

**Report To:** **OVERVIEW (AUDIT) PANEL**

**Date:** 23 November 2015

**Executive Member /  
Scrutiny Panel:** Cllr Maria Bailey Chair of Place Scrutiny Panel  
Councillor Peter Robinson, Executive Member (Transport and Land Use)

**Subject:** **REVIEW OF GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

**Report Summary:** The Chair to Place Scrutiny Panel to comment on the Executive Response (**Appendix1**) to the Scrutiny review of the Grounds Maintenance and the recommendations made to support future services – **Appendix 2**.

**Recommendations:** That the Overview (Audit) Panel note the Executive Response to the recommendations detailed in section 9 of **Appendix 1**.

**Links to Community Strategy:** This review supports the Community Strategy priorities relating to 'Supportive Tameside' and 'Attractive Tameside'.

**Policy Implications:** The review itself has no specific policy implications. Should the recommendations of this report be accepted by the Tameside Council's Executive, the relevant services will need to assess the policy implications of putting individual recommendations in place.

**Financial Implications:  
(Authorised by the Section 151  
Officer)** There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

**Legal Implications:  
(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)** The Council needs to assure itself that resources are being used efficiently and effectively to deliver priority services. It may be that as we go forward and the Council needs to deliver services with 30% less budget that the services and/or recommendations are no longer deliverable and this needs to be kept under review so there is a clear rationale.

**Risk Management:** Reports of Scrutiny Panels are integral to processes which exist to hold the Executive of the authority to account.

**Access to Information:** The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe by:

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**APPENDIX 1****Post Scrutiny - Executive Response**

**In Respect of:** Scrutiny Review of Grounds Maintenance

**Date:** 13 August 2015

**Executive Member:** Councillor Peter Robinson (Transport and Land Use)

**Coordinating Officer:** Nick Sayers, Head of Environmental Operations and Greenspace

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Accepted/ Rejected</b>	<b>Executive Response</b>	<b>Officer Responsible</b>	<b>Action By (Date)</b>
1. The Council's working relationship with Green Charter is further enhanced to support future tree inspections and to ensure a consistent approach is adopted for a range of issues such as fly tipping.	Accepted	We have recently tendered for the Arboriculture work for Green Charter and await their decision. They also accompany our cleansing teams when they carry out the zonal sweeps within their Housing Estates. Neighbourhood Services and Waste Services work in partnership with New Charter to identify evidence found within any illegal dumping and also carry out enforcement as part of their monthly Action Day's.	Nick Sayers	Ongoing

Recommendations	Accepted/ Rejected	Executive Response	Officer Responsible	Action By (Date)
2. In order to enhance community involvement with the maintenance of the borough's greenspaces the Council look to increase the promotion, marketing and publicity of grounds maintenance schemes and extend the remit of the community growing project.	Accepted	Greenspace have a volunteer conservation programme which is circulated to members and included on the Council website and social media. This programme offers a wide range of operational activities and attracts volunteers from across the borough. The Service also engages with larger businesses i.e. British Gas, Brother UK who as part of their volunteer days carry out tasks across the Borough. "Diggin Tameside" is working with further groups across the Borough including schools, community groups and resident associations.	Nick Sayers	Ongoing
3. The Youth Offending Team explores working closer with community groups and voluntary organisations to identify future areas of work in the borough.	Accepted	Alongside the work with Greenspace, the Youth Offending Team works with a number of local churches across the borough, a community centre and one of the allotment sites in the borough. The YOT has also worked on the grounds of some of the local authority run buildings such as the Linden Centre, the Denton Centre and plans are in place to complete some work at Jubilee Gardens. Specific placements have been arranged for young people in a range of local charity shops in Ashton under Lyne and Hyde and work has been completed with the Dogs Trust to look at specific opportunities for young people to work with them.	Sally Dickin	Ongoing

Recommendations	Accepted/ Rejected	Executive Response	Officer Responsible	Action By (Date)
4. In order to help young people build their skills the Youth Offending Team look to create links with housing associations to offer more varied work.	Accepted	The Youth Offending Team currently works with New Charter to complete identified tasks on some of their empty properties in preparation for new tenants moving in. This tends to be, but is not exclusively, the flats that are occupied by young people through the Local Authority. There is scope for this work to be built upon and opportunities for young people to get involved in additional pieces of work are always being sought.	Sally Dickin	Ongoing
5. Options are explored to expand the offer between Community Payback with other Council services in order to widen the existing area of work and incorporate maintenance jobs.	Accepted	In additional to the supervised Probation Teams we have now introduced a 'Buddy Up' scheme where low risk offenders are integrated within our operational teams and are mentored by front line staff. This scheme is now being trailed on Saturdays.	Nick Sayers	Ongoing
6. That work is undertaken to expand work and education based partnerships with Registered Social Landlords and land owners across the borough.	Accepted	The recommendation has been accepted with a view that expanding work and education for land owners is a primary goal for the service. However, due to capacity issues there is currently no available option for work to be expanded wider. Work will be ongoing to prepare should the current position change and further options will be explored and considered.	Jane Massam	Ongoing

## APPENDIX 2

### 1. INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR OF THE STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

- 1.1 I am very pleased to present this review of Grounds Maintenance undertaken by the Strengthening the Economy and Communities Scrutiny Panel during 2015.
- 1.2 The maintenance of the borough's parks and greenspaces is an integral part to the appearance and physical attractiveness of the borough. Well maintained areas demonstrate a sense of pride and help to make the environment attractive, vibrant and sustainable.
- 1.3 Despite being faced with budget reductions of almost 50% Tameside's Operations and Greenspace Service has made significant operational changes to the way services are delivered across the borough. A direct approach has also been taken to explore a sustainable approach towards grounds maintenance.
- 1.4 The move towards sustainable planting methods includes greater use of turf and the utilisation of perennial shrubs and reducing bedding plants in the borough. This has helped to ensure that Tameside's parks and greenspaces remain attractive and vibrant places throughout the year.
- 1.5 In addition to the service redesign and a greater emphasis on sustainable planting, different ways of working have been adopted to enhance partnerships and introduce a greater involvement of volunteers and community groups to assist with the maintenance of the borough's parks and greenspaces. Working with communities helps improve the borough for the benefit of all.
- 1.6 The new service, which works with community partners such as the Probation Service, is more responsive to and embedded in its communities helping to make the environment cleaner, reduce service demand and support residents and ex-offenders back into work.
- 1.7 The Operations & Greenspace Team have won the Efficiency Award of the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2015 following its radical service redesign to deliver improvements.
- 1.8 On behalf of the Scrutiny Panel, I would like to thank all those who have participated in this review.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The operational practices of the Council's Neighbourhood Operations and Greenspace Team have changed since April 2013 with a clear shift towards multi-functional working, multi-skilled teams and a sustainable approach towards grounds maintenance and planting in the borough.
- 2.2 There has been a greater involvement of community groups and volunteers taking ownership of the greenspaces of their local areas. This is in addition to work on community allotments by Mind, British Heart Foundation and the Stroke Association which has assisted with rehabilitation and recovery programmes.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL – 2014/15

Councillors Whitehead (Chair), Bailey (Deputy Chair), Buckley, Cooper, Drennan, Fowler, A Holland, Kinsey, I Miah, Ryan, T Smith, Sweeton, F Travis, Welsh, White.

### 4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Aim of the Review

- 4.1 To explore the effectiveness of a sustainable approach to grounds maintenance and the impact that an increase in volunteers and community groups has had on the borough.

#### Objectives

- 4.2
- 1) To explore the impact that changes have had on operational practices of the Neighbourhood Operations and Greenspace team
  - 2) To consider the effectiveness of sustainable planting within the borough
  - 3) To examine the effects of an increased involvement of community groups and volunteers
  - 4) To explore new initiatives, such as the community allotments project
  - 5) To examine the work of partners including Community Payback, Tameside College and New Charter
  - 6) To produce workable recommendations for the Council and partners

#### Value for Money/Use of Resources

- 4.3 This review will support the corporate priority 'Place' by promoting cleaner, greener and safer neighbourhoods, strengthening town centres and supporting a cultural offer that attracts people to the borough.

#### Equalities Issues

- 4.4 Over the past 18 months Tameside's Operations and Greenspace Service has changed the way services are delivered across the borough. With budget reductions of nearly 50% and limited resources demand has remained at the same level. Different ways of working and operating has been adopted with increased partnership work and a greater use of volunteers and community groups. This has helped to tackle unemployment, isolation and mental health issues and get resident's active.

#### People and Place Scorecard

- 4.5 The following targets from the People and Place Scorecard relate to the Grounds Maintenance review.

Strong Community	- Get on Well Together / Volunteering
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### 5. METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The Panel met with Nick Sayers, Head of Neighbourhood Operations and Greenspace, Tameside MBC, to receive an overview of grounds maintenance in the borough.
- 5.2 The Panel met with Nicola Marshall, Greenspace Development Manager, to understand the extent of community engagement and the role of volunteers.
- 5.3 The Panel met with Barry Wilson, Assistant Community Payback Operations Manager to receive information on their contribution to the maintenance of the borough's greenspaces.
- 5.4 The Panel met with Sally Dickin, Deputy Head of the Youth Offending Team and Jamie Cannon, Youth Offending Team Practitioner, to receive information on their contribution to the maintenance of the borough's greenspaces.

- 5.5 The Panel met with Jane Massam, Tameside College, to learn about the partnership work between the College and the Greenspace team.
- 5.6 The Panel met with David Wrigley, Head of Green Charter and Clean Care, to hear about their sustainable approach to grounds maintenance.

## **6. BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW**

- 6.1 The re-design of Neighbourhood Operations & Greenspace Services has created new ways of working which has changed the way services are delivered and further developed job roles.
- 6.2 The utilisation of man power and improvements to equipment has ensured that standards across the borough have been maintained. A flexible and reactive approach has been adopted towards issues that arise in the borough in order to tackle hot spots and areas of concern.
- 6.3 This review has explored the effectiveness of the changes to operational practices and the impact that an increase in support and volunteering has had on the maintenance of the borough's parks and greenspaces.

## **7. REVIEW FINDINGS**

### **Operations and Greenspace**

- 7.1 Despite budget reductions there have been improvements to the maintenance of the borough's parks and greenspaces through better use of resources, efficient use of machinery, teams of multi-skilled staff and a sustainable approach to grounds maintenance.
- 7.2 In addition to grounds maintenance the Council's Neighbourhood Operations & Greenspace service is also responsible for a number of front line services such as street cleansing, playgrounds, countryside and parks.
- 7.3 In the past each function was managed and delivered by the separate District Assembly areas, however, as part of the service re-design all services have become centrally managed.
- 7.4 The teams have four tractors and eight ride on mowers covering an area of 1.2million square metres every fortnight. A zonal approach is used which consists of ten equally loaded zones with all jobs in an area combined and undertaken at the same time.
- 7.5 Additional budget savings have resulted in the reduction of two multi-skilled teams. There are three multi-skilled teams covering the North part of the borough and three for the South, with the majority of staff based at Hyde depot. The co-location of staff has helped create and deliver a consistent approach to grounds maintenance across the borough.
- 7.6 In order for the service to maintain all areas effectively a shift was made towards the use of turf and sustainable planting methods. Sustainable planting is now used across Tameside in the borough's parks and greenspaces, utilising perennial shrubs and bedding plants as opposed to seasonal planting methods.

**Figure 1: Sustainable Planting in the Borough**



- 7.7 The images above show examples of the sustainable planting methods used in Tameside.
- 7.8 The restructure highlighted the benefits that are achievable by encouraging communities to take action and ownership for their local areas. Work has been undertaken to increase engagement with residents with a view to working with key partners and establishing friends groups.
- 7.9 Partnership work with Tameside College has enabled an NVQ in Horticulture to be offered providing students with an opportunity of practical work within the borough to enhance their theoretical studies. Students can use an allotment in Hyde and up to eight students work in Stamford Park on a weekly basis.
- 7.10 Other partnership work includes Routes to Work, Job Centre Plus, New Charter Housing Trust and corporate responsibility days from businesses such as British Gas, Brother, Royal Bank of Scotland and TSB.
- 7.11 There is a Service Level Agreement with the Community Payback Team who assist with cutting vegetation across ten hotspots in the borough with involvement from the Council's Youth Offending Team.
- 7.12 Collaborative work with Green Charter is also carried out, particularly around wider and cross cutting issues such as Japanese Knotweed and Tree Management. However, this could be supported further via a common tree policy and management system so that both service areas provide a consistent response.

### **Conclusions**

1. Improvements have been made to parks and greenspaces through better use of resources and a sustainable approach to grounds maintenance.

### **Recommendations**

1. The Council's working relationship with Green Charter is further enhanced to support future tree inspections and to ensure a consistent approach is adopted for a range of issues such as fly tipping.

### **Community Engagement**

- 7.13 A variety of friends groups and volunteers are actively engaged with their local environment and help carry out a wide range of tasks including maintenance work, event planning, leading walks and educational visits. Positive feedback has been received from those involved and the public who benefit from their hard work.
- 7.14 Corporate volunteering programmes have been increased with groups working on particular projects. Conservation work provides an opportunity to do something completely different and can help with team building projects. The companies can also benefit from a greater presence in the area and giving something back to the local community.



**Figure 2: Volunteer Statistics over a 12 Month Period**

	Volunteer Hours	Corporate Hours
November 2013	1332	
December	1176	24
January 2014	1494	
February	1296	48
March	1422	36
April	1296	108
May	1224	
June	1536	210
July	1776	
August	1470	120
September	1362	108
October	1548	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>16932</b>	<b>768</b>
<b>Monetary Value</b>	<b>£140,535</b>	<b>£6,374</b>

- 7.15 Volunteers make a vital contribution to the maintenance of the borough's parks and greenspaces. The table above shows the hours worked by volunteers and corporate volunteers over a 12 month period with the equivalent monetary value.
- 7.16 Close links with Public Health have been created to look at common aims and ways greenspaces can be promoted and utilised as a venue for people to improve their health and encourage more informal outdoor exercise.
- 7.17 Projects are being developed for walking trails, increasing health walks and creating more community growing spaces with targeted provision for areas in the greatest need which will assist with the maintenance of the borough's greenspaces. Work is also being carried out with Active Tameside for the development of a run/walk route around Stalybridge Country Park.
- 7.18 Collaborative work with colleagues in the Neighbourhood Team and Pennine Care has helped to deliver a family walk for members of the Zest group in Hattersley. The event was developed to encourage participation with the events programme and to create a sense of ownership for the local greenspace.
- 7.19 Events are held in the borough's greenspaces every weekend of the year and also school holidays through working with volunteers to encourage community involvement. These free, local events are easily accessible for residents and appeal to a broad section of society. Events range from large family fun days in parks to hikes across the countryside.
- 7.20 The approaches outlined above will help to ensure that the borough's parks and greenspaces are being maintained and instil a sense of community pride and ownership. They encourage people to spend time outdoors, meet others in the community and improve people's mental and physical health.
- 7.21 There is a high demand for Allotments within Tameside with a waiting list for all sites demonstrating that there is a keen interest in growing fruit and vegetables. The Service encourages projects such as the new community garden at Waterloo Park and the Orchard at Hyde Park. The Operations and Greenspace team are supporting colleagues in the Neighbourhood Teams with the Diggin' Tameside project.
- 7.22 Community plots are provided on existing sites for organisations such as MIND, the British Heart Foundation and the Stroke Association which assists with people's recovery programmes and rehabilitation.

## Conclusions

2. Friends groups and volunteers are becoming more engaged with their local environment carrying out a wide range of maintenance tasks.
3. Close links with the Public Health team have been created in addition to joined up work with Neighbourhood Teams and Pennine Care to promote Tameside's greenspaces.

## Recommendations

2. In order to enhance community involvement with the maintenance of the borough's greenspaces the Council look to increase the promotion, marketing and publicity of grounds maintenance schemes and extend the remit of the community growing project.

### Youth Offending Team

- 7.23 The Youth Offending Team (YOT) has been working closely with the Greenspace Team to get involved with the maintenance of local parks. Young people, aged twelve to seventeen, have been involved with the upkeep of flower beds, trimming and pruning of bushes, edging of grass verges and path clearing.
- 7.24 Job specifications for some parks have been set and agreed, incorporating the aforementioned tasks and the frequency with which they need to be performed. The YOT has agreed that a group of young people will support upkeep and perform agreed tasks on a minimum of a weekly basis.
- 7.25 The work is carried out in areas where the young people live to improve attachment, respect and sense of belonging to their community. Working alongside others can also help create an improved sense of value and worth.
- 7.26 Once the YOT have completed a session at one of the parks, a description of the tasks undertaken and work completed is forwarded to the Operations Supervisor. The Operations Supervisor can request specific tasks in direct response to events in the community, for example removal of leaves from playground areas or football pitches following a bad storm.

**Figure 3: Leaf Collection and Flower Bed Preparation at Oxford Park**



- 7.27 The images above show the positive contribution carried out by young people in community parks.
- 7.28 Young people involved with the YOT must all complete a number of hours of reparation that can vary from two hours to a maximum of thirty six hours. This work is completed throughout the course of their order and is often undertaken in small groups; in some instances it is necessary for the work to be completed on a one to one basis.

- 7.29 Sessions last for a period of two hours outside of the school day and the Greenspace team provide young people with the necessary safety equipment and tools. Young people who complete unpaid work hours dedicate twenty five per cent of their time to education, training and employment.
- 7.30 An offer for young people aged sixteen and seventeen, who are made the subject of an Unpaid Work Requirement, is currently under development. This provision has previously been delivered by the Probation Service, however, changes in funding streams has meant that the YOT will now be providing unpaid work hours.
- 7.31 This change is designed to ensure that the young people receive some form of educational input when completing their hours and can evidence that time spent completing their order has helped them to progress their skills and knowledge, supporting them to become positive members of their community.
- 7.32 Work is ongoing with the Greenspace team to look at how the YOT can use the links that they have with Tameside College to help tailor make the offer to young people. A programme is due to be established that results in some form of accreditation for young people and utilises the work completed in the parks as evidence towards accreditation.

#### **Conclusions**

4. The Youth Offending Team has been working closely with the Greenspace programme by assisting with the maintenance of local community parks.

#### **Recommendations**

3. The Youth Offending Team explores working closer with community groups and voluntary organisations to identify future areas of work in the borough.
4. In order to help young people build their skills the Youth Offending Team look to create links with housing associations to offer more varied work.

#### **Community Payback**

- 7.33 The Probation Trust is now run by Purple Futures via a partnership headed by Interserve, a support service and construction company, with Addaction, who deal with drug and alcohol misuse, a social enterprise company and Shelter.
- 7.34 During 2014 Community Payback completed over 10,320 hours work on behalf of Tameside Council. If these hours were converted to the minimum wage this would equate to a cost of £67,080.
- 7.35 Necessary tools, fuel, transport and supervisory costs are included in the annual contribution made by Community Payback to facilitate the partnership. Monthly meetings are held where work undertaken is assessed and schedules of work are discussed and disseminated.
- 7.36 Jobs include cut backs, clearances and litter picking, which is divided into six zones, with work completed three days a week over a two week period. This helps to provide clean and safe environments throughout the borough for the public to enjoy.
- 7.37 Work is carried out across the borough in groups of up to ten offenders that are managed by a Probation supervisor. Larger tasks are allocated double groups who can be directed to hotspots in the borough.

- 7.38 Suitable low risk offenders are identified as part of the 'Buddy Up' Scheme and integrated within the Operational Teams. These individuals are managed by Operations and Greenspace frontline staff.
- 7.39 Following the completion of their community hours the service has received some excellent feedback from offenders with some opting to continue as volunteers.
- 7.40 Partnership work is carried out with Manchester College who work with offenders and assist them in gaining NVQ's. The Operations and Greenspace team are currently looking at various tasks to assist with the rehabilitation of offenders completing their unpaid work.
- 7.41 This approach helps improve community outcomes in addition to assisting people to return to work following a prison sentence. Offenders gain valuable work experience at the same time as obtaining qualifications and remaining out of the criminal justice system.

#### **Conclusions**

- 5. During 2014 Community Payback completed over 10,320 hours work on behalf of Tameside Council.
- 6. It can be beneficial to the local community for offenders who are subject to a Community Punishment Order to complete the appropriate work in the borough where they reside.

#### **Recommendations**

- 5. Options are explored to expand the offer between Community Payback with other Council services in order to widen the existing area of work and incorporate maintenance jobs.

#### **Tameside College**

- 7.42 During the 2014/15 academic year, Tameside College has offered a Horticulture course for its students. A partnership with the Council has been created to provide a practical element to the course to compliment the academic offer.
- 7.43 The relationship between Tameside College and the Council allows students to make use of local parks and sports fields as a resource which in turn assists the Council in maintaining the borough's parks and greenspaces.
- 7.44 There are 7 full-time students studying Horticulture at Level 1 or 2, aged between 16 and 50. They work on a weekly basis at an allotment in Hyde Park and Stamford Park. Horticulture taster sessions are offered to entry level students studying different courses who work alongside the full-time students on a weekly basis at Stamford Park.
- 7.45 Prospects Horticulture is undertaken by up to 7 young students aged between 16 and 22 who benefit from practical teaching environments and there are 14 Pathways Students aged 16 to 18 with Special Educational Needs. They carry out occasional work at Stamford Park and with Tameside Countryside Rangers.
- 7.46 Engagement work to promote the course has been undertaken at career events across the borough. Promotional material has been sent to secondary schools in Tameside and surrounding areas with greater use of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- 7.47 A programme of weekly tasks is created which includes, pruning, planting, landscaping, bedding borders, weeding, leaf clearing and general tidy up. This model provides students with an insight into how a park is managed, what is involved in delivering Council services whilst maintaining parks and public areas.

**Figure 4: Tameside College Students Horticultural Work**



- 7.48 The images above show work undertaken by Tameside College students.
- 7.49 The partnership ensures students have access to practical activities which is essential for high quality teaching, learning and assessment. Combined with the real work environment, this makes the experience the students receive one of the best models for delivery of a Horticultural course in the country.
- 7.50 The standards of Horticulture in Stamford Park are very high and the students are involved in a wide range of activities. A validation visit from City and Guilds has commended the renovation work and new planting opportunities that the students are taking part in.
- 7.51 The partnership has provided a wealth of learning opportunities and experiences for the students. They are making a real difference and having a positive impact on their local environment.

#### **Conclusions**

7. In partnership with the Council, Tameside College offer a Horticultural course to students with a practical work element in the borough's parks and greenspaces.

#### **Recommendations**

6. That work is undertaken to expand work and education based partnerships with Registered Social Landlords and land owners across the borough.

#### **Green Charter**

- 7.52 Green Charter is part of the New Charter Housing Trust Group and was created in 2012 to deliver Grounds Maintenance services. The team is located on Globe Lane, Dukinfield with local work carried out by seven teams covering the entire footprint across the borough.
- 7.53 In addition to a core number of permanent staff, a selection of seasonal staff are employed during the busy summer months for approximately 26 weeks on a 45 hour weekly contract. They are active members of the team and are involved in team building activities.
- 7.54 The teams provide a cut and collect service during the first cut in March and then a mulching system which disperses the grass across the areas cut. This is done fortnightly until September/October after which time winter maintenance work is undertaken.
- 7.55 The team have access to hand held equipment and ride on and pedestrian mowers which are hired through an existing Service Level Agreement. Efficiency savings have been made which are invested in equipment and other service improvements.

- 7.56 Grounds maintenance services are provided for other departments within the New Charter Group and also to wider organisations such as other housing providers and neighbouring authorities.
- 7.57 All staff have received additional training to undertake tree work although any specialist work is sub contracted to an approved contractor. Permanent staff are provided with the opportunity to partake in a Horticultural NVQ which takes 12-18 months to complete.
- 7.58 The service is always looking for ways to improve and the views of customers are collected through resident monitors and a scrutiny group. Results show that service satisfaction has improved from under 30% prior to 2012 to over 92%.

### **Conclusions**

8. Green Charter is part of the New Charter Housing Trust Group and was created in 2012 to deliver grounds maintenance services.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 Improvements have been made to parks and greenspaces through better use of resources and a sustainable approach to grounds maintenance.
- 8.2 Friends groups and volunteers are becoming more engaged with their local environment carrying out a wide range of maintenance tasks.
- 8.3 Close links with the Public Health team have been created in addition to joined up work with Neighbourhood Teams and Pennine Care to promote Tameside's greenspaces.
- 8.4 The Youth Offending Team has been working closely with the Greenspace programme by assisting with the maintenance of local community parks.
- 8.5 During 2014 Community Payback completed over 10,320 hours work on behalf of Tameside Council.
- 8.6 It can be beneficial to the local community for offenders who are subject to a Community Punishment Order to complete the appropriate work in the borough where they reside.
- 8.7 In partnership with the Council, Tameside College offer a Horticultural course to students with a practical work element in the borough's parks and greenspaces.
- 8.8 Green Charter is part of the New Charter Housing Trust Group and was created in 2012 to deliver grounds maintenance services.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council's working relationship with Green Charter is further enhanced to support future tree inspections and to ensure a consistent approach is adopted for a range of issues such as fly tipping.
- 9.2 In order to enhance community involvement with the maintenance of the borough's greenspaces the Council look to increase the promotion, marketing and publicity of grounds maintenance schemes and extend the remit of the community growing project.
- 9.3 The Youth Offending Team explores working closer with community groups and voluntary organisations to identify future areas of work in the borough.

- 9.4 In order to help young people build their skills the Youth Offending Team look to create links with housing associations to offer more varied work.
- 9.5 Options are explored to expand the offer between Community Payback with other Council services in order to widen the existing area of work and incorporate maintenance jobs.
- 9.6 That work is undertaken to expand work and education based partnerships with Registered Social Landlords and land owners across the borough.