

**Grass Cutting**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Deputy Leader Councillor George Clements  
 Portfolio Holder Councillor Hugh Branney  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Toni Magean, Open Spaces Manager  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Toni Magean, Open Spaces Manager

**Summary and Recommendation:**

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 15 August requested that a report is presented at this meeting which informs the Committee of the management approach and delivery of the Council's grass cutting service across the borough. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the management approach to the Council grass cutting services as presented in this report.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be aware that the delivery and management of the council's grass cutting service is undertaken by the Council's Parks Services. In addition to maintaining grass areas owned by this council, Parks Services also maintains a number of grassed areas for a range of external organisations, such as Housing Associations, Town and Parish Councils and the County Council.

1.2 The approach by the parks services to grass cutting is based on established management practises and is measured on performance outputs:-

Regime	Land Type	Cutting System	Performance Based (Minimum Cuts)
A	Residential/Housing Estates	Cylinder/Rotary	14
B	Amenity Parks	Cylinder/Rotary	14
C	Open Spaces & Cemetery	Cylinder/Rotary	14
E	Bowling Greens	Cylinder	70
F	Open Spaces & Sports Pitches	Cylinder/Gang	14
G	Wild Flora (Flail)	Flail	6
H	Verges (Flail)	Flail	1
J	Roadsides (Flail)	Flail	2

1.3 The majority of the Council's grass maintenance is undertaken within the Open Spaces, Public Parks, Sports Pitches and Residential areas. However, the grassed areas owned by Copeland Homes are maintained and delivered through a Service Level Agreement; though this maintenance agreement will be subject to a tendering process towards the end of the year.

## 2. Service Delivery

2.1 Grass cutting is measured on a performance output base, which allows for the grass cutting service to be both flexible and adaptive to the seasonal climatic conditions. A base minimum cutting frequency is expected to be achieved by the grass cutting teams however, this base minimum is often exceeded by the grass cutting teams: -

Regime	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
A	16	16	17
B	14	16	17
C	12	16	17
E	74	78	76
F	14	16	20
G	6	6	7
H	1	1	1
J	2	2	2

2.2 Due to the nature and demands of grass management, park services employ a wide range of grass cutting equipment that ensure these demands will be met, this equipment ranges from Tractor Mounted Mowers, Ride-on Mowers down to Pedestrian Mowers, and are either cylinder, rotary or flail cutting. This range of grass cutting equipment is operated by both trained permanent and seasonal grass cutting staff working in teams:-

Team	Area	Resource
1	Egremont & Outer Areas	4 Staff, 1 Crew Cab, 1 Ride-On Mower, 2 Pedestrian Mowers
2	Whitehaven & Outer Estates	4 Staff, 1 Crew Cab, 1 Ride-On Mower, 2 Pedestrian Mowers
3	Hensingham & Villages	4 Staff, 1 Crew Cab, 1 Ride-On Mower, 2 Pedestrian Mowers
4	Nature Conservation Areas across the Borough	2 Staff, 1 Van, 3 Strimmers
5	Large Open Spaces across the Borough	2 Staff, 2 Tractors, Gang Mower, Rear/Side Flail Mower
6	Fine Turf and Sports areas across the Borough	6 Staff, 3 Vans, A Range of Turf Care Equipment
7	Millom & Haverigg	2 Staff, 1 Van, Mini Tractor Mower, 2 Pedestrian Mower

2.3 The cost of the Council's grass management is contained within the parks services budget allocation.

2.4 With regards to the collection of grass airings, a best practise approach to service delivery is undertaken by allowing the bio-mass to recycle back into the ground. The removal of cut grass is not environmentally friendly (Carbon footprint) and the cost for the collection, removal and correct disposal of grass arising across the borough is not affordable.

### **3. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)**

3.1 Financial and human resources to be contained within existing service provision.

### **4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN**

4.1 Maintained and quality green spaces supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

4.2 Promoting high quality green space environment and civic pride contributes to crime reduction which supports the Corporate Plan.

#### **List of Consultees:**

Councillor George Clements  
Councillor Hugh Branney  
Corporate Team

#### **CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES**

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	Quality Environments and Civic Pride contributes to Crime Reduction
Impact on Sustainability	Sustainable Planting supports a Greener Environment
Impact on Rural Proofing	None
Health and Safety Implications	None
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	None
Children and Young Persons Implications	Green Spaces support Young Peoples activities
Human Rights Act Implications	None

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision    NO