

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Policy and Governance (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Council	26 February 2019

COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS TEAM STAFFING REVIEW

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To seek member approval for a new structure in the Communications and Events team.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To approve the proposed structure for consultation.
3. Delegate the final decision on the new structure to the Executive Member for Resources subject to there being no major changes following the consultation period

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

4. The role of the Communications and Events team has continued to change significantly since the staffing of the team was reviewed two years ago. The side of the team based at the Town Hall is facing greater demands balancing the demand of event delivery, major projects support and the increasing use of digital channels as a way for people to communicate with the council.
5. We are also about to embark on major work to improve the site at Astley Hall and make it more sustainable with commercial opportunities so we need to look at refreshing the structure to reflect these new demands.
6. The proposed structure will require a permanent increase of £16,800 in revenue staffing budgets.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	x

BACKGROUND

8. The current Communications and Events team structure has been in place for two years and as the organisation continues to undergo significant change we need to adapt the structure to ensure it is fit for purpose.
9. The main drivers for changes within the structure are:
 - a. An expanding events programme means the current staffing structure struggles to balance the delivery of events and other priorities for the service.
 - b. The increasing use of social media as a communications channel, particularly relating to customer contact and queries, means the demands on the service for this resource are growing.
 - c. The changing nature of the organisation with major projects and changes to services we are delivering means the structure of the team struggles to cope with the demand and a more flexible approach to resourcing is required. Examples of this include the Market Walk extension project and the Digital Office Park, which have required more support than originally planned due to the complex nature of the projects.
 - d. If approved at budget council there will be significant investment in major improvement projects at Astley Hall as we look to safeguard the future of the building for generations to come while making it more sustainable financially.
10. All of the above means the day-to-day activities and internal communications activities drop to the bottom of the priority list and these areas need to be supported better.

COMMUNICATIONS

11. In terms of the communications part of the service the current structure (see appendix 1) is struggling to cope with the changing demands of the service and a fundamental review is needed to add in extra capacity while keeping the staffing budgets at similar levels.
12. As a team it is now delivering a bigger events programme, some of which are increasing in scale and take up significant amounts of time to deliver. To help with this the proposed structure looks to separate out event delivery roles so those officers are working solely on events with two full-time and one seasonal role (6 months) to help with capacity at the busiest time of the year. It adds in capacity at a lower level to help deliver some of the more day-to-day tasks so more senior members of the team can concentrate on improving the events year on year.
13. The tourism service that the team provides will be moved over to the Astley Hall side of the team to drive forward stronger links between attractions in the borough and support will be provided through the new role focussed on commercial development and developing the borough's cultural assets.
14. The changing nature of the organisation with larger projects that are more commercially driven means we need to have more flexibility in how we resource the team. There can be pressure points in the year which make it hard for the team to deliver its day-to-day service for the rest of the organisation because focus is on supporting the major projects. The proposal includes a role focussed solely on dealing with day-to-day internal and external communications and two roles (graphic designer and content creator) that will be used on a 'as required' basis with a bank of freelancers to support the team.
15. The Single Front Office review to take place later in the year will also consider how we can better manage customer contact enquiries that come to us through social media.

16. With the Strawberry Fields Digital Hub due to open soon this could create an opportunity for the team to build closer relationships with digital and creative businesses for mutual benefit. This will help spark more creativity in the team and help manage peaks in demand for the service.
17. To make this work the larger projects will need to be properly resourced for communications and marketing support to enable the flexibility to grow the team on a short-term basis. Or the team will look to commission external marketing agencies to deliver some of the projects.

ASTLEY HALL

18. The future plans for Astley Hall have been widely documented with the council looking to fund major improvement works following the rejection of the second Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid in December.
19. While the work is vital to secure the future of the Hall for the next generation it is also an opportunity to look at more commercial opportunities at the site including:
 - a. The introduction of a museum shop
 - b. A review of the spaces in the farmhouse to create commercial lets
 - c. The refurbishment of Ackhurst Lodge
 - d. The possibility of introducing admission fees for the Hall in the future
 - e. Increasing bookings for weddings, conferences and other ceremonies
20. To this end we lack a role relating to business development and commercial skills, with a heritage focus, so the proposal is to create a new post that specifically covers these areas.
21. As the investment in the site is significant it will also require close management and more capacity to look at developing the engagement and visitor experience.
22. While this work is undertaken it is proposed to include an increase in responsibility to the Arts and Heritage Manager and Museum Officer posts for a fixed time period of two years – an extra day will also be added in for the education and engagement role to allow for greater support to the project while balancing the demand for school visits.
23. There will also be a flattening of the structure to reduce the amount of supervisor roles and the creation of a conservation cleaner post to reflect the needs of the site going forward. A museum assistant role has been created but would not be recruited to until any museum shop is opened.

Feedback from the informal consultation

24. The informal consultation took place in January for a period of two weeks and was based around the following areas:
 - a. To consider how the changing world of communications, which offers us great opportunities to use insight and data, needs to lead to a bigger change in how we work both in terms of what we produce and how we review the outcomes.
 - b. To consider our approach and the resource we have for delivering events, given the type and nature of events continues to change, and how we deliver these alongside other priorities.
 - c. To consider how demands on the team through an increase in visitors at Astley Hall and their expectations and a drive towards more commercial sustainability on the site can be met and whether a change in focus is needed to react to this

- d. To consider the overall team structure and ensure it meets the needs of the business
25. A number of comments were received during the informal consultation period and they are summarised in appendix 2.

PROPOSALS

26. After taking into account all the above information the proposal is to delete the following posts:
 - Events and Tourism Lead
 - Events Coordinator
 - Digital Communications Analyst (this is a 12-month contract that will continue to run until February 2020)
 - Visitor Services Officer
27. And to establish the following posts:
 - Events Team Leader
 - Events Officer
 - Events Assistant
 - Communications Officer
 - Museum Officer (Commercial Development)
 - Conservation Assistant
 - Casual Museum Shop Assistant
 - Customer Communications Officer
28. And to transfer the following post as part of the senior management review:
 - Astley Attendant Supervisor
29. It is proposed the following posts is re-designated:
 - a. Branding and Digital Lead to Creative and Design Lead
30. It is proposed the following post remains in the structure with slight changes to the job description:
 - a. Digital Communications Officer
31. It is proposed that the following posts be given additional responsibilities for a period of two years, at which point it will be reviewed:
 - a. Arts and Heritage Manager – honorarium to grade POD (subject to JE)
 - b. Museum Officer (Exhibitions and Events) – honorarium to grade Sc5 (subject to JE)
 - c. Museum Officer (Collections) - honorarium to grade Sc5 (subject to JE)
 - d. Museum Officer (Education and Engagement) – with the hours of this post increasing to 29 - honorarium to grade Sc5 (subject to JE)
32. The proposed structure is available to see at appendix 2.
33. The rationale behind the changes to the Communications part of the team is to build capacity as outlined earlier in the report.
34. The changes to the team based at Astley Hall are largely around delivering major improvements to the site that will make it more sustainable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Current Structure

Post	Grade	Budget £
Events and Tourism Lead	POB	44,708
Branding and Digital Lead	POB	44,708
Events Co-Ordinator	SO1	35,747
Digital Communications Officer	Sc6	32,583
Digital Communications Analyst	Sc5	16,467
		174,200

Proposed Structure

Post	Grade	Budget £
Creative and Design Lead	POB	44,708
Events Team Leader	SO2	39,061
Communications Officer	SO1	35,747
Digital Communications Officer	Sc5	29,342
Events Officer	Sc5	29,342
Events Assistant (6 months)*	Sc3	0
		178,200

*charged to the events budget

35. The additional cost of the structure will be £4,000 however, the Astley Attendant Supervisor role will be transferred as part of the senior management review. The budget for this post is £12,800 and it will not be available to fund other posts in the team, as such the total cost of this restructure is £16,800. The additional cost of this restructure will be brought into the budget as part of the senior management review also on this Full Council agenda.
36. The temporary cost of funding the 24 months of honorariums is £32,000 (£16,000 per year) and will be funded through in-year revenue underspends.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

37. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	✓

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

38. The additional cost of this restructure will be brought into the budget as part of the senior management review also on this Full Council agenda. The temporary cost of funding the 24 months of honorariums is £16,000 per year and will be funded through in-year underspends.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

39. The proposed changes are being pursued in accordance with Council policy and procedures.

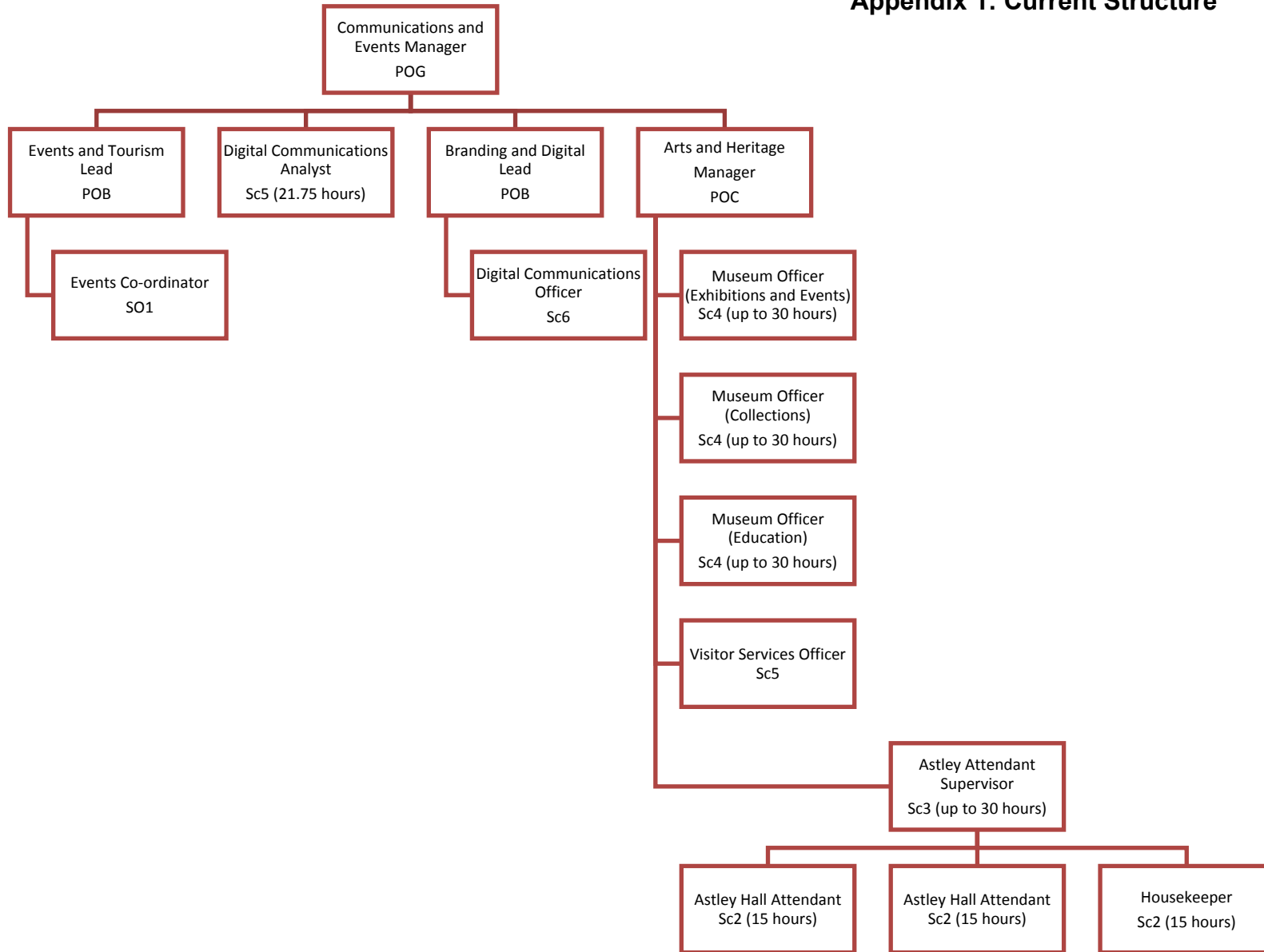
COMMENTS OF THE HR SERVICES MANAGER

40. We fully support the proposed changes to the structure as detailed in the proposals contained in this report. If agreed, we shall take them forward and implement the new structure in order to meet the changing needs of the service.

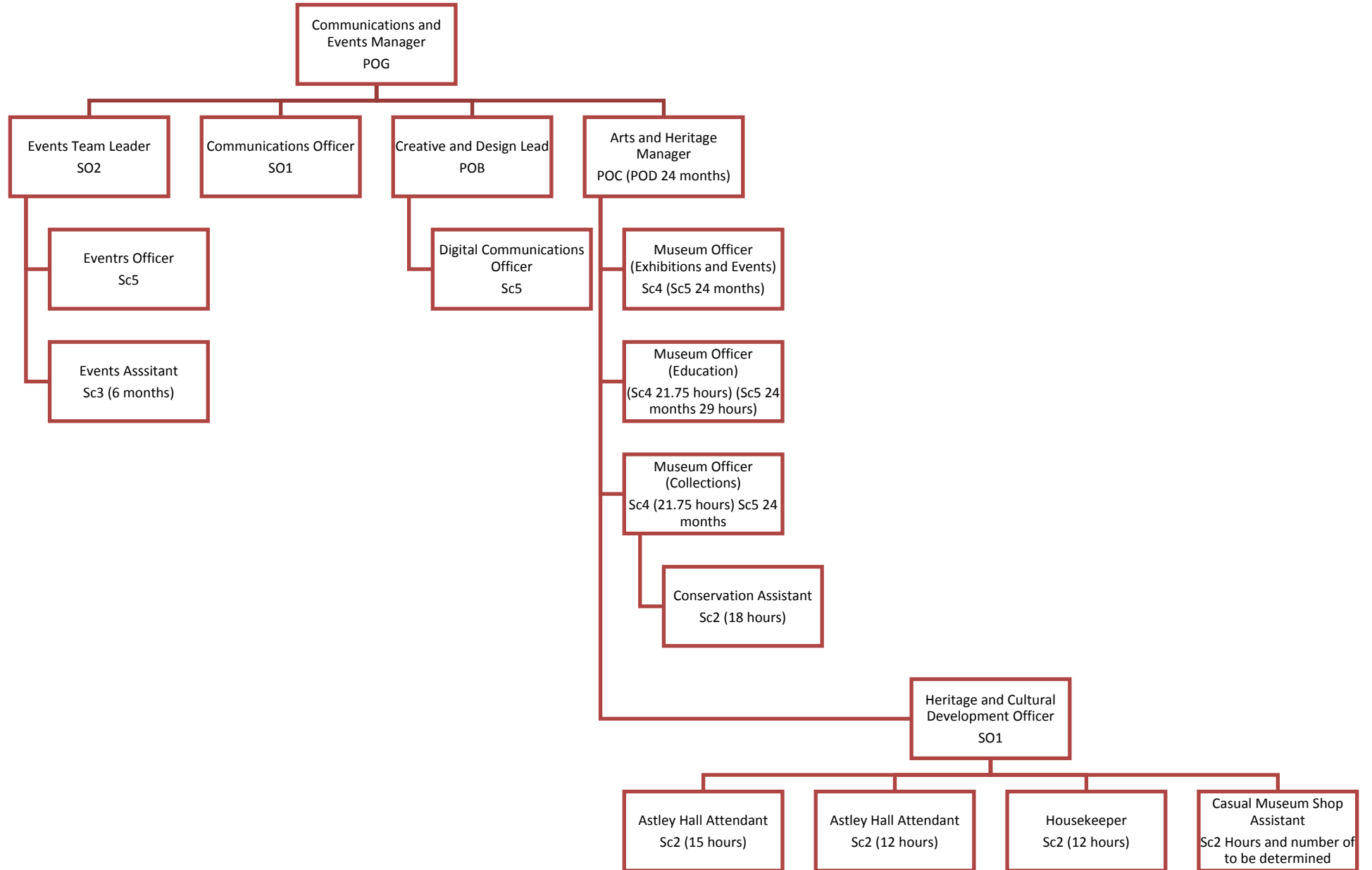
REBECCA HUDDLESTON
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Report Author	Ext	Date
Andrew Daniels	5265	14 February 2019

Appendix 1: Current Structure



Appendix 2: Proposed Structure



Communications and Events Staffing Review Feedback Matrix

Staff Feedback

Proposal	Feedback received	Comments/recommendation
Communications and Events	Need more capacity due to the demands of the team covering events, websites, social media, supporting large projects and delivering a service across the council	Agree that the demands of the service have changed and extra capacity has been added in the proposed structure with the equivalent of two additional full time roles across the Town Hall side of the team
	Social media needs more input from other services/customer services as it is increasingly becoming a contact channel for service requests	Agree – a new post has been created in the proposed structure to sit across the team and customer services to help address this.
	There were a series of comments relating to the need to better structure the team at Astley to enable more capacity for developing the offer, managing the various improvement projects and becoming more commercially-minded. There is also a reference to the fact that we need to review the pay of the museum officers as it is below the national averages.	Agree – these are dealt with by a number of changes to the structure at Astley Hall, which are outlined in the proposed structure. These include new posts, upping the hours of existing staff and creating two-year honorariums for staff who will be involved in the major improvement projects at Astley Hall.
	Payment for events is imbalanced when compared to what other services receive for working weekends/out of hours	To be reviewed with wider terms and conditions to ensure a fair approach across the organisation
	Frustration with ICT systems and equipment create barriers to carrying out work efficiently	To be addressed through the ICT improvement projects.
	A need to better manage expectations and demands on the site (at Astley)	Agree – this will be a key part of the officer roles and will be supported by the service manager,
	More capacity to deal with day-to-day issues that need dealing with in the communications side of the team.	Agree – it is proposed to include a new role (full time compared to the similar part-time role) in the new structure.
	Introducing parking charges at Astley to increase income	This is one of a number of options that will be reviewed each year.
	A number of comments related to certain ‘new’ elements at Astley such as the glasshouse and garden of reflection not having any budget associated with their general upkeep	Noted and will be reviewed, particularly as we start to generate more income from the site. It is also something that may be suitable for volunteers to take a more active role in.

Proposal	Feedback received	Comments/recommendation
	A need to review the types of third party events in the park that don't fit in with the offer such as football and athletics competitions.	Noted – this will be considered going forward as we balance the desire to become a tourist attraction while being a municipal park for local people to use.
	More flexible working hours as the TMS system doesn't cater well for sites like Astley where there is weekend.	This will be reviewed going forward as part of a wider review of terms and conditions.
	The Astley team may be better suited to moving under the regeneration and investment directorate rather than sitting in policy and governance	This will be reviewed as part of the wider management structure review.
	If a more commercial approach to the site is required then this change needs to be communicated with members so there is clarity over what officers will have discretion to decide and where members will need to be involved.	This is an important point as we change the focus of the organisation and will be covered through this process.