

The Highland Council
City of Inverness Area Committee – 2 June 2016

Agenda Item	10
Report No	CIA/26/16

Grounds Maintenance Performance Monitoring Report – early season update

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report details performance management information of the Grounds Maintenance Services for the period 1 April to 18 May 2016.

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

1. Introduction

1.1 Members will recall that local Committees now have certain powers with respect to Grounds Maintenance within the context of the overall strategy and budget which are set by Community Services.

1.2 In summary Grounds Maintenance includes:

- the maintenance of grass, flower and shrub beds;
- pruning vegetation and trees; and
- weed-killing in public open spaces, sports areas, burial grounds and play areas.

1.3 This report (and future reports) will detail Service performance in these tasks.

2. Maintenance Arrangements

2.1 Maintenance provision is carried out by in-house staff, and community and private sector partners according to the details in **Appendix 1**.

2.3 As well as non-contracted grass cutting the In-house team is responsible for the maintenance of open space assets listed in 1.2 above.

3. Supervision

3.1. The basis for supervision of the activities whether contracted or not is against a specification which is contained either in the contract (with the private sector) or in a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which is essentially a contract with the In-house team and Fort Augustus Community Company.

- 3.2. Grass cutting amenity standards are attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 3.3 Primary responsibility for monitoring the quality of works lies with the In-house team and/or contractors by way of self-assessment.
- 3.4 The management of performance, administration and validation of works are carried out by a small HQ based team comprising of three individuals (for all of Highland).
- 3.5 The team also manages recovery of calculated losses as a result of non-compliance and undertake planned, focused/reactionary and random inspections. Re-inspections are undertaken following the issue of a Breached Standard notice.
- 3.6 Where performance or inspection failure is recorded, a formal notice, (Remedial or Default), is issued to the service provider, whether In-house or external.
- 3.7 After a Remedial Notice has been issued, remedy is required within 7 calendar days. Failure to return the site to the required standard results in an escalation of the original notice.
- 3.8 To encourage prompt action, The Authority's Representative has the discretion to withdraw the Remedial Notice if the site is returned to standard within 48 hours of issue.
- 3.9 Failure to complete remedial action within 7 days results in loss of monthly payment for the specified location, incurs re-inspection cost and a Default notice being issued
- 3.10 For the 2015 season 100% of the notices issued were completed, of which, 81% were within 7 days. Re-inspection costs and site values were applied and recovered as compensatory works. The value of calculated losses through additional work carried out by ISS was £28,540. For the 2016 season calculated losses will be agreed at the monthly contracts meeting and deducted directly from monthly contract value

4. 1st Quarter Performance

- 4.1 Performance should be measured against the baseline figures of :
 - Maintained Area = 3.244 million square metres; and
 - Annual Tasks = 42,203.
- 4.2 In summary:
 - 39% of all Breached Standards were rectified within the notice period;
 - the number of Breached Standards overall is low; and
 - the average completion rate for Breached Standards is shown as **Appendix 3**.

5. Validation

- 5.1 Community Services actively prioritise resource allocation to sports areas, play areas and burial grounds maintenance.
- 5.2 To identify key issues and deploy resources in a cost efficient manner, the contracts team is focussed on and aiming to carry out validation checks at all burial grounds over the summer season.
- 5.3 This will result in a high number of breached standards notices being issued; these will be prioritised and programmed for action.
- 5.4 For the 1st Quarter Validation inspections recorded:
- 100% pass rate for the In-House retained grass cutting;
 - 27% pass rate for SLA works.
- 5.5 This is due to focussing resources on high intensity, repetitive grass cutting and deployment to interments, play area maintenance and special events.
- 5.6 Full details of the validation results for both Inverness and all Highland are attached as **Appendices 3** and **4** respectively.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note:

- the performance management and remedial action information provided on the grounds maintenance service; and
- the management action taken to address the performance issues identified.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 18 May 2016

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City of Inverness

Appendix 1

Maintenance Arrangements in Inverness (2016-17)

PROVIDER	Delivered By	SERVICE	Detail (m²)	VALUE (£)
Highland Council Community Works Team, Inverness	In-house staff (including village officers in Beauly, Ardersier)	High use/high profile locations including Castle Banks, sports facilities and the two main operational city burial grounds, internments, sites adjacent to Council depots and winter maintenance of open space grass areas	Mainly Inverness City All locations listed as In- house 1,119,364 sqm – of which grass cutting is 613,843 sqm	£1,116,100* *Excludes Income
	ISS (private sector)	Grass cutting to sports areas, play areas, bowling greens, schools and housing estates across Inverness-shire (Wards 13 – 18 & 20)	Inverness City, rural Inverness-shire All locations listed as sub-contracted grass cutting 2,309,839 sqm	£457,403
	Fort Augustus Community Co	All grounds maintenance work including grass cutting and SLA burials grounds in Fort Augustus	Grass-cutting & shrubs, including Cemetery – 35,591sqm	£8,500
		TOTAL		£1,582,000

Appendix 2

Grass Cutting Amenity Standards

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

Appendix 3

Validation Inspections: Inverness

1 April – 18 May

Inverness-shire Wards 13 - 18 + 20	Grounds Maintenance		
	Contracted Grass	Retained Grass	SLA non Grass cutting
Asset Quantity (m²)	2,309,839	613,843	209,843
Total No. of Inspections.	74	8	26
Pass Inspections.	56	8	4
Fail Inspections.	18	0	22
Pass Rate (%)	76%	100%	15%
Remedial Notices issued	18	0	22
Default Notices issued	0		
Notices addressed within time	15	0	7
% Notices addressed within time	83%		32%

Appendix 4

Validation Inspections: All Highland (Wards 1-22) 1 April – 18 May 2016

Operator	ACTION							
	Total No. of Inspections.	Pass	Fail	Pass Rate (%)	Remedial Notices	Default Notices	*Notices completed within time	*% within time
Grounds Contracted Grass Cutting (ISS)	157	116	41	74%	41	0	31	76%
Grounds Contracted Grass Cutting (Golders)	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	
Grounds Contracted Grass Cutting (In-House Team)	1	0	1	0%	1	0	0	0%
Grounds Retained Grass Cutting (In-House Team)	8	8	0	100%	0	0	0	
Grounds SLA Work (In-House, and Community Co)	53	12	41	23%	39	2	7	17%

*Due to report being mid-quarter **Appendix 4** includes notices currently live and within 7 days of issue.