

## SECTION A

Name of policy / project / service	Withdrawal of Urban Ranger Service
Background and aims of policy / project / service at outset	<p>The City Council needs to find £1million of ongoing savings in 2013/14, rising to an estimated £3million per annum by 2016/17. Every effort has been made to implement savings without loss of service, but the council has now reached a point where it is necessary to cease provision of some non-statutory services in order to achieve the level of savings required. The council has therefore refocused its priorities and these are now defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing the local economy</li> <li>• Protecting the city's poorest people from the effects of the recession</li> <li>• Increasing the supply of affordable housing</li> </ul> <p>The Urban Ranger Service does not directly contribute to these refocused priorities and withdrawal of the service will contribute to delivering financial savings required to meet the council's Medium Term.</p> <p>The Service started in August 1999, and from the outset has consisted of a team of three staff, on motorcycles suitable for off-road use, patrolling the Council's open spaces. Their original main purpose was to enforce laws and byelaws, but ever since inception their role has grown. They are empowered to take direct action where it is reasonable and safe to do so, so can clean up graffiti, broken glass and littering as a part of their rounds. They have also developed an educational role visiting schools to explain the value of caring for open spaces, and other environmental messages pertaining to the work of the Council.</p> <p>Their high profile patrols are on a shift system, which sees them work through until 10pm on some nights of the week, and permits suitable staff coverage at weekends. The team routinely addresses ASB issues in parks and open spaces, working with our own ASB team, CCTV, and the Police as well as the Commons Warden.</p> <p>The varied shift pattern means that although the rangers are unlikely to spend long at any one location, the timing cannot be predicted and therefore the fact that the rangers might be around provides some reassurance to commons users from a personal safety perspective.</p>

Statistics relating to incidents dealt with by the urban rangers over the past year indicate that there could be a limited potential impact on protected characteristics (see Section B under disability for further comment).

Consultation responses suggest that without the presence of the urban rangers people would feel less safe. In some isolated cases it is evident that some comments have been made by older, disabled or female persons, although other comments may have come from people with different characteristics. From the latest survey there appears no cluster of comments around a particular protected characteristic. There is no evidence to suggest that these groups would be less safe than any other groups. However, in mitigation of this feeling that they would be less safe work with the Park Advisory Groups on replacement initiatives such as Park Watch have been suggested. Whilst the Panel have shown a willingness to work with the council on replacement initiatives, no specific programme of work has yet been planned. In addition the Communities and Street Scene Service will continue to work in close partnership with Police in respect of parks and open spaces.

The council has received a petition stating that "We the under signed would like to raise our objection to the planned closure of the Urban ranger Service. The removal of the service will lower our feeling of safety whilst using the parks and may affect our usage of them. We also would like to point out that antisocial behaviour will increase as will damage to our green spaces and we all do not see how the removal of this service versus the impact and increase in damage and antisocial behaviour makes financial/business sense." However, this does not specifically raise any equality issues.

It should be noted that a separate savings proposal is to withdraw the Commons Warden who works closely with the Urban Rangers Service.

Person(s) responsible for policy or decision, or advising on decision, and also responsible for equality analysis

Decision – Executive  
EA – Steve Bird ADCSS

Key people involved *i.e. decision-makers, staff implementing it*

Executive Members  
Portfolio Holder for Health and Recreational Services  
Director of Housing and Community Services  
ADCSS

## SECTION B

This is to be completed and reviewed as policy / project / service development progresses

	Is the likely effect positive or negative? (please tick all that apply)			Please describe the effect and evidence that supports this?*	Is action possible to mitigate adverse impacts?	Details of action planned including dates, or why action is not possible
	Positive	Negative	None			
Age		X		<p>See background section above regarding feeling of personal safety.</p> <p>A small part of the role of the urban rangers is to participate in the organisation and presentation of talks to schools and other interested groups – there were 39 school visits in 2011-12. The original purpose of these visits was to promote the role of the service in connection with the promotion of pride and citizenship, but they now also include the value of caring for open spaces, and other environmental messages.</p>	<p>Yes – for personal safety (see background section)</p> <p>No – for school visits</p>	<p>Whilst it is not feasible to continue with school visits environmental information is available at Hartsholme Country Park.</p>
Disability		X		<p>The Urban Rangers assist the Police in searches for vulnerable missing persons, where the wardens' off road capability and knowledge of the parks and open spaces have both been an advantage.</p>	<p>If requested the council could ask its contractors</p>	<p>When reviewing progress on the Commons Management Plan consideration will need to be given to the timing of works</p>



				See background section above regarding feeling of personal safety.	to assist in such searches, but no off road motorcycles would be available so searched would be on foot	on access issues to ensure they are prioritised appropriately.
Gender re-assignment			X	No differential impact.	NA	
Pregnancy and maternity			X	No differential impact	NA	
Race		X		Some graffiti in open spaces is racist in nature. Depending on its type, the urban rangers are sometimes able to provide a faster response for its removal than the cleansing or grounds maintenance contractor.	The grounds maintenance or cleansing contractor can provide this service, but only when seen and reported. The Urban Rangers may remove it when they see it ,so it would be impossible to remove it more quickly.	Existing contracts provide for graffiti removal and will remove it promptly when reported.

Religion or belief			X	No differential impact	NA	
Sex			X	See background section above for general evidence.	NA	See background section
Sexual orientation			X	No differential impact	NA	
Marriage / civil partnership			X	No differential impact	NA	
Human Rights (see page 8)			X	Withdrawal of the Urban Ranger Service will have no impact on human rights.	NA	

*\* Evidence could include information from consultations; voluntary group feedback; satisfaction and usage data (i.e. complaints, surveys, and service data); and reviews of previous strategies*

Did any information gaps exist?	Y/N/NA	If so what were they and what will you do to fill these?
No		

## SECTION C

### Decision Point - Outcome of Assessment so far:

Based on the information in section B, what is the decision of the responsible officer (please select one option below):

- **No equality or human right Impact** (your analysis shows there is no impact) - sign assessment below
- **No major change required** (your analysis shows no potential for discrimination, harassment)- sign assessment below
- **Adverse Impact but continue** (record objective justification for continuing despite the impact)-complete sections below
- **Adjust the policy** (Change the proposal to mitigate potential effect) -progress below only AFTER changes made

Tick here

[ ]

[ ]

[X]

[ ]

- **Put Policy on hold** (seek advice from the E&D officer as adverse effects cant be justified or mitigated) -STOP progress [ ]

Conclusion of Equality Analysis (describe objective justification for continuing)	<p>In the context of needing to deliver financial savings, the Urban Ranger Service is not a statutory function, and has limited potential to contribute to the revised strategic priorities.</p> <p>Closure of this service has the potential to impact on the management of open spaces through slower responses to maintenance and enforcement issues, which could in turn impact negatively on perceptions of safety for some open space users.</p> <p>The Park Advisory Groups have recognised this and would work with the Council to mitigate these impacts. The local Police are represented on the Park Advisory Groups and so would be well placed to both feed into, and take advice from, the Park Advisory Groups so as to establish priorities for their resources.</p>
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When and hw will you review and measure the impact after implementation?*	<p>The local Police would be asked to provide reported crime statistics for specific key open spaces as a part of their engagement with Park Advisory Groups. The Park Advisory Groups will then monitor these.</p> <p>The Council established questions relevant to perceptions of management and public safety in public open spaces within its annual Citizen Panel Survey this year. This has provided a benchmark from which to monitor perceptions in the future.</p>
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Checked and approved by responsible officer(s) (Sign and Print Name)	Steve Bird	Date	7th March 2013
Checked and approved by Director (Sign and Print Name)	John Bibby	Date	7th March 2013

When completed, please send to [info.equality@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:info.equality@lincoln.gov.uk) and include in Committee Reports which are to be sent to the relevant officer in Democratic Services

The Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance to the Public Sector Equality Duty is available via:  
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/new-public-sector-equality-duty-guidance/>