

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 4 March 2014

Agenda Item	7
Report No	CIA/05/14

Grounds Maintenance Performance Report

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report details the arrangements for monitoring performance of the Grounds Maintenance Service in the City of Inverness and Area.

The Committee is invited to scrutinise the information provided on grounds maintenance performance for 2013.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Transport, Environmental and Community Services (TECS) are responsible for a wide range of horticultural related activities; including the maintenance of grass in public open spaces, designing and planting of flower and shrub beds, pruning vegetation and trees, also the inspection and maintenance of play areas.
- 1.2. This report details the arrangements for monitoring performance of the Grounds Maintenance Service.

2. Background

- 2.1. Report CIA/07/13 'Grounds Maintenance Programme' was presented to The City of Inverness Area Committee on 11th February 2013. This report detailed the arrangements for the delivery of the Grounds Maintenance Service and the resources available.

3. Activities

- 3.1. Grounds Maintenance activities include:
 - Grass cutting to low, medium and high amenity standards
 - Grass Area maintenance out with the growing season
 - Grounds around War Memorials
 - Arboriculture - the cultivation and management of individual trees, shrubs and other perennial woody plants
 - Path maintenance including weed control
 - In cemeteries, the lifting of grave surfaces as they settle
 - Tending high amenity locations such as Bellfield Park, Cavell Gardens and bowling greens
 - Floral displays and provision of hanging baskets
 - Support for Special Events
 - Burial Grounds and Internments

- Play Area inspection and maintenance
- 3.2. Across the seven Inverness Wards there are approximately 3.4 million square metres of public open and amenity space. Over the course of a year approximately 40,000 maintenance tasks or activities are carried out as summarised in **Appendix A**.
 - 3.3. Activities are carried out to the standards specified in the Grounds Maintenance Service Level Agreement (SLA).
 - 3.4. The contractor and the in-house operation are required to maintain grass areas within set parameters irrespective of the rate of growth.
 - 3.5. The SLA and specification apply Highland wide and provide a consistent set of standards including methods for measuring compliance across the region.

4. Monitoring and Escalation Process

- 4.1. The basis for all SLA or contract inspections is to determine if the site management, including sub-contracted services, is sufficient to maintain the service standard of the Service Level Agreement (SLA).
- 4.2. The first level of inspection is carried out as self-assessment by in-house or sub-contracted service delivery teams and managers. This first stage assessment is independently validated by Contract Supervisors.
- 4.3. SLA inspection levels by Contract Supervisors are set at a minimum of 10% of the maintained area each quarter. The period of inspection is quarterly, unless there are valid reasons for increasing inspections such as; repeated customer complaints, sites not meeting SLA standards or re-inspection following issue of a Breached Standard notice.
- 4.4. When a location is inspected on more than one occasion, the lowest grade is recorded in all cases; this includes follow up inspections where a Breached Standard Notice is issued.
- 4.5. Inspections are graded;
 - 0 - Very Poor
 - 1 – Poor
 - 2 – Unsatisfactory
 - 3 – Satisfactory
 - 4 - Good
- 4.6. An improvement request \ remedial notice or is issued to the internal (DLO) or external Contractor respectively where a grade of 0, 1 or 2 is given.
- 4.7. Failure to return the site to the SLA standard within 7 days results in an escalation to Non Conformity (DLO) or Default Notice (Contractor).
- 4.8. The Authority is entitled to recover its costs in respect of the issuing of a Default Notice and all losses which arise as a result of the deficient Services.

5. Performance

- 5.1. For the Grounds Maintenance Contract the number of inspections carried out and breached standards issued to both the contractor and in-house operation during the first 3 quarterly periods of year 2013/14 are shown below:

Inspections		
Number of Locations Inspected	Inspections Passing	Pass Rate
323	275	85%

Breached Standard			
Month	Issued	Resolved	Completed on time (7 Days)
April	0	0	0%
May	10	9	90%
June	1	1	100%
July	2	1	50%
August	21	17	81%
September	4	4	100%
October	13	11	85%
November	0	0	0%
December	0	0	0%
	51	43	84%

- 5.2. Overall 85% of the Inspections passed, being graded in the Satisfactory or Good category.
- 5.3. Overall 84% of all breached standards were rectified within the contractual limit of 7 days. Compared with the maintained area of 3.4 million square metres and the 40,000 annual tasks undertaken, the number of breached standards is low and the percentage rectified within 7 days is high.

6. Implications

- 6.1. There are no Resource, Legal, Equalities, Climate Change and Risk implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to scrutinise the information provided on grounds maintenance performance for 2013 for Inverness City and Area.

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Appendix A - Maintained Areas and Annual Tasks.

Inverness Grounds						
Area Maintained	Locations	Square Metres	Contracted		In House	
Grass	1,132	3,222,182	2,403,328	75%	818,854	25%
Planted	300	59,100	0	0%	59,100	100%
Hard landscape	262	80,605	0	0%	80,605	100%
Total	1,694	3,361,887	2,403,328	71%	958,559	29%

Number of Tasks Annually		Forecast
Grass	Growing Season	22,995
	Dormant Season	3,422
Planted	Growing Season	3,090
	Dormant Season	2,453
Hard landscape	Growing Season	4,887
	Dormant Season	3,198
Total		40,045

Recent Additions to

Programme:-

Cuduthel Pk

25,971

Inshes Pk

38,500