

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE****MAINTAINING CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS FOR CATERING AND HOSPITALITY AT COUNTRY PARKS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for interim staffing changes to maintain the capacity of catering and hospitality at Rufford Abbey Country Park and Sherwood Forest Country Park in order to meet customer service standards whilst a review of commercial activity is undertaken for implementation in April 2015.

**Information and Advice**

2. Catering and hospitality at the parks is a substantial and growing business. In 2013, Catering and Hospitality had a net turnover of £1.5m, generating a contribution to the authority of £168,000. Up until the end of January 2014, sales were up 11% and net profit was up 50%.
3. The business operates seven days a week, 364 days a year from 9.00 am until, when weddings are hosted, 1.00 am, trading from nine outlets across Rufford and Sherwood. The catering and hospitality management team (a catering manager band A, a hospitality manager band A and four assistant catering/hospitality managers) provide day-to-day supervision, direction and support for front line staff, and ensure consistency of customer service whenever managers are not in an outlet.
4. Demand for catering peaks on Sundays and Bank Holidays, so managers are required, but this means that, if all managers took their leave and lieu time for working Bank Holidays evenly throughout the year, there would only be two managers on any weekday.
5. With the growth in catering and hospitality, it has become apparent that the level of supervision required reviewing to ensure consistent operational standards and customer service.
6. Re-structuring of commercial activity at the parks has been delayed because of uncertainty over the size and shape the business would need to be, especially in light of the development at Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve. Work continues to reshape the commercial offer and this proposal is therefore of a temporary nature until April 2015 when a new staffing structure will be introduced following consultation in the Autumn.

7. The proposal is to create four operational supervisory posts, at grade 4 (subject to job evaluation), to provide additional operational supervision for the commercial provision. It is anticipated that the posts be filled internally on an acting-up basis, by existing catering staff who will have the supervisory elements added to their existing duties. The posts will be offered until 31 March 2015, when it is anticipated that the new structure will have been agreed and implemented. The full-time establishment numbers will not be increased.

### **Other Options Considered**

8. The alternative would be to continue to rely on catering assistant staff to always ensure customer service standards and food safety regulations are met, without support or guidance. Most of the staff are capable of working to these standards without direct supervision, but the risk to the Council will increase as demands on the service increase.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

9. To seek the approval of the Culture Committee for four temporary full-time additional catering supervisory posts, to ensure that catering and hospitality at the parks can continue to meet customer needs whilst the service is being re-structured. The solution to a current problem is the most cost effective method of building the supervisory capacity required.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required. There is an expectation by partners (environmental health, licensing, the police and registrars) that a responsible person is on the premises when our outlets are trading.

### **Implications for Service Users**

11. Maintenance of customer service standards and food safety will be expected by customers.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The full year additional cost of these changes will be £12,200 and will be met from within the existing budgetary provision within Country Parks and Green Estates.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

13. These proposals will ensure that the responsible person managing licensed premises will be capable of fulfilling his/her responsibilities in maintaining public order.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That four temporary full time catering supervisor posts at Rufford Abbey County Park and Sherwood Forest County Park, up to 31 March 2015, be approved.

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### **Constitutional Comments (LM 17/04/14)**

14. The Culture Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

### **Financial Comments (KLA 25/04/14)**

15. The financial implications of this report are set out in paragraph 12 above.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

None.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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