

## Cleaner, Greener Melton - Collaboration to support Environmental Quality

<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Ryan Finnegan</b> , Waste and Environmental Services Manager  <b>Michelle Howard</b> , Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
<b>Chief Officer Responsible:</b>	<b>Michelle Howard</b> , Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
<b>Lead Member/Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment & Regulatory Services (& Deputy Leader)

<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Theme 1: Healthy Communities and Neighbourhoods
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Exempt Information:</b>	No

### 1 Summary

- 1.1 Melton is a beautiful borough, and maintaining high levels of environmental quality and attractive open spaces is a core component of what Councils do. Historically, Melton Borough Council has focussed on and resourced the maintenance of existing service standards, however, the Council's Corporate Strategy 2024 – 2036 incorporates an emphasis on improvement and specific commitments to support a cleaner, greener borough. The Council recognises that it cannot deliver these things in isolation and alongside a commitment to deliver high quality services, recognition is given to the importance of collaboration with partners, contractors, volunteers and community groups.
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the work of the teams that work directly on ensuring a cleaner, greener Melton. It also provides a progress update on corporate strategy commitments, highlights notable achievements across the borough and sets out the ongoing work that is planned to further strengthen and enhance the Council's commitment and delivery of a cleaner, greener Melton.

## 2 Recommendations

That Committee:

- 2.1 Note the report, position update and overview of next steps
- 2.2 Provide feedback and suggestions to Cabinet for their consideration

## 3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The work in this area represents an important part of the Council's commitments to its communities. There is a need to manage resources carefully and effectively, to prioritise and plan ahead, and to maintain a commitment to high levels of environmental quality across the borough, whilst ensuring resource commitments remain affordable in the context of the council's other priorities.
- 3.2 Feedback from Scrutiny Committee members to support continuous development in this area of increased focus and priority is welcome. Feedback to Cabinet will support consideration of next steps and areas of focus and improvement for the future, whilst also providing opportunity to reflect on the progress made to date and the impact of council teams, contractors, partners and volunteers.

## 4 Background

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy 2024-2036 confirms that Melton Borough Council is committed to establishing Melton as a flourishing destination for both those who live here and those who visit. It is important for residents, visitors and businesses that there are high standards of environmental quality across the borough and that pride in our place is evident at all times, whilst also ensuring care is taken to operate within the resources available.
- 4.2 As part of its Corporate Strategy, the Council has made some specific commitments over the coming years to support a cleaner, greener borough, alongside an ongoing commitment to delivering high quality services, collaboration with partners and recognition of the significant role undertaken by partners, contractors, volunteers and community groups.
- 4.3 The Council has increased senior capacity and expertise to support an increased emphasis on Pride in Place. By appointing an experienced Service Manager to oversee and lead the development, delivery and performance of Waste and Environmental Services, there is an opportunity to review functions and contracts as well as strengthen collaboration across teams and partners in response to related issues such as envirocrime, environmental quality and climate change.
- 4.4 This report provides a progress update on work undertaken to deliver a cleaner, greener Melton, provides a position update on corporate strategy commitments, highlights notable achievements and sets out planned future work to support the council's ambitions.
- 4.5 This is a broad agenda with many cross cutting aspects. The report focusses on key thematic areas and will be accompanied by a presentation to provide additional context to support committee discussion and considerations. Where relevant, reference is made to the operational arrangements of the Municipal Waste Contract, however, the contract is subject to focussed scrutiny elsewhere on the committee work programme where more detail would be provided.

## 5 Main Considerations

### 5.1 Progress Update: Corporate Strategy Commitments 2024-2028

5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy (2024 to 2036) has increased the focus and prioritisation of resources in this area and makes specific commitments to be delivered over the coming years, which contribute to the longer term aspiration set out in 'Vision '36' to "be recognised as clean, green, and attractive; well on our way to becoming a net zero borough".

5.1.2 The Corporate Strategy includes several focus areas and commitments to be achieved over the first four years of the Corporate Strategy (i.e. before 2028) to support the overarching themes and aspirations. The actions that are directly related to this report are included in the table below with an update on progress and next steps:

<b>Theme1: Healthy Communities and Neighbourhoods</b>		
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Progress Update / Examples</b>
High quality and accessible public services	Review of Customer Journey, including for out of hours response	<b>In Progress:</b> Customer journey review is being managed as a corporate project and links to a range of services, systems and processes. Relevant teams are engaged, including the Environmental Maintenance Team for whom there is a high level of customer and member enquiries. Specific work underway to maximise opportunities to improve customer journey (for example, use of Whitespace back office technology; use of online forms; transfer of customer enquiries from Customer Services to EMT / Biffa).
	Accessibility Audits in Town Centre and Country Park	<b>Not started:</b> Following member and customer queries about accessibility of open spaces, a commitment has been made to assess the accessibility of the town centre and country park and will be undertaken in the coming year. This information will support strategic considerations for example town centre design guide / country park master plan.
Making the borough cleaner, safer and greener	Respond to Waste Reforms and Introduce Food Waste collections	<b>In progress:</b> The requirement to collect food waste from April 2026 and preparations towards this will be covered in more detail in a separate scrutiny committee report but is relevant context for this report. This is being managed as a corporate project and includes considerations regarding vehicles and caddies, service delivery, contracts and procurement, affordability, and behaviour change.
	Develop programme of environmental community clean up days	<b>Ongoing:</b> A range of community clean up days have been successfully completed, including in areas where there are most complaints about littering and flytipping (for example, Beckmill Court area), in open spaces (for example, Melton Country Park) and to support tenant engagement activities (for example, St Johns Court, Bradgate Flats).  The next focus area is to work with volunteers, contractors and partners to address overgrown and untenanted allotments, with the aim of bringing them

		back up to a condition they can be let to future allotment holders.
	Develop and implement Country Park Masterplan secure Green Flag Award	<p><b>In progress:</b> The Country Park Master Plan has been developed, and consideration is being given to options for external resourcing and delivery mechanisms.</p> <p><b>Not started:</b> Work to self-assess against the requirements for achieving green flag status for Melton Country Park has not yet been undertaken; this will be undertaken over the next six to nine months to inform a workplan and application.</p>
	Establish 'Pride in Place' group to improve environmental quality	<p><b>In progress:</b> This operational working group, supported by the Portfolio Holder, will directly support collaboration between teams, whilst also supporting coordination and prioritisation of resources to deliver on actions that will enhance pride in place across the public realm (for example, country park, play areas, town centre, closed churchyards, cemeteries, allotments) within the resources available. It will enable an increased and collective focus on Pride in Place to align with the increased corporate strategy focus, through which a range of council teams can collaborate on actions, projects and priorities, work together to understand what works well, consider more needs to be done and to have a shared understanding on outcomes and performance.</p> <p>Additionally, the group will be able to coordinate responses to ad-hoc requests that arise and ensure the council continues to work proactively and positively with stakeholders and volunteers.</p> <p>The specific remit of the group is to be determined through some initial workshop sessions in November and December 2024.</p>
Connected with our communities	Increase engagement with Voluntary and Community Sector and explore opportunities for closer working	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> There are many positive examples of engagement and collaboration with volunteers and community groups, and this commitment spans a broad range of the council's services and activities. This commitment will continue. Recent positive examples of collaboration and closer working relevant to a cleaner, greener Melton include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Melton in Bloom</b> achieved a gold award in 2024 East Midlands in Bloom competition. This is the result of significant volunteer effort throughout the year and collaboration with various Council Teams, contractors and stakeholders leading to a fantastic outcome and positive relationships. The town centre planting schemes are designed by Melton in Bloom and are planted and maintained by the Council's Environmental Maintenance Team. For</li> </ul>

		<p>summer 2024, the planting scheme was Olympic Themed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Melton Wombles</b> work tirelessly throughout the year, collecting litter across the borough. There is a process in place for the Wombles to raise a service request to have their pink sacks collected when filled – between January and October 2024, 255 collection requests were raised arising from litter picks (Wombles and other).</p> <p>The Wombles also play a valuable role in identifying and reporting fly-tips which are then assessed and investigated. Our Safer Communities Team have developed a positive relationship with the Wombles – joining them on litter picks and responding proactively to reports of flytipping.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>The Friends of Melton Country Park</b> work hard throughout the year on various tasks across the Country Park to support ecology, biodiversity and wildlife, whilst also showing creativity and innovation leading to improvements and enhancements such as the construction and installation of bird boxes, bird hides and preservation of the sculpture trail. Volunteering through this group is well established, and volunteers work in a positive and inclusive manner, often seeking external funding to further their work.</p> <p>In February 2024, <a href="#">three white hawthorn trees were planted in memory</a> of the founders of The Friends of Melton Country Park, Bill and Jean Forbes.</p> <p>Following the appointment of the Waste and Environmental Services Manager, work is planned to further strengthen the relationship and collaboration opportunities with The Friends of Melton County Park, and to work in a collaborative way to carry out a self-assessment and action plan to secure Green Flag status for the Country Park.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Melton Mowbray Town Estate (MMTE)</b> manage and maintain the town parks, ensuring they are maintained and well served with amenities, attractions and events whilst also managing the town centre market and some additional facilities. MMTE played a significant role in supporting the recent Melton in Bloom gold award and their work is visible and prominent in the town. The Council engages regularly with MMTE colleagues and is committed to working collaboratively and in support of one another for the benefit of our communities.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Melton Lions</b> are a proactive and positive partner, and there are a number of examples of</p> </li> </ul>
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	<p>collaboration to support a cleaner, greener Melton. Notable examples include the woodland <a href="#">tree planting at Kirby Fields</a> event earlier this year, collaboration to undertake a community litter ick with the Melton Wombles and Council teams for volunteer week, and current collaboration and planning to bring overgrown and untenanted allotment plots back into use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Friends of Gretton Court</b> was established over 14 years ago and work hard on a range of things to improve the living experience for tenants, including maintaining and improving the garden area for tenants at Gretton Court and are passionate about making the outdoor living environment as welcome and accessible as possible for tenants. It is open to the whole community as an outdoor opportunity for socialising, quiet contemplation and exercise such as walking in a safe environment. It is also an opportunity to carry out accessible gardening activities should they wish.</li> </ul> <p>The sensory and memory garden is open to everyone but is primarily used by residents of the Extra Care facility and communities along Egerton View such as Mowbray Court. It also includes a memory tree for past residents of Gretton Court.</p> <p>The volunteers have also provided support to the <b>Princes Trust</b>, through which a group of young people were supported and empowered to improve the sensory garden, planted areas and garden furniture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Volunteer week</b> in June 2024 provided a positive opportunity to promote volunteering opportunities through a Volunteer Fair and sought volunteers to be part of a community litter pick in Melton Country Park, supported by Melton Lions and Melton Wombles.</li> </ul> <p>Volunteers and community groups make an enormous contribution to a cleaner, greener Melton and it is important that we recognise the value of their work and commitment. The Deputy Leader has tasked officers to plan an event to recognise and thank volunteers, planning is underway.</p>
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## 5.2 **Environmental Maintenance Team**

5.2.1 The Council's Environmental Maintenance Team (EMT) comprises 7 operatives (one of which is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to March 2025) and a Depot Supervisor. As a team they, and their work is visible across the borough.

- 5.2.2 Within the wider team are also an operational Lead Officer, Cemetery Officer and Administrative Officer. Oversight and direction is provided by the recently appointed Waste and Environmental Service Manager, who reports to the Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive).
- 5.2.3 Tasks undertaken by the Environmental Maintenance Team include grass cutting, shrub maintenance, tree works, gritting and grit bin stocking, sandbag making and distribution, installation and maintenance of street furniture, bollard painting, play area maintenance and inspections, cemetery maintenance, and headstone inspections, weeding and spraying, summer and winter planting and watering, and responding to service requests.
- 5.2.4 Currently, the team is split into three sub teams:
- a) Team 1 (4 operatives): three weekly cycle for grass cutting with week 1 being town and villages, week 2 being cemetery, and third week being HRA land
  - b) Team 2 (2 operatives): three weekly cycle similar to Team 1, but three days in the week are reserved for street scene works including bench maintenance, street signs i.e name plates and other inspections. Week 1 central development area, week 2 are 8 ad hoc areas and villages including 2 sheltered housing, week 3 is play areas and St Marys Church
  - c) Team 3 (1 operative): Melton Country Park, Leisure Centre and 10 other larger open spaces
- 5.2.5 Operatives are out every day across the borough, and their workplan whilst set, is shaped by seasonal demands which can be impacted by weather (for example, the length of the grass cutting season is weather dependent and does vary year to year) which requires flexibility to adapt work programmes and areas of focus.
- 5.2.6 Throughout the year, winter maintenance tasks are collated and prioritised, and are allocated to operatives, however, ad-hoc service requests and one off projects can sometimes impact on this. Town centre planting is carried out in Summer and Winter and maintained throughout. Melton in Bloom provides a theme and decides on the planting design and arrangements, whilst EMT order the plants, receive delivery and plant them as agreed with Melton in Bloom. EMT watering and replace throughout year, alongside weeding & spraying in some areas.
- 5.2.7 Work in the Melton Country Park is varied. Alongside grass cutting and general maintenance of open spaces, tasks include maintenance of the Covid memorial garden maintenance & baby sensory garden. This can be challenging to manage during the grass cutting season when resources are necessarily directed to grass cutting.
- 5.2.8 The Environmental Maintenance team are well supported by the volunteer effort from The Friends of Melton Country Park (FOMCP) and also work closely with the Environment Agency. Working with FOMCP, progress is being made on installation of a bird hide and fruit orchard, general tree planting and maintenance of trail sculptures. Collaboration with FOMCP will be key to achieving Green Flag status for the Country Park.
- 5.2.9 Work is being planned to remove Himalayan Balsam, an invasive species which embeds itself into the banks of watercourses and erodes soil, in turn widening the water banks which can impact on flood resilience.
- 5.2.10 Working with the Environment Agency, reservoir maintenance works are undertaken and specific work to address issues, such as managing the presence and impacts of non-native

fish within the lakes. Where such work is planned, communication is shared with elected members.

5.2.11 In response to community feedback and / or issues, specific communication and activities are sometimes undertaken across council teams to help and encourage people to enjoy the Country Park safely. Examples include water safety and safety (particularly when the water is frozen) and work to address anti-social behaviour. Consideration is currently being given to education and communication about responsible dog ownership, following some community feedback and concerns.

### 5.3 **Street Cleansing - Biffa**

5.3.1 As part of the Municipal Waste Contract, Biffa provide a Street Cleansing Service (8 FTE staff), the objective of which is to meet statutory street cleansing requirements and high levels of customer satisfaction.

5.3.2 The Street Cleansing service broadly consists of daily (seven days) cleaning of streets, surface car parks and other public areas where the Council has a responsibility, an interest or a statutory duty, as directed by the contract.

5.3.3 The contract requirements include (but are not limited to):

- a) Removal of all litter and detritus
- b) Installation and maintenance of litter bins in zone 1
- c) Emptying litter and dog waste bins
- d) Removal of dead animals from public highways / open spaces
- e) Removal of fly tips
- f) Cleaning of some items of street furniture (benches, litter bins, specific bus shelters)
- g) Removal of graffiti and gum (if and when required)
- h) Emergency working

5.3.4 To manage the operational arrangements, the Borough is split into zones which reflect the frequency/levels of street cleansing required based on the areas and usage:

- a) Zone 1: daily (usually high footfall areas)
- b) Zone 2: 2 weekly to monthly
- c) Zone 3: monthly

5.3.5 Zone 1 has a designated resource between the hours of 0700 and 1800 for 6 days per week to maintain cleanliness and can be used to respond to emergency work if required. Zone 1 areas should not deteriorate to Grade C (therefore should be maintained at Grade B or above).

5.3.6 The Waste and Environmental Services Manager is in dialogue with the contractor to check that the operational arrangements continue to meet the Council's operational requirements, and to refresh performance monitoring and assurance arrangements to provide assurance on service quality and compliance.

5.3.7 To maintain a working understanding of the location and street cleansing activities being undertaken, Biffa now provide the Waste and Environmental Maintenance Team with a simplified schedule at the beginning of each month.



## 5.4 **Managing service requests**

5.4.1 As the Environmental Maintenance Team are largely out and about in the community and responding to various requests and requirements, it is important to be able to coordinate and manage service requests, allocate them correctly to enable the deployment of resources, and to manage expectations, particularly for ad-hoc requests which may not always be possible to fulfil. Some changes have recently been made to standard email responses for anyone contacting the service to advise of a 5 working day response time and to help manage expectations.

5.4.2 We have also included links to some key online forms, where residents or elected members can complete transactions or make service requests online, which can then be managed and coordinated more effectively. Work is underway to automate processes linked to all online forms, which will improve the customer experience, coordination of resources and overall response.

5.4.3 Below are some examples of key transactions that can be completed online. Some are fully integrated into the contractors system Whitespace. This has been added to the service areas auto email acknowledgement to encourage use of online services.

- a) [Find out what day your bins are collected](#)
- b) [Report a missed bin collection](#)
- c) [Book a bulky waste collection](#)
- d) [Sign up to Biffa's Green Waste Club for garden waste collections](#)
- e) [Order a new bin](#)
- f) [Report fly-tipping](#)
- g) [Report an overflowing or vandalised bin](#)
- h) [View a list of our parks and play areas](#)

5.4.4 Feedback from Scrutiny Committee members on additional reporting themes are welcome and can be considered as part of the Council's Customer Journey Review.

## 5.5 **Wider Efforts to maintain Environmental Quality**

5.5.1 Ensuring a cleaner, greener Melton is not the work of one team, and outcomes cannot be achieved in isolation. It is a cross cutting theme, and outcomes are the result of efforts and commitment from Council teams, partners, contractors and community groups / volunteers as outlined earlier in this report.

5.5.2 In September 2024, Scrutiny Committee considered the Annual Crime and Disorder report, which provided an update on the work to address enviro-crime, which is another important contributor to a cleaner, greener Melton. The Safer Communities team investigate incidents of Environmental crime (for example, flytipping, flyposting, abandoned vehicles, waste on land, commercial waste, householder duty of care, dog fouling, unsightly properties, graffiti) and continue to perform to a high standard. Please refer to the [Annual Crime and Disorder](#) report for more detail.

5.5.3 Through the Leicestershire Waste Partnership, positive campaign based work has been undertaken to support delivery of the Leicestershire Waste and Resources Strategy,

particularly to raise awareness of Flytipping. The artwork some waste vehicles was updated as part of the 'It's All Fly-Tipping' campaign from the Leicestershire Waste Partnership.

- 5.5.4 The campaign aims to make residents aware of the correct way to dispose of waste and the consequences of fly-tipping, as well as sending a warning shot to businesses who would seek to profit from this illegal action. As part of the campaign to tackle fly-tipping, the Council has also continued to monitor locally known flytipping hot-spots as well as the illegal transportation of waste. Local operations have been undertaken in collaboration with partners including the Police, aiming to reduce the incidents within the borough as well as taking robust enforcement action against those who commit the offences.
- 5.5.5 If waste is illegally transported or dumped, those responsible can be issued with fines ranging from a Fixed Penalty Notice to an unlimited fine, receive a criminal record or be sentenced to time in prison. Residents can check if someone is a registered waste carrier by visiting the Environment Agency website: [environment.data.gov.uk/public-register](https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register). Further information about the "It's All Fly-Tipping" campaign can be found on the Leicestershire Waste Partnership website at [www.lesswaste.org.uk/flytipping](http://www.lesswaste.org.uk/flytipping).
- 5.5.6 Collaboration on actions and opportunities to support the councils climate change ambitions is also taking place. This is another cross-cutting theme and the work of the Waste and Environmental Maintenance Team is directly relevant, meaning that continued engagement to support delivery of the action plan is key.
- 5.6 **Waste and Environmental Maintenance Team: Service Diagnostic and Next Steps**
- 5.6.1 The Environmental Maintenance Team have a busy and varied workload and requires the Council to make best and most effective use of the resources available. To support the increased emphasis on Pride in Place, the appointment of an experienced Waste and Environmental Services Manager has provided an opportunity to carry out a diagnostic of tasks and functions undertaken by the Council's Environmental Maintenance Team, and to assess service quality, effectiveness and opportunity for service development, continuous improvement and opportunities to do things differently in future. This work will support the Council to move to a position of achieving excellence within the resources available and making clear recommendations for future focus, collaboration and investment.
- 5.6.2 Within the diagnostic, consideration has been given to a range of tasks and functions across the wider Waste and Environmental Services Team. To support this assessment, consideration has been given to the following things:
- What good looks like
  - Where are we now: assessment of current delivery, effectiveness and performance
  - Actions and next steps
- 5.6.3 The diagnostic has provided a valuable opportunity to develop an understanding of the current position and next steps, and to develop a programme of work. It will be used as a service development tool and will directly support consideration of options for future resourcing and service delivery arrangements. The following themes have arisen from the diagnostic:
- a) There is a range of positive work undertaken to support a commitment to a cleaner, greener Melton, but resources have been modest. Enhancing resources would increase opportunities to meet the Council's aspirations.

- b) Health and safety is taken seriously, and positive collaboration takes place with the Council's Health and Safety Officer.
- c) Ensuring the Council is making best use of resources in this area is essential. There is scope to review value for money across some service delivery arrangements.
- d) There is scope to make officer roles and responsibilities clearer and to better align resources to future service needs and requirements.
- e) There is a positive and proactive relationship with the Council's Waste and Street Cleansing Contractor, but contract management and oversight / visibility of performance could be strengthened.
- f) There is positive collaboration with partners and volunteers and a commitment to build on this.
- g) Core work is being undertaken and staff are appropriately trained, but this work is not always being supported by the most effective processes, technology or monitoring systems.
- h) The service is often reactive and there is scope to move to a more planned approach to best manage resources and scheduling of tasks. There is not a single or centralised record to show EMT maintained assets and the associated work programme; developing one would support teams and customers and help manage expectations. Linked to this, increasing collaboration with planning colleagues would support future resource planning for the maintenance of green and open spaces
- i) The specific roles and responsibilities for the Environmental Maintenance Team and Corporate Property and Assets Team (and for some external partners) are sometimes unclear and would be enhanced through collaboration made possible through the proposed Pride in Place group.
- j) A programme of work to review policies and procedures would support service delivery. Linked to this, emergency response arrangements are person centred, but understanding and expectations could be better managed through a minor update to policies and procedures.
- k) The development of a revised set of performance measures would better support service delivery, oversight and assurance.
- l) Cross directorate collaboration, outcomes and prioritisation of resource requests could be enhanced through the proposed Pride in Place group.
- m) Raising awareness of ways in which service requests can be raised by customers (for example, use of online forms or reports via the customer services team) would support better coordination and deployment of staffing resources

5.6.4 There are a number of things planned by way of operational service development or taking place as a result of the corporate strategy that address the findings and recommendations arising from the diagnostic. For example:

- a) Establishing an operational **Pride in Place Group**, supported by the Portfolio Holder, to maximise internal collaboration to support a Cleaner, Greener Melton and collective ownership of cross cutting areas or projects.
- b) Refreshing **service and contract performance measures** to maximise visibility of environmental quality outcomes and impact.

- c) Mapping all EMT maintained assets (for example, open spaces, trees, shrubs, footpaths, bus shelters, dog / litter bins) to the **GIS mapping system** (or similar), to increase visibility and support oversight of inspection and maintenance plans and records. To use the mapping system to increase visibility and clarity of (and identify gaps or issues) the assets or open spaces are maintained on behalf of others (for example, the HRA, LCC, Parish Councils) and their associated inspection and maintenance plans and records. This tool would also be used to inform ongoing resourcing requirements for any future maintenance liabilities (parks and open spaces) arising from the planning process.
- d) Establishing an **additional fixed term post (2 years)**: 'Green and Open Spaces Officer' (subject to budget approval) to support collaboration across teams, and forward planning for inspection and maintenance requirements across the public realm. To lead on:
  - i) Directly support collaboration across teams (particularly Waste and Environmental Maintenance, Corporate Property and Seats, Housing, Communications) and to support the establishment and development<sup>5</sup> of the proposed Pride in Place Group.
  - ii) GIS mapping as outlined above, including using the system to develop a data led schedule specifically for HRA land which will enable accurate resourcing allocated to maintenance of these areas and re-charging arrangements,
  - iii) Review and develop inspection and maintenance schedules for all areas of the public realm maintained by MBC and implement revised arrangements as required.
  - iv) Targeted focus on allotments to determine options to regularise and future plan to ensure clear and effective mechanisms for allocation and usage of allotment space.
  - v) Support a review of options to make best use of the technology available to support service effectiveness.

## 6 Options Considered

- 6.1 None. This report responds directly to the approved work programme for the Scrutiny Committee.

## 7 Consultation

- 7.1 This report forms part of the agreed work programme for the Scrutiny Committee and provides an update and opportunity for feedback in order to inform future work and continuous improvement.

## 8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 8.1 This report forms part of the agreed work programme for the Scrutiny Committee and provides an update and opportunity for feedback in order to inform future work and continuous improvement.

## 9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The work undertaken by the Council in support of commitments to a cleaner, greener Melton span the General Fund, Special Expenses Budget and Housing Revenue Account. Careful consideration must be given to budget management and resource allocation to ensure work and resources are budgeted for appropriately and that policies and contract procedure rules are followed to ensure accurate and effective budget management, budget monitoring and value for money. This is particularly acute for the special expenses

budget, which, due to its low levels of reserves cannot withstand the financial impact of uncertainties or ad-hoc requests.

- 9.2 The Council has a service accountant with strong knowledge and expertise who works closely with the Waste and Environmental Services Manager. Together, they provide a robust approach to operational budget management and oversight. As these are complex and high risk budgets, budgets are monitored on a monthly basis.
- 9.3 In a constrained budget environment, and to ensure value for money, the proposed proactive work to inform procurement, inspection and monitoring arrangements and future investment in assets and services is welcome, as is any action that can support a reduction in ad-hoc requests.
- 9.4 The Council continues to face a challenging budget position, and therefore care must be taken to prioritise and deploy resources at all times. Where possible, efforts must be taken to secure external funding to support future aspirations, such as through the Nature, Towns and Cities Fund for which an expression of interest has been submitted.

**Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services**

## **10 Legal and Governance Implications**

- 10.1 There are various pieces of legislation which either impose duties on the Council in relation to cleansing or grant powers to undertake works which enhance public spaces within the borough. For example, the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended, requires the Council to keep land and highways clear of litter. The 1990 Act also incorporates a number of enforcement functions for the Council and has been amended several times, including by the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 which enhanced those enforcement powers
- 10.2 The powers to hold and manage public spaces such as the Open Spaces Act 1906 and the Public Health Act 1875 allow the Council to manage that land and enhance it for the benefit of residents.
- 10.3 The Council must of course ensure that it performs its various statutory duties in relation to cleansing etc. however, there is scope for the Council to enter into agreements with other bodies for the purpose of assisting in that function or for the purpose of managing or enhancing land under its control. This can be achieved by either informal partnership working for example with the voluntary bodies referred to in the table in paragraph 5.4, or through more formal arrangements including with private contractors or other local authorities. Detailed advice will be provided regarding relevant legislation in respect of the delivery of any particular service or initiatives.

**Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer.**

## **11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications**

- 11.1 Under the equality duty (set out in the Equality Act 2010), public authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and consider the potential impact of decisions and actions on each of the protected characteristics. There are no equalities or safeguarding implications arising directly from this report.

## **12 Data Protection Implications**

- 12.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed because there are no risks/issues to the rights and freedoms of natural persons arising from the report.

### 13 Community Safety Implications

13.1 As a Local Authority, Melton Borough Council has a duty under Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to pay due regard to the likely effect of its functions on crime and disorder and is required to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area, enhance public reassurance and confidence in the services that are in place to improve the community environment and its safety.

### 14 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

14.1 The work undertaken to support a cleaner, greener Melton as outlined in this report directly contribute positively to environmental and climate change implications.

### 15 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Ad hoc requests divert attention from planned and budgeted works making it difficult to manage staffing and financial resources.	5	2	Medium
2	Resources are not sufficient to manage the aspirational service levels to ensure high levels of environmental quality.	4	2	Medium
3	Collaboration between teams is not maximised to support environmental quality outcomes.	4	2	Medium
4	Service and contract performance measures do not maximise opportunity to assess quality and outcomes.	4	3	Medium

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High		1		
	4 Significant		2, 3	4	
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	<p><b>Ad hoc requests divert attention from planned and budgeted works making it difficult to manage staffing and financial resources:</b> review and raise awareness of mechanisms to raise service requests, and processes to consider and deploy resources. Via the Green and Open Spaces Officer, refresh and update inspection and maintenance schedules for all areas of public realm and ensure appropriate visibility and accessibility of scheduling information and records. Officers to be confident to manage expectations and processes for managing ad-hoc request which are outside of maintenance or approved budgets.</p>
2	<p><b>Resources are not sufficient to manage the aspirational service levels to ensure high levels of environmental quality:</b> Resources in this area have been modest. Service diagnostic has been undertaken for EMT. The proposed pride in place group will support collective and coordinated efforts and best use of skills and resources and options to progress aspirations such as allotments. The proposed fixed term green and open spaces officer post will provide an opportunity to move towards a more planned and proactive approach across all public realm works. Refreshing performance measures and monitoring arrangements will enable increased visibility and oversight of performance and inform options for change.</p>
3	<p><b>Collaboration between teams is not maximised to support environmental quality outcomes:</b> The proposed pride in place group will support collective and coordinated efforts and best use of skills and resources.</p>
4	<p><b>Service and contract performance measures do not maximise opportunity to assess quality and outcomes:</b> Refreshing performance measures and monitoring arrangements will enable increased visibility and oversight of performance and inform options for change.</p>

## 16 Background Papers

16.1 [Melton Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2024-2036](#)

16.2 [Crime and Disorder Annual Scrutiny Report \(September 2024\)](#)

## 17 Appendices

17.1 None