

APSE Parks, Horticulture
and Grounds Maintenance
Advisory Group (South)

Commercialising Landscaping, Grounds Maintenance, Tree and Play Services



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What have I been asked to say?

- How can we identify skills and assets to develop and sell?
- How do we take a commercial approach without squeezing out local businesses?
- How can local authorities support one another in establishing commercial approaches?

How do I intend to interact with this?

- What did we do (and not do)?
- Where did we innovate?
- How do we go about promotion and growth?
- Who helped us, and how can we cooperate with you?

What did we do?

- We acquainted ourselves with what the law allows
- We started with what we had, and improved it:
 - higher skilled operations
 - efficiency improvements
 - change of culture
- We filled in the gaps:
 - overtime
 - subcontracting
- We built on assured income:
 - 2-year invest-to-save teams
 - permanent recruitment



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What did we not do?

- We did not advertise
- We did not undercut local businesses
- We did not neglect core Council work
- We did not grow too fast to be able to maintain quality of work and excellent customer service

Where did we innovate?

- We turned problems into opportunities
- Example 1: the development of Playtrack



<http://www.playtrack.co.uk/>

- Example 2: tools maintenance and servicing

How do we go about growing?

- We have a programme for developing new services, both internal to the department and cross-departmental
- We have a plan for reaching new clients
- We have a longer-term strategy for selling multi-service packages

Who helped us?

How can we cooperate with you?

- We participate in the Cross Council Revenue Generation Group, hosted on KnowledgeHub
- We learned from precedent, and have benefited from advice from other local authorities: Oxford, Southampton, Cornwall
- We are willing to do the same, sharing processes and experience
- We are talking with neighbouring authorities about shared services
- We benefit directly from a long-term partnership with Hampshire County Council, which provides architectural services to us; there is no reciprocal purchasing
- Similarly, we can provide services to other authorities that represent value for money coupled with strict compliance with legislation and H&S guidelines: tree work, other GM, playground inspections and repairs



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