
REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING:	15th MARCH 2018	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	ADRIAN LOWERY ext. 5764	DOC:
SUBJECT:	STREET SCENE RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENTS	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To approve an increase to the Establishment of one new Cleansing Operative post and two new Grounds Maintenance Operative posts to help respond to increasing demand for service due to continual growth within the District.
- 1.2 To increase the Council's vehicle fleet by one additional compact sweeper, one additional ride on mower and one additional van/pick-up to help respond to increasing demand for service due to continual growth within the District.
- 1.3 To approve the purchase of other ancillary equipment including strimmers, blowers, fuel, spare parts etc.to help respond to increasing demand for service due to continual growth within the District.
- 1.4 To approve an increase to the Establishment of four new Grounds Maintenance Operative posts to improve the maintenance standards within the District.
- 1.5 To increase the Council's vehicle fleet by one additional van/pick-up to improve the maintenance standards within the District.
- 1.6 To approve the purchase of other ancillary equipment including strimmers, blowers, fuel, spare parts etc. to improve the maintenance standards within the District.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 Committee is being asked to consider additional staffing and vehicle resources to enable our Street Scene service to continue to respond to the growth within the District.
- 2.2 Committee is also asked to consider additional staffing and vehicle resources to improve the maintenance standards within the District.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The number of streets and public open spaces has grown within the District by over 10% during the last five years. This period has also seen a significant increase in the volume of work required of the grounds maintenance service due to the increase in public open spaces, highway verges and play/sports facilities a total of 94,310 square meters, which equates to cutting a further 1.5 million square meters during the summer period.
- 3.2 The current staffing resources available to deliver these services are 20 Grounds Maintenance Operatives and 9 Street Cleansing Operatives; this is unchanged from at least eight years ago.
- 3.3 In order to meet the increasing size of the District we have reorganised grounds maintenance and cleansing rounds on a number of occasions. We do not have sufficient capacity to meet any future growth and have recently had to abort some grounds works and significantly delay some cleansing jobs due to resource issues.
- 3.4 Direct Services introduced weed spraying to grassed areas around eight years ago to primarily reduce the exposure of operatives to Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) and to reduce the resource requirements of strimming.
- 3.5 The current practice is to use herbicides to kill grassed areas around obstructions such as fences, posts and street furniture, creating a buffer zone, in order that ride on mowers can cut grassed areas more efficiently.
- 3.6 This practice has reduced operatives use of strimmers. The herbicide application takes place twice a year, whereas strimming would be required on each maintenance visit (around 16 per year).
- 3.7 Whilst the impacts of HAVS have been reduced following the introduction of better equipment, better health surveillance and better monitoring, the practice of using hand blowers to blow cut grass back onto plots from pavements and paths has increased utilising the resources that would once have undertaken strimming.
- 3.8 The extensive use of herbicides in public places is not popular with the public and is often very unsightly, reducing the aesthetics of the District. Further to this the Government is positively encouraging local authorities to significantly reduce the use of herbicides and in particular glyphosate based products.
- 3.9 Typically we would spray grassed areas as indicated above twice per year, in order to reduce reliance on spraying and return to a regime of strimming will require an increase in resources, as strimming will need to be undertaken on each occasion the grass is cut, this is around 16 times per year in most locations as stated above.
- 3.10 Further to the above, the quantity of winter works has increased disproportionately, with significant volumes of tree work and shrub bed maintenance. The additional resources will be deployed in the winter to improve the maintenance of these areas. They will also be utilised to enhance litter picking specifically on highway verges.
- 3.11 Due to the rapid growth of the District it is likely that the grounds and cleansing work load will continue to expand.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The table below shows the additional costs proposed to the General Fund of increasing the Street Scene service provision.

	2018.19	2019.20	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Salaries: 6 x Grounds Ops & 1 x Cleansing Op	153,874	157,721	161,664	165,706	169,848	808,813
Training	1,500	1,530	1,561	1,592	1,624	7,806
Equipment	7,000	0	7,283	4,245	7,577	26,105
PPE	2,800	700	714	2,971	742	7,927
Vehicle maintenance	20,304	20,710	23,124	25,787	27,303	117,227
Additional revenue cost	185,478	180,661	194,346	200,300	207,094	967,878
Sweeper	66,500	0	0	0	0	66,500
2 x Van	73,000	0	0	0	0	73,000
Mower	24,500	0	0	0	0	24,500
Additional capital cost	164,000	0	0	0	0	164,000
Total cost	349,478	180,661	194,346	200,300	207,094	1,131,878

4.2 This proposal will increase the Establishment by 7 staff plus other additional revenue expenditure adding approximately £967,878 over a five year period. The on-going additional cost can be contained within the Growth Provision set-aside each year.

4.4 Provisions for growth are within contingent sums and total £500,000 per annum from 2018/19. The Growth Provision will be reduced per annum by the additional costs proposed resulting in no added pressure to the General Fund.

4.5 The capital cost in 2018/19 can also be contained within the Growth Provision. To ensure that there is enough set-aside for replacement of assets going forward it proposed that £30,000 per annum is taken from the Growth Provision and transferred into an Asset Replacement reserve.

4.6 Below is a table to show the impact on the Growth Provision from the proposals within the report.

	2018.19	2019.20	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Provision B/fwd	0	120,522	409,861	685,516	955,215	2,171,114
Street Scene Drawdown	-349,478	-180,661	-194,346	-200,300	-207,094	-1,131,878
Asset Replacement	-30,000	-30,000	-30,000	-30,000	-30,000	-150,000
Annual Contribution	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	2,500,000
Provision C/fwd	120,522	409,861	685,516	955,215	1,218,122	3,389,236

4.7 In summary, the additional on-going costs included within the report can be contained within provisions set-aside for growth and a healthy balance is still available for service pressures in future years.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 Legal implications – the Council are a designated Principal Litter Authority and have a statutory duty to arrange for the collection of litter and fly tipping. There are no legal implications; however, the Government has issued 'Weeds, Best Practice Guidance for Integrated and Non-chemical Amenity Hard Surface Weed Control', which does require local authorities to give consideration to alternative means of weed control.
- 5.2 Employment Implications – we will create seven additional local jobs. Sufficient staff resources will need to be allocated from Human Resources and Direct Services to undertake the recruitment process.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 Increase in the number of local jobs available for local people. Less reliance on the use of herbicides improves the environmental benefits to the community.