

## **SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNITY SPACES TEAM**

### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee about the services provided by the Community Spaces Team.

### **2 Recommendations**

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| 2.1 That Members note the services provided by the Community Spaces Team and the realignment of some services. |
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### **3 Executive summary**

- 3.1 The Community Spaces Team (CST) was formed in 2012 through merging two separate client teams ahead of tendering a single horticulture and street cleaning contract.
- 3.2 The current team structure includes 2 Senior Officers; one focused on the day to day management of delivering contracts and the other focused on parks management, parks planning matters incl S106, and improvement of parks.
- 3.3 Services covered by the CST includes:
- (a) Procure, manage, monitor, and administer contracts covering; horticulture and street cleaning operations, public conveniences cleaning, public health funerals, and parks improvements;
  - (b) Identify and deliver improvement projects in parks and open spaces;
  - (c) Secure external funding to enable the delivery of improvement projects;
  - (d) Provide safe and good quality play provision;
  - (e) Develop partnerships with suppliers, community groups, and statutory bodies;
  - (f) Manage and monitor developer S106 leisure contributions;
  - (g) Develop and maintain sports pitches and related facilities including booking service;
  - (h) Investigate instances of fly tipping and enforce fly tipping laws in liaison with the Waste Partnership for Bucks;
  - (i) Investigate reports of abandoned vehicles and arrange for disposal;
  - (j) Manage and deliver the public health funerals service;
  - (k) Fulfil customer enquires including service requests, compliments, complaints, and comments.
- 3.4 While the services being delivered remain, the staffing structure of those involved in delivery is changing to take account of the Heritage Team Leader post becoming vacant. In the interests of achieving savings, improving the strategic management of AVDC parks and green infrastructure, and building closer links between street cleaning and recycling and waste there will be a simple realignment of duties to cover managerial needs.
- 3.5 The detailed breakdown of the services covered by the CST in Appendix 1 includes which team is proposed to take responsibility for each element.

## **4 Background**

- 4.1 Prior to January 2013 the horticulture and street cleansing services were delivered via two contracts and were managed by two separate client teams; the Green Spaces Delivery Team and Contract Services.
- 4.2 In 2012 the Community Spaces Team (CST) was formed through merging the two separate client teams ahead of tendering a single contract to deliver the horticulture and street cleaning services.
- 4.3 When formed the CST included 13 posts, through staff leaving and redundancies the number of officers is now 7; providing much needed savings. In addition to this the team secured approx. £200,000 per year savings on the Street Cleaning and Horticulture Contract and since letting the contract have secured further significant savings and income through effective contract management.
- 4.4 At the time of forming the CST, some of the services delivered by the previously separate teams were allocated as follows:
  - AVDC office cleaning responsibility aligned to the Facilities Team
  - Christmas lights became the responsibility of the Engineers (now under the Facilities Team)
  - Markets became the responsibility of the Town Centre Manager
- 4.5 During a restructure of the Leisure Department the CST team transferred to Recycling and Waste based on the synergies with street cleaning. At this time the remaining Green Spaces Officers continued the strategic management of parks and green infrastructure, and delivery of the arboriculture and biodiversity services.

## **5 Recent changes**

- 5.1 Approximately 12 months ago the Green Spaces Team was realigned across the organisation, which included the redundancy of some posts. The result of this was the planning aspects of the arboriculture service transferred to Development Control under the management of the Heritage Team along with the biodiversity service, (now referred to as Ecology).
- 5.2 The management of trees on AVDC land transferred to the CST along with the strategic management of AVDC parks, including our representation on the Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership.
- 5.3 Work related to commenting on planning applications and S106 negotiations for leisure infrastructure also transferred to the CST, with no additional posts created to cover this work.

## **6 Services provided**

- 6.1 The CST is based within Recycling & Waste, the current team structure is provided in Appendix 2, and includes 2 Senior Officers; one focused on the day to day management of delivering the contracts the team is responsible for and the other focused on parks management, parks planning matters incl S106, and major repairs and improvement of parks.
- 6.3 The existing structure is beneficial given each team member is aware of all business either strategic or day to day. However, this does mean that on occasions those who should be working more strategically get pulled into day to day issues and vice versa.

- 6.4 As well as procuring and managing the Street Cleaning and Horticulture Contract the CST also provide the public health funerals service and manage the contract for cleaning public conveniences.
- 6.5 A detailed breakdown of the services covered by the CST is included in Appendix 1 and is summarised below:
- (a) Procure, manage, monitor, and administer contracts covering; horticulture and street cleaning operations, public conveniences cleaning, public health funerals, and parks improvements/major repair works;
  - (b) Identify and deliver improvement projects in parks and open spaces, and the street scene and civic spaces working with internal and external partners and agencies;
  - (c) Secure external funding to enable the delivery of improvement projects and facilitate on-going monitoring and reporting;
  - (d) Provide safe and good quality play provision for children and young people through improvements to play areas;
  - (e) Further develop partnerships with outside bodies such as voluntary groups, community groups, statutory bodies, friends groups;
  - (f) Manage and monitor developer S106 leisure contributions for both AVDC and parish councils, provided towards increasing leisure provision associated with developments across the district;
  - (g) Develop and maintain sports pitches and related facilities including booking service;
  - (h) Investigate instances of fly tipping and enforce fly tipping laws in liaison with the Waste Partnership for Bucks;
  - (i) Investigate reports of abandoned vehicles and arrange for disposal;
  - (j) Manage the estate and arrange the funeral of the deceased where no one else is available to do so;
  - (k) Process day to day customer enquires.

## **7 Key achievements**

- 7.1 The best achievement of the team was the OJEU compliant procurement of a single contract to provide horticulture and street cleaning services across the district. Compared to the previous separate contracts this saves £200,000 each year of the 7 year contract with minimal changes to service standards. Over the life of the contract that's a £1.4M saving.
- 7.2 Positive outcome from an internal audit regarding our management of the Street Cleansing and Horticulture Contract, including monitoring of work and financial controls.
- 7.3 Working differently to reduce staff number from 13 to 7 employees. This has meant some functions such as the Vale Park warden service have stopped, although with minimal impact given the site has a presence through PCSOs and Aqua Vale Leisure Centre, combined with changes to make the site safer.
- 7.4 Reduced costs for all towns and parishes using the dog waste service by including this service within the horticulture and street cleaning contact instead of a separate standalone contract.
- 7.5 Horticulture services provided to Buckinghamshire Fire Brigade via our Street Cleaning and Horticulture Contract; providing another public body with savings compared to their previous arrangements.
- 7.6 Green Flag awards for Vale and Bedgrove Parks have been secured.
- 7.7 The subsidy of pitch provision for football has been reduced by closely monitoring demand to ensure each pitch is fully utilised.
- 7.8 The outcome of a RoSPA access and play value audit confirmed all sites have a minimum play rating of good.
- 7.9 Management plans for closed churchyard we are responsible for have been produced with excellent stakeholder involvement and have been published on our website. Linked to this a programme for memorial testing is now in place.
- 7.10 External funding secured from; WREN for Bridge Street play area, SITA Trust for Cottesloe Green ball court, Sport England for an artificial cricket wicket at Alfred Rose Park.
- 7.11 Support the establishment and continuation of parkrun at Riverside Walk, Aylesbury and Heartlands, Buckingham.
- 7.12 No loss of town/parish sport/leisure S106 funds, due to funds being spent within the agreed deadline.

## **8 Service realignment**

- 8.1 While the services being delivered remain, the staffing structure of those involved in delivery is changing to take account of the Heritage Team Leader post in Planning becoming vacant. In the interests of achieving savings, improving the strategic management of AVDC parks and green infrastructure, and building closer links between street cleaning and recycling and waste there will be a simple realignment of duties to cover managerial needs.
- 8.2 The detailed breakdown of the services covered by the CST in Appendix 1 includes which team will take responsibility for each element. The main changes that will require time to embed includes:
  - (a) Street cleansing services and abandoned vehicles remains in Recycling and Waste. This includes the day to day enquiries received by the CST, which are initially handled by one officer and only handed off to others when expert input or a site visit is required.

- (b) Delivery of the Street Cleaning and Horticulture Contract and Public Conveniences Cleaning Contract to remain in Recycling and Waste, including the future procurement of new contracts, or bring part or all services in house.
- (c) Budgets related to parks and open spaces to be under the responsibility of Heritage & Parks; the team will be a customer of the Community Spaces Team, similar to Facilities, Parking Services, and Town Centre Management.

8.3 Service requests from Members will still be processed by the Community Spaces Team where appropriate. Request should be submitted via the 'AVDC Request from Member' form, which can be found on the Members area of our website:  
[http://eforms.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm\\_fid=291](http://eforms.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=291)

## **9 Resource implications**

- 9.1 A review of the existing Planning Tree Officer job description is underway and will be submitted for Hay evaluation and permission to recruit. All other posts remain at their current grade.
- 9.2 The realignment ensures the continuity of the Heritage Service while increasing opportunities for further improving service delivery of the recycling, waste, street cleaning, and grounds maintenance functions.

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Background Documents: Parks & Open Spaces Management, Recent Work & Accreditations (Environment & Living Scrutiny Committee Report 11 February 2015).

Encouraging Use of Parks and Open Spaces (Environment & Living Scrutiny Committee Report January 2016)



## Appendix 1: Services provided by the Community Spaces Team and realignment

The below lists the services managed and delivered by the Community Spaces Team. Headings in bold are a summary of each service, with a detailed breakdown below in italics. Alongside this is the team and portfolio, services will be realigned to.

Ref	Service	Team	Portfolio
<b>A</b>	<b>Procure and manage the Horticulture and Street Cleaning Contract</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
A1	<i>Contract review and procurement (OJEU)</i>		
A2	<i>Litter picking of roads footpaths and public open spaces</i>		
A3	<i>Mechanical sweeping of roads and cycle paths</i>		
A4	<i>Removal of fly tipping, graffiti, and fly posting from public property</i>		
A5	<i>Supply and install litter and dog bins for town and parish councils (chargeable service)</i>		
A6	<i>Emptying and sanitising of street litter bins</i>		
A7	<i>Emptying and sanitising of litter and dog waste bins (chargeable service)</i>		
A8	<i>Cleaning of AVDC owned car parks, community centre grounds, parks, playing fields, open spaces, planted areas, and play areas including equipment</i>		
A9	<i>Cleaning of output areas in Aylesbury, Buckingham, Winslow and Wendover towns, including manual sweeping</i>		
A10	<i>Seasonal leaf clearance</i>		
A11	<i>De-icing and snow clearance on selected AVDC property</i>		
A12	<i>Grass cutting on AVDC land (charged for service offered to others)</i>		
A13	<i>Maintenance of sports grounds including artificial sports surfaces, and pitch hire service</i>		
A14	<i>Safety inspections, repair and maintenance of play areas</i>		
A15	<i>Maintenance of planted areas, (shrubs, herbaceous beds, hedges)</i>		
A16	<i>Tree works including planting</i>		
A17	<i>Erect and dismantle Aylesbury market stalls</i>		
A18	<i>Removal and storage of dead domestic animals from highway incl contact with owners</i>		
A19	<i>Prioritising of Blitz Team work, includes clearance of fly tipping and dead animals</i>		
A20	<i>Specialist cleansing, e.g. sharps, asbestos, oil, chemicals</i>		
A21	<i>Provision of horticultural services to Bucks Fire Brigade</i>		
A22	<i>Ensuring drug data is reported to Communities and DAT</i>		
<b>B</b>	<b>Procure and manage the Public Convenience Cleaning Contract</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
B1	<i>Contract document review and procurement</i>		
B2	<i>Monitoring delivery of contract</i>		
B3	<i>Provision of additional services</i>		
B4	<i>Ensuring drug data is reported to Communities and DAT</i>		
B5	<i>Liaising with public</i>		
<b>C</b>	<b>Manage and maintain closed churchyards</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
C1	<i>Closed Churchyards Management Plan</i>		
C2	<i>Commission structural surveys and act upon any recommendations</i>		
C3	<i>Organise memorial testing and act upon any recommendations</i>		
C4	<i>Apply for faculty consent to enable identified works to be carried out</i>		
C5	<i>Monitor contracted horticulture works and oversee any over and above requests</i>		
C6	<i>Liaise with internal teams and external bodies; Parochial Church Councils and Diocese</i>		
<b>D</b>	<b>Abandoned vehicles</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
D1	<i>Identifying the appropriate course of action to reports of possible abandoned vehicles</i>		
D2	<i>Assess abandoned vehicle, checks with police, issue notice, photograph, and document</i>		
D3	<i>DVLA database enquiry and record in accordance with Data Protection Act. Issue letter to registered keeper</i>		
D4	<i>Make second site visit and if required arrange for vehicle disposal</i>		
D5	<i>Car removal negotiations and arrangements with vehicle disposal company and Bucks CC</i>		

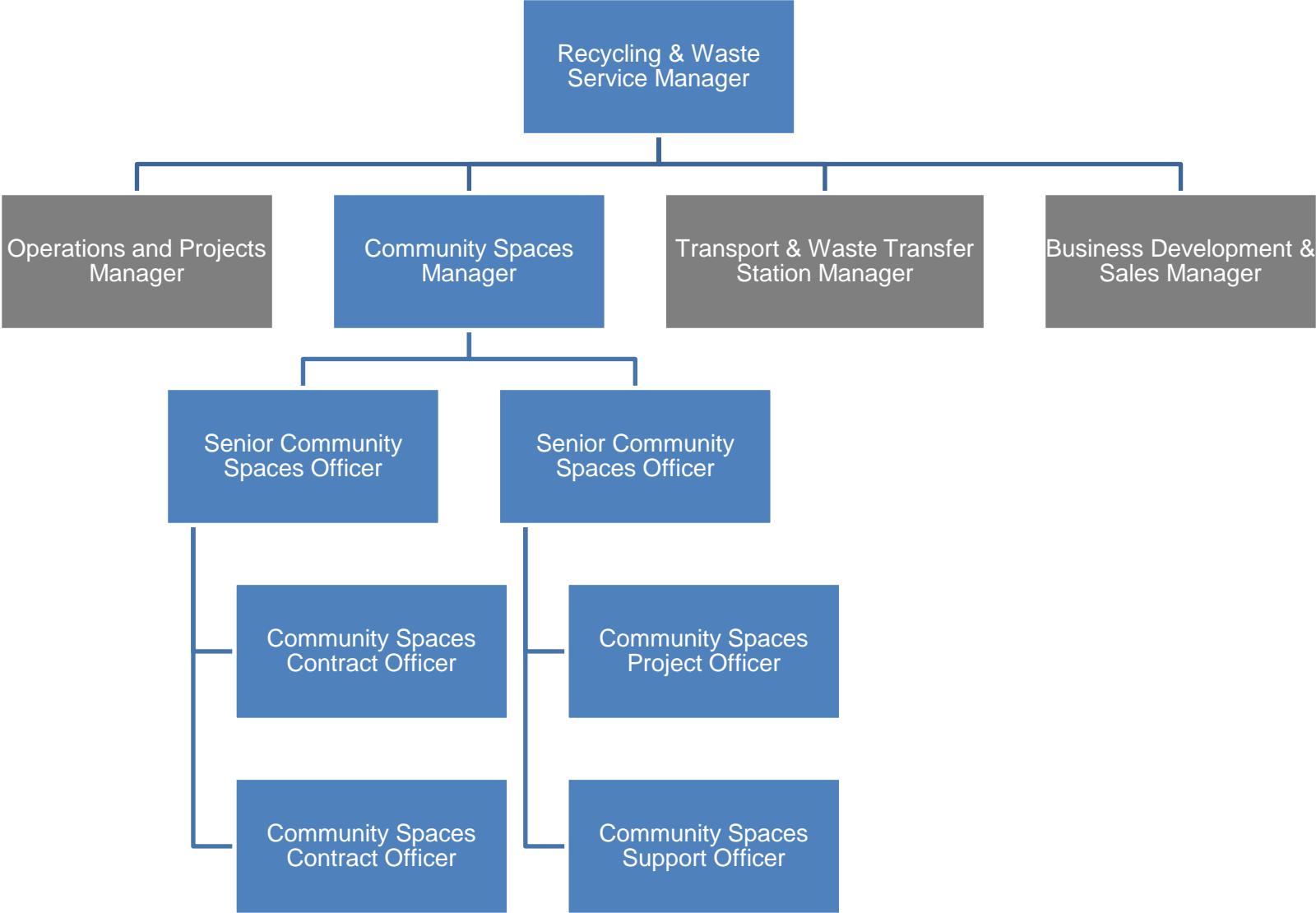
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
D6	<i>Keep accurate records available for DVLA audit</i>		
D7	<i>Note AVDC have not taken devolved powers from DVLA to investigate nuisance vehicles or parking issues</i>		
<b>E</b>	<b>Public Health Funeral service</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
E1	<i>Contract review and procurement</i>		
E2	<i>Visit property and establish next of kin and presence or absence of a will</i>		
E3	<i>Arrange for registration of death</i>		
E4	<i>Make funeral arrangements</i>		
E5	<i>Establish value of estate and pass to treasury solicitors</i>		
E6	<i>Responding to FOI's relating to Public Health Funerals</i>		
<b>F</b>	<b>Delivery of green space improvements including children's play areas</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
F1	<i>Carry out biannual quality evaluation of AVDC parks and open spaces</i>		
F2	<i>Parks and open space risk assessments</i>		
F3	<i>Produce contract documents and procurement for improvements/one off works</i>		
F4	<i>Works overseen, snags highlighted and invoices paid</i>		
F5	<i>Works prioritised taking into account site safety, popularity/importance, condition of existing facilities and user feedback</i>		
F6	<i>Cllrs, stakeholders, users consulted, engaged or informed</i>		
F7	<i>Press releases, opening ceremonies organised, website updated as appropriate</i>		
F8	<i>Memorial bench applications (applicants fund and maintain)</i>		
F9	<i>Parks and open space street furniture, seating, litter bins, signage etc.</i>		
F10	<i>Sourcing and securing external funding to support the above e.g. funding applications to WREN, SITA Trust, Sport England, etc</i>		
F11	<i>Footpath inspections on AVDC owned parks, open spaces and closed churchyards, identify hazards and implement repairs</i>		
F12	<i>Annual RoSPA play area safety inspections and rectifying faults identified</i>		
<b>G</b>	<b>Promoting parks and open spaces</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
G1	<i>Develop and deliver promotion strategy</i>		
G2	<i>Identify community park champions</i>		
G3	<i>Liaise with town and parish councils to encourage use of open space across the district</i>		
G4	<i>Ensure requirements for events are in place</i>		
<b>H</b>	<b>Park and open space strategy</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
H1	<i>Rolling programme of site visits to identify and record open space improvements</i>		
H2	<i>Produce over arching strategy for AVDC parks and open spaces, taking consideration of future growth areas</i>		
H3	<i>Produce management plans for key sites e.g. Green Flag sites and deliver action plans</i>		
H4	<i>Deliver and review Green Infrastructure Strategy (including links to County and neighbouring authority GI strategies)</i>		
H5	<i>Represent AVDC at Natural Environment Partnership</i>		
H6	<i>Develop AVDC sports pitch strategy</i>		
H7	<i>Improve GIS data</i>		
<b>I</b>	<b>Secure Green Flag awards</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
I1	<i>Write and keep management plans up to date</i>		
I2	<i>Submit Green Flag applications</i>		
I3	<i>Organise Green Flag raising ceremonies and press releases</i>		
I4	<i>Ensure all judges recommendations are delivered</i>		
<b>J</b>	<b>Planning related to leisure</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
J1	<i>Record all S106 income and expenditure</i>		



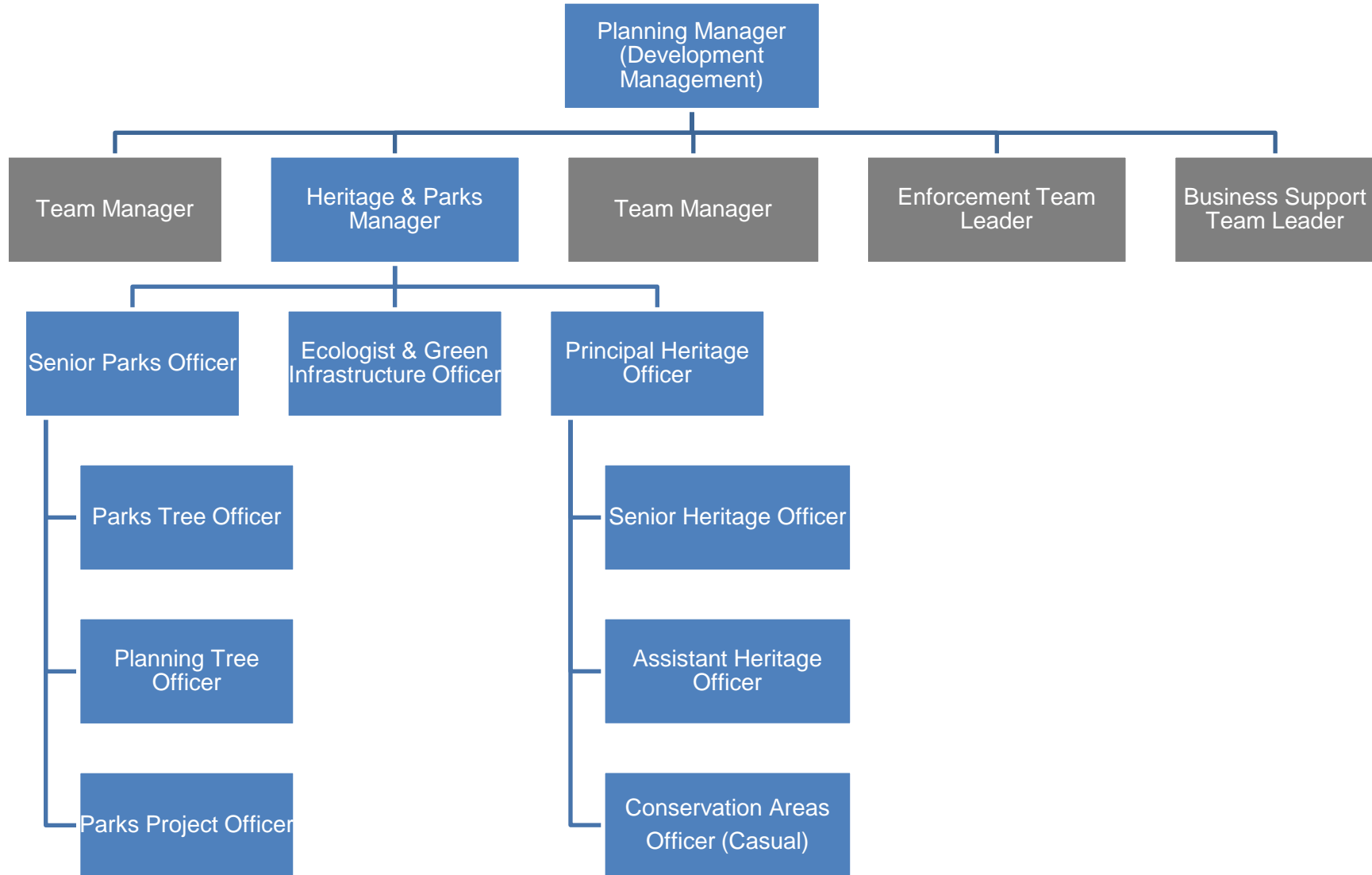
Ref	Service	Team	Portfolio
J2	<i>Liaise with parish/town councils to ensure all S106 funds are spent on appropriate sport and leisure projects within the district</i>		
J3	<i>Administer the S106 authorisation form completion and sign off processes</i>		
J4	<i>Recommend release of S106 funds</i>		
J5	<i>Respond to all applications with a net gain of 10 or more dwellings regarding on/off-site sport and leisure facilities and off-site financial contributions</i>		
J6	<i>Negotiate directly with developers over the above</i>		
J7	<i>Liaise with planning/legal and relevant parish/town Councils regarding the inclusion of appropriate sport and leisure projects to be included within S106 legal agreements</i>		
J8	<i>Liaise with planning/legal regarding the drafting of S106 legal agreements</i>		
J9	<i>Prepare for and attend planning hearings</i>		
J10	<i>Update equipped play provision audit data on GIS layer</i>		
<b>K</b>	<b>Open space adoptions</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
K1	<i>Inspect sites regarding any snagging works required prior to being adopted by AVDC and added to Street Cleaning and Horticulture Contract</i>		
K2	<i>Liaise with Bucks CC regarding adoption of highways, add any adopted areas to the Street Cleaning and Horticulture Contract</i>		
K3	<i>Update GIS to account for adoptions</i>		
<b>L</b>	<b>Events on AVDC land</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
L1	<i>Ensure AVDC land is a suitable standard for events to take place</i>		
L2	<i>Liaise with the Communities Team and advise on works taking place that could affect events etc.</i>		
L3	<i>Provide up to date maps detailing site information</i>		
<b>M</b>	<b>Customer care and data</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
M1	<i>Promotion of Keep Britain Tidy campaigns</i>		
M2	<i>Webpage updates incl forms</i>		
M3	<i>Process Waste Data Flow returns</i>		
M4	<i>Responding to Freedom of Information requests</i>		
<b>N</b>	<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
N1	<i>Complete incident report forms and forward to Business Assurance, liaise on any resulting insurance claims</i>		
N2	<i>Monitor contractor risk assessments</i>		
N3	<i>Monitor and review the contractor's working practices</i>		
<b>O</b>	<b>Contract management</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
O1	<i>Monitor contractors return data (mainly using Smartsheet)</i>		
O2	<i>Performance management</i>		
O3	<i>Environmental Standards Management (EPA code of practice)</i>		
O4	<i>Issuing contractor with rectification instructions and defaults</i>		
O5	<i>Issuing one off and permanent variation orders</i>		
O6	<i>Ensuring correct monthly payments are processed</i>		
<b>P</b>	<b>Trees</b>	<b>Heritage &amp; Parks</b>	<b>Communities &amp; Civic Amenities</b>
P1	<i>Management incl. surveying of trees on AVDC land</i>		
P2	<i>Ordering and monitoring tree works</i>		
P3	<i>Commenting on tree matters on planning applications</i>		
P4	<i>Applications for works on trees covered by preservation orders</i>		
P5	<i>Requests for trees to be covered by tree preservation orders</i>		
P6	<i>Review tree preservation orders</i>		
P7	<i>Notification of works to trees in conservation areas</i>		

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Team</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
P8	<i>Serving notice on landowners where there's an imminent danger to public</i>		
P9	<i>Review and update Tree Strategy</i>		
<b>Q</b>	<b>Customer fulfilment</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
Q1	<i>Incoming and outgoing calls for Community Spaces</i>		
Q2	<i>Community Spaces e-mail processing initial enquires (in full where possible e.g. clearance of fly tips/dead animals with Contractor, additional litter clearance/sweeping, missed bin empties, basic tree enquires, grass cutting, etc)</i>		
Q3	<i>Raise customer care requests on contractor's service request system</i>		
Q4	<i>Monitor work flow for complaint responses</i>		
Q5	<i>Submit information to Waste Data Flow</i>		
Q6	<i>Update customer Care Unibase system</i>		
Q7	<i>Arranging supply, fitting, and emptying of dog waste and litter bins on behalf of towns and parishes</i>		
Q8	<i>Dog waste service recharges</i>		
Q9	<i>Reconciling pitch hire fees and claim from contractor</i>		
Q10	<i>Recharges to Bucks CC (related to abandoned caravans, sweeping related to incidents)</i>		
Q11	<i>Recharges for clearing fly tips from private property</i>		
Q12	<i>Collating drug data</i>		
<b>R</b>	<b>Finance</b>	<b>Recycling, Waste, Community Spaces</b>	<b>Environment &amp; Waste</b>
R1	<i>Updating Finance and customer on changes to contract expenditure/service prices</i>		
R2	<i>Set annual fees and charges (as part of annual Council budget report)</i>		
R3	<i>Verifying and processing monthly invoices for contracts</i>		
R4	<i>Manage income from pitch hire, dog waste service, Bucks Fire Brigade, Bucks CC, recharges for any ad hoc services provided</i>		

**Appendix 2: Community Spaces Team existing structure**



**Appendix 3: Heritage & Parks Team**



**Appendix 4: Recycling & Waste** (only showing direct alignment of Community Spaces Officers; other staff not shown)

