

Chasewater Country Park: Development Development Plan

Document Control

	Chasewater Country Park: Development Plan	Date and Signature
Purpose and Description	To describe the future of Chasewater Country Park, identifying strategic options and the method for appraisal; and to define a detailed operational plan that drives stepped change over the short term.	
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Version History

Version No	Date Released	Change / Reason for Change / Comments
v0.1	-	Initial development plan
v0.2	26/03/2014	Draft development plan completed

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1. Project Overview

1.1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.1. Staffordshire County Council (SCC) agreed for the acquisition of Chasewater Country Park from Lichfield District Council (LDC) as of 18th April 2011.
- 1.1.2. As part of the agreement LDC would continue to manage and finance the park until 31st March 2014 at which point SCC would then take full responsibility.
- 1.1.3. The Chasewater project was initiated with Transformation Support Unit (TSU) support in March 2013 with the key objectives of ensuring that SCC is able to operationally manage the Park from day 1 and creating a sustainable delivery model that reduces current ongoing financial pressures.
- 1.1.4. The project was designed into two inextricably linked phases:
 - **Phase 1:** To ensure the smooth transfer of operational management of Chasewater Country Park from LDC to SCC effective from 1st April 2014
 - **Phase 2:** To produce a long term development plan that aims to reduce the ongoing financial pressures to SCC as well as increasing the contribution to priority outcomes.
- 1.1.5. The key deliverable from Phase 1 was the business case with the preferred option being to fund a minimum level operating model that included development resource to drive and implement phase 2. This was approved as part of the MTFS process and recognised as a new pressure. Phase 1 is now complete with the operational model in place and fully resourced.
- 1.1.6. The focus and purpose of this document are on achieving the objectives of phase 2, with the key deliverable being a development plan.
- 1.1.7. Within this document the development plan is divided into two workstreams.
Workstream 1 – within the project lifecycle, recommends **operational** development opportunities to be implemented within years 1 and 2
Workstream 2 - sets out an initial long list of **strategic** options and how they will be appraised.
- 1.1.8. **Workstream 1** -The operational opportunities are not limited to pursuing a single preferred option and the recommendation is that a number of development options exist that are combined into an operational development plan (see Section 4). It is recognised that any operational improvements should not adversely constrain or limit strategic plans for the future.
- 1.1.9. **Workstream 2** - Initial strategic options have been identified at a high level and the project has produced the approach to appraising these options to decide the future strategic direction.

1.2. Strategic Case

- 1.2.1. Chasewater Country Park along with the wider countryside portfolio and County Council services are coming under increased scrutiny due to the financial pressures and saving requirements highlighted through the MTFS.
- 1.2.2. Budgets in recent times have continually reduced and whilst an operational budget has been secured, the original business case (Appendix 1) also highlighted and accounted for savings to be made over the initial 5 year plan.
- 1.2.3. The Chasewater project has been initiated and implemented with sustainability (especially financially) as a key strategic aim and in doing so aligning to the wider Country Parks Strategic Aims
- 1.2.4. Whilst the key driver is financial, it is also recognised that Country Parks play a key role within the Staffordshire community through the safe provision of green space that currently and will continue to contribute to the County's priority outcomes.
- 1.2.5. As part of initial planning, Chasewater's project objectives have been mapped through the services strategic plans, including the Rural County Strategic Plan and the Country Park Strategic Plan and ultimately feeding into the County Councils priority outcomes. The mapping exercise is presented in the form of an "outcome chain" and can be seen in full in Appendix 2.
- 1.2.6. Chasewater already (and increasingly) will play an important part in meeting the County Council's ambitions as set out in the emerging sub outcomes. In particular; Ready for Life, Enjoying Life, Right for Business and a Great Place to Live. An overview of Chasewater's contribution the priority outcomes is summarised below:

SCC Priority Outcome	Country Park (Chasewater) Contribution
<p>The people of Staffordshire will be able to access more good jobs and feel benefits of economic growth.</p> <p>'Right for Business'</p>	<p>Chasewater offers an opportunity to attract inward investment through business and tourism. Tourism is one of Staffordshire's most important growth industries and Country Parks contribute to this offer. Country Parks also enable and encourage a diverse range of volunteering experiences. Volunteering gives people a sense of pride in their environment, confidence in their abilities, a sense of giving something back to society and in some cases, the skills and confidence to go into the workplace. SCC has initiated building a robust and effective volunteer base as an immediate priority.</p> <p>The Park also has ten B1 units for start-up and small-micro businesses. It is estimated that around 25 people are employed directly at these units.</p>

<p>The people of Staffordshire will be healthier and more independent</p> <p>'Enjoying Life' 'Ready for Life'</p>	<p>It is estimated that 20,000 people live within 1km (walkable distance) of the Park and 3 million people live within 20-miles. Its open space and 'green' credentials offer a natural health service, where people have the opportunity to participate in recreational activities such as walking, cycling, water sports, nature walks, or just enjoy the peace and tranquillity. As stated above, volunteering opportunities will be introduced offering volunteers just the right balance of independence and Ranger support suited to their individual needs.</p>
<p>The people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community</p> <p>'Great Place to Live'</p>	<p>Chasewater aims to enable local residents to develop their confidence, skills and prospects. Residents will have the opportunity to become involved in creating and managing the Park, making their neighbourhood more 'liveable'.</p> <p>The Park is included in the Country Park Strategy, which is currently in draft. The Strategy aims to create a well and sustainably managed high quality countryside estate which Staffordshire's residents, visitors and businesses will be able to access, enjoy and benefit from and which contributes directly to economic prosperity by helping to create a healthy, skilled and educated workforce.</p>

- 1.2.7. The future strategic direction for Chasewater (and potentially within the wider portfolio) is to be agreed through implementing a strategic options appraisal as part of business as usual activity. The phase 2 Project Initiation Document (PID) and initial planning scoped the project to deliver an initial long list of strategic options and the methodology for evaluating them, recognising that the required time to complete this would extend further than the project lifecycle and therefore forms part of the secondary workstream.

1.3. Current Arrangements

- 1.3.1. The transfer of operational management transferred from LDC to SCC on 1st April 2014, including responsibility for all assets, agreements and existing stakeholder groups.
- 1.3.2. As per the original business case, the minimum operating model was put in place with the addition of a designated development role aimed at delivering phase 2.
- 1.3.3. The operating model delivers the core functions of the Country Park ensuring that all statutory and legal obligations are complied with, there is a safe experience for all visitors, residents and businesses; and that a quality service is delivered in conjunction with key stakeholders. The detailed operating model can be found in Appendix 3.

- 1.3.4. The operating model is delivered by in-house resources through the Ranger Service, Innovation Centre staff, Estate Workers and direct support from a Biodiversity Officer.
- 1.3.5. A budget allocation of c. £100k per annum for the immediate future was agreed as a new pressure through the MTFs, and as per the business case a financial (savings) target was agreed at £10k p.a. from year 2 onwards.
- 1.3.6. Given the nature and complexity of the site in terms of land ownership and designations, current activity classified as the “as is” has been mapped to clearly outline where constraints exist that will impact on both operational and strategic development opportunities. This can be found in Appendix 4.

1.4. Objectives, Critical Success Factors (CSF's) and Benefits

***Vision:** “Chasewater is an attractive, accessible, diverse and multi-functional place where people come to participate in employment, education, recreation, tourism and culture”*

- 1.4.1. The following are key **objectives** for **Phase 2** of the Chasewater project:
 - 1.4.1.1. To maximise the economic, health, social and environmental value of Chasewater Country Park
 - 1.4.1.2. To reduce the long term financial pressures that Chasewater currently presents to SCC
 - 1.4.1.3. To inform and provide insight for the wider countryside service and other County / Partner initiatives
- 1.4.2. Aligned to the objectives a set of **CSF's** has been developed for **workstream 1** which have been used to appraise the **operational** opportunities identified within the development plan:
 - 1.4.2.1. Contribution to the County's priority outcomes and operating principles
 - 1.4.2.2. Maintain or enhance a safe country park experience and in doing so satisfy all statutory, legal and compliance requirements
 - 1.4.2.3. Reduces the financial pressure to the County Council and Partners
 - 1.4.2.4. Provides added value to Staffordshire's residents, businesses and visitors
 - 1.4.2.5. Achievability given current and forecasted levels of resource and timescales
- 1.4.3. Success for **workstream 1** of the project is that the **operational development plan** achieves the following:

- Focuses on the short to medium term detailing what will be delivered in year 1 and outlining **operational developments** for years 2 and 3
- High level costs are known where possible or the plan accounts for determining financial impacts
- Delivers the financial savings set out in the original Chasewater business case
- Has stakeholder buy-in across all levels internally and externally
- Aligns to the County’s priority outcomes and operating principles

1.4.4. Success for **workstream 2** of the project from a **strategic** perspective is the following:

- The strategic view is inclusive of the whole site, including Highfields Farm
- Identifies a long term vision that has key stakeholder buy-in
- Provides an initial long list of **strategic options** (that haven’t been formally evaluated)
- Provides the framework and methodology for how the **strategic options** will be taken forward and appraised.

1.4.5. The overall Phase 2 Chasewater project aims to deliver the following benefits:

- Financial savings aligned to the business case of £10k additional income p.a. from year 2 onwards, reducing the pressure to SCC
- Provides a sustainable future for Chasewater and informs the wider country park estate, through financial savings and more effective ways of working
- Maximises Chasewater’s value to the local community through provision of additional activities, attraction to local businesses and increased footfall across the site
- Increased contribution to SCC priority outcomes as demonstrated in the outcomes mapping (Appendix 2)

1.5. Scope

1.5.1. The following table outlines the scope for the development plan within the project lifecycle:

In Scope	Out of Scope
All land holdings and water bodies (including Highfields Farm and Norton Bog)	Implementation of the development plan as this will be delivered as part of business as usual (BAU)
All physical assets including the Innovation Centre and outbuildings	Production of development plans for the wider countryside portfolio
Business units and lease arrangements	

Facilities and infrastructure	
Human resource – operational workforce and volunteers	
HLS and other legal agreements	
Current operating model and working practices	
Consideration and impacts upon existing stakeholders	
Detailed operational development plan (Workstream 1)	
Summary of the strategic direction and approach (Workstream 2)	

1.6. Constraints and Dependencies

- 1.6.1. Chasewater is not wholly owned by Staffordshire County Council – e.g. Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO) historically have some land ownership and the Canal and Rivers Trust own the rights to the water in the reservoir
- 1.6.2. Chasewater is classified as open access land, with elements designated as Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), Site of Biological Interest (SBI) and the whole site is within Green Belt designation.
- 1.6.3. The Innovation Centre was originally built with European Regional Development Funding (ERDF), English Partnerships and Staffordshire Environmental funding and has certain conditions associated with this. The building also is restricted to B1 planning permission.
- 1.6.4. Business Enterprise Units are currently restricted to B1(Business Classification) planning consent with the exception of one unit which has D1(Non Residential Education and Training Centre) planning consent
- 1.6.5. Highfields Farm – area of land is made up of 3.66ha SBI with 10.77ha classed as potentially developable. Albeit that all land at Chasewater is designated Green Belt.
- 1.6.6. Full details can be found in Appendix 4.

1.7. Stakeholders

- 1.7.1. Key stakeholders have been identified and analysed in order to understand their level of impact and interest in Phase 2, and to develop a Communications Plan. Key stakeholders include:

Internal

- Elected Members
- Chief Executive
- Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive
- Place Finance Team

- Rural County Team
- District Commissioning Leads
- Legal Services
- Health & Safety Team
- Project Sponsor Infrastructure+
- Staffordshire Tourism
- Volunteer Co-Ordinator
- SCC Communications Team
- Sportshire Co-Ordinator
- Public Health
- Connectivity Team
- Highways
- Waste Management
- Economic Regeneration
- Chasewater Staff
- Youth Service
- Equalities Team
- Economic Development and Planning Policy

External

- Chasewater Stakeholder Engagement Group
- Lichfield District Council
- Cannock Chase District Council
- Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
- Town and Parish Councils
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- CISWO
- Trade Unions
- Canals and Rivers Trust
- Chasewater Enterprise Units
- Entrust
- Forest of Mercia
- Residents
- General Public
- Staffordshire Wildlife Group
- Friends of Norton Bog
- Local Media
- CCG Partnership Officer

1.7.2. Stakeholder management will be critical throughout the life of the Project. Table 1 below outlines the engagement to date and Table 2 sets out the proposed Communication Plan moving forwards. It is assumed that those parties highlighted in Table 1 will continue to be engaged.

Table 1 - Engagement to Date

Stakeholder	Summary of Engagement and Communication
Lichfield District Council	Via the monthly operational meetings held between SCC and LDC to discuss and implement LDC's exit strategy. Topics discussed include future development on site. Individual Officers at LDC have been consulted

	as required.
Natural England	SCC is fully engaged in discussions with Natural England who have a watching brief as development opportunities occur
Chasewater Stakeholder Engagement Group	A monthly meeting is held with external stakeholders who have an interest in the Park such as tenants and club organisers. Operational and development opportunities are discussed. The group engaged in a SWOT analysis and continue to provide customer insight to inform Phase 2
District Commissioning Lead	The DCL has been heavily involved in discussions over the development of Chasewater with regular meetings taking place between the DCL and the Project Sponsor and Manager.
Chief Executive and Director for Place	The Project Sponsor regularly updates and consults Helen Riley and the Chief Executive as required
Rural County Team	Meetings have taken place with relevant members of the Rural County Team and representatives sit on the project board
Elected Members	At least monthly meetings take place with both Lead and Support Cabinet members. Both Councillors have been involved in discussions about the Park's future. Elected Members for the Lichfield District Area have through their briefing meetings received regular updates on progress for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Chasewater Project
Health and Safety Team	Regular meeting take place with the health and safety team, who also attend the monthly stakeholder engagement meetings
Staffordshire Tourism	Regular meetings take place with the tourism team regarding the tourism potential of Chasewater
Communities and Equalities Team	A meeting has taken place to establish whether a Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is required. It was agreed that a CIA was not required for Phase 1 but will be for Phase 2 as it progresses, ensuring that any proposals do not inadvertently have a negative impact on any particular group or groups.
Burntwood Town Council	A meeting has taken place, involving the Town Council to discuss future plans and for the Park. The Council has engaged in a SWOT analysis and provided customer insight for the project
Entrust	Frequent meetings are taking place with Entrust regarding the current and future operations of the café. Entrust also run the Outdoor Education Centre on the Park.
Project Sponsor Infrastructure+	The Project Team has engaged the Project Sponsor for Infrastructure+ to keep them informed of progress and activity. In addition, the Chasewater Project Manager has regular catch-ups with the Infrastructure+ Project Manager and Place Portfolio Manager.

Sportshire Co-Ordinator	Monthly meetings take place with the Sportshire Co-Ordinator who is proactively engaged in the development potential of Chasewater
Chasewater Staff	Monthly update meetings keep staff advised of the progress of Phase 2. Staff have engaged in a SWOT analysis and providing insight information for the project.
Economic Development and Planning Policy/Highways/Economic Regeneration	A meeting has taken place to discuss opportunities and update on the progress of Phase 2. A SWOT analysis has also been carried out with this internal group
General Public	Customer insight gained through onsite engagement and feedback
Forest of Mercia	A meeting has taken place to discuss opportunities and update on the progress of Phase 2. A SWOT analysis has also been carried out with this internal group

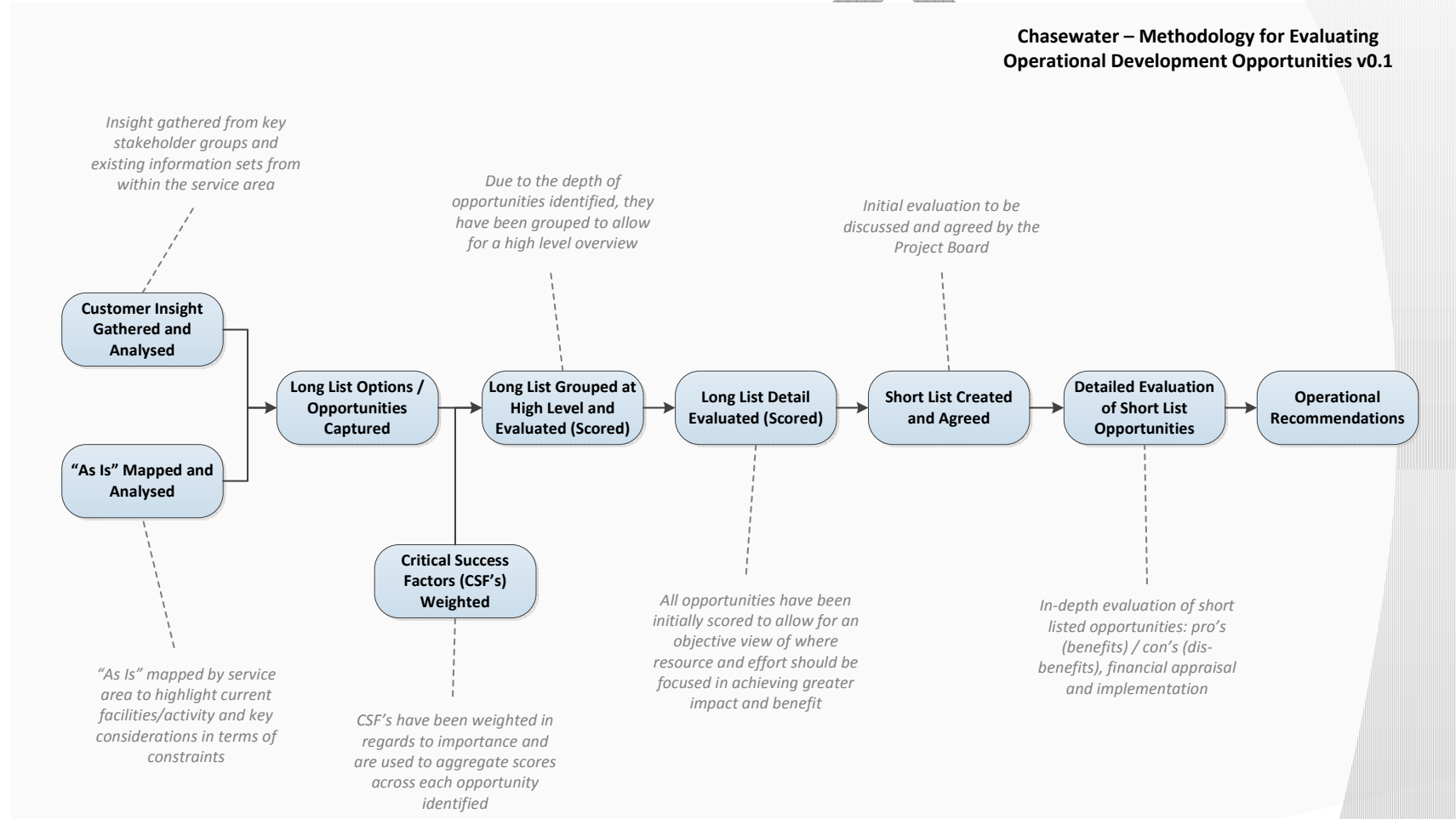
Table 2 - Future Engagement and Communications Plan

Stakeholder	Proposed Engagement and Communication
Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee	Elements of this document will be presented at the April 2014 Select Committee
Human Resources/Finance Unit	Will continue to be consulted for ongoing advice during Phase 2
Local Media/General Public	An announcement will need to be made about the handover and how SCC will run the Park. Phase 2 should also be communicated in order to get early local buy-in.
Cannock District and Walsall MBC	Will be consulted as appropriate as opportunities for Phase 2 arise
Legal Department/Estates	Due to a number of ongoing issues, regular meetings take place with the Legal Department/Estates regarding the Park. With regards to Phase 2, they will provide ongoing support and advice with development opportunities and new leases and concessions
SCC Commissioners	The Project sponsor will update other commissioners through Place SLT and as necessary through other appropriate channels

2. Options Appraisal

2.1. Operational Development Options Appraisal – Workstream 1

2.1.1. Methodology



2.1.2. Evaluation and Findings for Operational Development Opportunities (Workstream 1)

2.1.2.1. Using the customer insight gathered, existing intelligence within the service area and stakeholder input a “long list” of options / opportunities were identified. Given the vast array of opportunities identified the project team grouped these at a high level to allow for an overview of the type of operational activity to be appraised. The following table details the high level groups and the scoring of each ‘category’:

Ref.	Workstream 1 Operational Development Opportunity	Critical Success Factors (Weighting 1-5) x Scoring (0-5)					Weighted Score
		Contribution to the County’s priority outcomes and operating principles (5)	Maintain or enhance the country park experience for users and in doing so satisfy all statutory, legal and compliance requirements (5)	Reduce the financial pressure to the County Council and partners (5)	Provides added value to Staffordshire’s residents, businesses and visitors (4)	Achievability given current and forecasted levels of resource and timescales (4)	
1	Accreditation Schemes	0	0	0	1	1	8
2	Improve existing facilities and services; e.g. signage	5	5	4	5	5	110
3	Create New Facilities/Services; e.g. Farmers market	5	5	3	5	5	105
4	New Concessions	5	5	3	5	5	105
5	Update / Maximise Property Use e.g. Rangers Hut	4	4	4	4	4	92
6	Explore and Secure Grants/Funding	5	5	5	5	3	107
7	Income Generating Opportunities	3	4	5	4	5	96
8	Staffing Use and Future Operating Model; e.g. Ranger Apprenticeships	5	5	4	5	5	110
9	Increased Customer Insight	5	5	3	4	5	101
10	Marketing	4	4	4	4	4	92

- 2.1.2.2. With the exception of accreditation schemes, the long list scoring demonstrates that all other identified opportunities are feasible and align to the project’s critical success factors, and therefore should be evaluated in more detail.
- 2.1.2.3. Evaluation of the detailed opportunities has been completed and scored against the CSF’s. Detail of which can be found in Appendix 5.
- 2.1.2.4. The “short list” has been created through prioritising opportunities that have scored highest against the CSF’s (please note that this does not mean that other opportunities will not be pursued; they simply won’t be prioritised as part of the initial operational development plan).
- 2.1.2.5. Business as usual (BAU) activity, in that it is already provided across other Country Park’s, has been highlighted through the “short list” and as such has not been evaluated in detail as they will automatically form part of the development plan.
- 2.1.2.6. Full detail and analysis of the short list can be found in Appendix 5, although operational opportunities and recommendations are summarised below:

Ref	Workstream 1 -Operational Development Opportunity	Description	BAU / New Development	Recommendation
2	Guided walks and events	Annual programme of Ranger-led guided walks and events	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate
2	Holiday activities	School holiday programme led by the Ranger service (including family oriented events, children aged 5-16)	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate
2	Parties in the park (incl. children’s parties room hire)	Children’s parties led by the Ranger service, organised as per demand	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate
2	Information and interpretation	Provision of information and interpretation through promotional material and through on site Rangers.	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate
2	Improved signage in and around the park	Internal signage to guide and manage visitors – Ranger service in conjunction with Estate Workers	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate

3	Recreational cycling and walking trails	Creation of cycling and walking trails around the Park. Maintain and enhance existing trails.	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate
8	Expand "Friends of Group" and volunteer base	To expand the existing voluntary contribution within the Park.	BAU	Implement as per existing Country Park estate
2	Educational programme / partnerships	Working with partners to create and deliver an enhanced environmental education programme for country parks and promote learning outside the classroom. Opportunity for joint working with schools and other educational establishments (e.g. Learning and Skills, South Staffordshire College, Stafford College, Harper Adams University, Birmingham University, Keele University etc.) to help promote the benefits of protecting the natural environment through pupil participation and engagement. Potential to link training opportunities through practical applications on site.	New Development	Initial activity should focus around researching best practice and building up networks with partners and education providers; envisaged that research and development would commence in year 1
2	Disabled Vehicles	To improve accessibility to the site for people with disabilities or mobility issues through the introduction of Disabled vehicles for hire (as available at Marquis Drive)	New Development	Identify funding opportunities, either internal or external, and validate cost projections based on Marquis Drive model in year 1.
2	Targeted activities for youth	Targeted activities for youth. Identifying joint opportunities with SCC Youth Service, neighbouring District Councils and partners. Opportunity will investigate potential for facilities and activities for Youth provision based at Chasewater.	New Development	Initial scoping and engagement should commence from the outset although recognising the rethinking within SCC youth provision then this may be delayed, but should be a priority nonetheless.
2	Family Area for Toddlers	Creation of an improved outdoor play area which includes a family area for toddlers.	New Development	Initial activity should focus around insight and

		<p>Insight information identified that there is a demand for better play facilities on the park. An opportunity exists to engage with children and their families and for them to take an active role in development of the play space. Using the natural environment and creating a better outdoor space for play will encourage families to visit, instil confidence in the area and raise the profile of the site.</p>		<p>engagement, working with Rural Access Team to implement some immediate improvements in year 1. Quick wins to be identified through the Ranger service capabilities whilst a long term plan and associated funding is sought.</p>
3	<p>Establish multi-sport offer at Chasewater</p>	<p>Development of the concept of Chasewater as a multi-sport venue. Working with development / partner organisations to create sports based facilities (e.g. all weather pitches). Opportunities for furthering links with other sport and leisure providers already on site. Opportunity to develop a whole site approach</p>	<p>New Development</p>	<p>Project Sponsor (Rural Commissioner) to seek and clarify position regarding Highfields Farm. Should the option be viable post this decision then a business case could be developed within year 1/2.</p> <p>In parallel, opportunities should be explored for the remainder of the site or temporary use of Highfields Farm.</p>
3	<p>Extend opening hours and accessibility</p>	<p>Extend/review opening hours of Innovation Centre to increase demand and enhance visitor experience whilst generating income through secondary spend in the café and shop. Drive primary spend through room hire for commercial purposes and as a community resource</p>	<p>New Development</p>	<p>Development Officer to scope demand and determine cost-benefit analysis. To be completed in Year 1.</p>
3	<p>Green Energy initiatives</p>	<p>Explore the potential of further green initiatives (e.g. solar panels, ground source heat pump etc) for the park and ensure green</p>	<p>New Development</p>	<p>Development Officer instigates feasibility study and analysis in year 1 to</p>

		energy is considered across all developments where appropriate. Investigate potential of green park trail across the site, guided tours for visitors. Development of climate change and renewable energy education package. Potential of building upon previous work initiated by LDC and Birmingham University, potential of Chasewater Innovation Centre as a learning academy and a remote university site for green energy study purposes		determine viability.
3	Farmers Market	Opportunity to introduce a farmers market, providing local produce to local communities and visitors.	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to undertake market analysis and stakeholder engagement to determine demand and interest. Implementation in year 1 subject to the above.
3	Mini markets	Opportunity to introduce "mini-markets" on site - for craft and local goods, providing opportunities for local artists, craft workers and businesses. E.g. plant sales through local groups such as COGs (Cherry Orchard Gardening Services) www.cogsprepareforlife.co.uk	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to undertake market analysis and stakeholder engagement to determine demand and interest. Implementation in year 1 subject to the above.
3	Activities for the elderly	Opportunity to extend the community use of the Innovation Centre to target activities for the elderly - e.g. tea parties, arts and crafts, social events etc.	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to determine demand and setup requirements (including partner contribution e.g. Entrust and Age Concern) and depending on the outcome facilitate

				implementation in year 1
3	Improve parking Burntwood (North Shore side)	Opportunity to improve parking on the North Shore. The BOAT restriction for driving over the dam has meant that visitors from the Burntwood by-pass have to drive around to get to the South Shore as very limited parking is available on the North Shore	New Development	Undertake feasibility study in year to determine setup and maintenance costs vs demand and income generation, to determine VFM. Identify potential funding sources and joint working opportunities.
3	Assault course (high ropes)	Opportunity to improve facilities on the South Shore through the introduction of an assault course or high rope centre.	New Development	Identify feasibility and potential partner within year 1 with an aim to full implementation in year 2. To be facilitated by the Chasewater Development Officer.
4	Cycle and scooter hire/segways	Opportunity to improve facilities and activities on site through the introduction of cycle, segway and scooter hire	New Development	Identify feasibility and potential partner within year 1 with an aim to full implementation in year 2. To be led by the Chasewater Development Officer.
4	Local and national sporting events i.e. triathlon, ironman, powerboating, wakeboarding, orienteering, open water swimming, paddleboarding	Development of the concept of Chasewater as a venue for local and national sporting and large scale events - e.g. triathlon, ironman, national power boat racing, wakeboarding, orienteering, open water swimming, open air concerts, music and firework events. Working with partner organisations, stakeholders and sponsors to attract large scale local events. Furthering links with other sports providers already on the site. Opportunity to develop whole site approach to large scale events.	New Development	Project Sponsor to seek and clarify position regarding Highfields Farm if the land is required to run specific events. Investigate opportunities on a case by case basis from year 1 onwards.

5	Rangers Hut redevelopment	Opportunity to develop the Rangers Hut wholly or partially as a business enterprise unit / community use workshop facility etc. Remedial work is required to bring the building up the standard for lease. Provides opportunity to support start up business or community group etc.	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to investigate demand and produce clear cost model within year 1. Dependent on outcome this should be delivered within year 1.
5	Investigate planning permissions for potential change of use from B1	There is currently limited use on the business enterprise units at Chasewater with the planning permission restricted to B1. There is an opportunity to seek to expand planning on units through engagement with LDC to widen the site attractiveness and provide a platform for further development and expansion.	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to determine demand and feasibility of change in planning use. Outcome dependent, a change in planning use application should be completed.
6	Explore Innovation Centre use excluding café/restaurant	Opportunity to review current use of the Innovation Centre and investigate future use to maximise value and outcomes	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to facilitate and lead on a feasibility study and options appraisal for the future use of the Innovation Centre. To be undertaken within year 1.
7	Corporate Sponsorship	Creation of a corporate sponsorship programme, raising the profile of Chasewater realising benefits in kind and direct financial benefits	New Development	Not a priority activity but on-going development route that should be explored from year 2 onwards.
8	Review and expand role of stakeholders on site	To review the role of existing stakeholders to explore opportunities to expand and develop their offering and to become more operationally responsible for the site and its future development	New Development	Chasewater Development Officer to engage stakeholders and scope out potential
8	Investigate Ranger Apprenticeship	Investigate the possibility of introducing a	New	Rural Access Manager to

	Scheme – e.g. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust model at Highgate Common	Ranger apprenticeship scheme (e.g. similar to those operated by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust at High Gate Common)	Development	explore best practice examples and feasibility in year 1
9	Capture customer insight and data including performance management and comparisons across country park portfolio	Improve customer insight to enable informed decisions of the management and future of country parks	New Development	Insight and data collection to be reviewed and requirements gathered to inform a robust approach to gaining insight. Chasewater Development Officer to instigate as a key priority within year 1.
10	Marketing of the Country Park	Creation and promotion of a brand, defining the product offer, raising profile, identifying target market(s), product channels, communication strategy, stakeholder engagement.....culminating in a holistic site marketing strategy and plan that is synergistic with corporate marketing and messages	New Development	Existing marketing mechanisms are to continue in the interim whilst a full marketing strategy and plan is produced. It is envisaged that the plan will determine future timescales as it is inclusive of current activity and ongoing development opportunities. Development Officer to drive activity as the accountable post.

**The Chasewater Business Case in Phase 1 of the Project secured, as part of the operating model, funding for a Development Officer who is responsible for operational developments and delivery of this plan.*

2.1.3. Preferred Option(s)

- 2.1.3.1. The nature of the project and development plan does not lead to a preferred option as such, rather a combination of opportunities that form the overall **operational** development plan.
- 2.1.3.2. The recommendations formed within the “short list” have been analysed and structured with regards to implementation, and in doing so form the development plan. The full development implementation plan can be found in section 4.1.

2.2. Strategic Options Appraisal – (Workstream 2)

2.2.1. Purpose

A key deliverable of the Chasewater development project was to define an initial long list of **strategic** options and the methodology that should be used to evaluate them so that the business area could subsequently take forward this work in a structured way aligned to best practice. The purpose therefore of this document is to define the approach to undertaking the strategic options appraisal including initial planning activity that will form next steps.

2.2.2. Objectives

The overarching aim of workstream 2 of the project is to determine the future strategic direction of Chasewater Country Park and the benefits that it will provide. This will cover financial and non-financial benefits ultimately working towards a sustainable model of delivery that can be a pilot for the rest of the Country Park portfolio.

2.2.3. Outcomes

- 2.2.3.1. A sustainable model for the delivery of Country Park services at Chasewater and within the wider portfolio
- 2.2.3.2. Clear line of sight from preferred option to benefits that will support the sustainability of Chasewater
- 2.2.3.3. A full and shared understanding of the investments and timescales to realise the benefits
- 2.2.3.4. Decisions are based on evidence, transparency and are consistent

2.2.4. Project Scope and Exclusions

The purpose of the **strategic** options appraisal is to explore all reasonable alternatives to the delivery of Chasewater and by default inform all Country Parks, and therefore would suggest that the scope is relatively broad. This will

focus on being visionary and strategic but will account for operational implications.

Scope of the options appraisal will be managed through stakeholder engagement; however an initial view would suggest the following:

In Scope	Out of Scope
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives of the options appraisal • Criteria and weighting to evaluate options • Current activity at Chasewater including constraints (“As Is”) • Demand analysis • Business case for preferred option(s) • High level implementation plan • Consultation (if required) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed target operating model including process maps and standard operating procedures

2.2.5. Stakeholders

Initial activity should focus on stakeholder identification and analysis to determine the key stakeholder groups that will affect or are affected by the strategic options appraisal and outcome. It is recommended that a RACI (Responsible, accountable, consult, inform) tool be used to align stakeholders to the options appraisal process, so that there is a clear and shared understanding of roles and responsibilities throughout each step of the appraisal.

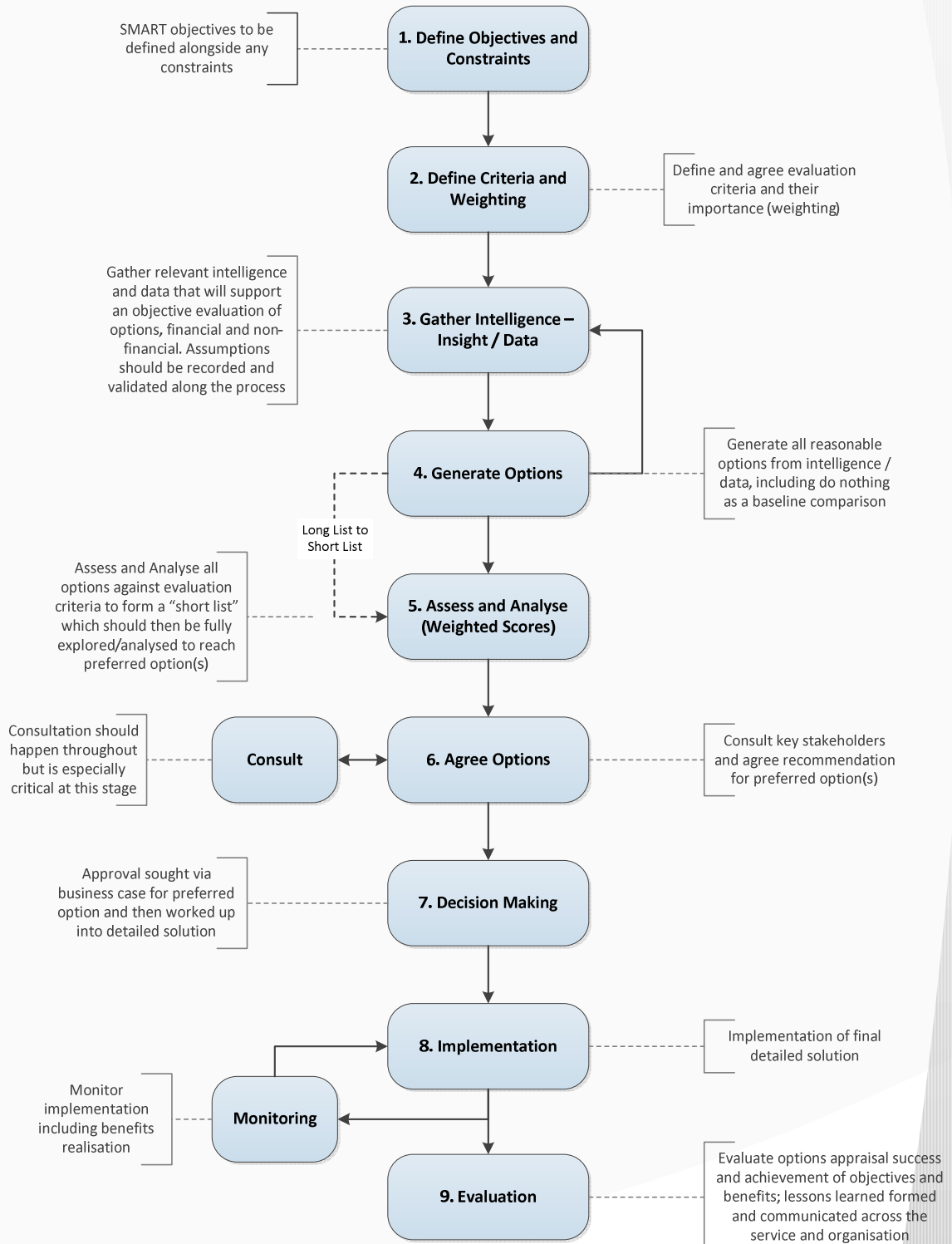
2.2.6. Project Approach

The suggested approach has been based on the Government “Green Book (2011)” as a standard method to delivering an options appraisal. The principles behind the options appraisal are:

- Being clear about the objectives
- Considering all the (reasonable) different ways that the objectives could be achieved options
- Assessing the costs and benefits of all options
- Identifying the pros and cons of each option, quantifying and valuing them if possible
- Considering risks and sensitivities
- Considering the most appropriate and best value use of resources, not solely focusing on cost alone

The following outlines the process of completing the options appraisal:

Chasewater Development – Strategic Options Appraisal Process



2.2.7. Next Steps

2.2.7.1. Analysis of customer insight, good practice and innovation both nationally and internationally have helped inform the initial high level long list of **strategic options**. The full detail can be found in Appendix 6 although the options are summarised below:

- SCC continues to implement improvements with the resources available to run Chasewater as a country park
- SCC transfers the freehold by selling or gifting the Park, or agreeing to a long-term lease*. This option is not necessarily restricted to Chasewater Country Park and could include other SCC land holdings
- A multi-agency public sector partnership which runs Chasewater as an outdoor public amenity
- SCC commissions a private sector company to run Chasewater as an outdoor public amenity
- SCC commissions a not-for-profit organisation to run Chasewater as a country park
- SCC enters into a cross-sector partnership to run Chasewater as an outdoor public amenity, including a multi-sport outdoor centre
- SCC enters into a partnership with an education establishment to run Chasewater as an outdoor public amenity and a centre for learning
- SCC enters into a partnership with a not-for-profit organisation to run Chasewater as an outdoor public amenity and a community garden
- SCC creates an independent, not-for-profit organisation focused on raising money from individuals and organisations to run and enhance Chasewater

2.2.7.2. Building on the initial identification of strategic actions, the following initial planning steps are recommended prior to commencing the strategic options process:

Identify immediate key stakeholders to form a key working group and undertake planning exercise:

- Stakeholder identification and analysis including interest/influence matrix to analyse key stakeholder groups and inform the communications plan
- Apply RACI (responsible, accountable, consult, inform) to stakeholder list across each step of the options appraisal process; this will align stakeholders and create clear roles and responsibilities across the project lifecycle.
- Communications plan aligned to project deliverables and strategic options appraisal process
- Engage key stakeholder groups to undertake planning exercise to determine key products (aligned to objectives), scope, resource and timescales (plan)

- Define and setup governance structure
- Initiate key project controls – risks and issues management, change control, escalation processes.

3. Financial Overview

3.1. Operating Budget and Financial Projections

3.1.1. The approved Chasewater business case secured an operating budget of c.£100k which has been recognised as a new pressure through the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) process.

3.1.2. Forecasted over the next 5 years, the operating budget requirement will be reduced as additional income is generated, maintenance is reduced and the Chasewater Development Officer post becomes self-sustaining or not required from year 3 onwards. The following table is the extract from the original business case:

	Y1 (£)	Y2 (£)	Y3 (£)	Y4 (£)	Y5 (£)
Y1 additional resources required	102,117	102,117	102,117	102,117	102,117
Reduced maintenance	-	-	-10,000	-15,000	-20,000
End of Development Officer Post	-	-	-30,400	-30,400	-30,400
Additional income	-	-10,000	-20,000	-30,000	-40,000
Ongoing resources required	102,117	92,117	41,717	26,717	11,717
Cumulative costs		194,223	235,950	262,667	274,384

3.1.3. The table above sets out the financial targets that the operational development plan aims to achieve through additional income. The absence of a year 1 target is in recognition that the development plan will be in its infancy and that scoping and engagement activity will be a priority.

3.1.4. A key success measure for the operational development plan will be to generate an additional £10k income p.a. year on year from year 2 onwards.

3.1.5. The existing Chasewater budget is currently £183k for 2013/14.

3.1.6. The approved Chasewater budget for 2014/15 is £283,500 and therefore financial benefits realized through the implementation of the development plan will be measured against the total Chasewater envelope and the wider

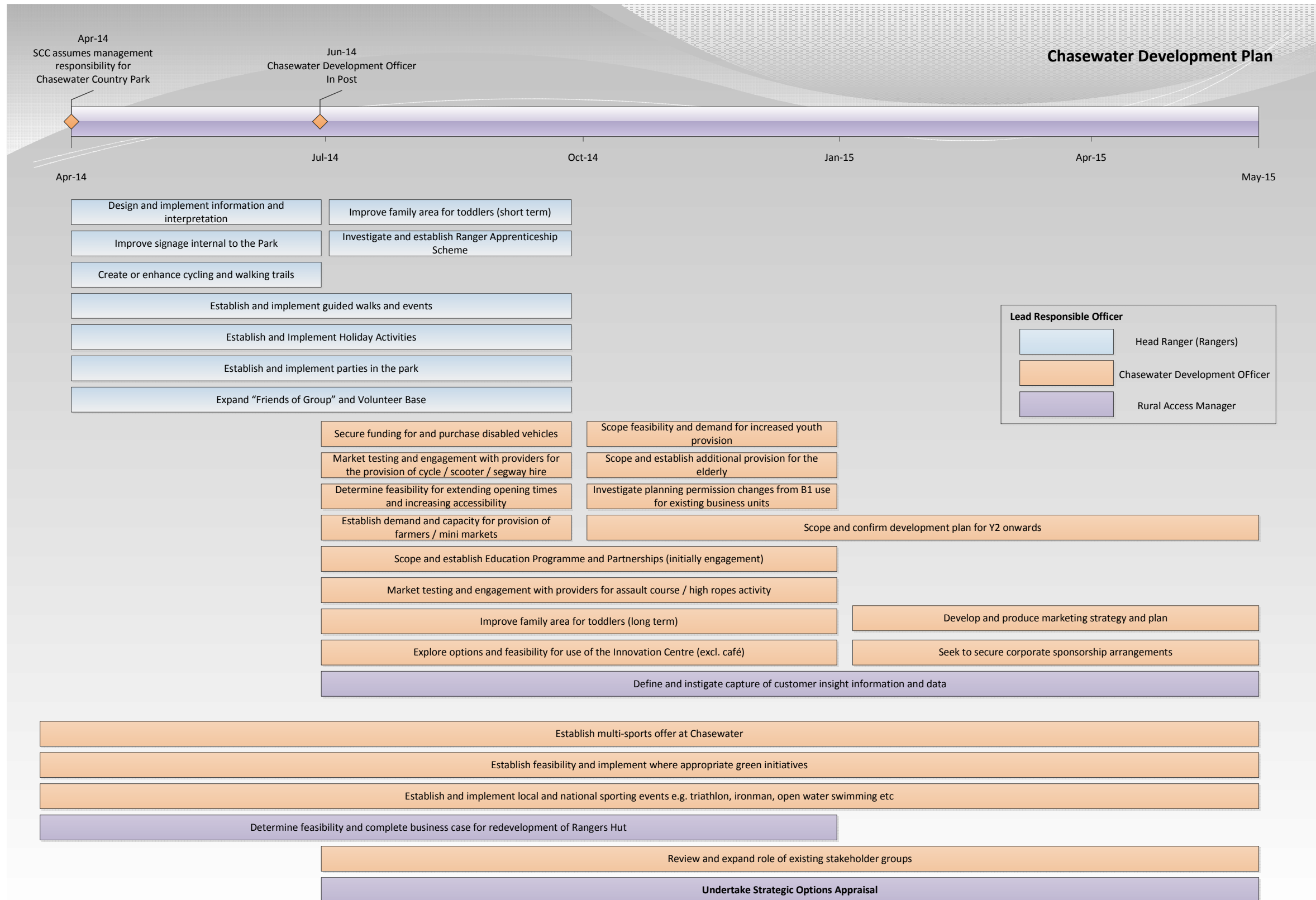
Country Park portfolio as one of the key objectives is to use Chasewater to inform the wider service area.

3.2. Financial Investment

- 3.2.1. Given the nature of the operational development opportunities identified and the need for an initial focus on engagement with stakeholders and partners, internally and externally, investment requirements have been identified as part of the appraisal process but not quantified.
- 3.2.2. Where possible estimations of investment requirements have been made, but will need to be validated through the development plan. This can be found in Appendix 5 as part of the evaluation of short list opportunities.
- 3.2.3. Investment does not solely relate to the County Council as with franchise models and concessions the capital and revenue costs will be of concern to the provider, with SCC seeking to secure income generation through lease / concession agreements.
- 3.2.4. In house provision (SCC) identified as part of the development plan (e.g. provision of disabled vehicles, ranger hut development) would need funding to be secured either through existing operational budgets or new sources of funding.
- 3.2.5. Critical to the operating model, the Chasewater Development post holds a key responsibility for identifying and securing funding opportunities, internally and externally, to provide resource for the implementation of development activities.

4. Management Case

4.1. Development & Implementation Plan



4.2. Resource Commitment

- 4.2.1. The key resource that will be driving the development plan (responsible officer) is shown in section 4.1.

4.3. Governance Arrangements

- 4.3.1. Management of the country park and the development plan will both be governed through the existing country park structure. Reporting lines and escalation points will replicate the existing structure that applies to the wider portfolio. The existing structure can be found in Appendix 7.

4.4. Transition Plans

- 4.4.1. The key customer of the development plan is the Rural Access Manager who has been a key member of the immediate project team from the outset.
- 4.4.2. Initial development activities are focused around “business as usual” activity and therefore there will be a “soft” launch which will transition from project to operational go-live.
- 4.4.3. As the expertise and experience required is contained within the service area there is no requirement for project support post go-live and as plans have been jointly produced with the service area then a natural transition will occur.
- 4.4.4. As part of project closure, lessons learned (both positive and negative) and key successes will be captured so that it can inform future projects.

4.5. Risk and Issue Management

- 4.5.1. Risk and issue management is already integrated into the culture and working practices of the service area through effective policy and process. It is incorporated into service planning and performance management processes with a proactive approach to risk assessment across all country parks. Chasewater as an addition to this portfolio will also be managed through the same policies and processes as part of business as usual.

Risk Description	Likelihood (L)	Impact (I)	Risk Score (L x I)	Mitigation
If the Highfields Farm site is “mothballed” until the Strategic Property Partner is in place then there is risk of limited development ability on this piece of land and associated loss of income potential	5	3	15	Temporary development use of Highfields Farm to be explored to maximise potential income in the short term.
Constrained development opportunities for existing and new stakeholders regarding catering on site given that Entrust are the prime provider.	5	3	15	Engage Entrust to gauge level of interest in provision of catering on site and in doing so determine impact on timescales, development opportunities and existing (and new) stakeholder groups.
CISWO (land owner) do not recognise the transfer of ownership and lease from LDC to SCC resulting in future activity being delayed due to perceived LDC responsibility.	5	3	15	SCC Legal to continue discussions regarding transfer of leases.
Risk of limited development opportunities across the whole site due to the nature of the land (SSSI, Green Belt) which will constrain future activity	4	5	20	Continual discussions with LDC and Natural England to maximise opportunity and flexibility. Stakeholder engagement key activity in managing expectations.
Risk of the dam requiring ongoing and potentially significant maintenance should it falter (potential to detract from development and absorb cost)	3	5	15	Maintenance plan for the dam to provide early warning of potential issues so that cost is minimised. Development activity to take account especially given the use of the water body.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Chasewater Business Case (Appendices available on request)

Appendix 2 – Chasewater – Development – Outcomes Mapping v0.2

Appendix 3 – Option 1 – ToM and SWOT for Min Service Level + v0.1

Appendix 4a – Chasewater Insight Index Map

Appendix 4b – Chasewater Index for the Insight Map

Appendix 4c – Chasewater Tenure SSSI and SBI Map

Appendix 5 – Evaluation of Short List Development Opportunities v0.2

Appendix 6a – Chasewater Strategic Options

Appendix 6b – Strategic Options Diagram of Influences

Appendix 7 – Chasewater Country Park Structure Chart

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