

**The Highland Council**  
**Lochaber Area Committee**  
**25 August 2015**

Agenda Item	<b>11</b>
Report No	<b>LA 25/15</b>

## **Grounds Maintenance Performance Monitoring Report**

### **Report by Director of Community Services**

#### **Summary**

This report details performance management information of the Grounds Maintenance Services from April to June 2015.

Members are invited to note the management actions taken to deliver contracted and SLA grounds maintenance operations.

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Council's Scheme of Delegation to City/Area Committees gives the Lochaber Area Committee the power:

“to approve local levels of service for grounds maintenance within the strategy and budget allocated by Community Services Committee.”

1.2 Community Services is responsible for a wide range of horticultural related activities, including the maintenance of grass, flower and shrub beds, pruning vegetation and trees, weedkilling in public open spaces, sports areas, burial grounds and play areas.

1.3 This report details the recorded performance from April to June 2015 and provides feedback of actions taken to manage the service during the period.

#### **2. Maintenance Arrangements**

2.1 Lochaber grass cutting operations, with the exception of sports pitches (delivered by DLO), were awarded to ISS in April 2012. From March 2015 sports pitch maintenance was varied into the ISS contract to reflect operational needs of the areas and to achieve efficiency savings.

2.2 The DLO are responsible for all non-contracted grass cutting and maintenance of open space assets listed in 1.2 above.

#### **3. Contract Supervision & Performance**

3.1. The basis for all SLA or contract inspections is to determine if the site management, including contracted services, is sufficient to maintain the service standard of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and contracted works.

- 3.2. The first point of contact for all operational issues, customer or Member enquiries/complaints and service requests is the respective Community Works Officer, and then escalated to the Assistant Area Manager, where no satisfactory outcome or response is proved. The DLO undertakes initial assessment of works delivered by in-house or contracted service delivery teams.
- 3.3. The role of monitoring and validation of all works has been assigned to Community Services contracts team consisting of a Performance Coordinator and two Contract Supervisors. They undertake planned, focused and reactionary inspections covering all grounds maintenance disciplines. Re-inspections are undertaken following the issue of a Breached Standard notice.
- 3.4. Where performance or inspection failure is recorded, a breached standards, (informal, remedial or default), notice is issued to the service provider, whether internal (DLO) or external contractor.
- 3.5. Failure to return the site to the required standard within the notice period results in an escalation of the original notice issued.
- 3.6. A follow up inspection will be made on or after the notified completion date and, if there has been insufficient improvement, then a Default Notice will be issued to the DLO manager or the contractor respectively.
- 3.7. For the grass cutting activities and other grounds maintenance work, the number of inspections and resulting breached standard notices issued to the contractor and in-house DLO during April to June 2015 are shown below:

<b>Grounds Maintenance Performance Report</b>					<b>Wards</b>
<b>Lochaber</b>					<b>12 &amp; 22</b>
<b>All Tasks - all Service Providers</b>					
<b>Table 85</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring</b>		<b>Breached Standard Notices</b>		
<b>April 2015 - Mar 2016</b>	<b>Validation Inspections</b>	<b>Pass Rate</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>No. completed within Notice Period</b>	<b>% completed within Notice Period</b>
April	79	75%	20	16	80%
May	48	71%	14	12	86%
June	95	46%	51	37	73%
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>76.5%</b>

- 3.8. Overall 76.5% of all breached standards were rectified within the notice period. Compared with the maintained area of 1.130 million square metres and the 10,694 annual tasks undertaken, the number of breached standards is low. The level of performance differs between the service providers, as presented in **Appendix C**.

#### **4. Management Summary and Actions**

- 4.1 The monitoring and arrangements for recording performance is migrating to the area teams who will work closely with the Community Service Contracts team over the remainder of the growing season to ensure consistency.
- 4.2 Members will note limited formal contract monitoring data for retained DLO works. Unfortunately conflicting service priorities has resulted in a greater reliance on customer reports through the CRM Lagan system to alert the service to any quality concerns. This has been a relatively successful approach; however, discussions are underway on how the existing arrangements can be enhanced to provide a more comprehensive recording mechanism.

#### **5. Implications**

- 5.1 The resource implications of achieving performance improvements will need to be carefully examined.
- 5.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.3 There are no equality implications arising from this report.
- 5.4 There are no climate/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.
- 5.5 There are no risk implications arising from this report.
- 5.6 There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.
- 5.7 There are no Rural implications arising from this report.

#### **6. Recommendations**

Members are invited to:

- (i) scrutinise the performance management and remedial action information provided on the grounds maintenance service set out in this report;
- (ii) note the management actions taken to address the performance issues identified; and
- (iii) agree to review required service standards at future Ward Business Meetings

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 11th August 2015

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**Appendix A - Grass Cutting Maintained Areas and Annual Tasks**

<b>Lochaber</b>						
<b>Area Maintained</b>		<b>Square Metres</b>	<b>Contracted</b>		<b>In House</b>	
	Grass	904,989	904,989	100%	0	0%
	Planted	32,493	0	0%	32,493	100%
	Hard landscape	193,350	0	0%	193,350	100%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,130,832</b>	<b>904,989</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>225843</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Forecast Tasks Annually</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Contracted</b>		<b>In House</b>	
Grass	Growing Season	7150	7127	99.7%	23	0.3%
	Dormant Season	250	230	92%	20	8%
Planted	Growing Season	653	0	0%	653	100%
	Dormant Season	229	0	0%	229	100%
Hard landscape	Growing Season	1969	882	45%	1087	55%
	Dormant Season	443	37	8.4%	406	91.6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>10,694</b>	<b>8,276</b>	<b>77.4%</b>	<b>2,418</b>	<b>22.6%</b>

**Appendix B - Grass Cutting Amenity Standards**

<b>Grass Type</b>	<b>Minimum Height of Grass (after cutting)</b>	<b>Maximum Height of Grass (prior to cutting)</b>	<b>Evident Clippings Acceptable</b>	<b>Action if Excessive Clippings</b>
<b>Lawn</b>	<b>15mm</b>	<b>25mm</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>N/A - <i>Collected at Each Cut</i></b>
<b>High Amenity</b>	<b>25mm</b>	<b>60mm</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Remove</b>
<b>General Amenity</b>	<b>35mm</b>	<b>100mm</b>	<b>Some, Dispersed Evenly</b>	<b>Spread thinly or Remove</b>
<b>Low Amenity</b>	<b>75mm</b>	<b>150mm</b>	<b>Moderate, Dispersed</b>	<b>Spread</b>
<b>Rough Verge</b> or	<b>100mm</b>	<b>250mm</b>	<b>Significant, Scattered</b>	<b>N/A – <i>Not an Amenity Grade</i></b>

## Appendix C – Performance Analysis

Grounds Maintenance Performance Report Lochaber Contracted Grass Cutting (Lot 6) - ISS					Wards 12 + 22
Table 56	Performance Monitoring		Breached Standard Notices		
April 2015 - Mar 2016	Validation Inspections	Pass Rate	Issued	No. completed within Notice Period	% completed within Notice Period
April	72	78%	16	16	100%
May	47	72%	13	12	92%
June	81	53%	38	37	97%
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>97%</b>

Grounds Maintenance Performance Report Lochaber Retained Grass Cutting - DLO					Wards 12 + 22
Table 60	Performance Monitoring		Breached Standard Notices		
April 2015 - Mar 2016	Validation Inspections	Pass Rate	Issued	No. completed within Notice Period	% completed within Notice Period
April	0	-	0	0	-
May	0	-	0	0	-
June	0	-	0	0	-
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>

Grounds Maintenance Performance Report Lochaber SLA Work excl. grass cutting - DLO					Wards 12 + 22
Table 64	Performance Monitoring		Breached Standard Notices		
April 2015 - Mar 2016	Validation Inspections	Pass Rate	Issued	No. completed within Notice Period	% completed within Notice Period
April	7	43%	4	0	0%
May	1	0%	1	0	0%
June	14	7%	13	0	0%
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>