

**REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES & CULTURE****CHANGE TO STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN COUNTRY PARKS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the establishment of a temporary part time Gardener/Handy Person post (0.74 fte at Grade 2) at Rufford Abbey Country Park.

**Information and Advice**

2. Rufford Abbey Country Park receives an increasing number of visitors each year (currently over 400,000). With recent changes to the staffing at the park increased capacity is required to ensure the park gardens and grounds are presented to a high standard.
3. Commercial income at Rufford Abbey Country Park relies on visitor numbers. To retain good visitor numbers its gardens must be well presented.
4. Landscape Services Direct Services Organisation (DSO) carry out major grounds maintenance tasks such as grass mowing and hedge pruning, under a service level agreement with the service.
5. A number of smaller garden tasks are not included in this. Landscape DSO operatives are grounds maintenance qualified as opposed to horticulturally qualified.
6. At present, the park's warden, rangers or casual car parkers assist with garden tidying duties, such as watering hanging baskets, cleaning moss from stonework and 'brash' clearance from woodland, when they have time free from core duties.
7. It is proposed that a role of Gardener/Handy Person be established and recruitment undertaken initially on a temporary basis for one year from the date of appointment. The post will be advertised in accordance with the NCC Vacancy Protocol. The post will be reviewed in relation to its effectiveness and affordability within the overall staffing budget.

**Other Options Considered**

8. Grounds maintenance across the park (grass cutting and pruning etc.) is carried out under a service level agreement with the NCC Landscape and Cleaning DSO. However, a number of more minor tasks such as watering, or snow clearance from paths, occur seasonally, and need attention quickly and flexibly. It is more logical for these to be done

by a member of staff available at the park and under the direct control of the Site Manager.

9. Volunteer help in the gardens is welcome, and sometimes available, but volunteers must be supervised for health and safety reasons. The post will enable us to make more use of volunteer or youth trainees to help keep the park well presented, by providing additional supervisory capacity.

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

10. A dedicated member of staff with basic horticultural skills, working directly to the Park Manager, would be an efficient solution to this particular site need, and increase consistency.
11. The post could support volunteers and trainees, offering an accessible work experience opportunity to young people in the County's "Skills for Employment" programme.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

13. The cost of creating a Gardener/Handy Person post (Grade 2) will be absorbed within the park's frontline staffing budget. 0.74 FTE at this grade is a cost to the Authority of £13,198 including employer's on-costs.

### **Human Resources Implications (JA 03/09/2015)**

14. The HR implications have been considered and are addressed in the report.

### **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications**

15. As the post holder will not be engaged in regulated activity a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will not be required.

### **Implications for Service Users**

16. The post is designed to maintain quality of experience for service users.

### **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

17. The job description includes a requirement for training in the responsible use of pesticides.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the establishment of a temporary part time Gardener/Handy Person post (0.74 fte at Grade 2) at Rufford Abbey Country Park be approved.

**Laurence Jones**

**Temporary Service Director, Youth, Families and Culture**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Linda Hardy

Visitor Services Manager

Country Parks Service

T: 01623 821328

E: [linda.hardy@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:linda.hardy@nottsc.gov.uk)

### **Constitutional Comments (SMG 01/09/15)**

18. The Committee has the responsibility for approval of departmental staffing structures. The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Committee.
19. The Employment Procedure Rules provide that the report to Committee include the required advice and HR comments and that the recognised trade unions be consulted on all proposed changes to staffing structures (and any views given should be fully considered prior to a decision being made).

### **Financial Comments (SS 27/08/15)**

20. The financial implications of this report are contained within paragraph 13 above.

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

None.

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

All.

C0692