

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - REPORT TO MEMBERS

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| 1. | Meeting: | Cabinet |
| 2. | Date: | 24 th April 2013 |
| 3. | Title: | Grounds Maintenance Review |
| 4. | Directorate: | Resources |

5. Summary

The report includes the final report of the sub group established to implement a scrutiny review of the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing services, following discussion at the Commission's meeting in July 2012. The full report is attached as an appendix.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- **Receives the report;**
- **Feeds back their response to OSMB within two months.**

7. Proposals and details

A full report was presented to the Improving Places Select Commission on the 25th July 2012, regarding the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing services. Following some very detailed discussion it was agreed that a review of the services was required. It was noted that officers were already committed to conducting a review in October/November of 2012, however, Members felt very strongly that they needed to be involved in the review as they were responsible for making the budget decisions. A joint Member/officer review was therefore agreed.

The agreed objectives of the review were:

- To analyse the impact of budget cuts to the service
- To ensure that risk and impact assessments have been fully considered and are in place for the future
- To develop practical suggestions for improvement of the service within budget
- To consider invest to save options

An initial officer review was completed and was the focus of the early discussions held by the review group. This focused on Grounds Maintenance and looked at the areas of grass cutting, weed killing, shrub/flower beds and hedges and rural verges, considering each of the agreed objectives as listed above.

Members of the review group went on to explore this paper in more detail and a key issue that arose was the integrated nature of the Grounds Maintenance Service and Street Cleansing services. For this reason, the review included issues and suggestions relating to both service areas.

Cabinet Members with relevant portfolios and other ward councillors were also consulted as part of the process. The resulting recommendations were specifically relating to each of these services, as well as some more overarching and general recommendations. There were three main themes emerging from these findings:

1. Flexibility of resources

This includes a set of recommendations around the need to be more flexible in the use of staffing resources and also around schedules and resource distribution.

2. Local feed back and support

A key finding was the need to improve communications both with the public and elected members. The recommendations make some practical suggestions about how this can be achieved.

3. Information sharing

The recommendations in this section look at clarifying roles and responsibilities of the cabinet portfolios and also how different services can share information and intelligence to ensure resources are targeted effectively.

8. Finance

The recommendations in this report relate to use of existing resources more effectively.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The main risks identified with this area of work are the reputational risks associated with the increasing levels of dissatisfaction with the general public. There are also risks associated with the physical impact of the declining frequency of service delivery.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

This review supports the Corporate Plan priority “Improving the environment”

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Details can be found in the main report appended to this paper.

This report was considered by the Improving Places Select Commission on 27th March 2013 and by OSMB on the 5th April 2013.

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