

SERVICETEAM (VEOLIA) – GROUNDS MAINTENANCE UPDATE

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to receive the attached progress report from Serviceteam on the progress of the Grounds Maintenance Contract (Appendix A). Mike Jarvis (Regional Manager) and Derek Lester (Operations Manager) for Serviceteam will be present at the meeting to answer any questions that Members may have.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to note the content of the progress report and answers provided by Serviceteam's Regional Manager and Operations Manager in relation to the grounds maintenance contract.

Jeremy Bourne

Head of Community Services

Background Papers:-

None

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If you would like this report in large print, braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.

APPENDIX A

SERVICETEAM GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

OPERATIONAL REPORT - OCTOBER 2006 TO JANUARY 2007

1 Introduction

The grass cutting season again lasted longer than normally expected and due to this unseasonably warm weather, it resulted in mowing not ending until the last cut on 20 November 2006.

Our improved supervisor structure across the Rochford contracts has resulted in us being more proactive within the grounds maintenance element, developing a more customer focused service and developing higher levels of consistency.

2 Grass Cutting

The prolonged grass cutting season had a knock on effect on other parts of the winter works programme, but was addressed in consultation with the Council's Supervising Officer, Geoff Dawson.

At the time of writing this report, the winter mow of sheltered schemes has started and will maintain a tidy appearance, which in turn will help to reduce the Spring surge of growth. We anticipate normal verge and sports grass cutting to start late February/early March, weather permitting.

3 Football Season

Due to the limited response received to the football pitch satisfaction questionnaire that was sent to clubs, we are considering a re-issue in an attempt to gather further information, although the feedback previously received has been very favourable.

We still feel there is a need to review the level of increase made on the pitch hire charge, as it is our view that costs of associated labour and materials are increasing at a higher rate. Compared to some other Districts, some of Rochford's pitch hire prices are significantly cheaper.

4 Green Waste

Green waste generated from the grounds maintenance contract in Summer months produces a skip a week relating to approx two tonne, as compared to the Winter, when we only get a skip per month. Most of the green waste produced over Winter relates to leaf collection and general pruning activity. Each skip, when full, is sent to the company's materials recycling facility at Rainham.

5 Winter Works

Leaf fall being late this season has caused some problems, (along with the extended grass cutting period) but the rest of the winter works such as play areas, sports pitches, ditches, planting and pruning, have been carried out as per the appropriate schedules, or as close to as winter weather permits. As already stated, any particular problem areas have been addressed in consultation with the Council's Supervising Officer.

6 Action Plan

We are aiming to further improve the grass cutting schedules but will still require detailed maps from the Council to formulate this proposal, although it is understood that these maps / measurements are being produced as part of the Council's procurement process for the new contracts.

Waste Management Industrial Training and Advisory Board have still to come up with an NVQ suitable for the landscapes work format, although negotiations are still taking place.

The overall programme of works for this year remains on target.

7 Training

We have agreed a training scheme with Writtle College for shrub and rose pruning and are in the process of finalising the details with our training manager. He will now have to put this proposal forward to Veolia for funding, although we are confident that a positive response will be received.

8 Conclusion

As always, the last year has proven demanding but rewarding. We believe the strategy put forward last year is showing effect, although we must always strive for improvement. Regular meetings with our work colleagues help us to gain the support to gain our objectives.

9 Follow Ups

There were no items or issues to follow up from the last review meeting.

10 Questions

Derek Lester
Contracts Manger

Mike Jarvis
Regional Manager