

APSE - Parks, National One Day Parks Seminar

Managing an Efficiency Review for Open Spaces and coming out the other side.

Hilton Coylumbridge
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In January 2009 external consultants brought in to look at the structure of the entire Council. Halton Borough Council had to save £5 Million from its Budgets just to stand still.

In year one of a three year programme a review of the following areas was undertaken.

Management Structures

Administration Services

IT

Green Space Services

Review of Green Space Services

In scope were the following areas.

Parks and Open Spaces

Allotments

Streetscene

Cemeteries

Rangers

These services were delivered in the Main by the Landscape Services Division.

Looked at the following factors.

- 1. Is the service valued**
- 2. Is it cost effective and does it offer value for money**
- 3. Does it deliver quality**
- 4. Could it be done differently**
- 5. What savings could be made**

How to survive

1. **Be able to Demonstrate cost effectiveness and quality.**
2. **Have Member support.**
3. **Have Senior Management Support.**
4. **Have support of colleagues in other Divisions.**
5. **Have strong support from the local community.**
6. **Have evidence to back up your claims.**

**APSE Performance Networks data
Proved invaluable.**

**It would be fair to say that the
Consultants had a bias towards
Externalisation. They needed to be
Persuaded to see things differently.**

The Outcome

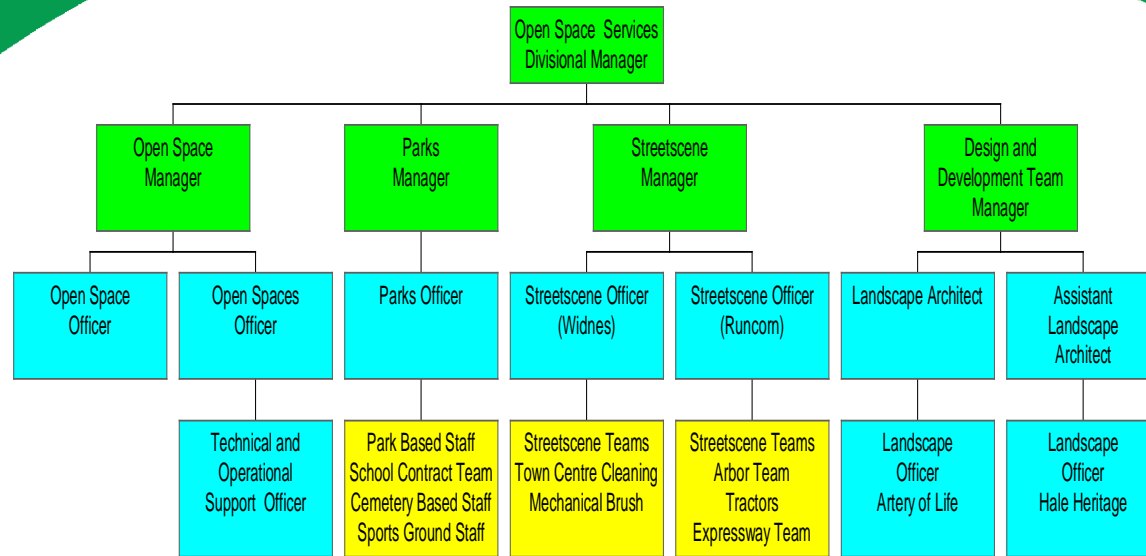
Creation of an Open Space Services which would be responsible for all areas of green space including parks, cemeteries, local nature reserves, Allotments and woodland areas.

That the service be a core part of Halton Borough Council and that its Employees be directly employed by the Council.

That savings totalling £500,000 be delivered.

Savings would be from staff reduction, increase in charges to school's and from 'other' efficiencies?

The New Structure



The new Open Space Service structure represented a reduction of seven Managerial and technical staff.

- 1. We must be seen to offer value for money.**
- 2. We must continue to demonstrate our cost effectiveness.**
- 3. We must continue to deliver an excellent service.**
- 4. We must do all of this with a smaller budget.**