

## 1. The Project

<b>Directorate:</b>	Place
<b>Theme or area:</b>	Open Spaces, Natural Environment and Leisure
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	John Flannigan
<b>Date:</b>	20 November 2024

Budget Reference	Budget Proposal	2025/26 Budget reduction (£)	2026/27 Budget reduction (£)	2027/28 Budget reduction (£)
PD03	Review of staffing structure within Open Space, Natural Environment and Leisure	£232,000		

### Description of the project:

Staffing structure within Open Space, Natural Environment and Leisure (OSNEL) has been reviewed in the light of the need to make budget savings for 2025/26.

The MTFP proposal has identified a staffing reduction of 6.6 FTE. 4.5 FTE of this staff reduction is being made from vacant posts.

### Summary of changes:

The OSENL team will see an overall reduction in its staffing levels. Staff carrying out key health and safety and inspection works have been retained especially in relation to flood risk, tree risk and visitors to parks and seafronts. These areas are where the public can experience impacts in the event of inclement weather including high winds (fallen trees), flooding (coastal, surface or fluvial) or damaged infrastructure in parks and open spaces.

The reduction in staff capacity will also have an impact on ‘softer’ issues such as response times to non-urgent enquiries; or longer waiting times to resolve non-urgent enquiries.

**Are any of the proposals within this theme a continuation of a previous medium-term financial plan saving?**

**No**

**If yes, please insert reference number and year of assessment?**

**If yes, please describe what steps you have taken to review the equality impacts from previous years?**

## 2. Customer equality impact summary

**Will the changes proposed in this project have a disproportionate impact (or bias) for any of these groups?**

Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.

H = High, M = Medium, L = Low, N = None

+ = Positive, - = Negative

Protected or significant group	Impact Level				Impact type	
	H	M	L	N	+	-
Disabled people (Including the consideration of neurodiversity)			X			X
People from different ethnic groups			X			X
Men or women (including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave)			X			X
People who are LGBTQ+				X		
People on a low income			X			X
People in particular age groups			X			X
People in particular faith groups				X		
People who are married or in a civil partnership				X		
People who are undergoing gender reassignment				X		
Other significant groups, for example: Armed Forces Community, care experienced young people, carers, parents. Please specify: carers and parents			X			X

## 3. Explanation of customer impact

The reduction in the team will inevitably lead to longer waiting times for enquiries from the public to be resolved because there will be less staff available.

There is also likely to be longer periods between routine inspections for parks, seafronts and public right of way because staff capacity is going to be stretched. This may mean sites may look more dilapidated.

In relation to Public Rights of Way (PROW) statutory duties will be prioritised (e.g. ensuring PROWs are kept open) whilst other non-statutory enquiries and landowner liaison will be reduced.

The loss of the late ranger will mean there is less presence on the seafront in the evening, which may impact people's feeling of safety, but the public can still rely on the emergency services to deal with safety issues, as they do elsewhere else across North Somerset.

**Please describe how you will communicate these changes to those impacted.**

This will be picked up as part of the wider Council's budget communications

## 4. Staff equality impact summary

**Are there any staffing implications for this proposal?** **Yes**

### Explanation of staff impact

6.6 FTE permanent posts are proposed to be deleted.

4.5 of these posts are vacant.

## 5. Cumulative equality impacts

**Is this project linked to or likely to have an impact on any other service areas?**

None

## 6. Action Plan

**Are there any further actions that should be taken because of this Equality Impact Assessment?**

Issue Identified	Planned Action	Lead Officer	Time for review
Need to advise disabled people of potential access impacts. To develop a method for disabled people to contact North Somerset Council where a particular access problem arises	Statutory needs will be prioritised, and these tend to deal with access and safety issues – this should help ensure that no one group is impacted because routes will be kept open and as safe as possible to use.		

	<p>Communications plan to describe impacts for disabled people</p> <p>Create a process for disabled people to contact North Somerset Council with specific issues.</p>		
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## 7. Review and Sign Off

### Service Manager Review

Insert any service manager comments here.

None

**Is a further detailed equality impact assessment needed?**

**No**

**If 'yes', when will the further assessment be completed?**

**Service Manager:**

John Flannigan

**Date:**

20 November 2024