

This report will be made public on 20 March 2018

Folkestone

Hythe & Romney Marsh
Shepway District Council



Report Number **C/17/86**

To: Cabinet
Date: 28 March 2018
Status: Non - key Decision
Head of Service: Andy Blaszkwicz
Cabinet Member: Councillor Ann Berry, Transport and Commercial

Subject: Grounds Maintenance Management Solution – Potential Collaboration with Dover District Council

SUMMARY:

The Grounds Maintenance Manager is leaving the Council at the end of April this year. Due to the Transformation Project the future shape of the Grounds Maintenance (GM) management team is uncertain. This report puts forward a temporary solution working with Dover District Council's Open Spaces Team to cover the management of SDC's grounds maintenance service through this interim period.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to consider the solution put forward in this report as it will provide continuation of the high service standards that are experienced across the District whilst building in resilience and developing the relationship with Dover District Council. The position will be reviewed in six months when the future structure is made clear through the transformation project.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive report C/17/86.**
- 2. To approve the Head of Commercial and Technical Services to enter into a temporary arrangement with Dover District Council for their Head of Open Spaces to assist in the management of SDC's grounds maintenance service.**
- 3. To review the arrangement in six months when the future structure of the grounds maintenance management team is clear in the transformation project.**

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Grounds Maintenance service is very highly regarded by members in Shepway. It is a highly visible service and as such standards cannot be allowed to drop.
- 1.2 Following the resignation of the current Grounds Maintenance Manager the Head of Commercial and Technical Services has explored various options for the future management of the service. These include:
 - a) Straight recruitment of new GM Manager
 - b) Existing member of staff to act up
 - c) Share management responsibility between existing staff members and HoS
 - d) Explore collaborative arrangement with Dover District Council (DDC)
- 1.3 Option a) would probably be the first choice if we were not embarking on the transformation project. The future shape of the GM management team is uncertain which will make it hard to recruit and potentially put existing members of the management team at risk further along in the process.
- 1.4 Option b) was discounted after speaking to existing staff within the management team who are happy in their current positions.
- 1.5 Option c) was discounted after considering the capacity of existing staff members.
- 1.6 Option d) was considered to be an option after initial discussions were had with the Service Director at Dover who confirmed that they had capacity to take this on, on a short term basis.

2. Potential arrangement

- 2.1 The Head of Parks and Open Spaces at DDC has capacity to be able to spend two days a week providing management expertise and support to the SDC GM management team. This would include line management of the existing management team, budget monitoring, promoting commercial activity and the other main tasks associated with the GM Manager role. When not at SDC telephone support will be provided.
- 2.2 This is not enough resource to undertake all of the tasks associated with the role and as such it is envisaged that other tasks will be distributed amongst the team as this is a temporary arrangement.

3. Potential benefits of Collaboration

- 3.1 This paper is seeking approval for a trial period until the new structures become apparent under the transformation process. There will be a contract in place to provide a management resource to SDC from DDC. During the trial period of six months it will give the DDC Head of Open Spaces and SDC's Head of Commercial and Technical Services the opportunity to explore the benefits of collaboration within the two teams.
- 3.2 Early thought's on potential benefits could include but are not limited to:
 - Achievable savings in both teams
 - Increased resilience (two management teams knowledge and expertise)

- Economies of scale when purchasing
- Shared use of resources, including specialist kit / teams
- Improving our green credentials
- Use of same specialist contractors driving down cost
- DDC / SDC shared use of green waste recycling and compost
- Developing relationship to potentially take on other services in future

4. Financial Considerations

- 4.1 As this potential arrangement would be for a trial period of six months DDC have suggested that no payments would be required for their management time.
- 4.2 Records will be kept of savings / efficiencies made by both Districts in-order to evaluate the financial gains / savings of both Districts in 6 months at the end of the initial period.
- 4.3 There is a potential salary saving of £26k for the proposed 6 month period (May-Oct 18).

5. Contractual Considerations

- 5.1 The potential arrangement would be for an interim period of six months. It is envisaged that a contract will be drawn up between DDC and SDC for the provision of a temporary grounds maintenance manager. The agreement / contract would set out:
- Duties associated with task
 - Health and safety responsibilities
 - Budgetary control and ability to negotiate on behalf of SDC
 - Line reporting and line management responsibility
 - Working days at SDC and arrangements for when not at SDC
 - Length of agreement
 - Break clause
 - Liabilities (covered by SDC when working on our behalf)
 - Terms for SDC teams carrying out work at DDC (ie. Tree work)

This list is not exhaustive and The Head of Commercial and Technical Services will liaise with legal services and the Council's Corporate Contracts Manager over the form of any agreement should Cabinet give authority to proceed.

6. LEGAL / FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS / POLICY MATTERS

6.1 Legal Officer's Implications: (DK)

There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report. Should approval be given by Cabinet to proceed with the 'GM Management Solution', Legal Services will upon instruction advise on an appropriate Contractual Agreement to be entered into between SDC and DDC for the management of SDC's GM services, together with (if relevant) such grounds management services as SDC may supply to DDC.

6.2 Finance Implications: (RH)

The financial implications are included in the body of the report. The potential savings highlighted are for the grounds maintenance manager's salary (as per the 2018/19 base budget).

7. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officers prior to the meeting.

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