

# Handling Organisational Change Organisational Change Assessment

## Review of Parks Services

### 1. Purpose

- To set out proposals to make changes to the organisation of the Council's Parks Service to improve services and deliver efficiencies.
- To outline the timetable for formal consultation with affected employees and confirm the date of Administration & Regulation Committee when the final proposals for the changes will be considered.
- DMT have given their support for the proposals to be considered for consultation.

#### 1.1 Background and context

The Council has made savings of £113 million over the last seven years. The Council also needs to deliver over £11 million of savings in 2019/20, with further savings of about £16 million in the following four years.

Thus, the objective is to restructure the Council so it is better placed to deliver good quality services with far less resources.

Some of the changes being considered include a move towards more commissioned services, fewer directly employed staff and a greater emphasis on partnership working. In addition, the Council recognises that it needs to generate new income streams from external sources, particularly from traded services.

The Council is legally obliged to inform and consult, at the earliest opportunity, the Trades Unions and all employees whose jobs and/or terms and conditions of employment are affected. This will be carried out by Service Managers, who will be advised by HR.

For more information please see the Council's Transformation Strategy on the intranet. If you do not have access to a computer at work, please ask your manager for copies.

## 1.2 Scope

Post title	Grade	FTE
Grounds maintenance Supervisor	L7	2.00
Parks Sports & Concessions Supervisor	L4	1.00
Parks Buildings & Events Supervisor	L4	0.57
Play Area Technician	L4	2.00
Charge Hand	L4	5.00
Sports Supervisor	L4	1.00
Gardener Grounds Person	L3	15
Assistant Gardener Grounds Person	L2	22
Building Maintenance Assistant	L1b	0.65
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>49.22</b>

The scope of this review is all staff currently employed within the Parks Service with the exception of Surveillance Officers, seasonal staff and the posts that were recently included with in the Parks Service management review and the Arboricultural Services review being:

- Operations Manager (Parks & Grounds Maintenance)
- Operations Manager ( Facilities & Business Support)
- Arboricultural Services Supervisor
- Horticultural Services Supervisor
- Operations Support Officer (QMR) – Parks
- Assistant Operations Support Officer - Parks

## 1.3 The Current Position

The Parks Service has made a significant contribution to the Council's savings since 2012 by achieving a saving of £1.312 million by introducing efficiencies through new working methods such as annualised hours & the centralisation of its grounds maintenance operation and by a significant reduction in maintenance frequencies and quality standards across the service.

The frequency of grass cutting has been reduced to between six and eight cuts from March to November each year and horticultural maintenance reduced to as little as one maintenance visit per year. Such a large reduction in the number of maintenance visits has resulted in shrub beds becoming over grown with large amounts of weed present and the length of grass being considerably longer at times of high volume grass growth.

High levels of service requests were received in 2018 due to the length of grass across the public realm causing the leader of the council to publically cite the detrimental appearance of the town. This resulted in the chief executive demanding an action plan to address the situation for future years, and specifically to look at more flexible working arrangements to cover bank holidays and weekend working during periods of high grass vigour.

The current annualised hour's scheme covers a 5 day working week of 40 hours per week for 32 weeks (summer period) and 32.2 hours per week for 20 weeks (winter

period). In the summer months the working week ends at 12.12pm each Friday and at 1.30pm during winter months, this significantly reduces productivity on Fridays.

Employees receive a 30 minute lunch break which must be taken onsite. During hot temperatures such as summer 2018 and periods of 2019 this resulted in high levels of fatigue, particularly amongst machine operators carrying heavy petrol machines.

The Parks Service relies on a large number of seasonal workers to meet the increased workload during the summer months. It has become increasingly more difficult to find and retain qualified and experienced personal to meet this demand; this has resulted in a high turnover of seasonal staff and a number of unfilled vacant posts which heavily affect the services ability to meet performance standards.

Extracts from the draft report for the parks Action group Nurturing Skills for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parks identified a loss of core horticultural skills across the industry. This is particularly relevant to Luton where a swathe of retirements and redundancies, along with budget cuts have resulted in planting and pruning and other horticultural activities being reduced, with remaining resources geared towards more reactive maintenance and basic tasks such as grass-cutting.

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 is a set of regulations created under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 which came into force in Great Britain on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Employers are required to introduce technical and organisational measures to reduce exposure to the lowest possible level, to meet this requirement the service currently use a traffic light system to identify risk and task rotation to minimise exposure. This is having a significant impact on grass cutting operations which rely on employees being familiar with an individual round.

A revised Service Level Agreement (SLA) has been agreed for 2019 onwards between the Parks Service and Housing landlord Services. The new SLA will increase the level of service by employing an extra 2 x L2 Assistant Gardener Grounds Person, 2 x L3 Gardener Grounds Person and 1 x L4 Charge hand full time equivalent posts. This scheme will be funded by an increase in service charges to tenants.

The service currently relies on overtime payments to grounds maintenance employees to deliver games attendant duties and undertake cleaning duties related to sports pavilions. This puts additional financial pressures on the service as well as contributing to some employees breaking the working time directive, in that they work more that 48hours a week in a rolling 17 week period. Overtime payments should only be used when an employee continues undertaking their substantive post past 37 hours per week. Games attendance and building cleaning duties do not currently form part of any of the grounds maintenance job descriptions.

Play areas under Council control are inspected by the Play Area Technician's as part of their substantive post. Inspections are manually recorded and data entered into the council's web based Play Area Management System (DTE Play) by the operational support team. Inspections are carried out 4 times a year and during inspections the technician's ability to undertake maintenance of the parks play and infrastructure is significantly reduced.

The Parks Service has a number of buildings within its portfolio and are therefore responsible for ensuring that they are maintained and remain compliant. The Building Maintenance Assistant regularly visits all Parks buildings throughout the Borough in order to undertake water flushing and temperature recording procedures; and to monitor cleaning standards, energy usage and repairs as part of his substantive post. The post holder visits alone and mostly outside of core hours. The council have recently agreed the demolition of three sports pavilions and re-tendered the water compliance contract, both of which affect this post.

The recent Parks Service management review brought together the administrative support and the facilities support into one generic business support team under the direction of the Operations Manager (Facilities & Business Support). Two of the team's roles were reviewed and amended as part of the Arboricultural Services review to provide a broader operational support function. The remaining two posts continue to be facility focused roles.

Two new Supervisor positions were also created with lead responsibility for Arboricultural and Horticultural services. This has increased the generic pool of Supervisors to four posts; however the two Grounds maintenance Supervisors posts work annualised hours and are generic roles without any defined lead responsibilities. There is a need to review these posts to bring them in line with the new roles by identifying lead responsibilities and changing their working times so as all supervisor posts can cover each other's post in time of absence.

Luton Traded Service (LTS) is the council's external trading arm. The Parks Service trades as LTS Greenspace Solutions with outside bodies to offset the cost of the core grounds maintenance service it provides for Luton Borough Council. Currently the Parks Service has external contracts with London Luton Airport (LLAL), Active Luton, Harpenden Town Council and a number of former local authority schools. Works to service these contracts rely heavily on employees undertaking additional duties on overtime which reduces the viability of these contracts by reducing profitability as well as contributing to some employees breaking the working time directive.

Greenspace Solutions recently completed the business accelerator programme which was in in-depth appraisal of the current business model. The Business Accelerator was delivered in partnership by EELGA and Essex County Council, with a series of six masterclasses, covering:

- Induction
- Sales
- Marketing
- People and Change
- Systems and Processes
- Financial Performance

Resulting from this extensive exercise was the production of a business plan with the short to mid-term growth ambition for LTS Greenspace Solutions (GSS) being to steadily grow the business year on year by securing short to medium term contracts. The current Parks Service structure is not fit for purpose in that there is not a dedicated resource assigned to trading, this compromises both the core service to the Council and the customers of GSS.

## 2. Proposal (s)

We need your feedback about the proposal(s) set out in this document. This is your opportunity to shape the future of the service.

Please remember that these are initial proposals only and that the final proposals will only be known once the formal consultation period has ended.

The proposal is to restructure the Parks Service to reflect the changing scope of the service and the emphasis on maximizing income through trading, whilst ensuring that resources are best placed to support the front line core LBC grounds maintenance service.

The objective of this restructure is not to reduce costs but to put in place changes that will enable the service to respond to high demands placed upon it at certain times of the year, especially during the active growing season.

The proposals set out a different ways of delivering the Council's Parks Service, It is therefore proposed to delete posts, create new posts and revisit current job descriptions as detailed below:

Proposed post deletions		
Post Title	Grade	FTE
Building Maintenance Assistant	L1b	0.65
Charge Hand	L4	6.00
Gardener Grounds person	L3	2.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8.65</b>

It is proposed that employees whose posts are 'at risk' of redundancy through post deletions will potentially be ring fenced or slotted into new posts in the new structure.

Employees whose posts are proposed for deletion with no slot in or ring fenced opportunity will be referred to the redeployment process and every reasonable attempt will be made to secure them suitable alternative employment. Changes affecting staff will be in accordance with the Councils Organisational Change Procedure.

Proposed New posts		
Post Title	Grade	FTE
Skilled Gardener	L4	3
Skilled Grounds person Greenkeeper	L4	2
Team Leader	L4	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

<b>Proposed revised job descriptions</b>		
<b>Post title</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Assistant Operations Support Officer - Buildings & Events	TBC	0.57
Assistant Operations Support Officer - Sports & Concessions	TBC	1.00
Parks Infrastructure Technician	L4	2
Gardener Grounds person	L3	11
Grounds maintenance Supervisor	L7	2
Specialist Machine Operator	L3	2
Grounds Maintenance Operative	L2	22
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40.57</b>

The proposals affecting staff are as follows:

The Parks Service will adapt and become more flexible to meet the changes in service provision. Distinct teams will be created and posts reviewed to ensure each groups unique requirements can be achieved with the correct ratio of qualified employees.

Where the service demands the current annualised hour's agreement will be amended to reflect the changes in the programmed work throughout the year. (Appendix 3)

Grass cutting within the public realm will be programmed to maximise productivity at times of high grass vigor. A 48hr working week will be introduced for sixteen weeks March - June this will include working Saturdays, with longer breaks to ensure staff fatigue is minimised. There will be a requirement for this team to work all bank holidays within this period (4) as part of their normal working week, employees that are required to work on a bank holiday shall receive in addition to the normal pay for that day, plain time rate for all hours worked (8) plus time of in lieu, at a later date. (Appendix 4)

The taking of annual leave will be restricted during this period to maximize the resources available at times of high grass vigor.

The use of seasonal staff will be reduced to allow teams to develop and take ownership of their areas. Analytical software will be used to monitor employee's exposure to hand arm vibration to reduce the need to rotate employees between different groups.

Skilled professional horticultural positions will be developed to address the loss of core horticultural skills that have occurred in the service. These professional posts will undertake key horticultural tasks whilst both supervising and mentoring trainees and volunteers. They will be evaluated at a higher grade (L4) than the current Gardener Grounds person role (L3) to reflect the vocational qualifications and supervisory responsibilities, thereby increasing the service's ability to attract and retain skilled professional staff. There will be a clear competency frame work and career development pathways for parks professionals. This will identify opportunities to enhance career progression through front-line and apprenticeship pathways, enabling

recruits to move from apprentice, to supervisor, to manager. A “grow our own” approach using the Apprenticeship Levy as part of succession planning.

A dedicated parks litter crew will be reintroduced Monday – Friday from the generic grounds maintenance Operative resource to ensure that the parks remain at an acceptable standard. The litter picking of parks at weekends/bank holidays during the busy summer months will be commissioned via LBC Street cleansing service.

Professional driving roles dedicated to tractor driving and hi-ab operation will be introduced to recognise the complexity and additional driving and operating qualifications required to operate such machinery.

Safety inspections of the councils play facilities will be commissioned via a third party provider. A requirement of this contract will be to upload the inspections directly into the Councils Playground management software DTE Play. This will enable management to interrogate the data base and issue work orders based on risk, allowing the new positions of Parks Infrastructure Technician to undertake additional responsibilities with managing the Parks buildings and infrastructure.

Compliance testing of parks buildings will be procured through the newly awarded corporate contract.

The use of Parks employees undertaking games attendants and cleaning duties on overtime will no longer be permitted. Additional casual games attendants will be recruited to undertake all games attendant duties and the corporate cleaning contractor will be commissioned to clean sports pavilions.

The Parks Sports & Concessions Supervisor and Parks Buildings & Events Supervisor job descriptions will be reviewed and re-evaluated to bring them in line with a more generic operational support role under the direction of the Operations Support Officer (QMR) – Parks.

The Ground maintenance Supervisor job description will be reviewed to bring it in line with the other Supervisor Jd's in that each post holder will have a lead role within the generic pool of Supervisor positions being:

- Arboricultural Services Supervisor
- Horticultural Services Supervisor
- Parks Service Supervisor
- Grounds maintenance Services Supervisor

LTS Green Space Solutions will look to grow the business primarily through increasing market penetration of Schools, colleges and other educational establishments.

This will be achieved by developing the designated route to market through the School Support Services team by targeting 75 Luton schools and the 194 out of borough schools currently registered with their database.

There is a need to restructure the service to create a dedicated trading resource to ensure that the service meets its strategic goals without compromising the core services the Parks Service provides to the residents of the town.

Trading currently requires an additional 4.2 fte's. Staff is currently at maximum capacity fulfilling core work therefore this additional work will be undertaken using existing experienced staff, the service will recruit agency staff / temporary staff/ casual staffs to back fill experienced staff to undertake contracted work during normal working hours.

### 3. Existing Structure (s)

Please see Appendix 1

### 4. Proposed structure(s)

Please see Appendix 2

We need your feedback about the proposal(s) set out in this document. This is your

### 5. Staff affected by the proposal(s)

Post title	Grade	FTE	Headcount	Vacant
Grounds maintenance Supervisor	L7	2.00	2	0
Parks Sports & Concessions Supervisor	L4	1.00	1	0
Parks Buildings & Events Supervisor	L4	0.57	1	0
Play Area Technician	L4	2.00	2	0
Charge Hand	L4	6.00	6	0
Gardener Grounds Person	L3	14	11	3
Assistant Gardener Grounds Person	L2	20	10	10
Building Maintenance Assistant	L1b	0.65	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>26.22</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>13</b>

### 6. Risks

There are no service delivery risks associated with this proposal.

Whilst there are posts deletions every reasonable attempt will be made to secure alternative employment for employees affected by the proposal. Employees will be considered for posts within the structure in the first instance and they will need to demonstrate their suitability for the new roles. There is however a potential risk that employees will not be able to demonstrate their suitability for employment and this could lead to an at risk situation.



## 7. Consultation and next steps

**The Council's Handling Organisational Change policy will be used throughout the process.**

TU/Management Meeting - Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Formal consultation start date - Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019

Formal consultation end date - Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019

Admin & Regulation Committee - Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019

During the period of formal consultation:

- All affected employees can have a one-to-one meeting with the Greenspace Manager or an appropriate manager during the consultation period. If affected employees wish to have a one to one meeting they should contact the Greenspace Manager to make arrangements.
- Group staff meetings will be arranged as necessary.
- Continual and open dialogue on further suggestions and ideas to arrive at the best proposals for change given the circumstances in which the Council finds itself are encouraged.
- All affected employees have the opportunity to e mail their views / comment / suggestion about the proposals to [Stephen.Battlebury@luton.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.Battlebury@luton.gov.uk). Each e-mail, comment/suggestion received will be logged and a response provided.
- Detailed documentation (including job descriptions and roles and responsibilities within the new structure) will be made available to affected staff. These documents will be made available for staff to comment on early in the formal consultation process.
- Trades Unions will be involved throughout.
- The Human Resource contact throughout this process is Dona Shaw, HR Adviser. Contact number 01582 546566.
- Consultation will include opportunities for key stakeholders to give their comments on the proposal(s).
- We will report to Administrative and Regulation Committee on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 the final service proposals. Subject to the Committee's decision the implementation of changes will commence immediately and implementation is

scheduled to be complete by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 at the latest.

- If necessary, formal notices of redundancy are likely to be served from the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020, at the earliest.
- If necessary, dismissals are likely to take effect from the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020, at the earliest.

## **8. Implementation**

Implementation will be in line with the Council's Handling Organisational Change policy.

A draft implementation plan will be developed towards the end of formal consultation, once the final proposal(s) likely to be presented to Committee become clear. The draft plan can be amended at any point, as a result of formal consultation or Committee's decision.

The final implementation plan will be circulated following the publication of Committee's decision. In general, implementation will commence immediately.

Human Resources will advise on technical/procedural aspects of implementation plans.

## **9. Employee Support**

Changing times can often be difficult. A confidential support service called Be Supported is available for all council employees provided by AXA PPP Healthcare. This service is entirely independent and offers information, counselling and life management support on a range of matters including employment, legal and financial. You can contact Be Supported 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on:

**0800 072 7 072**

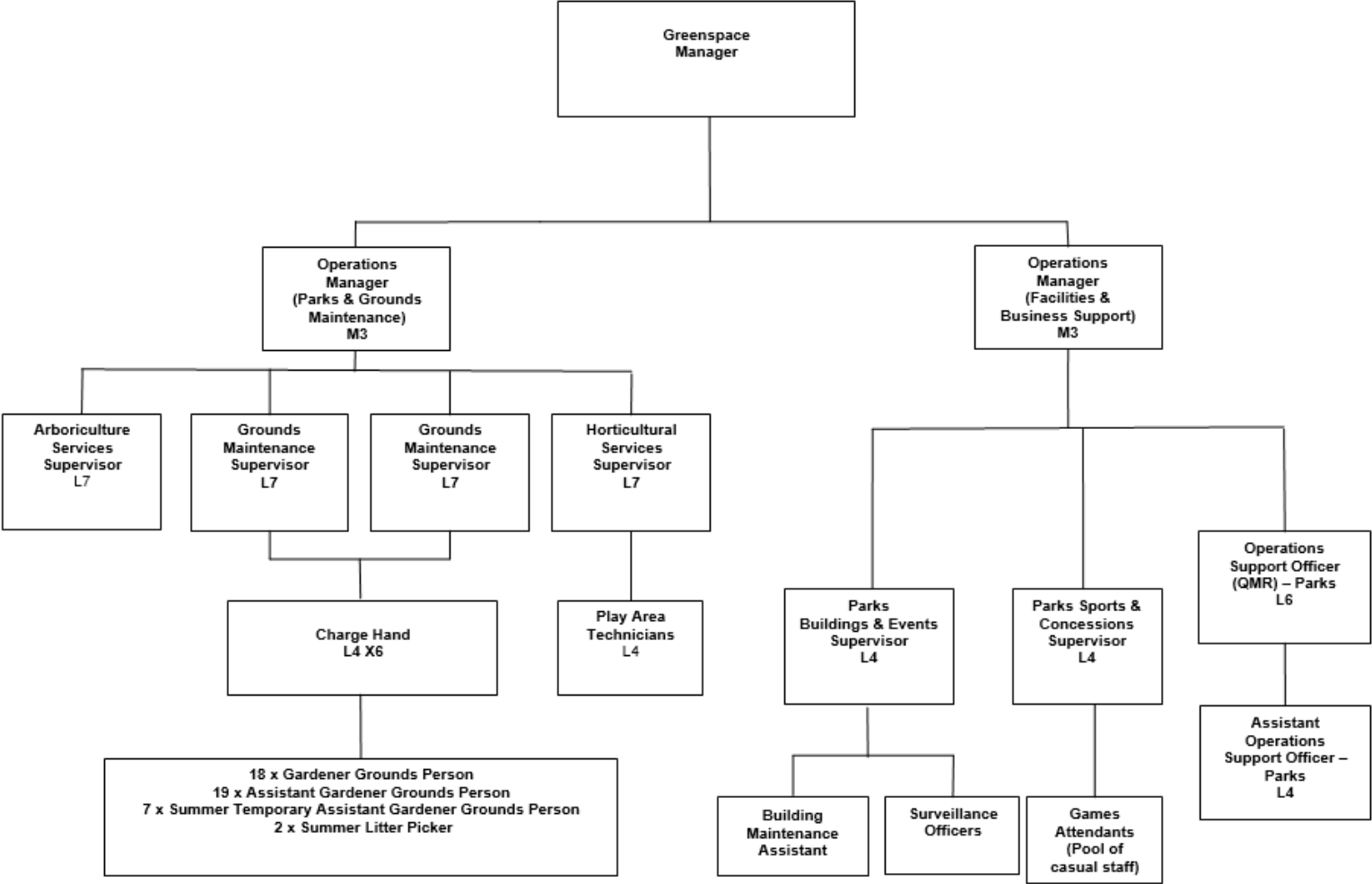
Careers support, advice and information is available from the Learning Partnership Ltd. (Bedfordshire & Luton). You can contact them on **01234 851154** or visit their website at [www.learning-partnership.org.uk](http://www.learning-partnership.org.uk) (This service is provided on behalf of the National Careers Service)

Support is also available from the Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy. The Town Chaplaincy Team offers a confidential, independent, non-judgemental listening ear to anyone regardless of faith or no faith. The Town Chaplains are available between 12-2pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at Luton Town Hall. The Team can also be contacted on the following numbers:

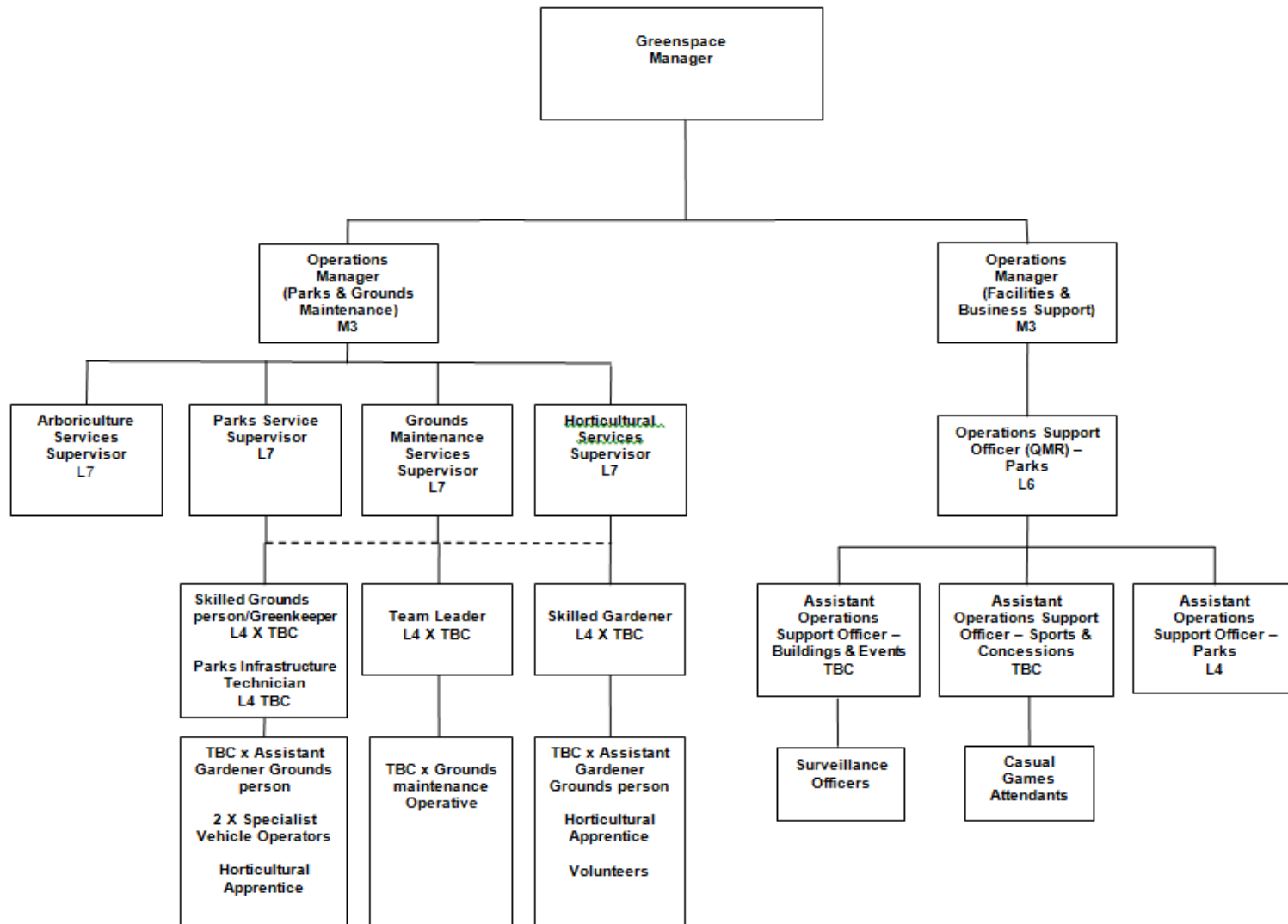
**01582 545037    07528 498677    07557 686218**

Further information from [www.lutontcc.org.uk](http://www.lutontcc.org.uk) or email [info@lutontcc.org.uk](mailto:info@lutontcc.org.uk)





## Appendix 2



# The Working Week

**WINTER PERIOD** - the working week for 20 weeks, will be one of 32.2 hours per week:

- Monday – Thursday
- 8.00am – 12.00pm      4 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
- 12.30pm – 3.30pm      3 hours
- **Total 7 hours**
- Friday
- 8.00am – 12.12pm      4.2 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
- **Total 4.2 hours**

**SUMMER PERIOD** - the working week for 32 weeks, will be one of 40 hours per week:

- Monday – Friday
- 7.30am – 12.00pm      4.5 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
- 1.00pm – 4.30pm      3.5 hours
- **Total 8.0 hours**

## The Working Week

**WINTER PERIOD** - the working week for 20 weeks, will be one of 25.8 hours per week:

- Monday – Wednesday
  - 8.00am – 12.00pm 4 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
  - 12.30pm – 3.30pm 3.5 hours
  - **Total 7.0 hours**
- Thursday
  - 8.00am – 12.50pm 4.8 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
  - **Total 4.8 hours**

**SUMMER PERIOD** - the working week of 32 weeks for which 16 weeks will be one of 48 hours per week and for the other 16 weeks one of 40 hours per week:

- Monday – Saturday
  - 7.30am – 12.00pm 4.5 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
  - 1.00pm – 4.30pm 3.5 hours
  - **Total 8.0 hours x 6 days = 48 hours**
- Monday – Friday
  - 7.30am – 12.00pm 4.5 hours including a 15 minute break at 10.00am
  - 1.00pm – 4.30pm 3.5 hours
  - **Total 8.0 hours x 5 days = 40 hours**