

## MECHANICAL SWEEPER

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Members on the performance of the Applied Mechanical Sweeper in Rayleigh, Hockley and Rochford, and seeks agreement to extend the use of the equipment to be used in Hullbridge and Great Wakering.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In the past Rochford District Council has always undertaken the cleansing of its pavement areas by using manual cleansing equipment such as stiff brooms, dustpans, brushes & litter pickers. This operation has always proved time consuming and labour intensive.
- 2.2 The trial was arranged to determine:-
- i) how the machine would improve the cleanliness of Rayleigh shopping area.
  - ii) whether the machine was practical for use in a non-pedestrian environment.
  - iii) as to whether the machine would be environmentally unfriendly (noise, pollution, etc).
  - iv) the versatility of the machine.
- 2.3 In January 2000 a one-week trial was arranged for a mechanical sweeper to be used in Rayleigh High Street and its surrounding shopping areas. The mechanical sweeper was demonstrated, at no cost to the Council, between 4-7 January 2000.
- 2.4 In March 2000, as a result of the successful trial period, Council Members approved the Capital budget for the Street Cleansing Contractor to purchase a mechanical sweeper. The machine was brought in to service on 25 July 2000. It was initially scheduled to be used in Rayleigh Town Centre and its surrounding shopping areas, and Rochford and Hockley Town Centres. The schedules are as follows with the sweeper covering the ground as many times as possible within the allotted time at each location. This amounts to two sweeps of Rayleigh High Street on each occasion, and one major sweep of the other two town centres:-
- Rayleigh - Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays & Saturdays.

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- Rochford - Tuesday & Thursday (morning only).
- Hockley - Tuesday & Thursday (afternoon only).
- 2.5 The cost to the Council for the provision, parts, maintenance and service charge is £386.59 per week. The contract agreement expires on 31 March 2001.
- 2.6 The new Street Cleansing contract includes for the use of mechanical sweepers to be used and therefore future costs are included within the new contract.
- 3 RESULTS OF THE USE OF THE MACHINE**
- 3.1 The inception of the mechanical sweeper has improved street cleaning in the three main centres that had previously been swept by hand. The manually operated machine has distinct advantages over the old broom method with its powerful brushes, which include jet washers. It also incorporates other specialist attachments such as the Dog Excrement Remover and "Wander-hose".
- 3.2 Other advantages of the machine are:-
- i) the removing of detritus from kerbsides.
  - ii) the removing of pigeon fouling.
  - iii) the ability for it to be used in areas such as confined bus shelters
  - iv) to collect litter from grass verges and shrubbery beds using its specialist attachments.
- 3.3. As a measure of the improvements the grades of Rayleigh High Street have shown a small level of improvement of the number of Grade A inspections from 91% to 92%. However the visual improvement of the additional cleanliness as opposed to the number of pieces of litter cannot actually be graded. The visual improvement over the period of use of the sweeper has been significant.
- 3.4 Disadvantages of the machine are:-
- i) unable to use on stepped areas or where steps are the only means of access to a particular area.
- 4 EXTENSION OF THE USE OF THE SWEEPER**
- 4.1 Informal comments from other Members suggest that the sweeper could be used in other areas particularly around smaller shopping precincts, where the additional levels of cleanliness would be valued.

- 4.2 The areas commented on are Golden Cross Shopping parade, Ashington, Ferry Road, Hullbridge, and High Road, Great Wakering.
- 4.3 Officers have inspected these areas and looked at schedule of sweeping and concluded that it would be feasible to carry out a weekly sweep in these additional areas to supplement the existing sweeping regime without a significant detrimental effect on current usage.
- 4.4 The use of this sweeper will only be until the end of the current street sweeping contract in March 2001.

**5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There is no doubt that the introduction of this mechanical sweeper with its additional facilities does provide an improved environment in the areas already covered by its use. The additional benefits are listed in Paragraph 3.2.
- 5.2 Extending the use of the sweeper would provide these additional benefits to the areas requested.

**6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no staffing resource implications as a result of this report.
- 6.2 Extending the range of use of the sweeper incurs no further costs to the Council.


**7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Extending the use of the sweeper would provide improvement to the three Parishes where its use has been requested.

**9 RECOMMENDATION**

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That the use of the mechanical sweeper is extended to the three additional areas requested. (CD(F&ES))



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**Background Papers:**

None

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