices are also a concern and need to be taken into consideration when setting budgets. Whilst steps have been taken to ensure fuel and other energy needs are procured in the most advantageous way, they, nevertheless, will vary and, no doubt, increase over time. This must be reflected in revenue budgets if these services are to be maintained.

Support service costs continue to be an issue, and Service Managers have no control about what is charged to services from other parts of the Council. Internal Service Level Agreements for support services would be

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worth considering in order to give better control on costs. Whilst this would only lead to cost savings if major changes were made it would nevertheless better reflect the real cost of each individual service area.

Opportunities & Requests for Additional Resources

The emergence of the new legislation resulting from the Flood and Water Management Act places new duties on the Council to cooperate with other Agencies in the better management of surface water in order to reduce the effect of future flooding incidents. In order to meet these new responsibilities the Council needs to have the capacity and capability within its staff resources to do so. This is an issue that needs addressing as a matter of considerable importance during 2010/11 and a clear decision being taken as to how to meet the Councils obligations.

Maximising Income

Whilst the opportunities for maximizing income from Street Scene services is limited where it is possible the amounts can be significant.

The Council has had in place a charging system for the use of a number of its key car parks by way of pay and display parking for many years now the charges themselves when compared with other parts of the county and in the rest of the country are still quite reasonable. Whilst it remains a policy of the Council to continue to extend charging for parking where it is reasonable and practical to do so, there is no mechanism in place to regularly review the charging tariffs routinely and maximize income wherever it is possible to do so. A modest increase in charges can generate a reasonable level of additional income if applied appropriately.

Whilst fees and charges that apply to recreation facilities are reviewed annually this is not usually done based on any form of market research or comparisons with other providers. The Councils charges continue to be at the lowest or lower end for its facilities and could therefore be an area where a sensible increase in charges could be applied.