

MELTON ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

1st NOVEMBER 2017

REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

PEST CONTROL SERVICE DISINVESTMENT WITH ASSOCIATED REINVESTMENT OF REMAINING RESOURCE

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek members support for: a) withdrawing the main public pest control service but retaining an in house function for special need council properties and council commercial premises only b) reducing the Pest Control Officers working week from 4 days down to 2 days d) revise the job description from Pest Control Officer to better reflect the revised duties and responsibilities of the new post of Environment and Waste Services Support Assistant

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Members support the withdrawal of the main public pest control service and delegate to the Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods to implement the change after ensuring appropriate alternative provision is in place.**
- 2.2 **Members agree the requested reduction in both the working week of the Pest Control officer post from the current 4 day down to 2 days per week as well as a change in the title and associated core duties and responsibilities of the post to be retitled Environment and Waste Services Support Assistant.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Pest Control Service is one of the few remaining non-statutory services currently provided by the Council
- 3.2 The public demand for this council service has greatly reduced over recent years as the private sector provision has grown along side increased 'Do-It- Yourself' options. Many Councils are now signposting residents to various pest control services, the proposal, if approved by members, will ensure that more than adequate information and signposting is available through the council's website and other communication vehicles.
- 3.3 This report is seeking members support for changing both the core role and length of working week for the current post holder
- 3.4 Should members be minded to support the changes and reductions to the existing post the new post will still include an internal pest control function for council homes as requested by

tenant officers in special need and for the councils public buildings and properties to ensure its statutory legal requirements are met.

In addition, officers will ensure that a suitable alternative provision is provided and clearly accessible through the Council's website and other communication channels.

3.5 During recent years as demand for the pest control service has reduced, spare capacity has been filled with duties and responsibilities that support both the councils waste management and environmental maintenance services

3.6 These increasingly essential range of support duties, which either already includes, albeit in a scaled down form or through this proposal should it be supported will formally include:

- Melton Country Park proactive weekly inspections, covering maintenance issues i.e. cleansing, litter bins, vandalism, graffiti, fly tips, life buoy availability, and access and maintenance inspections. Following the councils insurance broker recommendations a footpath condition inspection schedule has been created that will be developed into a monthly programme.

These inspections will cover all the parks official paths annually, plus inspections of footways across or surrounding council grassed areas in Harby/Hose/Long Clawson and Bottesford. The purpose of these inspections is to minimise and reduce the cost of insurance claims.

- Sewer baiting – intensive 10 day programme
- Trash Screen inspections (screen preventing debris blocking water flow) approx. 10 locations – unblocking obstructions or gathering information for an instruction to EMT or contractor to carry out work.
- Monitoring/Inspecting EMT Grounds work core programme.
- Battery recycling collections from all schools sure start centres/library/village stores/halls.
- Assist with site visits regarding initial and re-inspections as required of abandoned vehicles (increased six fold since 2015) fixing warning notices and taking photographic evidence
- Sand Bag availability and deliveries together with monitoring and reordering of stock
- Inspections in regards to land drainage issues and problems flooding enquiries/initial home visits and site assessments.
- Fire safety checks & audit log, daily & weekly – Snow Hill
- Viewing upon request of Severn Trent underground maps/schematic plans.
- Checks and inspection on Biffa H&S operational requirements, service delivery performance (covert on site and pre-planned depot checks) and vehicle safety checks. These inspections are a requirement of the HSE.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There is no statutory obligation for the council to provide a pest control service. A high number of local authorities' no longer offer this service but in place guide customers to external providers. The service does generate an income, however the income is lower than that required to either consider the service as self sustaining or profitable and in regards to the current commercialisation objectives this service does not offer economic value. There are no other direct policies or corporate implications as a direct result of this report.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As previously mentioned the Pest Control service although receiving an income for the services it provides, it does not make an overall profit. This proposal includes seeking a reduction in the post holder's working week from 4 day down to 2 days.

5.2 The reduced salary requirement for this reduced working week is almost exactly the same as the income reduction from withdrawing the public service, therefore as the table below shows that change alone results in an almost cost neutral change

17/18 Estimate - 0.8 (4 day week)	17/18 Estimate - 0.4 (2 day week)		
Salary			
16,110	8,060		
Pension			
3,860	2,090		
National Insurance			
1,090	0		
<hr/>	<hr/>		
Total cost £21,060	Total cost £10,150	£10,910	Salary Saving
		<hr/>	
		£11,648	Income loss
			Total
		<hr/>	
		-£738	Loss

5.3 Members should note that one of the main benefits and positive element of this proposal is the potential to reduce, mitigate or even nullify insurance claims against the council by establishing and recording defensive regular comprehensive inspection programmes in regards to footpath slips trips and falls (ST&F)

5.4 The councils insurance arrangement carries an excess payment of £5k.for successful claims against it. Excess insurance payments for ST&F paid out to customers in 2016 amounted to £20k in excess payments

5.5 Accordingly if any of those cases could have been defended with records of proactive and

regular inspections, it is not unlikely that those claims may either have been settled at a greatly reduced cost to the council or even not upheld due to the council taking all reasonable steps to prevent such occurrences through regular inspections. Members will therefore understand that his proposal could save considerable sums of settlement or excess payment monies.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 This report seeks the cessation of the public pest control service which is a non statutory service. The intention is to retain an in house pest control function for certain council properties and as there is a legal requirement to proactively manage / prevent pest infestation within council controlled public premises.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 Private sector Pest Control Services are easily and widely available to the Boroughs residents. There are a number of competing companies offering services similar to those currently provided by the council service. The council service does not include any concessionary rates therefore Customers wishing to access our service have to pay in advance and in full. Accordingly by virtue of there being a number of alternate similar service providers available to Borough residents, the withdrawal of the main public element of the pest control service is not expected to have any significant impact or resulting implications as a result of its cessation

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 This report is about changes to an existing service that are expected to increase increasing service economy, efficiency and effectiveness, as such there are no direct equality implications as a result of this report

9.0 RISKS

The risks identifies below are the potential outcomes should this report not receiving member support.

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant		3,4	1	2
	D	Low				
	E	Very Low				
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4
		IMPACT				

Risk No	Risk Description
1	No resource available to establish robust inspection programmes
2	No resource available to check lifebuoy's, trash screens
3	No resource available to support the abandoned vehicle officer
4	No resource available to support waste management related issues i.e. fly tipping inspection , Battery collections , Proactive checks on the H&S measures employed by our waste contractor

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are no direct implications or impacts resulting from, this report as any pest problem increases or decrease that may emerge through climate change can be managed by the significant numbers of private pest controllers. . A number of the proposed changes / new duties and responsibilities may have a positive impact on preventing, identifying , mitigating or reducing environmental issues compounded by climate change

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 No direct consultation has been carried out in regards to the proposed change suggested by this report, however if supported as previously mentioned there is known to be an adequate supply of local alternate private pest control services and the revised duties and responsibilities of a new Waste and Environmental support officer are intended to better ensure safer and stronger local environments. In essence the changes are expected to result in positive improvements and benefits for both the council and the residents it serves.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 Residents of all wards are entitled to access the pest control service so its withdrawal will impact upon all wards. In a similar way the additional duties and responsibilities of the proposed new post is expected to bring environmental benefits to wards throughout the Borough so is expected to potentially benefit all wards

Contact Officer Raman Selvon
Date: 8/9/2017

Appendices : None

Background None
Papers:

Reference : X : Committees\