

LEISURE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

21 SEPTEMBER 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES WORK UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report has been prepared to inform Members about the work that has been undertaken by the Environmental Services Street Scene Team and the services they offer.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 In 2018 parks, grounds maintenance, street cleaning and waste services were merged into a single Environmental Services Team. This merger provided opportunities to streamline services and identify new areas of working to increase income to the council.

3.0 Internal Provision

- 3.1 The grounds maintenance provision for NSDC housing came in house in April 2021. This includes provision for Gladstone House, playground works, tree works and general grounds maintenance. In the near future we expect this SLA to be expanded to include new areas including the Broadleaves development and new resources will need to be identified.

This is a £288,090 contract currently. These SLAs for “In House” Departments have meant we have increased our Staff Establishment. It is not extra income to Street Scene but the ability to carry out this work internally has seen a great increase in Service Quality for our Tenants. It has also greatly reduced complaints to our Customer Service Teams and housing colleagues reducing time spent on negative issues we saw from using a third party contractor.

- 3.2 Service level agreements have been agreed for, Car Parks and Asset Management these are now serviced by the Street Scene team. Asset Management was previously using a third party contractor. We have increased our establishment keeping the money inside the Council for front line services. This increased specification and service delivery has seen a higher quality of work. This will increase the satisfaction of car park users, and increase the attractiveness of our industrial units to be rented out.
- 3.3 In addition to the above we provide winter gritting services to other NSDC departments. This is run as a ‘pay as you go’ service dependant on the weather.

4.0 External Customers

- 4.1 Outside of NSDC, grounds maintenance and associated services are now provided to the following parish councils within the district and the approximate income in 2021/22:

Bilsthorpe Parish Council	£4,016.00
Chuter Ede School	£6,636.15
Farnsfield Parish Council	£8,696.00
Hoveringham Parish Council	£1,675.00
Kings Clipstone Parish Council	£875.00
Kneesall Parish Council	£470.00
Lowdham Parish Council	£13,942.00
Wellow Parish Council	£440.00
Total:	£36,750.15

4.2 In addition a 1 year extension has been agreed with Newark Town Council which runs until March 2022. This contract brought in £165,902 to the Council last year. This contract covers grounds maintenance, parks and play areas, street cleansing and litter bin services. This is included in the Grounds Maintenance Budget.

4.3 Work with Nottinghamshire Council/Gilstrap Maintenance brought in £690.92 in 2021/22 and Active 4 Today (£1,381) started in August 2021

4.4 We offer a Playground Inspection Service, which we feel has enabled us to bring the standard of play grounds up throughout the district. This service provided an income of £2,835.00 in 2020/21 for annual inspections plus £2,000 for monthly and quarterly inspections.

5.0 Growth of the Department

5.1 The increase in income has enabled internal investment. 7 full time members of staff have been recruited to work on the Housing SLA and 1 FT Member of Staff to cover the SLA with Asset Management. We have also recruited 1 member of staff on a Zero Hour Relief contract to assist with Parish Council Tender Wins. This has enabled us to offer more jobs to local people.

5.2 Of these new recruits we have made two existing apprentices from the Team, who had finished their Apprenticeships into full time employees. We have also introduced two New Apprentices into the NSDC Street Scene Team.

5.3 Our Advice and Work Quality has been through word of mouth that has provided the growth for new works within the District.

6.0 Service Offering

6.1 We can provide a range of services to external and internal parties. These include:

- Street Cleansing
- Grounds maintenance
- Winter Gritting
- Litter and Dog Bin Servicing and Fitting
- Play area inspections and Repairs
- Arboricultural services
 - Tree surveys
 - Tree works

6.2 We have recently started offering Arboricultural Services, conducting Tree Surveys and works. Surveys and large tree works are conducted through external providers with an admin fee being added to costs. Small tree works are conducted by our in house Street Scene Team.

7.0 Limitations

7.1 There are of course some limiting factors which may prevent us from taking on additional work. The current team is working near capacity so any additional income would be offset by the need for new crew members and a vehicle. *For illustration purposes only, an annual cost of £37,000 for a member of staff and vehicle including associated running costs. This includes additional equipment (mowers strimmer's etc.).*

£55,250 capital cost would need to be found to purchase a Vehicle.

7.2 Any significant expansion of external or internal service offering will have to be met by internal investment or a reduction in internal service standards. However, some councils have effectively created a trading arm to their Street Scene services and this may be something the Council explores in the future.

8.0 Equalities Implications

8.1 None

9.0 Financial Implications (FIN21-22/273)

9.1 The costs for 7 extra staff and equipment has been covered by funding from the HRA. The HRA's costs have not increased, they are funding the internal service, rather than an external provider. Car Parks and Asset Management have previously used an external company to carry out some grounds maintenance work, which is now carried out internally by Street Scene. The budgets used for the external supplier have now transferred to Street Scene to enable them to employ another member of staff, and cover other associated costs.

9.2 Formal contracts have been agreed with the Parish Council's listed in 4.1. This resulted in net additional income of £12,000 to the Council after funding the additional member of staff as mentioned at paragraph 9.1 above. Any additional contracts may require additional staffing and equipment, as detailed in 7.1 above.

10.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

10.1 The actions of the team support the following community plan objectives:

- Continue to maintain the high standard of cleanliness and appearance of the local environment.
- Enhance and protect the district's natural environment

11 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) **the significant increase in income and work conducted by the Environmental Services Street Scene Team be noted; and**

(b) the capacity for expansion, but that constraints to that expansion still exist be noted.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Ben Stacey Street Scene Manager on 5738

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