

**Agenda Item – Reporting and Monitoring performance**

**1. Method**

In the last quarter of 2012, the Council revised Appendix D to the grounds maintenance contracts with partners Quadron and The Landscape Group. Appendix D sets out the contract Quality Monitoring Procedure. The revision accompanied an updated and more comprehensive monitoring regime. Relevant training has been carried out with all relevant staff. After testing the technology and processes used in January, the monitoring system is being implemented from February 2013.

Each BCC Parks Head Gardener, supervisors from Quadron Services and The Landscape Group, Parks Contract Officers and In-House Parks Officers have been issued hand held electronic devices with our Quality Monitoring Software installed.

At the beginning of each month the BCC Contracts Manager deploys 25 condition surveys to each hand held device remotely.

The 25 condition surveys are spread geographically by ward and by asset and include:

- Grass: Boxed, Parks Recreational Turf, Highway and Housing Grass, Sheltered Housing Grass.
- Hard Surfaces: High, Med, Low, Gravel
- Park Furniture: Litter Bin, Dog Bin, Seat
- Ornamental Borders: Shrubs, Roses, Herbaceous
- Hedges Timed: Agricultural
- Hedges Monthly: Amenity
- Water Course
- Water Feature
- Park User Facility
- Sport Facility

The Officer will personally inspect each of their respective 25 surveys over the calendar month and award a mark of: **Very Good, Good, Fair** or **Poor**.

The officer also has the ability to record defects on the hand held device that they may come across as part of their monitoring inspections.

Further to the official monitoring carried out by the operations team our Quality Monitoring Officer will independently monitor the whole city on a monthly basis. This information is fed to managers to assist them in their management of the areas.

In the contract areas we have implemented a program of joint monitoring between parks officers and the contractor to build a better understanding of the specification.

**2. Use of data**

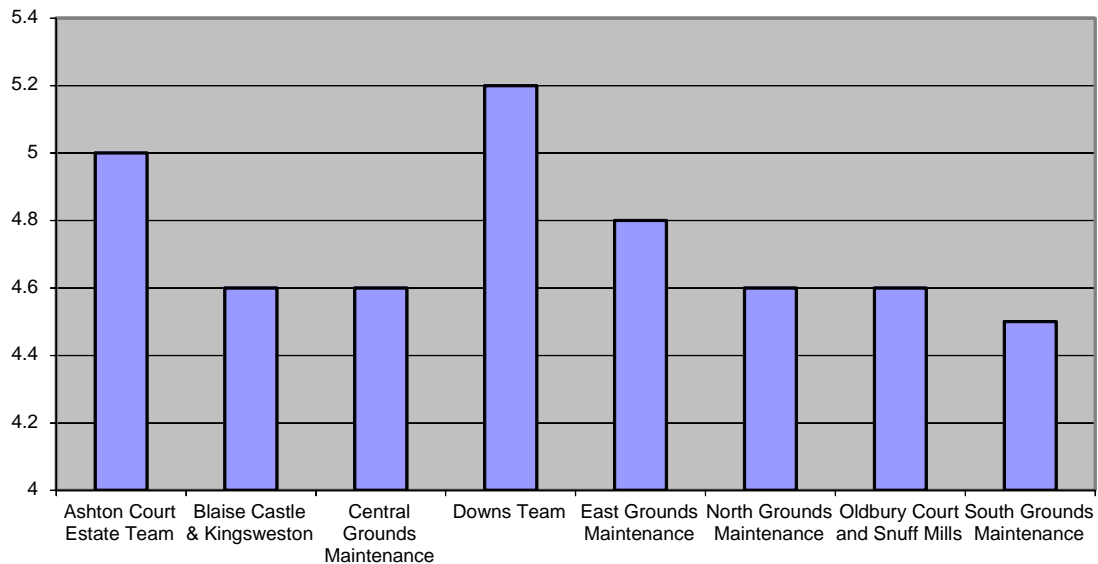
The monthly data is used to assess the performance of our teams, both in house and external contractors and enable managers to allocate resources more effectively.

Longer term the data will help identify trends in our operational programs and help us be more effective in allocating resources. It could also assist in the procurement of machinery and with new contracts. It will also assist in developing a value for money model for the future delivery of the parks service.

Currently when monitoring has identified an area of concern or a trend is occurring for example, it will be raised under the monthly contract agenda item on Monitoring and Performance with the relevant contractors management. BCC Parks Officer working with the contractor will review why the issue has arisen and set in place a program of improvement agreed with the contractor. This improvement program will continue to be monitored by officers to ensure the improvements take place and are sustained.

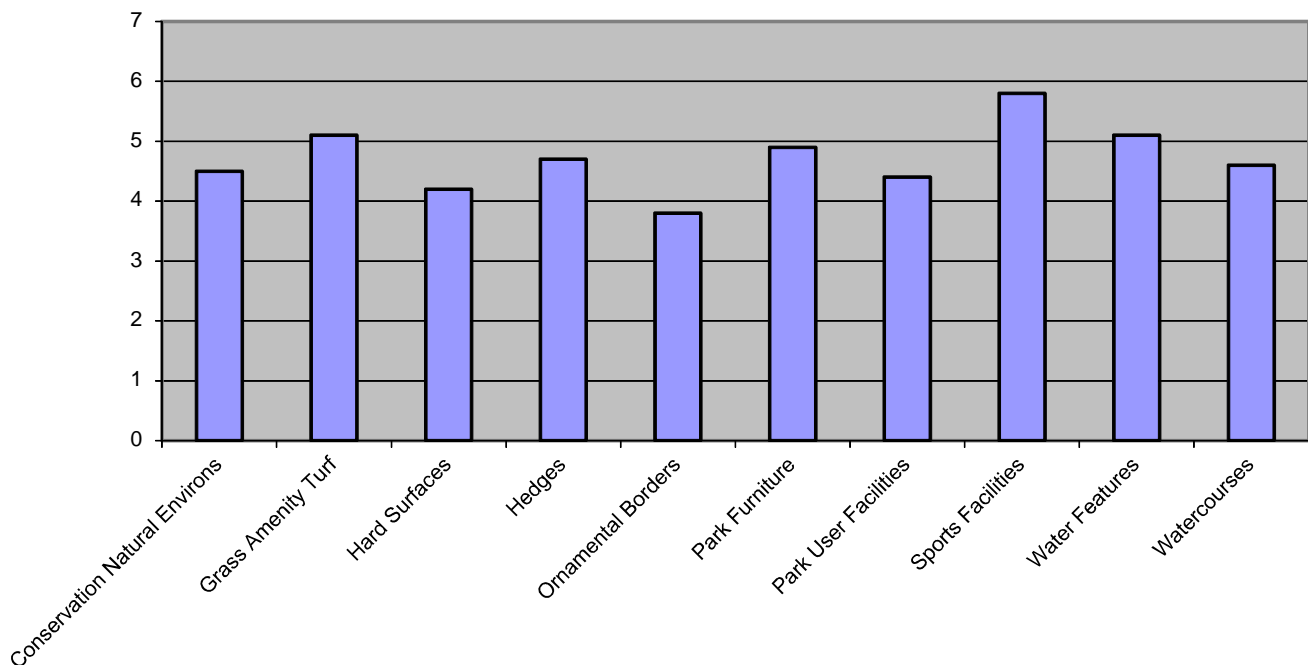
### 3. Results– past six months (See appendix A)

**Performance monitoring - Average score over 6 months by area**



Note: The score given is the mean average of all scores. The chart does not necessarily enable a direct area by area comparison. Some reference should be made to resourcing levels and the relative amounts of different feature classes in each area before doing this.

**Performance monitoring - Average score over 6 months all sites**



#### 4. Monitoring observations:

- The *mean average* score is around 'FAIR', score five, for most parts of the city and most feature groups. The expectation from the specification is 'GOOD', a minimum score of six.
- Using an average over six months, there are four 'POOR' measurements. There are sixteen 'GOOD' measurements.
- On average the poorest performing feature group is Ornamental Borders. The main defects detected are that the mulch level is low or missing and the presence of weeds.
- For grass cutting the main defects are that it is too long followed by the grass cut being incomplete.
- The only defect relating to conservation grass cutting is that the grass was not cut during the 'hay cut' window identified.
- For hard surfaces the main defects detected are the presence of moss/algae and the presence of weeds. Moss/algae is also a common defect for Park User Facilities and park furniture.
- The main defects for hedges are excessive growth and the presence of weeds.
- Accurate comparison between contract areas would also need to consider the costs and resourcing of each area, the amount of land under management, the relative quantity of feature groups and the ratio of different types of space.
- The number of monthly inspections has increased four-fold in the last two months compared with previously as the number of monitoring officers has been increased. The results from these months therefore offer greater reliability. Future months will offer the same reliability.

#### 5. Actions arising

- Due to the increased reliability of the inspection regime we are in a position to use the data to make evidence based changes to regimes and priorities:
  - Both grounds maintenance contractors have been briefed about Feature Achievement Notices and Feature Rectification notices and that, at monthly contract meetings, the details of contract performance - which feature classes are performing well and not well – will be discussed, assessed and actions agreed.
  - During February meetings have been planned with in-house grounds maintenance managers and the Landscapes Team to discuss as above.

## Appendix A

Rating	Description	Feature Score	Status
Un-rateable	Unable to rate feature due to technical reasons	0	
VV Poor	Applied where a feature is on contract but appears completely un-maintained.	1	Red
V Poor	Applied where a feature is considerably below specification in all aspects.	2	Red
Poor	Applied where a feature is considerably below specification in one or more aspects.	3	Red
Fair	Applied where a feature is slightly below specification in all aspects.	4	Amber
Fair	Applied where a feature is slightly below specification in one or more aspects.	5	Amber
Good	Applied where a feature has achieved contract standard in all aspects.	6	Green
V Good	Applied where a feature has achieved above specification in some aspects.	7	Green
VV Good	Applied where a feature has achieved above specification in the majority of aspects.	8	Green
Excellent	Applied where a feature has achieved above specification in all aspects.	9	Green
Exceptional	Applied where a feature has achieved a good standard with exceptional attention to detail.	10	Green