

CABINET

3 OCTOBER 2022

Present: Councillors Barnett (Chair), Batsford, Evans, Haffenden, Hilton, Rogers and Roark

In attendance: Jane Hartnell Managing Director, Kit Wheeler Chief Finance Officer, Mary Kilner Chief Legal Officer, Cameron Morley Waste and Cleansing Services Manager

458. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillor Willis

459. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor	Item	Interest
Cllr Hilton	7	Personal – Member of Hastings as a Garden Town Team

460. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2022 be approved as a true record.

461. NOTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS

462. URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

Urgent item for 591 Sedlescombe Rd rent review to be discussed in part two

463. CASTLEHAM INDUSTRIAL UNITS ROOF REFURBISHMENT

The Managing Director introduced the report. The work had been planned to cost approximately £250,000. Now due to the costs increasing a budget of £325,000 is required, covering the increased cost of materials and some additional work that's been identified to expand the life of the roofs. This is essential work, but also a good investment for the future.

Councillors asked regarding having solar panels fitted whilst they are working on the roof. The Managing Director replied that would be a sensible approach and will come back with an answer.

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Councillor Rogers agreed it would be a good idea to investigate solar panel installation. The roof work is essential work that needs to be completed need to keep the councils' properties in good order and we need to keep the tenants happy.

Report to be proposed and seconded in part two

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464. AGREEING THE DELIVERY MODEL FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES FROM NOVEMBER 2023

The Waste and Cleansing Services Manager explained the current contract comes to an end in November 2023. The current service has been running for nearly 10 years. With it coming to an end has given an opportunity to review how we are delivering this in a way which would meet our current needs as a Council, taking into consideration our financial situation, our statutory responsibilities, and the strategic aspirations we have for the service moving forward.

The report is a culmination of nearly a year and a half of work, during which time different ways in which the Council could provide the Grounds Maintenance Services in the future has been looked at. Some soft market testing has been completed and an external consultant has been used to look at what options are available.

The aims are to have an affordable but also flexible service. Flexibility built into the service to adjust based on resources or in response to internal or external pressures. We wanted to be able to incorporate some of our strategic aims relating to climate change, increasing biodiversity, and working closely with Community partners to both protect our green spaces but also encourage the development of green skills

Councillor Hilton as the Portfolio holder thanked the officers for all the work that went into the report. Green spaces are essential for physical and mental wellbeing. Green spaces, access to them and how we look after them are a key part of turning around the huge health inequalities and Hastings and should be at the core of our regeneration goals. Over half of Kent Councils have brought their Ground Maintenance Services in house as has our former partner Optivo.

The councillors debated and highlighted the green spaces around the borough and the help it has on residents' health. The flexibility of having the Grounds Maintenance Service in-house was discussed. Residents will be able to be involved much more in managing and supporting activities in parks and open space.

Report to be proposed and seconded in part two

465. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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466. CASTLEHAM INDUSTRIAL UNITS ROOF REFURBISHMENT - PART 2

The Cabinet discussed the report.

Proposed by Councillor Rogers, Seconded by Councillor Roark

RESOLVED (unanimously):

1. The Capital programme budget is increased from £250,000 to £325,000.

Reasons for Recommendations

Costs have increased since the budget was set.

467. AGREEING THE DELIVERY MODEL FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES FROM NOVEMBER 2023 - PART 2

The Cabinet discussed the report

Proposed by Councillor Hilton, Seconded by Councillor Evans

RESOLVED (unanimously):

It is recommended that Cabinet approve this report for consideration at Full Council with the following recommendations:

(i) To in-source the grounds maintenance service from November 2023, adding the service to Hastings Direct Services Organisation (HDSO).

(ii) To authorise the Waste & Cleansing Services Manager to progress the new Ground Maintenance service from November 2023, including the appointment of support staff, the procurement of any equipment and establishment of budgets as outlined in this report

Reasons:

The current grounds maintenance contract with IdVerde comes to an end in November 2023. To ensure that there is no service disruption, Hastings Borough Council (HBC) will require a new supplier to carry out the work from that point forward.

With the assistance of an external grounds maintenance consultant, a review of the current GM service has been undertaken, and a full pricing exercise completed to establish the market rate of carrying out the council's GM service either as an in-house (via HDSO) or outsourced (via a contractor) operation. The outcome of that exercise, coupled with HBC's own soft market testing has demonstrated that the current service, if tendered right now, would be unaffordable.

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With this in mind, an in-house proposal has been developed to provide a simplified service that covers HBC statutory and health and safety (H&S) responsibilities, while remaining affordable and continuing to offer some flexibility. It is recommended that this service be implemented from November 2023.

The Council's statutory duty to ensure the service offers Best Value is an important consideration in this matter. The S.151 Officer and Chief Legal Officer are persuaded that the evidence from the extensive market testing, and information provided by the consultants about the local market and procurement exercises undertaken in our geographic area both demonstrate that the approach offers best economic and social value.

468. 591 SEDLESCOMBE ROAD NORTH

The Cabinet discussed the report

Proposed by Councillor Barnett, Seconded by Councillor Batsford

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To agree with the recommendations

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 7.07 pm)