

EXTERNAL AMENITY CONTRACTS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the April meeting of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, it was agreed that a report be submitted providing detail on the external amenity contracts across all areas.
- 1.2 The amenity team forms part of Roads and Amenity's operations team which also includes roads operations. The amenity team deliver a wide and varied range of services the detail of which is expanded on in the main body of the report.
- 1.3 With the reductions in revenue funding there have been numerous changes to the amenities team in terms of working patterns, the scale and type of work carried together with a reduction in staff numbers. Alternative working patterns have been introduced to help manage the reductions in budgets. The changes to working patterns together with a reduction in overall staffing numbers have reduced the flexibility and resilience within the team.
- 1.4 The Council has been successful in securing third party works for grounds maintenance through a main contractor for areas that fall within ACHAs responsibility. These arrangements fully fund two seasonal staff. The funding received from these works covers labour, plant and overhead, provides employment and also provides the amenity team with additional resilience through increase resource being available. In practice the 2 additional staff can be used to supplement scheduled council work with permanent council staff being used to supplement the contracted work, this arrangement provides more resilience and flexibility. Overall the contracted work does not exceed the 2 additional seasonal staff. The finances associated with the works are commercial and confidential and are therefore not included within this report.
- 1.4 It is recommended that members endorse this report.

EXTERNAL AMENITY CONTRACTS

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's amenity team carry out some contracted work. At the April Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, it was agreed that a report be submitted providing detail on the external amenity contracts across all areas. This report provides that detail.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Members endorse this report.

4.0 DETAILS

- 4.1 At the April 2017 Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee of 1 March 2017 regarding external amenity contracts across all areas. The decision of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee was:

'The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to the appropriate Committee by the Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure Services providing detail on the external amenity contracts across all areas. (Reference: Extract from Minute of Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee held on 1 March 2017 and report by Executive Director – Development and Infrastructure Services dated February 2017, submitted)'

- 4.2 The amenity team forms part of Roads and Amenity's operations team which also includes roads. The amenity team deliver grounds and grassland maintenance, weed treatment, bedding plants, maintenance of playparks, street sweeping, cleansing and maintenance of public conveniences, burial and cremation service, maintenance of cemeteries, environmental wardens (covering control of dogs, pest control, litter enforcement, commercial waste agreements, monitoring of civic amenity sites and support to the parking service), operational management of council run landfill sites and minor roads repairs through the Local Environmental Teams (LETs).

- 4.3.1 With the reductions in revenue funding there have been numerous changes to the amenities team in terms of working patterns, the scale and type of work carried out and also a reduction in staff numbers. Varying working patterns have been introduced to help manage the reductions in budgets and staffing levels. The changes to working patterns include; annualised hours (with some staff working longer summer hours and shorter winter hours to accommodate seasonal demands), split shift working and 7 day working based on 4 days on 4 days off with each working day being longer to be equivalent to a full working week. These changes to working patterns together with a reduction in overall staffing numbers have, as highlighted when the policy decisions were being considered, reduced the flexibility and resilience within the team.
- 4.3.2 The Council have been successful in securing third party works for grounds maintenance through a main contractor for areas that are the responsibility of ACHA. These arrangements fully fund two seasonal staff based in Kintyre and Islay. The funding received from these works covers labour, plant and overhead, provides employment and also provides the amenity team with additional resilience through increase resource being available. In practice the 2 additional staff can be used to supplement scheduled council work with permanent council staff being used to supplement the contracted work, this arrangement provides more resilience and flexibility. Overall the contracted work does not exceed the 2 additional seasonal staff. The finances associated with the works are commercial and confidential and are therefore not included within this report.
- 4.3.3 The council will need to take an increased focus on securing third party work and generating income given the budget outlook between now and 2020 – 21. Teams across Roads and Amenity and the wider council are actively seeking to generate income through external work to enable jobs to be secured locally and provide resilience to otherwise reducing teams.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Council's amenity team carry out some contracted work. At the April Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee, it was agreed that a report be submitted providing detail on the external amenity contracts across all areas. This report provides that detail.
- 5.2 This report also details the work carried out by the amenities team, the working patterns and also confirms that the council will be actively seeking to secure additional third party works where appropriate.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | Changes to working patterns and staffing numbers have resulted from policy decisions directly related to reductions in budget level. |
| 6.2 | Financial | As detailed in the report, the financial issues relating to |

third party work is commercial and confidential

6.3	Legal	None Known
6.4	HR	The current third party arrangements in amenity enable 2 seasonal FTEs to be employed
6.5	Equalities	None Known
6.6	Risk	None Known
6.7	Customer Services	None Known

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Head of Roads and Amenity Services Jim Smith

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August 2017

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