

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Grass Cutting Delivery Review 2019</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Parry Bath, Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Sarah Hollamby, Director of Locality and Customer Services

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

To ensure that the Grounds Maintenance Service/Contract with Tivoli is fit for purpose so that residents can enjoy well-maintained open spaces, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, amenity areas and highway verges across the Borough.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee consider the progress update report for the 2019 grass cutting programme.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was asked to review the contract arrangements for the Grounds Maintenance service and this was addressed at meetings held in August, September and October 2018. A final report was prepared and considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018 which made a number of recommendations to the Council's Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January.

A meeting was held in February 2019 where a report provided by Council Officers to advise Members of the actions and mitigations undertaken to address the recommendations in order to deliver an effective grass cutting service (appended for information). This report provides a further update now that grass cutting has commenced to review the progress made.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Council's current Grounds Maintenance Contract commenced in 2016 with a new contractor, ISS Facility Services, which was subsequently bought out by Tivoli Group Ltd in June 2018. The contract was awarded after a joint procurement exercise with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The contract moved away from a traditional prescriptive model (i.e. a defined number of cuts) to an output/outcomes based contract.

The contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 where there were some initial issues but there was a significant improvement in the service delivered by the contractor in 2017. In 2018 however further problems arose and the Council received a significant number of complaints and negative coverage in print and social media.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee asked to review the contract arrangements and this was addressed at meetings held on 1 August, 19 September and 17 October, with a final report prepared and considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Management on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018. The recommendations from this report were presented to the Council's Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 with a WBC Client Officer report being considered by The Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee in February 2019. Following this it was agreed that a review would take place in June 2019 after grass cutting had commenced in the borough to monitor the progress made.

### **Steps taken**

The previous Overview & Scrutiny report (appended) outlined the actions to be taken by both WBC Officers and Tivoli on a month by month basis, running from January to May (appendix 2). This focused on preparation leading up to the start of grass cutting, having used our risk matrix (appendix 3) and forming most likely scenarios (appendix 9) we were able to arrange for appropriate mitigation should these occur. From March once grass cutting had commenced, our emphasis was to work closely with Localities to effectively monitor Tivoli's progress and ensure that the communication going out to Members was valuable and would work over the course of the grass cutting season.

As part of the preparation and monitoring of the contract in the lead up to grass cutting commencing, fortnightly and often weekly meetings were held between Tivoli Contract Manager and WBC Place Clienting Officers to monitor the progress. In addition to these, fortnightly meetings have been in place with Sarah Hollamby, Customer & Localities Director; Clare Lawrence, Assistant Director Place; Customer & Localities Assistant Director Jude Whyte and Place Clienting Officers. This has kept all services up to date on the contracts progress and provided opportunities for joined up working. For example we were able to utilise Council resources to assist with Tivoli's recruitment and help advertise for seasonal worker positions which had not yet been filled. This used our Tenancy forums, Elevate at Wokingham Library, Optalis as well as our Community Facebook and Twitter.

The Supervisors at Tivoli lead a grass cutting planning day with their long standing employees and team leaders, to identify operational issues they had experienced in previous years and discuss efficiencies that could be made to help prevent lost time. This

helped to get operatives on board, agreeing to amend the grass cutting routes from six to two, which would allow operatives to work in teams closely together, utilise local knowledge and support each other should any problems arise. This left Operatives confident that they had everything in place to deliver a monthly cut with high profile sites receiving additional cutting as required.

### Progress to date

Since grass cutting commenced as planned in mid-March we are now on our third round of cutting for the year and have been able to sustain a 4 weekly cut with higher use parks cut more frequently. We have worked closely with our contractors and within the Council to monitor progress and escalate potential issues before they become a problem. As a result customer complaints are significantly lower year on year with 168 justified complaints received at the same point in 2018 (between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018) compared to 11 received to date (accurate as of 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019).

To keep Members up to date of progress, weekly updates have been sent to members since grass cutting started, outlining the towns/parishes where grass cutting has been taking place and giving details of where to expect grass cutting to take place the following week. This also provided links to the grass cutting FAQs (see appendix 7) and details of how Members and residents can report grass cutting issues via the Microsoft Dynamics System.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

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

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
None
<b>List of Background Papers</b>
None

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<b>Date:</b> 29/05/2019	<b>Version No.:</b> 1

## Appendix

**Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations - updated**

**Appendix 2 – Action Plan – spring 2019**

**Appendix 3 – Risk Matrix**

**Appendix 4 – Current KPIs - updated**

**Appendix 5 – Proposed KPIs**

**Appendix 6 – Communications Plan**

**Appendix 7 – FAQs**

**Appendix 8 – The Customer Journey**

**Appendix 9 – Scenario Testing**

**Appendix 10 – Path of Performance Monitoring**

**Appendix 11 – Overview & Scrutiny Report February 2019**

### Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations progress update

Recommendation	Progress Update
2.1 That the Executive Member and Director of Locality and Customer Services meet with senior management from Tivoli Group to discuss the operation of the grounds maintenance service and to emphasise the Council's expectations for service delivery in 2019.	Completed February 2019.
2.2 That the Executive Member and Director of Locality and Customer Services liaise with their counterparts at RBWM to identify areas of common interest and concern and make joint representations to Tivoli Group as necessary.	An initial informal meeting has been held and quarterly meetings will be programmed which will include other mutual Contracts.
2.3 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services review the level of WBC's client monitoring/management resource available for the beginning of the next grass cutting season – March/April 2019.	Regular monitoring of the contract is ongoing and will continue throughout the grass cutting period. This involves the Localities and Place Clienting Officers working closely together and links with the KPIs

<p>2.4 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services review the contractual options available to the Council in the event of continuing underperformance by the grounds maintenance contractor.</p>	<p>Complete (see Appendix 10)</p>
<p>2.5 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services explore options for co-location of the grounds maintenance client and contractor teams and review the weighting of Key Performance Indicators in the contract to emphasise the performance standard required for key public-facing elements of the service.</p>	<p>The co-location of Clienting staff has been considered in the possible redesign of Toutley Depot which is currently being addressed by Property Services.</p> <p>The new KPIs were agreed and are now in place for the current (fourth) contract year which commenced April 2019.</p>
<p>2.6 That the implementation of the Localities Service be used to explore opportunities for improved local intelligence and the development of local networks providing feedback on the operation of the grounds maintenance service.</p>	<p>The Localities Officers are currently monitoring grass cutting progress and feedback issues via the Dynamics System and to the contract manager.</p>
<p>2.7 That WBC Officers work with the contractor to seek input from appropriate specialist groups, including RSPB and the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) in order to inform management plans for biodiversity sites (woodland, copse and thicket) across the Borough.</p>	<p>Officers have met with WBC Biodiversity Officer and will be compiling an Action Plan to review deliverable options. Meetings have also been held with WBC's Countryside Service to discuss their approach to managing these areas.</p>
<p>2.8 That, as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme, opportunities for using new technology be explored in order to deliver more comprehensive, up to date information on grounds maintenance schedules, routes, performance and customer feedback.</p>	<p>Tivoli are currently progressing their mobile operating system. Our Localities team are currently trailing remote devices which support them out in the field and will help them to interact with both Customers and Contractors.</p>
<p>2.9 That the Council continue discussions with Town and Parish Councils about the potential for further asset transfers and options for mutual support in relation to the grounds maintenance service, with</p>	<p>These discussions are ongoing with Town and Parish Councils with the view to have similar arrangements with local community groups and schools to help deliver facilities that work for the public.</p>

regular updates to the Borough Parish Liaison Forum.	
2.10 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services submit a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, at its meeting in February 2019, setting out the arrangements in place to ensure an effective grass cutting service in 2019.	Completed February 2019
2.11 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services submit a further report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, at its meeting in October 2019, setting out details of performance issues and lessons learnt during the 2019 grass cutting season.	October 2019
2.12 That the Executive instruct Officers to provide updated guidance on the Council's approach to public consultation, in line with the commitments set out in the Council's Constitution and the relevant legal principles.	<p>It is agreed to update the Council's guidance on consultations in line with the Council's Constitution and statutory requirements.</p> <p>To note - the consultation conducted prior to the development of the Grounds Maintenance contract conformed to the expected standards detailed in the report. The report identifies other consultation activity as evidence for the recommendation.</p>

Appendix 2 – Action Plan – Spring 2019

January

- Recruitment commences
- Liaise with Town Parish & Countryside Services
- Machinery in for servicing
- Locality Officer KPI inspection training

February

- Tivoli Seasonal worker training
- Asset list reviewed
- Quarterly meeting to review progress
- Executive & Director Meeting with Tivoli
- Planning day with Tivoli
- Servicing of machinery complete
- O&S Committee
- Comms plan completed and reviewed

March

- Commence 1st cut
- Start Communications programme to Members
- Introduction of Tivoli Operative System (TOPS)
- Additional monitoring by Tivoli Team
- Monitoring by Localities commencing
- Wildflower preparations underway

April

- Commence 2nd cut
- New KPI weighting in place for start of 4th contract year
- Provide Communications update on how we are progressing
- Operational Review
- Wildflower preparations continue

May

- Locality Officer inspections reviewed
- Communications continue with weekly updates to Members

### Appendix 3 Risk Matrix

Contract Management Risks (Grounds Maintenance)	Issue in 2016	Issue in 2017	Issue in 2018	Likelihood of becoming an issue (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk score
Late start due to staff training not being completed	Yes	No	No	2	4	8 - Medium
Strong early growth due to mild winter and hot spring requiring early start	Yes	No	No	4	3	12 - High
As with 2018 – severe winter conditions in March leading to late start to cutting	No	No	Yes	2	3	6 – Medium
Late start due to lack of recruitment	No	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Insufficient machinery at season start	Yes	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Lack of communication between Tivoli and WBC	Yes	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Lack of Communication between WBC, Members & Residents	Yes	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Lack of WBC monitoring resource	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	4	8 - Medium

#### Key Contract Objectives

1. Ensure sufficient staffing available to start first cut by March annually;
2. Ensure sufficient grass cutting equipment available by March annually;
3. Ensure sufficient Locality monitoring staff available as per 1 & 2 above;
4. Ensure comprehensive communications plan has been approved by Executive Member by mid-February annually;
5. Annual review of Contract to include efficiency savings

#### Assessing Likelihood and impact scoring

Impact level on delivery

Likelihood

1 – Moderate

1 – Unlikely

2 – Significant

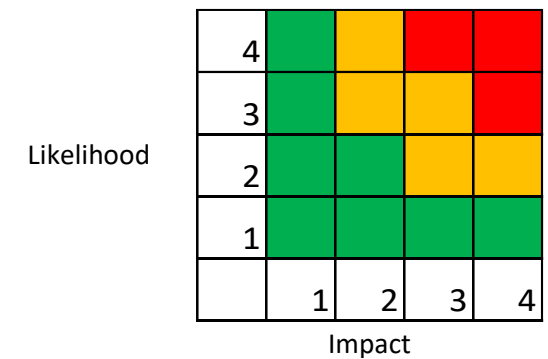
2 – Low

3 – Serious

3 – Very likely

4 - Critical

4 – Certain/High





### Appendix 4 – KPIs to date

KPI	Description	Target	Achieved	Year 1	Achieved	Year 2	Achieved	Year 3	Year 4 Target	Achieved to date
KPI 1	Officer inspection scores	80	82	Pass	78	Fail	75	Failed	80	75
KPI 2	Independent inspection scores	80	80	Pass	80	Pass	78	Failed	80	TBC
KPI 3	Play area inspections completed and officer inspections	90	90	Pass	92	Pass	90	Pass	90	80
KPI 4	Stakeholder/customer satisfaction	80	81	Pass	85	Pass	71	Failed	85	TBC
KPI 5	Sports user satisfaction	80	77	Fail	92	Pass	78	Failed	80	TBC
KPI 6	Justified complaints – grass	24	-	-	19	Pass	298	Failed	50	11
KPI 7	Justified complaints – hedges, copse and shrubs	30	-	-	72	Fail	165	Failed	30	8
KPI 8	Justified complaints – other	37	-	-	22	Pass	69	Failed	37	7
KPI 9	Biodiversity performance (no. of projects)	6	6	Pass	6	Pass		TBC	6	TBC

**Appendix 5 – Agreed KPIs commenced Year 4 April 2019**

KPI No	KPI	Percentage change in Reward/ Penalty	Target Yr 3	Target Yr 4
1.	Average annual Cleaner and Greener inspections score	0%	80%	80%
2.	Average annual independent inspections score	-20%	80%	80%
3.	Play area inspections & maintenance	-22%	90%	90%
4.	Stakeholder/customer satisfaction	-20%	85%	85%
5.	Sports user satisfaction	0%	80%	80%
6.	No. Justified Complaint Grass (no.)	200%	24	50
7.	No. Justified Complaint hedges, copse & shrubs (no.)	0%	30	30
8.	No. Justified Complaint Other (no.)	0%	37	37
9.	Biodiversity performance (no. projects)	0%	6	6
10.	Partnership working & problem solving approach	-17%	80%	80%

<b>Management Performance Indicators linked to KPI no. 10</b>	<b>Weighting Yr 3</b>	<b>Weighting Yr 4</b>	<b>% change in weighting</b>	<b>Target Yr 4</b>
Assistance provided in preparing Management Plans (No. of plans)	15%	15%	0%	1 Plan
Support in providing Community Involvement/Projects/Volunteer hours (No. of hours)	15%	20%	33%	100 hours
Contribution to changing Customer perception – support at meetings, marketing etc. (No. of hours/ occ.)	10%	15%	50%	40 hours / 12 occasions
Assistance/support in Changing Management Regimes (No. of occasions/sites)	15%	10%	-33%	4 sites
Assistance with Sponsorship site development. (Changed from: Identifying opportunities and delivering reduced pesticide use)	5%	5%	0%	4 sites/ occasions
Sports surface quality improvement (Percentage improvement in impact/ball roll test etc.)	15%	15%	0%	As per STRI/ Pitch Strategy
Staff training – multi-skilling, bio diversity, customer perceptions/service understanding etc. (No. of hours)	10%	5%	-50%	1400 hours
No/% maps and/or Bills updated accurately	5%	5%	0%	3 examples
Savings and new income streams achieved	10%	10%	0%	3 examples

## Appendix 6 – Communications Plan

### Communications, Marketing and Engagement Plan for Grass Cutting 2019

#### Overall objective

**The grass cutting service proactively reacts to emerging issues to prevent escalation and All stakeholders and interested residents are kept informed of grass cutting programme**

#### Background:

Grass cutting has become an issue of significant public concern during some recent summers (2014, 2016 and 2018), when contractors have struggled to keep up with. Among the issues identified have been the need for contractors to react more quickly to emerging issues in order to prevent escalation and discontent and the provision of accurate and timely information to stakeholders and residents during the grass cutting season.

#### Overview

WBC will provide clear and timely information on grass cutting to residents and stakeholders in order to:

- Ensure residents and stakeholders understand the grass cutting contract including how to report any issues
- Work with Localities officers to provide an early warning system of any localised issue to stakeholders and residents and explain mitigating actions
- Provide regular updates to stakeholders (ward members and town/parish councils) on grass cutting performance

#### Outcomes - by the end of the grass cutting season:

1. WBC will have increased understanding among residents of the grass cutting contract
2. Identified emerging issues and put mitigation in place before significant public / media problems occur
3. Stakeholders will have been provided the right information at the right time on grass cutting progress
4. Any issues or delays that have arisen have been explained to stakeholders and residents along with mitigating action taken

Stakeholders	
<b>Key influencers</b> Elected members Town and Parish Councils Social media community groups Residents' Groups Local media MPs	<b>Partners and potential partners</b> Tivoli Countryside Services Town and Parish Councils
<b>Target audiences</b> All borough residents, with specific targeting to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas affected by any issues or delays arising during the grass cutting season</li> </ul>	

#### Key communications messages

- We realise the importance of maintaining public open spaces well and that there have been problems in previous years
- We have put mitigating actions into place to reduce likelihood or problems occurring and impact of them is they do
- We will use localities workers to identify emerging issues and react to them quickly
- Residents and stakeholders can help by reporting genuine issues in the right way

#### Methods

The primary method of communication will be a weekly update provided to key stakeholders (elected members and town & parish councils) and then placed online.

Other methods:

- Media release
- Updated webpages with FAQ
- Social media
- Standard response prepared for complaints

#### Activities: Communications plan for grass cutting 2019

Activity	Target stakeholders	Date	Who
<b>Briefing for all members and town and parish councils: notes to be provided to all members to set out:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations/requirements of service</li> <li>• Improvement measure put in place</li> <li>• Mitigation plans</li> <li>• Reporting mechanism for issues</li> </ul>	Ward member Town and Parish Councils		
Update webpages to include preparations for 2019 and mitigation in place – new FAQ			
Borough News article to acknowledge issues in the past and set out measures put in place for improvement and mitigation	All residents		
<b>Media release and FAQ published ahead of grass cutting season in order to:</b> Explain grass cutting contract (what residents should expect) Set out measures put in place to reduce risk of problems Set out mitigation ready to use if necessary Provide appropriate method for residents to report issues	All residents		
Localities officer to provide early warnings of any emerging local issues	Internal		
<b>Weekly updates to key stakeholders to include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuts that took place the previous week</li> <li>• Cuts scheduled for the week ahead</li> <li>• Any issues raised and response</li> </ul>	Ward members and town and parish councils	Issued each week from XXX	
Updates placed on WBC website after circulation to stakeholders	All residents	Published each week from xxx	

<b>Social media posts to promote web updates</b>	All residents	Published each week from xxx	
<b>Media releases as required to provide general updates and deal with any specific issues</b>	All residents	Ad hoc releases	

## Appendix 7 – FAQs

### Contents

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[What should contractors be doing when they cut the grass?](#)

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[Do you collect grass cuttings?](#)

[I think an area has been missed, will they come back?](#)

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[The Quality if the cutting is poor, why is this and will the contractors come back?](#)

[Dog fouling is an issue in long grass areas](#)

[Long grass encourages ticks](#)

[Long grass exacerbates hay fever please will you cut it?](#)

### How often is the grass cut? / When will the grass be cut?

- Grass cutting should be carried out within the agreed specification standard
- Grass should be no longer than 125mm (5 inches) and no shorter than 30mm (1 inch) in general grass areas – most urban highway verges and parks where it has not been left for long grass or meadow areas.
- There is no set period of time between cuts, and times may vary according to weather conditions. Difficult conditions can often have a knock on effect when cutting is being carried out and cutting of high volumes of grass can take longer than anticipated. Alternatively prolonged periods of dry weather may make cutting unnecessary.
- We are only able to give a rough guide of 4 weeks between cuts during growing season, which is between April and September.

### Why are there designated long grass areas?

- Where suitable, large highway verges in both rural and urban areas will be left to establish into grassland habitats, but with grass cut regularly around the fringes to ensure grass does not encroach onto pathways, roads or obstruct sight lines.
- In parkland and other open spaces where appropriate we will allow margins of grassland to develop instead of cutting right up to the park boundary.
- We will avoid cutting grass right up to the bases of trees and instead allow the grass to grow to prevent possible damage to trees.

### **What should contractors be doing when they cut the grass?**

Our contractors are required to look after grass areas to provide a generally maintained appearance, which includes:

- Carrying out a uniform cut
- Giving due care and attention to grassed perimeter edges and any obstacles e.g. fence posts and trees
- Litter should be cleared from grass areas before cutting, with litter also being collected where grass areas have been cut exposing litter not previously seen.
- Paths and surrounding edges should be free of clippings

### **Why has the edge been cut but not the middle of the grass and vice versa?**

- Grass cutting crews operate in teams of 2 or 3 operators and will usually consist of 1 ride-on mower operator and 1 or 2 strimmer/blower operator/s.
- Due to the speed of the ride-on mower, the strimmer/blower can often be left behind. The distance gap between them can be up to 24 hours. Please wait at least 24 hours before contacting the Council with your concern as the contractors may already be on route.

### **Do you collect grass cuttings?**

No, this is not a service that has ever been provided by the Borough, clippings are left on site to compost down. It is not feasible to carry out this operation as it would be very labour intensive, carries excessive waste costs and is not economically viable.

### **I think an area has been missed, will they come back?**

Generally our contractors will not be able to return to cut a missed patch. We receive numerous requests for the contractors to return. If we authorise all of these requests the normal routes would be severely disrupted causing further delays to the rest of the borough.

### **Why has an area been missed?**

There are many reasons why an area of grass may have been missed. Here are some of these below.

- There are many areas where daffodil and tulip bulbs have been flowering. These areas of grass will be left uncut until 6 weeks after the flowers have finished blooming to ensure they return the following spring. The cutting will be carried out during the next round of cutting after this period of time.
- Where contractors pass areas that appear to be maintained they will not cut the area again. This is because if a resident is taking care of an area they are likely to be upset by our large machinery leaving possible damage or a poor cut to the carefully attended area. If you want the contractors to cut the grass, please do not cut it yourself and leave it to be cut during the next visit.
- We occasionally receive information of rare wildflowers, birds or animals being present in some grass areas. When these reports are received we will cease to cut around the area, for example until the end of nesting season in order to protect the species.
- Some areas of grass may suffer from standing water. If our contractors are unable to access the grass, they will leave the area and return during the next round to try again.
- If you believe an area of Council owned land has been missed, please provide exact details of the area using the nearest property address if possible and we will check the area and raise this with our contractors so it is not missed during the next grass cutting round.



**The grass has Dandelions and other weeds. The seeds float across to my garden. Can you remove or spray the weeds?**

We are not legally obliged to cut grass to stop weeds. We cannot authorise additional work to manage Dandelion or other weed seeds from dispersing.

**The Quality if the cutting is poor, why is this and will the contractors come back?**

- Our contractors are instructed to cut to a certain standard. There are some issues that can interfere with that standard.
- Scalping – where there are uneven ground levels a tyre of the mower can dip down causing the blade to scalp over lumps or slopes of uneven ground. This is not intentional and often cannot be helped. The contractors will not be sent back to rectify the damage.
- Tufts or uneven grass – where there is long grass growth, machinery will often will have problems cutting through the amount of grass and may not leave an even cut. You may see tufts or ridges of longer grass. This is due to the wheels of the machine pushing the long grass flat as they pass over. Once pushed flat it is missed by the blades. This cannot be prevented when dealing with long grass and the contractors will not be sent back to rectify the issue.
- Sending the contractors back for such issues disrupts the rounds and may cause further delays between cuts across the Borough.

**Dog fouling is an issue in long grass areas**

We believe that it is every owner's responsibility to collect their dog's waste and that the benefits of biodiverse areas outweigh the potential increase in dog fouling. It is the dog owner's responsibility to collect all waste regardless of the grass height or environment.

**Long grass encourages ticks**

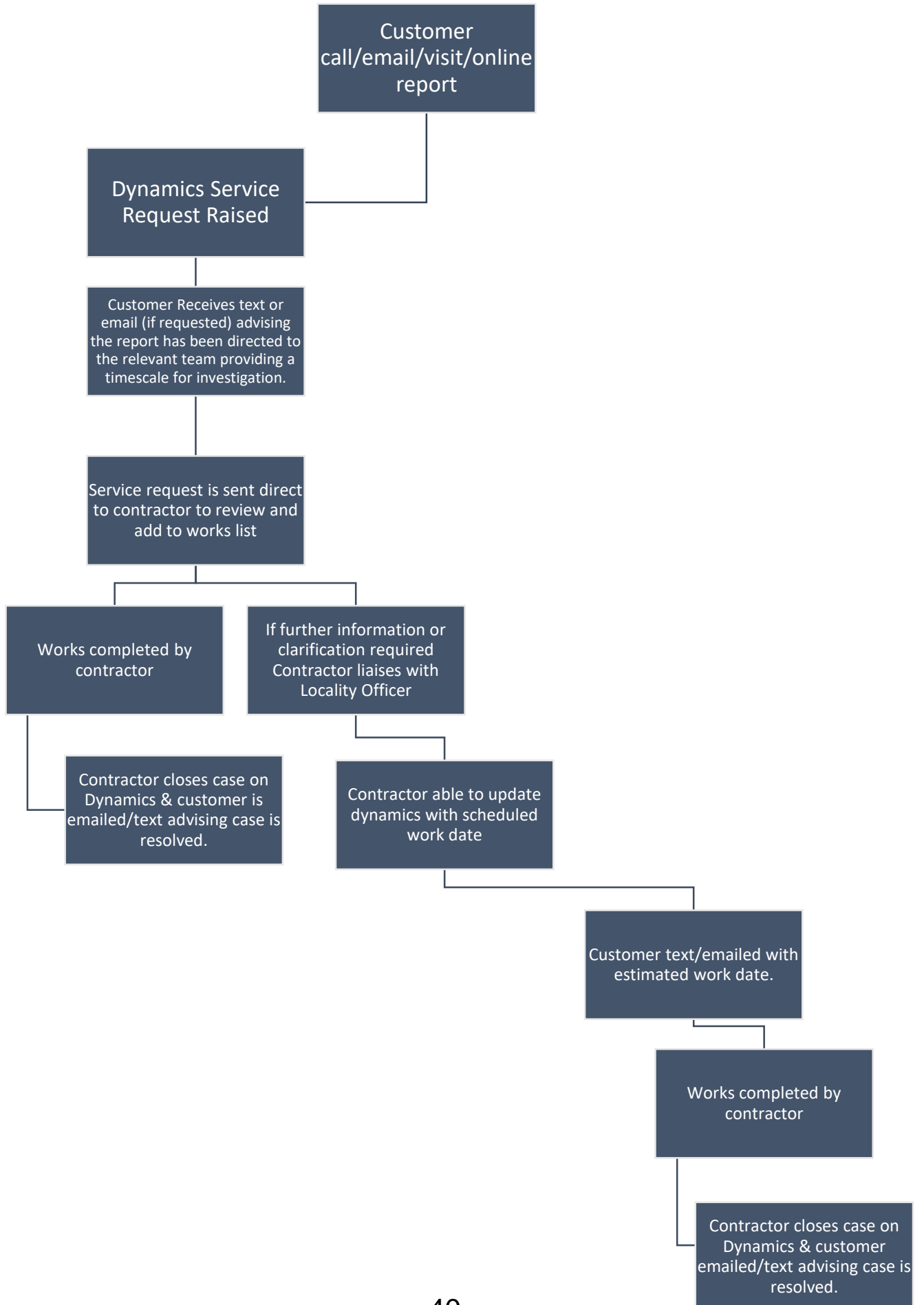
We have sympathy for dog owners and do not seek to reduce the enjoyment of walking your dog. Ticks live in areas of dense vegetation such as grassland and woodland locations, so we encourage those enjoying these environments to take care along with pet owners. Ticks are easily removed and it is important to examine your dog after a walk regardless of whether they have been taken through woodlands or grasslands. Where we have introduced long grass areas we are ensuring that there are still plenty of areas of regularly cut areas for all to enjoy. Top tips to avoid ticks include:

- Keep to footpaths where possible
- Wear long-sleeved tops and trousers when in woodland and grassland areas
- Use insect repellent on exposed skin
- Keep a look-out for ticks after being in a tick environment so any can be removed promptly

**Long grass exacerbates hay fever - please will you cut it?**

There is no legal obligation to cut the grass for hay fever purposes. We sympathise for hay fever sufferers, however studies show the wider health, wellbeing and ecosystem benefits from allowing grassland areas far outweigh the negative impact on hay fever sufferers. In grassland and meadow areas, we will time cuts of grassland areas when the pollen becomes more dense and less dispersed, this is typically outside the critical period of May, June and July.

## Appendix 8 – The Customer Journey



## **Appendix 9 – Scenario Testing**

### **Scenario 1 - Issues with Staffing**

This could include:

- Training issues
- Problems recruiting staff
- Problems retaining staff

#### **Mitigation**

- A clear recruitment timeline has been proposed by Tivoli
- Recruitment commencing in January provides ample time to train up operatives
- More embedded trainers are now available at Tivoli to train up and sign off operatives promptly
- A number of seasonal staff from last summer were retained during the winter who will already be inducted
- Sub-contractor relationships formed by Tivoli to assist should any staffing issues arise
- Tivoli are currently reviewing the incentives available to operatives to help retain staff levels
- To maximise the staffing resource during the growing season Tivoli will be introducing time off in lieu for working bank holidays and stringent holiday leave during growing season

### **Scenario 2 - Issues with Weather/Conditions**

This could include:

- Mild winter leading to early growth
- Wet hot weather leading to rapid growth
- Late/extended winter leading to late start
- Wet spring making preventing machinery to access sites

#### **Mitigation**

- Communications plan will be in place to keep Members informed (see Appendix 6)
- Tivoli will be prepared and ready to commence cutting in March regardless of conditions
- Resource and machinery in place to deliver a cut every 4 weeks to set clear expectation regardless of weather
- Clear communication regarding why areas have been missed i.e. to prevent damage to grass, bulb areas
- The Localities and Place Clienting teams will work with Tivoli on reporting any missed areas to arrange for a reactive team of operatives available to revisit these sites to carry out works without interrupting the cutting schedule.

### **Scenario 3 - Issues with machinery**

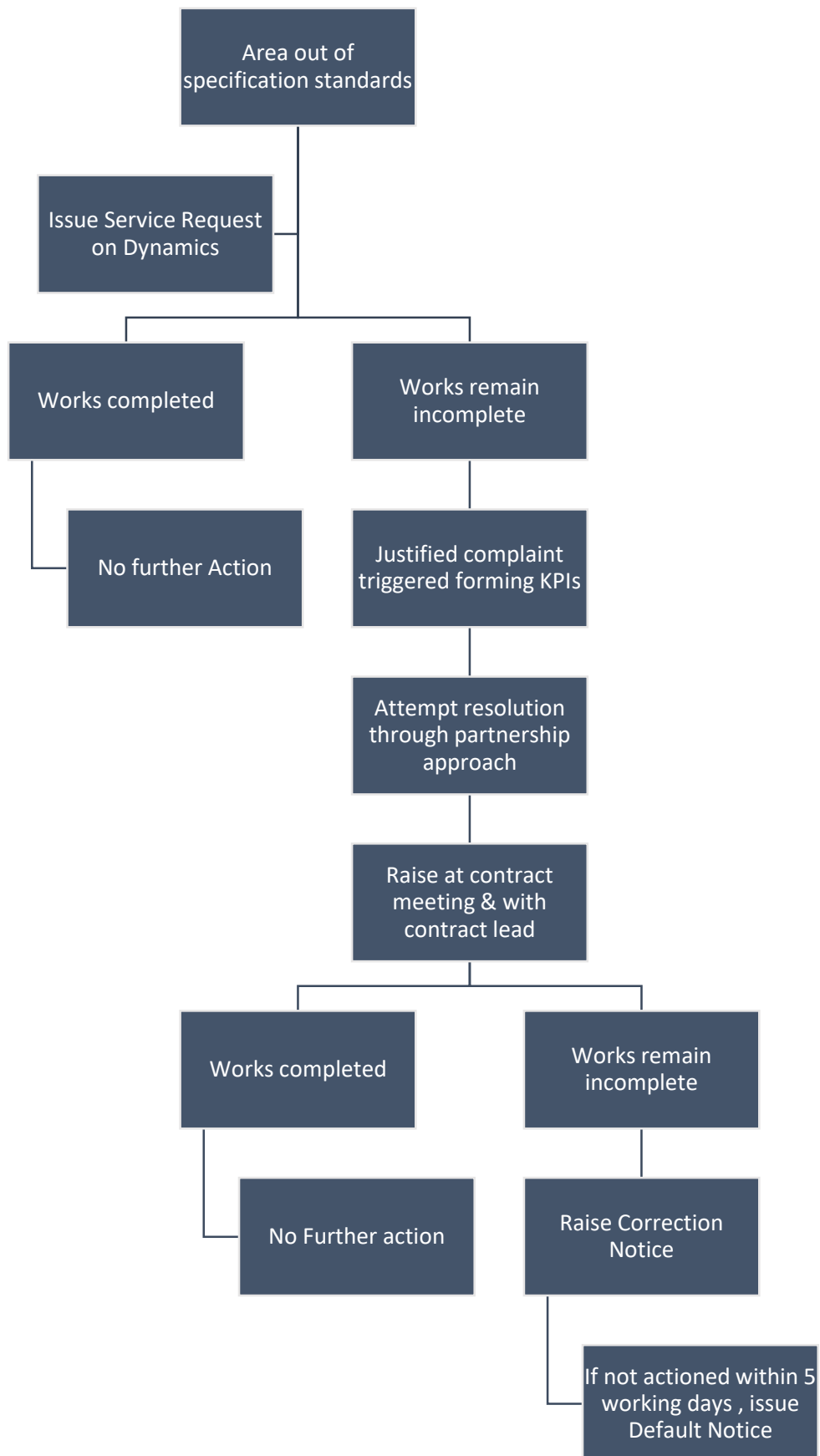
This could include

- Insufficient machinery
- Machinery breakdown

Mitigation

- Assets have been accounted for and will be reviewed prior to grass cutting season
- A clear servicing plan is in place to get machinery to commence cutting at the earliest opportunity
- Training has been set up for operatives to assist with machinery maintenance and prevent breakdowns
- Tivoli have a subcontractor set up and available to assist if required at short notice
- Other parties have been approached to see if they will be available to assist should a breakdown occur including; Countryside Services, Town Councils and our Street Cleansing contractor OCS.
- Should machinery break-down Tivoli will arrange for it to be assessed within 24 hours to determine when it will be back in use and whether alternative machinery needs to be mobilised to prevent a delay in grass cutting.

## Appendix 10 – Path of Performance Monitoring



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