

Parks and open spaces: Towards An Excellent Service

2. The TAES Framework

Supported by:



Introduction

What is the TAES Framework?

The TAES Framework helps organisations and partnerships providing parks and open spaces, sport and recreation and wider cultural services to:

- a. understand what brings about excellent results
- b. assess how they are performing and what results they are likely to achieve in the future
- c. develop plans to improve the capability of the organisation or partnership to achieve excellent results

Who developed the TAES Framework?

The TAES Framework is based on recognised best practice and is tailored to meet the specific needs of the relevant industry sector. This version has been developed by practitioners working in the parks and open spaces industry, CABE Space, ISPAL and the IDeA through a comprehensive consultation, pilot and evaluation project.

Who is this TAES Framework designed for?

This version of the TAES Framework has been developed specifically for parks and open space services. Section 5 provides guidance on establishing the exact scope of this TAES Self-Assessment. Other versions exist for local authority sport and recreation, wider cultural services, county sports partnerships, national governing bodies of sport and Sport England.

What is in the TAES Framework?

The TAES Framework comprises criteria that enable organisations or partnerships to review 'how' they are functioning and identify improvement priorities, which can be tackled annually as part of the overall service planning process. Clearly the organisation or partnership will also be measuring 'what' it has achieved using the appropriate performance data. The correlation of 'what' and 'how' will provide a rounded assessment of the performance of each organisation or partnership.

The TAES Framework is designed to incorporate all relevant quality and excellence criteria to provide the parks and open spaces industry with the opportunity to approach continuous

improvement as one journey, rather than as a collection of separate schemes, which may not be related to normal 'work'. Therefore TAES is based on the EFQM Excellence Model criteria and incorporates criteria from a variety of relevant quality and assessment initiatives. (These include Charter Mark, iIP, the Equality Standard, Quest, the CPA framework, Ofsted, SSI joint review methodology, the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership model and the IDeA Peer Review benchmark.) This version of the Framework also incorporates learning from the development and use of the other versions.

The eight TAES themes, criteria and descriptors

From the analysis of these existing frameworks and consultation, it was clear that eight main factors influence the parks and open space services delivered to our users. Through effective management and improvement relating to these eight **themes**, organisations can continuously improve the results they achieve.

These eight themes have been subdivided into 32 **criteria**, which define key elements of excellence in relation to each theme. Equality and service access are integrated into the criteria where relevant.

Within each of the criteria, **descriptors** have been established, which help the organisation to understand the criteria (and therefore to assist self-assessment) and provide a means of incorporating national initiatives and priorities into the Framework.

The TAES Evaluation System

TAES Self-Assessment involves applying the following evaluation system to each of the 32 criteria and eight themes. This enables organisations to crystallise their thinking during the self-assessment and provides a basis for strengths and areas for improvement to be agreed:

Poor – no approaches have been planned

Fair – approaches are in the process of being planned and implemented covering many of the relevant guidance points

Good – approaches have been planned covering most of the relevant guidance points and these are implemented systematically

Excellent – approaches have been planned covering all of the relevant guidance points and implemented systematically; the effectiveness of the approaches and their implementation

has been measured, reviewed and improved; your performance measurement tells you that the approaches are having a positive impact.

Each descriptor is presented in a matrix, which shows what 'poor', 'fair', 'good' and 'excellent' mean in relation to the descriptor.

Examples of practice and best practice

Examples of practice and links to best practice relating to each criterion are provided in section 3. These examples help people to develop their understanding of the criteria and descriptors and provide valuable assistance with improvement planning.

Terms and abbreviations

Throughout the Framework the term **organisation** refers to the parts of the local authority, contractors and partners included within the scope of the self-assessment (clear guidance on establishing the scope of the self-assessment is provided in section 5). The organisation will also define the terms **leaders**, **community**, **users**, **partners** and **outcomes** in the process of establishing the scope. The term **stakeholder** refers to the organisation's staff, elected members, partners, users and the wider community.

The descriptors contain a number of words which need to be consistently understood to enable you to assess the service. To help you, a definition of each word, as applied in the Framework, is given below:

Demonstrate There is evidence to support the activity being evaluated

Actively People in the organisation have made an effort to do something which is recognised by others in the organisation or outside, as opposed to just passive involvement

Committed to People responsible for the activity have support for it

Planning to People responsible for the activity have a real intent to do something and have taken some steps to start the activity

Outcomes	The intended changes have occurred as a result of the activity being evaluated and these can be measured
Impact	The activity has made the intended difference and this can be measured
Over time	The activity being evaluated has been in place long enough for it to have had an impact. In most cases this will mean two to three years at least
Number of years	In most cases this will mean two to three years or long enough to anticipate the outcomes or impact
Under-represented	People and groups not participating to a representative level
Most people	Most of people in the organisation are aware or are involved

Theme 1: Leadership

The key decision makers and opinion formers in the organisation demonstrate leadership, a sense of ambition, direction and support for delivering and improving parks and open spaces.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
1.1 Leaders in the organisation develop the mission, vision and values, demonstrate ambition and are role models for continuous improvement.	a	Leaders do not develop the organisation's mission, vision and values.	Leaders are planning to develop the organisation's mission, vision and values.	Leaders develop the organisation's mission, vision and values.	Leaders have, over time, actively developed the organisation's mission, vision and values, and can demonstrate the impact of this on results.
	b	Leaders do not act as role models of continuous improvement.	Leaders are starting to act as role models of continuous improvement.	Leaders act as role models of continuous improvement.	Leaders have, over time, acted as role models of continuous improvement, and can demonstrate the impact of this on other people.
	c	Leaders do not encourage empowerment, innovation and creativity by sponsoring learning and improvement initiatives.	Leaders are starting to encourage empowerment, innovation and creativity by sponsoring learning and improvement initiatives.	Leaders encourage empowerment, innovation and creativity by sponsoring learning and improvement initiatives.	Leaders have, over time, regularly stimulated and encouraged empowerment, innovation and creativity by sponsoring learning and improvement initiatives, and can demonstrate the impact of this on other people.
	d	Leaders do not welcome internal scrutiny or external challenge.	Leaders welcome and are developing mechanisms for internal scrutiny and external challenge.	Leaders welcome and have in place mechanisms for internal scrutiny and external challenge.	Leaders can demonstrate how internal scrutiny and external challenge have assisted with continuous improvement.
	e	Leaders do not identify strategic change requirements or plan and manage change.	Leaders are beginning to identify strategic change requirements and plan and manage change.	Leaders identify strategic change requirements and plan and manage change.	Leaders have a record of identifying strategic change requirements and planning and managing change to achieve effective outcomes.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	f	Leaders are not committed to equal opportunities and diversity.	Leaders are planning to develop equal opportunity and diversity policies.	Leaders actively promote equal opportunities and diversity.	Leaders can demonstrate the positive impact of their active promotion of equal opportunities and diversity.
	g	Leaders do not promote a balanced approach to risk in the management of parks and open spaces.	Leaders are starting to promote a balanced approach to risk in the management of parks and open spaces.	Leaders promote a balanced approach to risk in the management of parks and open spaces.	Leaders have, over time, promoted a balanced approach to risk in the management of parks and open spaces, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
1.2 Leaders actively engage with key stakeholders to manage the reputation of the organisation.	a	Leaders are not aware of the need to build strategic relationships with key stakeholders (eg, education planning, friends groups and national bodies).	Leaders are building strategic relationships with key stakeholders (eg, education, planning, friends groups and national bodies).	Leaders have built strategic relationships with key stakeholders (eg, education, planning, friends groups and national bodies).	Leaders have, over time, built strategic relationships with key stakeholders (eg, education planning, friends groups and national bodies) and can demonstrate the impact of this on the profile of the parks and open space service.
	b	Leaders do not manage their relationships with key stakeholders to develop the reputation of the organisation.	Leaders are seeking to manage their relationships with key stakeholders to develop the reputation of the organisation.	Leaders manage their relationships with key stakeholders to develop the reputation of the organisation.	Leaders have, over time, managed their relationships with key stakeholders and as a result the credibility and reputation of the organisation is high.
	c	Leaders do not utilise their relationships with key stakeholders to enhance the achievement of their strategic objectives.	Leaders are seeking to utilise their relationships with key stakeholders to enhance the achievement of their strategic objectives.	Leaders utilise their relationships with key stakeholders to enhance the achievement of their strategic objectives.	Leaders have, over time, utilised their relationships with key stakeholders to enhance the achievement of their strategic objectives, and can demonstrate the impact of this on results.
	d	Leaders do not monitor and review their strategic relationships to maximise the reputation of the organisation.	Leaders are planning to monitor and review their strategic relationships to maximise the reputation of the organisation.	Leaders monitor and review their strategic relationships to maximise the reputation of the organisation.	Leaders have regularly monitored and reviewed their strategic relationships to maintain the reputation of the organisation, and can demonstrate the impact of this.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
1.3 Leaders are actively engaged with service users and partners.	a	Leaders do not listen to and understand the needs and expectations of the community.	Leaders are starting to listen to and understand the needs and expectations of the community.	Leaders listen to and understand the needs and expectations of the community	Leaders have regularly listened to and understood the needs and expectations of the community, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	b	Leaders are not aware of the distinctive nature of the voluntary, community and private sectors and their value in providing services.	Leaders are aware of the distinctive nature of the voluntary, community and private sectors and their value in providing services.	Leaders have used the voluntary, community and private sectors to assist in providing the services.	Leaders have regularly used the voluntary, community and private sectors to assist in providing the services, and can demonstrate the value of this
	c	Leaders do not encourage collaboration within the organisation (eg with grounds contractors), with partners and with the community.	Leaders are starting to encourage collaboration within the organisation (eg with grounds contractors), with partners and with the community.	Leaders encourage collaboration within the organisation (eg with grounds contractors), with partners and with the community.	Leaders have, over time, encouraged collaboration within the organisation (eg with grounds contractors), with partners and with the community, and can demonstrate the results of this.
	d	Leaders do not promote, establish and facilitate the creation of partnerships	Leaders are starting to promote, establish and facilitate the creation of partnerships	Leaders promote, establish and facilitate the creation of partnerships.	Leaders have, over time, promoted established and facilitated the creation of partnerships, and can demonstrate how they have helped to improve services.
1.4 Leaders motivate, support and recognise people in the organisation to improve services.	a	Leaders are not visible and accessible to people in the organisation.	Leaders are starting to be visible and accessible to people in the organisation.	Leaders are visible and accessible to people in the organisation.	Leaders have been visible and accessible to people in the organisation over time, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the organisation's people.
	b	Leaders play no role in communicating the organisation's vision, mission, values, strategy and plans with people in the organisation.	Leaders are starting to communicate the organisation's vision, mission, values, strategy and plans with people in the organisation.	Leaders communicate the organisation's vision, mission, values, strategy and plans with people in the organisation.	Leaders have regularly communicated the organisation's vision, mission, values, strategy and plans with people in the organisation, and can demonstrate the impact of this on people.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	c	Leaders do not support people to achieve the organisation's goals.	Leaders are starting to support people to achieve the organisation's goals.	Leaders support people to achieve the organisation's goals.	Leaders have regularly and actively supported people to achieve the organisation's goals, and can demonstrate the impact of this on results.
	d	Leaders do not recognise and celebrate people's successes.	Leaders are starting to recognise and celebrate people's successes	Leaders recognise and celebrate people's successes.	Leaders have, over time, regularly recognised and celebrated people's successes, and can demonstrate the impact of this on people's performance.
1.5 Leaders are committed to sustainability in the management of parks and open spaces.	a	Leaders have not adopted a strategic approach to the environmental management of parks and open spaces.	Leaders are starting to adopt a strategic approach to the environmental management of parks and open spaces.	Leaders have adopted a strategic approach to the environmental management of parks and open spaces.	Leaders have, over time, taken a strategic approach to the environmental management of parks and open spaces, and can demonstrate the impact of this approach on the environment.
	b	Leaders show no interest or commitment to biodiversity or understanding of how to act.	Leaders are considering changes to the service in response to research, in order to achieve biodiversity.	Leaders have changed the way the service is delivered in response to research, in order to achieve biodiversity.	Leaders can demonstrate the impact on biodiversity of the actions they have taken.
	c	Leaders do not undertake sustainability appraisals of relevant strategy.	Leaders are planning to undertake sustainability appraisals of relevant strategy.	Leaders have undertaken sustainability appraisal of relevant strategy and acted on the results.	Leaders can demonstrate the impact of undertaking sustainability appraisals on the services.
	d	Leaders do not undertake environmental audits on key activities.	Leaders are planning to undertake environmental audits on key activities.	Leaders have undertaken environmental audits on key activities.	Leaders can demonstrate the impact of environmental audits on services and operations.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	e	Leaders do not understand the likely effect of climate change and have not acted to mitigate or adapt to its effects.	Leaders understand the likely effect of climate change and how they can mitigate or adapt to its effects.	Leaders have a good understanding of the likely effect of climate change and are acting to mitigate and adapt to its effects.	Leaders can demonstrate positive adaptations of parks and open spaces and positive steps to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Theme 2: Policy and Strategy

The organisation develops clear direction and priorities, based on stakeholder needs and expectations, and implements these through design and development of the services and continuous improvement.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
2.1 The organisation develops clear strategy for parks and open spaces and delivering outcomes from it.	a	The organisation has no process for developing and reviewing policy and strategy	The organisation is planning a process for developing and reviewing policy and strategy.	The organisation has implemented a process for developing and reviewing policy and strategy.	The organisation has an established process for developing and reviewing policy and strategy and can demonstrate the impact of this on the community.
	b	The organisation has no strategy for the development of parks and open spaces.	The organisation is developing strategy for the development of parks and open spaces.	The organisation has implemented strategy for the development of parks and open spaces.	The organisation has implemented strategy for the development of parks and open spaces and can demonstrate the impact of this on the community.
	c	There are no site management plans in place.	Management plans are in place for some parks and open spaces.	Management plans are in place for all significant parks and open spaces	Management plans are embedded into the normal way of working for all significant parks and open spaces, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of these on the community.
	d	The organisation has not taken into account national and regional strategies and priorities when developing strategy for the parks and open spaces.	The organisation is starting to take into account national and regional strategies and priorities when developing strategy for parks and open spaces.	The organisation has taken into account national and regional strategies and priorities when developing strategy for parks and open space.	The organisation has taken into account national and regional strategies and priorities when developing strategy for parks and open space and can demonstrate the impact of this on the community.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	e	The organisation has not considered adopting the open space strategy as part of the local development framework.	The organisation is developing plans to ensure the strategy is adopted by the local development framework.	The local development framework has adopted the open space strategy and it informs quality, quantity and accessibility standards in line with PPG17.	The organisation can demonstrate how the strategy is successfully informing the delivery of high quality open space through new development.
	f	The organisation has not considered the potential contribution of the service to the Government's priorities and regional development agency outcomes.	The organisation is considering the potential contribution of the service to the Government's priorities and regional development agency outcomes.	The organisation has incorporated in its strategy the contribution the service can make to the Government's priorities and regional development agency outcomes.	The organisation has, over time, incorporated in its strategy the contribution the service can make to the Government's priorities and regional development agency outcomes and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	g	The organisation has not recognised the contribution of parks and open spaces to the community strategy.	The organisation is considering the contribution of parks and open spaces to the community strategy.	Parks and open spaces are responsible for achieving key outcomes in the community strategy.	Parks and open spaces have, over time, been responsible for achieving key outcomes in the community strategy, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on the community and on the profile of the service.
	h	The organisation has not based policy, strategy and plans on community, user and staff consultation.	The organisation is starting to base policy, strategy and plans on community, user and staff consultation.	The organisation bases policy, strategy and plans on community, user and staff consultation.	The organisation has, over time, based policy, strategy and plans on community, user and staff consultation and can demonstrate the impact of this on the community.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	i	The organisation has not involved or considered under-represented groups in the strategy and planning processes	The organisation is developing ways to involve and include under-represented groups in the strategy and planning processes.	The organisation involves and includes under-represented groups in the strategy and planning processes.	The organisation has, over time, involved and included under-represented groups in the strategy and planning processes and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	j	The organisation does not respond appropriately to locally led initiatives and developments.	The organisation is starting to respond appropriately to locally led initiatives and developments.	The organisation responds appropriately to locally led initiatives and developments.	The organisation has, over time, responded to locally led initiatives and developments and can demonstrate the impact of this on the community.
2.2 The organisation sets ambitious and achievable targets and plans to achieve strategy.	a	The organisation does not set or communicate ambitious, achievable and realistic targets in relation to its strategy and national or local priorities.	The organisation is setting and communicating ambitious, achievable and realistic targets in relation to its strategy and national or local priorities	The organisation sets and communicates ambitious, achievable and realistic targets in relation to its strategy and national and local priorities.	The organisation has, over time, set and communicated ambitious, achievable and realistic targets in relation to its strategy and national and local priorities, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	b	Service plans, management plans, team and individual work programmes are not linked to the organisation's strategy and targets.	Service plans, management plans, team and individual work programmes contain some links to the organisation's strategy and targets.	Service plans, management plans, team and individual work programmes contain clear links to the organisation's strategy and targets.	Service plans, management plans, team and individual work programmes have been based on the organisation's strategy and targets for a number of years, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	c	There is a general lack of clarity about responsibilities for target setting and their achievement and about resource implications.	Some managers/staff know who is responsible for setting and achieving targets and are generally aware of the resource implications.	Most managers/staff know who is responsible for setting and achieving targets and are generally aware of the resource implications.	All managers/staff know who is responsible for setting and achieving targets and are aware of the resource implications, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	d	Service plans do not include ambitious and achievable targets linked to corporate equality and diversity objectives.	Service plans are developing ambitious and achievable targets linked to corporate equality and diversity objectives.	Service plans include ambitious and achievable targets linked to many corporate equality and diversity objectives.	Service plans have, for a number of years, included ambitious and achievable targets linked to corporate equality and diversity objectives, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	e	Improvement projects are not a part of the service plans.	The organisation is developing improvement projects based on strategy as part of the service plans (eg, following the TAES Self-Assessment).	The organisation includes improvement projects in the service plans (eg, following the TAES Self-Assessment) based on strategy.	The organisation has, over time, included improvement projects in the service plans (eg, following the TAES Self-Assessment) based on strategy, and can demonstrate the organisational changes achieved.
	f	The organisation does not use benchmarking to assist in planning improvements.	The organisation is developing benchmarking to assist in planning improvements.	The organisation uses benchmarking to assist in planning improvements.	The organisation has, over time, used benchmarking to assist in planning improvements, and can demonstrate the level of learning and improvement achieved.
2.3 The organisation meets the needs of the community through attention to design and development of public space and its	a	The organisation does not use design audits of open spaces to deliver good quality local environments which meet the needs of the community.	The organisation is actively considering using design audits of open spaces to deliver good quality local environments which meet the needs of the community.	The organisation uses design audits of open spaces to deliver good quality local environments which meet the needs of the community.	The organisation can demonstrate how design audits of open spaces have helped to deliver good quality local environments which meet the needs of the community.
	b	Open spaces are not seen as important features in the design and development of roads and other infrastructure.	Open spaces are beginning to be seen as important features in the design and development of roads and other infrastructure.	Open spaces are seen as important features in the design and development of roads and other infrastructure.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of open spaces being seen as important features in the design and development of roads and other infrastructure. .

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
use.	c	Open space managers and designers are not represented on design teams and have not been included in the planning process.	Open space managers and designers are consulted by design teams and included in the planning process.	Open space managers and designers are seen as integral members of design teams and are intimately involved in the planning process.	The organisation can demonstrate the value and impact of open space managers and designers being integral members of design teams and being intimately involved in the planning process.
	d	The organisation has no capacity to respond appropriately to the local development framework and design guide work.	The organisation is developing capacity to respond appropriately to the local development framework and design guide work.	The organisation responds appropriately to the local development framework and design guide work.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of its engagement with the local development framework and design guide work.
	e	The organisation does not ensure that all facilities are accessible for all people.	The organisation is starting to ensure that all facilities are accessible for all people.	The organisation ensures that all facilities are accessible for all people.	The organisation has ensured that all facilities are accessible for all people and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	f	The organisation does not plan and develop the use of parks and open spaces based on the present and future needs of the community.	The organisation is starting to plan and develop the use of parks and open spaces based on the present and future needs of the community.	The organisation plans and develops the use of parks and open spaces based on the present and future needs of the community.	The organisation has, over time, planned and developed the use of parks and open spaces based on the present and future needs of the community, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the community.

Theme 3: Community Engagement

The organisation ensures the active involvement of communities in planning, delivering and improving parks and open spaces.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
3.1 The organisation is actively developing community engagement to improve parks and open spaces.	a	The organisation has no access to the skills and experience to communicate, consult and engage with its communities effectively.	The organisation is developing access to the skills and experience to communicate, consult and engage with its communities effectively.	The organisation has access to the skills and experience to communicate, consult and engage with its communities effectively.	The organisation has, over time, developed and improved the skills and experience to communicate, consult and engage with its communities effectively and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and the community.
	b	There are no or few systems to predict and foresee future requirements and/or issues emerging in communities.	The organisation is developing systems and processes to predict and foresee future requirements and/or issues emerging in communities.	There are systems and processes in place to predict and foresee future requirements and/or issues emerging in communities.	The organisation has, over time, developed and used systems to predict and foresee future requirements and/or issues emerging in communities, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	c	Community engagement activity is not coordinated with other parts of the organisation and local partners.	Community engagement activity is starting to be coordinated with other parts of the organisation and local partners.	Community engagement activity is coordinated with other parts of the organisation and local partners.	Community engagement activity has, over time, been coordinated with other parts of the organisation and local partners, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this.
	d	The organisation has not identified the critical success factors and risks involved in engaging with communities.	The organisation has started to identify critical success factors and risks involved in engaging with communities.	The organisation is aware of, responds to and manages the critical success factors and risks involved in community engagement.	The organisation has, over time, identified, responded to and managed the critical success factors and risks involved in community engagement, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and the community.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
3.2 The organisation communicates to, consults with, and involves communities in providing services.	a	There is little or no commitment from the organisation to undertake consultation and community engagement to improve services.	The organisation is committed to undertaking consultation and community engagement to improve services.	The organisation undertakes consultation and community engagement to improve services.	The organisation has, over time, undertaken consultation and community engagement, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and the community.
	b	The organisation does not attempt to identify and utilise best practice techniques or innovations to engage with its communities.	The organisation is attempting to identify and utilise best practice techniques or innovations to engage with its communities.	The organisation has identified and utilises best practice techniques or innovations to engage with its communities.	The organisation has, over time, identified, developed and utilised best practice techniques or innovations to engage with its communities and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and community.
	c	The organisation has not attempted to engage with under-represented groups.	The organisation is attempting to engage with under-represented groups	The organisation engages with under-represented groups.	The organisation has regularly engaged with under-represented groups and has redesigned and improved services as a result.
	d	The organisation has not involved and supported interest groups with whom it can consult on green space policy and issues.	The organisation is planning to involve and support interest groups with whom it can consult on green space policy and issues.	The organisation regularly involves and supports interest groups with whom it can consult on green space policy and issues.	The organisation has, over time, involved and supported interest groups with whom it regularly consults on green space policy and issues and can demonstrate the value of this.
	e	The organisation has not considered the implications of equal opportunity and diversity in its approach to consultation and engagement.	The organisation is considering the implications of equal opportunity and diversity in its approach to consultation and engagement.	The organisation has incorporated the implications of equal opportunity and diversity in its approach to consultation and engagement.	The organisation has embedded the implications of equal opportunity and diversity in its approach to consultation and engagement and can demonstrate the impact of this on its services.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
3.3 The organisation is able to demonstrate the value of its work with communities in providing services.	a	The organisation does not use the results of consultation and engagement to shape its policies, strategy and plans.	The organisation is using some of the results of consultation and engagement to shape its policies, strategy and plans.	The organisation uses the results of consultation and engagement to shape its policies, strategy and plans.	The organisation has, over time, used the results of consultation and engagement to shape its policies, strategy and plans, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and the community.
	b	The organisation does not use the results of consultation and engagement to shape planning and allocation of resources.	The organisation is using some of the results of consultation and engagement to shape planning and allocation of resources.	The organisation uses the results of consultation and engagement to shape planning and allocation of resources.	The organisation has, over time, used the results of consultation and engagement to shape planning and allocation of resources, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and the community.
	c	The organisation has no clear view or accurate measurement of the outcomes from its engagement activity.	The organisation is developing mechanisms to measure outcomes from its engagement activity.	The organisation is measuring the outcomes from its engagement activity.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of its engagement activity.

Theme 4: Partnership Working

The organisation works in a structured way with other organisations (ie, organisations outside the scope of the self-assessment) to deliver and improve parks and open spaces.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
4.1 The organisation develops and maintains a clear understanding and awareness of partnership working.	a	People in the organisation have little or no understanding and awareness of how partnerships could help to achieve strategy.	There is a developing understanding and awareness in the organisation about how partnerships can help to achieve strategy.	Most people in the organisation understand and are aware of how partnerships can help to achieve strategy.	People throughout the organisation fully understand and are aware of how partnerships have helped to achieve strategy.
	b	People are unclear about the status of partnerships and the decision-making responsibilities allocated to them.	People are learning about the status of partnerships and the decision-making responsibilities allocated to them.	Most people are clear about the status of partnerships and the decision-making responsibilities allocated to them.	People throughout the organisation are clear about the status of partnerships and the decision-making responsibilities allocated to them, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this.
	c	People working in partnerships are unclear about their role and responsibilities to the partnership and the organisation.	People working in partnerships are learning about their role and responsibilities to the partnership and the organisation.	People working in partnerships are clear about their role and responsibilities to the partnership and the organisation.	People working in partnerships are clear and confident about their role and responsibilities to the partnership and the organisation, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on partnership working.
	d	The organisation's representatives rarely attend partnership meetings.	The organisation's representatives sometimes attend partnership meetings.	The organisation's representatives attend partnership meetings on a regular basis and participate fully.	The organisation's representatives are active advocates of the partnership, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
4.2 The organisation proactively develops and maintains relevant partnerships in order to achieve strategy.	a	The organisation has not explored partnership working to achieve strategy.	The organisation is developing partnerships to assist in achieving strategy.	The organisation has partnerships in place to assist in achieving strategy.	The organisation has been developing partnerships for a number of years to assist in achieving strategy, and can demonstrate the impact of this on results.
	b	There are no processes to ensure that the organisation's contribution to partnership working is informed by and relevant to the community.	Processes are being developed to ensure that the organisation's contribution to partnership working is informed by and relevant to the community.	Processes are in place to ensure that the organisation's contribution to partnership working is informed by and relevant to the community.	Processes have been in place for some time to ensure that the organisation's contribution to partnership working is informed by and relevant to the community, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	c	The organisation does nothing to build capacity within the voluntary, private and community sectors to enable them to participate in partnerships.	The organisation is starting to build capacity within the voluntary, private and community sectors to enable them to participate in partnerships.	The organisation has built capacity within the voluntary, private and community sectors to enable them to participate in partnerships.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of the capacity built within the voluntary, private and community sectors to enable them to participate in partnerships.
	d	The organisation is distrustful of its partnerships and seeks to exert control.	The organisation is cautious about its partnership arrangements and does not, therefore, participate and react fully.	The organisation is able to participate fully within its partnerships and to contribute to the partnerships' decision-making processes.	The organisation is confident to participate fully within its partnerships and to devolve decision making to them, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	e	The organisation does not seek to develop shared goals with its partners.	The organisation is starting to develop shared goals with its partners.	The organisation develops shared goals with its partners.	The organisation has, over time, developed shared goals with partners and can demonstrate the impact of this on results.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
4.3 The organisation takes into account the implications and impact on partnership arrangements when taking policy and budget decisions.	a	The organisation does not consider the implications and impact on partnership arrangements prior to the formation and endorsement of relevant policies and decisions.	The organisation is starting to consider the implications and impact on partnership arrangements prior to the formation and endorsement of relevant policies and decisions.	The organisation considers the implications and impact on partnership arrangements prior to the formation and endorsement of relevant policies and decisions.	The implications and impact on partnership arrangements have regularly influenced relevant policies and decisions made by the organisation.
	b	The organisation does not consider the implications and impact on partnership arrangements as part of the annual budget and service planning process.	The organisation is starting to consider the implications and impact on partnership arrangements as part of the annual budget and service planning process.	The organisation considers the implications and impact on partnership arrangements within the annual budget and service planning process.	The implications and impact on partnership arrangements have regularly influenced budget and service planning decisions made by the organisation.
4.4 The organisation continually reviews and modifies its involvement in partnerships and is able to demonstrate their value.	a	The organisation does not monitor and evaluate the ongoing benefits of its involvement in partnerships.	The organisation is starting to monitor and evaluate the ongoing benefits of its involvement in partnerships.	The organisation monitors and evaluates the ongoing benefits of its involvement in partnerships.	The organisation regularly monitors and evaluates the ongoing benefits of its involvement in partnerships, and can demonstrate the impact of this evaluation.
	b	The organisation is not able to demonstrate the rationale and value of its partnership arrangements and to differentiate between them.	The organisation is committed to demonstrating the rationale and value of some of its partnership arrangements and differentiating between them.	The organisation demonstrates the rationale and value of most of its partnership arrangements and differentiates between them.	The organisation demonstrates the rationale and value of all partnership arrangements and differentiates between them, in terms of outcomes achieved over time.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	c	There is no consistency in the views of other partners on the value of particular partnerships.	There is some consistency in the views of other partners on the value of particular partnerships.	There is consistency in the views of other partners on the value of particular partnerships.	There is clear consistency in the views of other partners on the value and outcomes achieved by particular partnerships.
	d	Partnerships are allowed to continue when of little or no benefit to the organisation.	The organisation recognises that partnership arrangements need to be reviewed but is slow to take action.	The organisation is able and willing to evaluate partnership arrangements and take action to ensure improvements are made.	The organisation regularly evaluates the value of partnership arrangements and can demonstrate taking effective action to ensure that the organisation does not waste resources in partnerships that do not meet its objectives.

Theme 5: Use of Resources

The organisation ensures efficient use of resources to achieve service improvement.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
5.1 The organisation allocates financial resources in accordance with strategic priorities.	a	The organisation does not take budget decisions in accordance with strategic priorities.	The organisation is starting to take budget decisions in accordance with strategic priorities.	The organisation takes budget decisions in accordance with strategic priorities.	The budget has been reshaped over time in accordance with strategic priorities, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this on its results.
	b	The organisation does not take budget decisions to enable service improvement.	The organisation is starting to take budget decisions to enable service improvement.	The organisation takes budget decisions to achieve service improvement.	Previous budget decisions have achieved desired outcomes in terms of service improvement.
	c	Where resources have been reduced or redirected it has resulted in a negative impact on the service and staff.	Where resources have been reduced or redirected some effort has been made to minimise the negative impact on the service and staff.	Where resources have been reduced or redirected the process has been managed to minimise the negative impact on the service and staff.	Where resources have been reduced or redirected there has been no negative impact on the service and staff.
5.2 The organisation controls the use of its financial resources effectively.	a	The organisation does not use budget targets to improve performance.	The organisation is starting to use budget targets to improve performance.	The organisation uses budget targets to improve performance.	The organisation can demonstrate that the use of budget targets has led to improved performance.
	b	There are no systems for monitoring financial performance.	The organisation is developing systems for monitoring financial performance at some levels of management.	The organisation uses systems for monitoring financial performance to provide accurate and timely information to most levels of management.	The organisation uses well-developed systems for monitoring financial performance to provide accurate and timely information to all levels of management, and can demonstrate the impact of this on financial results.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	c	Managers are not able to take financial decisions to improve service and performance.	Managers are being trained and encouraged to take financial decisions to improve service and performance.	Managers take financial decisions to improve service and performance.	Managers take financial decisions and can demonstrate improvements in service and performance as a result.
5.3 The organisation achieves value for money in the use of its resources and adds value by its actions and activity.	a	The organisation cannot demonstrate how it improves efficiency.	The organisation is developing ways to improve efficiency.	The organisation systematically improves efficiency.	The organisation has, over time, systematically improved efficiency and can demonstrate the impact of this activity on results.
	b	The organisation has not compared its financial performance with other organisations.	The organisation is planning to compare its financial performance with other organisations.	The organisation compares its financial performance with other appropriate organisations.	The organisation has used comparator financial data for a number of years, and can demonstrate this has improved the performance of the organisation.
	c	The organisation has no process for procuring goods and service to support service improvement.	The organisation is developing a process for procuring goods and service to support improvement.	The organisation has a procurement process for goods and service to support improvement.	The organisation has a record of procuring goods and service to support service improvement over a number of years.
	d	The organisation has not considered alternative service delivery mechanisms (eg, grounds maintenance contractors, trusts, etc).	The organisation is considering evaluating the use of alternative service delivery mechanisms to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation has evaluated the use of alternative service delivery mechanisms to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of using a range of appropriate service delivery mechanisms.
	e	The organisation does not invest in innovation and creativity to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation is starting to invest in innovation and creativity to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation invests in innovation and creativity to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of investing in innovation and creativity.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	f	The organisation does not have a systematic approach to project management.	The organisation is developing a systematic approach to project management.	The organisation has a systematic approach to project management.	The organisation has a systematic approach to project management and can demonstrate how this has aided improvement in services.
	g	The organisation does not have a systematic approach to risk management applied to service delivery, projects and change management.	The organisation is developing a systematic approach to risk management applied to service delivery, projects and change management.	The organisation has developed a systematic approach to risk management applied to service delivery, projects and change management.	The organisation has in place a systematic approach to risk management applied to service delivery, projects and change management and can demonstrate its impact on service improvement.
5.4 The organisation seeks and attracts resources from outside the organisation.	a	The organisation does not attempt to attract external funding and other resources to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation is seeking to attract external funding and other resources but they are not targeted towards achieving strategy.	The organisation has attracted external funding and other resources to help to achieve strategy.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of attracting external funding and other resources to help to achieve strategy.
	b	External agencies and partners do not wish to invest in the organisation.	External agencies and partners are expressing interest in investing in the organisation.	External agencies and partners have invested in the organisation.	External agencies and partners have continued to invest in the organisation over a number of years and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this.
5.5 The organisation manages its physical assets (equipment, vehicles and premises) efficiently.	a	The organisation does not have an asset management plan.	The organisation is developing an asset management plan.	The organisation maintains its assets in accordance with an asset management plan.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of maintaining its assets in accordance with a long-term asset management plan.
	b	The organisation does not use available assets to stimulate or maintain investment in the services.	The organisation is planning to use available assets to stimulate or maintain investment in the services.	The organisation is using available assets to stimulate or maintain investment in the services.	The organisation has used available assets to develop and improve services over time.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
5.6 The organisation uses alternative and new technologies to achieve strategy.	c	The organisation does not contribute towards the e-government targets.	The organisation is seeking to contribute towards the e-government targets.	The organisation contributes towards the e-government targets.	The organisation has a record of contributing towards the e-government targets to improve services.
	d	New technology is not used effectively in the organisation.	There are plans to utilise new technology to improve service and performance.	New technology is used to improve service and performance.	New technology has been used significantly and the organisation can demonstrate how this has improved service and performance.

Theme 6: People Management

The organisation manages, develops and improves its people to support service improvement (based on the liP assessment framework).

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
6.1 The organisation develops and implements a strategy for managing people to improve its performance which is clearly defined and understood.	a	Senior managers have not put in place a strategy for improving the organisation's performance through people.	Senior managers are developing a strategy for improving the organisation's performance through people.	Senior managers have put into place a strategy for improving the organisation's performance through people.	Senior managers have a well-established strategy for improving the organisation's performance through people, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	b	The organisation has no approach to workforce planning and to managing its changing workforce needs.	The organisation is developing an approach to workforce planning and to managing its changing workforce needs.	The organisation has an approach to workforce planning and managing its changing workforce needs.	The organisation has a well-developed approach to workforce planning and has managed over a number of years its changing workforce needs.
	c	Managers do not consult staff when developing policies and strategy.	Managers are starting to consult staff when developing policies and strategy.	Managers consult staff when developing policies and strategy.	Managers have for many years consulted staff when developing policies and strategy and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	d	Managers do not involve people in developing service plans and agreeing team and individual goals.	Managers are starting to involve people in developing service plans and agreeing team and individual goals.	Managers involve people in developing service plans and agreeing team and individual goals.	Managers have for many years involved people in developing service plans and agreeing team and individual goals and can demonstrate the impact of this.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
6.2 The organisation plans learning and development to achieve strategy and plans.	a	Learning and developing needs are not clearly established.	Learning and developing needs based on the present and future needs of the organisation and its people are being established.	Learning and developing needs are clearly established based on the present and future needs of the organisation and its people.	Learning and developing needs have been clearly established for a number of years, based on the present and future needs of the organisation and its people, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this.
	b	The organisation has not planned activities to meet the learning and development needs.	The organisation is planning activities to meet the learning and development needs.	The organisation has planned, resourced and implemented activities to meet the learning and development needs.	The organisation has planned, resourced and implemented activities to meet the learning and development needs, and can demonstrate the impact of these activities on performance.
	c	People working in the organisation are not involved in identifying their learning and development needs.	Some people working in the organisation have been involved in identifying their learning and development needs.	People working in the organisation are involved in identifying their learning and development needs.	People working in the organisation have been involved in identifying their learning and development needs and can explain the impact of this.
	d	Senior managers do not have the capacity to engage with mainstream corporate functions and cross-cutting issues at a strategic level.	Senior managers are developing the capacity to engage with mainstream corporate functions and cross-cutting issues at a strategic level.	Senior managers have the capacity to engage with mainstream corporate functions and cross-cutting issues at a strategic level.	Senior managers have a well-developed capacity to engage with mainstream corporate functions and cross-cutting issues at a strategic level and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	e	Stakeholders and partners do not have confidence that the organisation has the ability to deliver.	The levels of skill and professionalism are starting to give confidence to stakeholders and partners that the organisation has the ability to deliver.	The levels of skill and professionalism give confidence to stakeholders and partners that the organisation has the ability to deliver.	The levels of skill and professionalism have, over time, given confidence to stakeholders and partners that the organisation has the ability to deliver, and the impact of this is clear.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	f	People working in the organisation do not develop their understanding of the issues and priorities of other council services and partners.	People working in the organisation are starting to develop their understanding of the issues and priorities of other council services and partners.	People working in the organisation develop their understanding of the issues and priorities of other council services and partners.	People have, for a number of years, developed their understanding of the issues and priorities of other council services and partners, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service and its position in the wider organisation.
	g	The organisation does not identify, share and make the best use of knowledge within the organisation and partner organisations.	The organisation is starting to identify, share and make the best use of knowledge within the organisation and partner organisations.	The organisation identifies, shares and makes the best use of knowledge within the organisation and partner organisations.	The organisation has, for a number of years, identified, shared and made the best use of knowledge within the organisation and partner organisations and can demonstrate the impact of this.
6.3 The organisation's strategy for managing people is designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of people.	a	Managers have not created an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve performance.	Managers are developing an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve performance.	Managers have created an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve performance.	Managers have, for a number of years, created an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve performance, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	b	Managers do not make sure everyone has fair access to the support they need or that there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop.	Managers are starting to make sure everyone has fair access to the support they need and that there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop.	Managers make sure everyone has fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop.	Managers have made sure everyone has fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop, which has improved their performance.
	c	The organisation is not developing a diverse workforce which reflects the community it serves.	The organisation is developing a diverse workforce which reflects the community it serves.	The organisation has created a diverse workforce which reflects the community it serves.	The organisation has created a diverse workforce which reflects the community it serves, which in turn has enhanced service delivery.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	d	The organisation does not encourage imaginative approaches to flexible working.	The organisation is starting to encourage imaginative approaches to flexible working.	The organisation encourages imaginative approaches to flexible working.	The organisation has encouraged imaginative approaches to flexible working, and can demonstrate the impact of this on team performance.
6.4 Managers lead, manage and develop people effectively.	a	Managers have not developed the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people.	Some managers are developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people.	Managers have developed the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people.	Managers have the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop people effectively and plans are in place to make sure managers maintain and develop these capabilities.
	b	Managers do not give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.	Some managers give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.	Managers give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.	Managers give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate and can demonstrate the impact of this on people's performance.
	c	There are few or no opportunities for two-way communications.	There are some opportunities for two-way communications.	The organisation has planned and implemented two-way communication with all employees.	The organisation has planned and implemented two-way communication with all employees and can demonstrate the impact of this on people's performance.
6.5 The organisation encourages people to take ownership and responsibility for the service.	a	Managers do not encourage people working in the organisation to be involved in decision making.	Some managers encourage people working in the organisation to be involved in decision making.	Managers encourage people working in the organisation to be involved in decision-making.	Managers have, for a number of years, encouraged people to be involved in decision-making, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the organisation's results.
	b	The organisation does not encourage and support people to improve their own performance.	The organisation is starting to encourage and support people to improve their own performance.	The organisation encourages and supports people to improve their own performance.	The organisation has, for a number of years, encouraged and supported people to improve their own performance and can demonstrate the impact of this.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	c	The organisation does not empower its employees to take responsibility for changes that improve the service.	The organisation is starting to empower its employees to take responsibility for changes that improve the service.	The organisation empowers its employees to take responsibility for changes that improve the service.	The organisation empowers its employees to take responsibility for changes that improve the service and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
6.6 The organisation values and recognises people's contribution.	a	Managers do not recognise and value people's individual contribution.	Managers are starting to recognise and value people's individual contribution.	Managers recognise and value people's individual contribution.	Managers have regularly recognised and valued people's individual contribution and can demonstrate the impact of this on performance.

Theme 7: Standards of Service

The organisation manages and improves service delivery to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of users.

NOTE: The term 'process' means the sequence of steps involved in delivering parks and open spaces services to the user. Clearly these steps are rarely contained within one council department and could cut across the functions of various council departments, contractors and external partners. Criterion 7.1 essentially involves managing and improving these 'end-to-end' processes, rather than just the parks department's functions.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
7.1 The organisation plans and manages service delivery to meet the needs and expectations of users.	a	The organisation has not identified and defined the service delivery processes for parks and open spaces.	The organisation has started to identify and define the service delivery processes for parks and open spaces.	The organisation has identified and defined the service delivery processes for parks and open spaces.	The organisation has identified and defined the service delivery processes for parks and open spaces and can demonstrate how this has helped process improvement.
	b	The organisation has not designed and documented the service delivery processes.	The organisation is starting to design and document each service delivery process.	The organisation has designed and documented each service delivery process.	The organisation has designed and documented each service delivery process and can demonstrate the impact of this on the users.
	c	The organisation has few or no comprehensive service standards.	The organisation is developing comprehensive service standards.	The organisation has developed comprehensive service standards.	The organisation has operated comprehensive service standards over a number of years and can demonstrate the impact of this on the users.
	d	The organisation has not taken equal opportunities and diversity into account when setting its service standards.	The organisation is taking equal opportunities and diversity into account when setting its service standards.	The organisation has taken equal opportunities and diversity into account in setting its service standards.	The organisation can demonstrate the impact of embedding equal opportunities and diversity into its service standards.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	e	The organisation manages the service delivery processes to ensure the standards are being met and users are satisfied.	The organisation is starting to manage the service delivery processes to ensure the standards are being met and users are satisfied.	The organisation manages the service delivery processes to ensure the standards are being met and users are satisfied.	The organisation has a well-established approach to managing the service delivery processes and can demonstrate the impact of this on the user.
	f	The organisation does not use relevant and recognised external and industry standards to assist in improving the service (eg, Green Flag Park Award).	The organisation is planning to use relevant and recognised external and industry standards to assist in improving the service (eg, Green Flag Park Award).	The organisation uses relevant and recognised external and industry standards to assist in improving the service (eg, Green Flag Park Award).	The organisation has, for a number of years, used relevant and recognised external and industry standards to assist in improving the service (eg, Green Flag Park Award) and can demonstrate the impact of this on the user.
	g	The organisation does not operate a proactive approach to managing health and safety risks.	The organisation is in the process of implementing a proactive approach to managing health and safety risks.	The organisation operates a proactive approach to managing health and safety risks.	The organisation has, for a number of years, operated a proactive approach to managing health and safety risks and can demonstrate the impact of this on health and safety results.
	h	The organisation does not review and improve service delivery processes in a systematic way.	The organisation is starting to review and improve service delivery processes in a systematic way.	The organisation reviews and improves service delivery processes in a systematic way.	The organisation has a well-established system for review and improvement of service delivery processes and can demonstrate the impact of this on the user.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
7.2 The organisation manages the relationships with the users to improve their experience of parks and open spaces.	a	The organisation is not clearly committed to enhancing the experience of users.	The organisation is developing a clear commitment to enhancing the experience of users.	The organisation has developed and communicated a clear commitment to enhancing the experience of users.	The organisation has a well-established clear commitment to enhancing the experience of users, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the service.
	b	The organisation does not train and develop staff to communicate effectively with users.	The organisation has started to train and develop staff to communicate effectively with users.	The organisation trains and develops staff to communicate effectively with users.	The organisation operates a well-established approach for training and developing staff to communicate effectively with users, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	c	Users tend to be passed from person to person when making an enquiry.	The organisation is planning to ensure that users are not passed from person to person when making an enquiry.	Users are not passed from person to person when making an enquiry.	The organisation operates a well-established approach for dealing with enquiries so that the users are not passed from person to person, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the users.
	d	The organisation does not give users comprehensive and easy-to-understand information about the service.	The organisation gives users some easy-to-understand information about the service.	The organisation gives users comprehensive and easy-to-understand information about the service.	The organisation has, over time, given users comprehensive and easy-to-understand information about the service, and can demonstrate the impact of this.
	e	The organisation does not publish its service standards for users.	The organisation is committed to publishing its service standards for users.	The organisation publishes its service standards for users.	The organisation has, for a number of years, published its service standards, and can demonstrate the impact of this on users.
	f	There is no regular dialogue with users.	People in the organisation are starting to have regular dialogue with users.	People in the organisation are involved in regular dialogue with users.	People in the organisation have, for a number of years, been involved in regular dialogue with users and can demonstrate the impact of this.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	g	The organisation does not have a structured process for obtaining and dealing with feedback from users and using this to improve the service.	The organisation is planning a structured process for obtaining and dealing with feedback from users and using this to improve the service.	The organisation operates a structured process for obtaining and dealing with feedback from users and using this to improve the service.	The organisation operates a well-established and structured process for obtaining and dealing with feedback from users and using this to improve the service, and can demonstrate the impact of this process on users and the service.
7.3 The organisation ensures that service standards are based on the needs and expectation of users.	a	Communities are not involved in setting local standards and monitoring performance.	Communities are starting to set local standards and monitor performance.	Communities set local standards and are engaged in monitoring performance.	Communities have set local standards and are engaged in monitoring performance.
	b	The organisation does not base service standards on the needs and expectations of users.	The organisation is starting to base service standards on the needs and expectations of users.	The organisation bases service standards on the needs and expectations of users.	The organisation has, for a number of years, based service standards on the needs and expectations of users, and can demonstrate the impact of this on the users.
	c	The organisation does not regularly measure user satisfaction with its services.	The organisation is committed to regularly measuring user satisfaction with its services.	The organisation regularly measures user satisfaction with its services and publishes the results.	The organisation regularly measures user satisfaction with its services, and can demonstrate how the service has improved as a result.

Theme 8: Performance Measurement and Learning

The organisation measures, reviews and evaluates its performance to facilitate learning and continuous improvement.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
8.1 The organisation has developed a performance measurement culture.	a	The organisation has little or no understanding of the importance and need for performance measurement.	The organisation is developing an understanding of the importance and need for performance measurement at some levels.	The organisation has an understanding of the importance and need for performance measurement at many levels.	The organisation has a clear and thorough understanding of the importance and need for performance measurement at all levels.
	b	Staff are untrained in performance measurement and the use of performance indicators.	Staff have received some training in performance measurement and the use of performance indicators.	Staff are adequately trained in performance measurement and the use of performance indicators.	Staff are fully trained in performance measurement and the use of performance indicators, and the organisation can demonstrate the impact of this.
	c	Staff do not assume responsibility for performance measurement in their own area of work.	Staff assume limited responsibility for performance measurement in their areas of work.	Staff assume responsibility for performance measurement in some of their areas of work.	Staff are accountable for performance measurement in all their areas of work.
	d	Staff are not aware of the link between performance measurement and improvement.	Some staff are aware of the link between performance measurement and improvement.	Most staff are aware of the link between performance measurement and improvement.	Staff are aware of the link between performance measurement and improvement and can demonstrate where measurement has led to improvements.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	e	The organisation does not adequately monitor resource utilisation or review its structures, systems and work practices in response to its performance.	The organisation is developing means to monitor resource utilisation and is committed to reviewing its structures, systems and work practices in response to its performance.	The organisation has in place means to monitor resource utilisation and reviews its structures, systems and work practices in response to its performance.	The organisation regularly and systematically monitors resource utilisation and can demonstrate how it has reviewed its structures, systems and work practices and improved its performance as a result.
8.2 The organisation has developed a well-balanced range of high quality data and information.	a	The organisation has an inadequate range and number of indicators and data.	The organisation is developing a limited range and number of indicators and data.	The organisation's range of indicators and data is broad enough to enable it to measure performance in the majority of its priority areas.	The organisation has developed a wide range of indicators and data, which enable it to measure its performance in all areas.
	b	Information is incomplete, not easy to access or analyse, and is not easily understood.	Information is largely incomplete, not easy to access or analyse, and is not easily understood.	Information is mostly complete, accessible, able to be analysed and easily understood.	Information is complete, easy to access and analyse, understandable and has been communicated within the organisation.
	c	Indicators for equality and diversity are incomplete and insufficient to enable the organisation to assess its progress against its objectives.	Indicators for equality and diversity are being developed and will enable the organisation to assess its progress against a small number of its objectives.	Indicators for equality and diversity are broad ranging but incomplete, although they do enable the organisation to assess progress against most of its objectives.	Indicators for equality and diversity are complete, broad ranging and sufficient to enable the organisation to assess its progress against its objectives.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	d	Data is not collated on time, at regular intervals or in a format that allows ease of monitoring and evaluation.	Some data is collated on time, at regular intervals and in a format that allows limited ease of monitoring and evaluation.	Most data is collated on time, at regular intervals and in a format that allows monitoring and evaluation.	Data is collated on time, at regular intervals appropriate to objectives and timescales and in a format that allows ease of monitoring and evaluation.
	e	Analysis and dissemination is slow and does not allow timely and appropriate action.	Analysis and dissemination is mostly slow and does not allow timely and appropriate action to be taken.	Analysis and dissemination is quick and allows timely and appropriate action to be taken across most work areas.	Analysis and dissemination is quick and allows timely and appropriate action to be taken across all work areas.
	f	Feedback on performance is not made freely or easily available within appropriate timescales to those involved.	Some feedback on performance is made freely and easily available within appropriate timescales to those involved.	Feedback on most performance is made freely and easily available within appropriate timescales to those involved.	Feedback on all performance is made freely and easily available within appropriate timescales to those involved.
8.3 The organisation monitors and takes action on performance information.	a	Monitoring does not focus on key priorities and objectives.	Monitoring focuses on a few key priorities and objectives	Monitoring focuses on most key priorities and objectives.	Monitoring focuses fully on key priorities and objectives.
	b	Monitoring does not enable the organisation to identify any success or under-performance and fails to prompt appropriate action.	Monitoring enables the organisation to identify a small number of successes and under-performance but fails to prompt adequate action proportionate to targets.	Monitoring enables the organisation to identify most successes as well as under-performance, and leads to many actions proportionate to the target, timescale and resources required.	Monitoring enables the organisation to identify all successes as well as under-performance, and leads to clear and appropriate action proportionate to the target, timescale and resources required.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	c	Reporting is not used to highlight or communicate progress or success and does not describe action to address under-performance.	Reporting is used minimally to highlight or communicate progress or success and describes actions to address under-performance in a few areas.	Reporting is used to highlight and communicate many areas of progress and success and describes actions to address under-performance in most cases.	Reporting is used to effectively highlight and communicate progress and success and fully describes actions to be taken to address under-performance.
	d	There are no or very few performance reports.	Reporting is limited to a few people and is infrequent.	A variety of reports is provided to stakeholders (managers, elected members, users and wider public as necessary) on a frequency appropriate to the targets and timescales.	A wide variety of reports is provided to a full range of stakeholders (managers, elected members, users and wider public as necessary) on a frequency appropriate to the targets and timescales.
	e	Monitoring arrangements do not provide adequate, quality information to enable members, managers and staff to take action.	Monitoring arrangements provide poor quality information to enable members, managers and staff to take action in a small number of work areas.	Monitoring arrangements provide adequate quality information to enable members, managers and staff to take action across most work areas.	Monitoring arrangements provide high quality information to enable members, managers and staff to take action across all work areas.
	f	Monitoring reports are unclear or incomplete, do not cover all measures and service areas, lack clear purpose and do not include actions in response to under-performance.	A few monitoring reports are clear and complete, cover all measures and service areas, have a clear purpose and include actions in response to under-performance.	Most monitoring reports are clear and complete, cover all measures and service areas, have a clear purpose and include actions in response to under-performance	All monitoring reports are clear and complete, cover all measures and service areas, have a clear purpose and include actions in response to under-performance.

Criteria		Level 1 – Poor	Level 2 – Fair	Level 3 – Good	Level 4 – Excellent
	g	There is little action following monitoring.	There is some action following monitoring.	Action following monitoring is in most cases appropriate to the importance of the targets, the extent of under-performance, timescales and resource requirements.	Action following monitoring is appropriate to the importance of the targets, the extent of under-performance, timescales and resource requirements.
	h	The organisation does not reallocate people and financial resources to address under-performance.	The organisation reallocates people and financial resources to address under-performance identified in a few cases.	The organisation is able to reallocate people and financial resources to address under-performance in most cases.	The organisation is thorough in reallocating people and financial resources to address under-performance.
8.4 The organisation learns from its performance measurement and utilises it in its future planning.	a	The organisation does not have a positive attitude to learning from performance.	Some managers and elected members have a positive attitude to learning from performance and act as role models across some areas of the service.	Most managers and elected members have a positive attitude to learning from performance and act as role models across most areas of the service.	All managers and elected members have a positive attitude to learning from performance and act as role models across all areas of the service.
	b	Time is not made available for reflection and review and past lessons and experiences are not fed into the forward planning process.	Some time is made available for reflection and review and some past lessons and experiences are fed into the forward planning process.	Time is made available for reflection and review and many past lessons and experiences are fed into the forward planning process.	Time is made available for reflection and review and past lessons and experiences are fed into the forward planning process.