

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Grounds Maintenance Contract Review – Terms of Reference</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2018
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Norman Jorgensen, Executive Member for Environment

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Overview and Scrutiny is one of the key checks and balances which ensure that the Council and its partners make an implement effective decisions.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee agree the proposed Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny review of the Council's Grounds Maintenance contract (Annex A) and the proposed Call for Evidence (Annex B).

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Committee has agreed to carry out a Scrutiny review of the Council's Grounds Maintenance contract. In order to provide clarity on the purpose of the review and proposed outcomes, Terms of Reference have been drafted (Annex A).

The Terms of Reference provide a framework for the review and set out a number of key objectives which will provide a basis for the development of key lines of enquiry.

Members are requested to agree the Terms of Reference and the proposed list of witnesses to be called during the Scrutiny review.

In order to notify residents, Town and Parish Councils and community groups about the review a Call for Evidence has also been produced (Annex B). The Call for Evidence invites written submissions and notifies potential witnesses that the Committee will be holding witness sessions during the autumn.

The following paper on the Agenda, from the Director of Locality and Customer Services, sets out the background to the current delivery of the Grounds Maintenance contract and identifies a number of issues for Members to consider as part of the Scrutiny review.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

*The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.*

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	0	0	0
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	0	0	0
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0	0	0

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

### Cross-Council Implications

No specific cross cutting themes.

### List of Background Papers

None

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW – GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Purpose of Review

To review the organisation and operation of the Council's grounds maintenance contract with Tivoli Group Ltd (formerly with ISS Facility Services Landscaping) with specific focus on the grass cutting service.

To make recommendations for service improvements to the Council's Executive.

#### Key Objectives

1. To understand the key terms of the Council's grounds maintenance contract with Tivoli Group Ltd (who took over this year, having bought out ISS Facilities Services Landscaping).
2. To understand the operation of the joint management arrangements between Tivoli, WBC and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
3. In relation to grass cutting, to understand the delivery of the service in terms of frequencies, timings, local priorities, complaints handling and communication with stakeholders.
4. To understand how the grounds maintenance service works with key partners such as Town and Parish Councils and local community groups.
5. To consider performance management of the grounds maintenance contract in relation to performance indicators, targets, penalties, monitoring, financial control and reporting to Members.
6. To consider the financial elements of the grounds maintenance contract within the context of the financial challenges facing the Council.
7. To understand how other Councils deliver grounds maintenance services and consider examples of best practice.
8. To consider the potential for service improvements, improved communications and partnership working within the context of the challenges facing the Council.

#### Background

The current grounds maintenance contract commenced in April 2016. The contract was awarded to ISS Facility Services Landscaping following a joint procurement exercise with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead which delivered an annual saving to WBC of £40k.

Tivoli Group Ltd took over the contract in 2018 having bought out ISS Facilities Services Landscaping. Further efficiency savings are delivered through a shared management structure for Tivoli across both Councils, although each Council receives an individual service tailored to its own needs.

The new WBC contract implemented a flexible grass cutting service where grass is cut when necessary rather than relying on a fixed schedule. The contract also included a new performance management scheme with greater focus on customer satisfaction and service quality.

The contract also included an increased focus on enhancing biodiversity by providing areas of longer grass and wildflowers in which pollinators and other wildlife could flourish. The contract was designed following a public consultation in 2014 when residents told the Council that they would welcome a more flexible grass cutting service which targeted priority areas at priority times.

### **Information Gathering – Witnesses/Supporting Documents**

- WBC Officers and Members – Lead Member/Director/Service Lead/Customer Service Lead.
- RBWM Officers and Members – Lead Member/Service Lead.
- Tivoli Group Ltd. Representatives.
- Town and Parish Councils, Residents and Community Groups.
- Expert Witnesses.
- Additional witnesses to be invited to attend as necessary.
- Contract Documents/Contract Review and Performance Management Reports.
- Research documents on best practice and the state of the market.
- Evidence of communications, media releases and complaints handling.
- Site visits to be arranged as and when necessary.

### **Timetable**

- Kick off – O&S Management Committee on 1 August 2018.
- Witnesses to attend O&S Management Committee meetings on 19 September and 17 October 2018.
- Draft report to O&S Management Committee on 21 November 2018.
- Report to the Council's Executive on 31 January 2019.

**WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW OF GRASS CUTTING**

**CALL FOR EVIDENCE**

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is undertaking a review of the Council's grass cutting service.

The new service commenced in April 2016 and aimed to provide a more flexible service which responded to local needs and priorities. However, there have been a number of complaints about the quality and effectiveness of the service which has led to the review.

The Committee would like to hear the views of residents, Town and Parish Councils and Community Groups about the frequency and quality of grass cutting across the Borough. This could include the timeliness and frequency of cuts, the quality of the work, disposal of grass cuttings, impact of wildflower areas, information on the Council's website, complaints handling or any other issues.

The Committee will be holding witness sessions in the autumn, but, in the first instance would like to receive written evidence or comments.

Please submit written evidence to the Council's Scrutiny Officer, Neil Carr, electronically at [neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk) or by post at Democratic Services, Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1WH.

If you would like to find out more about the review, please contact Neil Carr on 0118 974 6058.

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