

15 October 2009

Grounds Maintenance Standards Within the Borough's Parks

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr Barry Sanders

1. Summary of report:

1.1 This report seeks to inform the Community Services Scrutiny Panel of the grounds maintenance standards which apply to the Borough's parks and open spaces managed by Green Spaces.

2. Background papers:

Grounds Maintenance – Service Level agreement between Green Spaces and Street Pride, Green Space Strategy

3. Reason for scrutiny:

- 3.1 The Green Space Service is responsible for the management and development of over 1,262 hectares of public open space including formal parks, recreation grounds, countryside sites, nature reserves and allotment sites. In all the Service holds management responsibility for over 286 individual sites varying considerably in size and character.
- 3.2 In February 09 the direct responsibility for undertaking grounds maintenance operations within the Formal Parks, Recreation grounds and Open Spaces managed by Green Spaces transferred to Street Pride along with the relevant budgets, staff and other operational resources.
- 3.3 A service level agreement has been established between Green Spaces and Street pride which aims to define the relationship, role and responsibilities between the two service areas in the delivery of the grounds maintenance service and includes a number of key areas including:
- Baseline Standards
 - Monitoring and Non-Performance
 - Communications, Correspondence and Customer Liaison
 - Meetings and Stakeholder Engagement
 - Amendments & Variations
 - Events
 - Arboricultural Maintenance
 - Children's Play Areas
 - Call Outs
 - Health & Safety
 - Green Flag Parks

- Walsall Arboretum
 - Supporting the Park Ranger Service
- 3.4 The Service Level Agreement identifies three base line standards of maintenance which will apply to the individual parks and open spaces. These are Green Flag Parks, Premier Parks and Other Parks and Open Spaces. Each of these categories will have differing standards of maintenance applied to them.
- 3.5 At the time of the transfer it was agreed between Green Spaces and Street Pride that specific standards to be achieved within each category would not be initially defined. This would be done 12 months following the transfer allowing a settling in of the realigned resources, the expected learning curve and when the full effect of the efficiencies which included operational staff reductions were realised.
- 3.6 During 2008 Cabinet endorsed the continued programme to achieve Green Flag Award status for the Council's other premier parks as set out in the Council's adopted Green Space Strategy. The assessment considers 8 key criteria which includes:
- A welcoming place
 - Healthy safe and secure
 - Clean and well maintained
 - Sustainability
 - Conservation and heritage
 - Community Involvement
 - Marketing
 - Management
- 3.7 Green Flag status has been achieved at both Palfrey Park and Willenhall Memorial Park and as a condition of the Arboretum HLF Grant Award it is expected that the Arboretum will also achieve this status once the HLF modernisation programme is completed in 2013. All these sites have dedicated gardening staff allocated to them.
- 3.8 The Green Space Strategy identified a number of premier parks and open spaces. The Green Space Service will produce management plans that define standards of maintenance required for each premier park to bring them up to green flag status over the next 15 years. These include:
- Arboretum
 - The Airport Playing Fields
 - Blackwood Park
 - Doe Bank Park
 - George Rose Park
 - Holland Park
 - King George Vth Playing Fields
 - Kings Hill Park
 - Leamore Park
 - Leighswood Park

- Palfrey Park
- Pelsall Common
- Pleck Park
- Reedswood Park
- Willenhall Memorial Park

3.9 All the premier parks are maintained by specific and dedicated mobile teams who are allocated responsibility for the maintenance of individual parks sites ensuring ownership and accountability.

3.10 The remaining areas of open space are maintained by geographically based mobile teams. The four geographical contract areas are as follows:

1. Willenhall and Darlaston
2. Bloxwich, Blakenall and Leamore
3. Pelsall, Walsall Wood, Brownhills, Aldridge, Streetly and Pheasey
4. Walsall, Palfrey, Pleck and Caldmere.

3.11 Each area mobile team maintains Highway, Schools, Parks, Open Spaces, Retained Housing Land and Social Service locations carrying out grass, shrub bed, hedge and sports pitch maintenance.

3.12 Until the baseline standards are defined and adopted, the present grounds maintenance operations and standards will continue to be based around the schedules established and detailed in the MAYRISE management system originally created at the time of Compulsory Competitive Tendering during the late 1980's. Typical maintenance operations and frequency of operations are detailed in Appendix A.

4. Resource and legal considerations:

4.1 The grounds maintenance operations are undertaken entirely from within the existing resources held by Street Pride.

4.2 There are no anticipated legal resource implications in this review

5. Citizen impact:

5.1 Extensive consultation undertaken as part of the Green Space Strategy identified the standards of grounds maintenance as an issue of key concern by local residents and one of the most important areas for improvement.

6. Environmental impact:

6.1 The standards of maintenance achieved or delivered have an impact on residents perceptions and satisfaction with parks and open spaces and local environment. It is an important issue which has a direct impact on their quality of life. Deterioration in standards can lead to an impression of neglect and encourage anti-social behaviour and be a barrier to residents use of parks.

7. Performance management:

7.2 The main risk is that the levels of residents satisfaction with the service, they are only average and the parts of the borough is unattractive to inward investment, this has a effect on the overall Council reputation.

8. Equality Implications:


8.1 Grounds maintenance service effects most sections of the local authority as well as residents and visitors, our continued monitoring of the service has allowed the service to develop and improve in line with the residents requests and move towards a cleaner, greener and safer environment.

9. Consultation:

9.1 Consultation undertaken as part of the Green Space Strategy has identified grounds maintenance as an area of key concern. The Green STAT Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey introduced by Green Spaces will assist in assessing Residents views on standards and influence future delivery of the service. Service Standards for the service have been introduced to assist to inform residents of what to expect and how to contact us. Local Neighbourhood Partnership meetings have allowed residents to raise enquiries / queries within the service and receive feed back. Friends of the Parks Groups take a active part in how individual parks are used and maintained.


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Appendix A

Street Pride Grounds Maintenance Bill Of Quantities Report

Contract No. **GM1 GROUND MAINTENANCE**

Contractor **GRM GROUNDS & STREET CLEANSING**

Programme From **06/04/2009 To 04/04/2010**

Site No	Site Name	Task	Description	Quantity	Unit	To Do
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/DB02B	SHRUB BEDS SPRAY HERBICIDE	275.00	M2	3
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/DB03B	LIGHT FORK SHRUB BEDS	275.00	M2	1
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/DB04B	LEAF CLEAR SHRUB BEDS	275.00	M2	2
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/DB05B	SHRUB BEDS FACE BACK / REMOVE EXCESS GROWTH	275.00	M2	1
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/DB07B	SHRUB BEDS WINTER MAINTENANCE INC PRUNE ETC.	275.00	M2	1
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/DB10B	LITTER PICK SHRUB BEDS 26 TIMES PER ANNUM	275.00	M2	26
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/GM02B	GRASS CUTTING WITH RIDE ON (TRIPLE) MACHINE	7,266.00	M2	14
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/GM03B	GRASS MOWING WITH PEDESTRIAN MACHINE, CUTTINGS NOT COLLECTED INC STRIM AND CLIP	384.00	M2	14
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/GM18B	COLLECTION OF LITTER FROM GRASS AREA DURING WINTER MONTHS 10 x'S	7,046.00	M2	10
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/VC02B	APPLY HERBICIDE TO PATHS, DRIVES AND HARD SURFACES	19.00	M2	3
GLE01276	HONEYBOURNE OPEN SPACE	GR/VC03B	SPRAY FENCE LINES, HEDGES ETC	196.00	M2	3

Site No	Site Name	Task	Description	Quantity	Unit	To Do
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/AB01B	ANNUAL BEDDING REMOVE, DISPOSE, PREPARE & PLANT.	24.00	M2	2
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/AB02B	ANNUAL BEDDING REMOVE & DISPOSE OF LEAVES TWICE	24.00	M2	2
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/AB03B	ANNUAL BEDDING REMOVE & DISPOSE OF LITTER 26 x'S	24.00	M2	26
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/AB04B	ANNUAL BEDDING DEAD HEAD, REMOVE WEED & DISPOSE 4 x'S	24.00	M2	4
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/BU02B	C/R SWEEP/EMPTY BINS CLR LITTER	22.00	M2	52
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/DB02B	SHRUB BEDS SPRAY HERBICIDE	1,533.00	M2	3
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/DB03B	LIGHT FORK SHRUB BEDS	1,533.00	M2	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/DB04B	LEAF CLEAR SHRUB BEDS	1,533.00	M2	2

GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/DB05B	SHRUB BEDS FACE BACK / REMOVE EXCESS GROWTH	1,533.00	M2	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/DB07B	SHRUB BEDS WINTER MAINTENANCE INC PRUNE ETC.	1,533.00	M2	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/DB10B	LITTER PICK SHRUB BEDS 26 TIMES PER ANNUM	1,533.00	M2	26
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ01B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL PAINT & ERECT GOAL POSTS	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ02B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL INSPECT SOCKETS	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ03B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL INITIAL MARK	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ05B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL OVERMARK WEEKLY	1.00	NO	34
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ06B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL DISMANTLE & REMOVE POSTS TO STORE ON SITE	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ07B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL APPLY GRANULAR FERTILISER	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ08B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL SLIT/SOLID TINE	1.00	NO	7
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ09B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL RENOVATE END OF SEASON (NO OF)	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FJ13B	JUNIOR FOOTBALL CHAIN HARROW PTICH	1.00	NO	12
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS01B	SENIOR FOOTBALL PAINT & ERECT GOAL POSTS	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS02B	SENIOR FOOTBALL INSPECT SOCKETS	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS03B	SENIOR FOOTBALL INITIAL MARK PRD 6	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS05B	SENIOR FOOTBALL OVERMARK WEEKLY	1.00	NO	34
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS06B	SENIOR FOOTBALL DISMANTLE & REMOVE POSTS TO STORE ON SITE	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS07B	SENIOR FOOTBALL APPLY GRANULAR FERTILIZER	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS08B	SENIOR FOOTBALL SLIT/SOLID TINE	1.00	NO	7
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS09B	SENIOR FOOTBALL RENOVATE END OF SEASON (NO OF)	1.00	NO	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS17B	SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAIN HARROW PITCHES	1.00	NO	12
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/FS18B	SENIOR FOOTBALL ROLL PITCHES	1.00	NO	12
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM01B	GRASS CUTTING WITH TRACTOR GANG MOWER	37,743.00	M2	14
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM02B	GRASS CUTTING WITH RIDE ON (TRIPLE) MACHINE	4,534.00	M2	14
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM03B	GRASS MOWING WITH PEDESTRIAN MACHINE, CUTTINGS NOT COLLECTED INC STRIM AND CLIP	5,735.00	M2	14
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM08B	PEDESTRIAN COLLECT GENERAL AMENITY AREAS INC CLIP & STRIM	1,708.00	M2	14
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM09M	REAR MOUNT FLAIL ROUGH CUT MONTHLY	7,600.00	M2	7
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM11B	SIDE ARM FLAIL 3 X'S PER ANNUM	250.00	M2	3
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM15B	STRIM AREAS INACCESSABLE TO OTHER MACHINES	6.00	M2	14
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/GM18B	COLLECTION OF LITTER FROM GRASS AREA DURING WINTER MONTHS 10 x'S	56,195.00	M2	10
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/HE01B	HEDGE CUT HAWTHORN PRIVET BEECH	2,488.00	M2	2
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/OA01B	OTHER AREA LITT. BINS/CLEAR LITT.	1,316.00	M2	13
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/OA02B	OTH. AREA PATHS SWEEP INC. LEAVES	1,316.00	M2	13
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/OA03B	OTH. AREA WASH LITT. BINS & SEATS	1,316.00	M2	13
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PA01B	PLAY AREA SWEEP/EMPTY LITTER BINS	264.00	M2	260
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PA02B	PLAY AREA RELEASE TWISTED SWINGS	1.00	NO	260
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PA03B	PLAY AREA INSPECT/REPORT AREA DEFECTS	1.00	NO	260
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PA04B	PARKS FURNITURE INSPECT/REPORT	1.00	NO	52
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PP01B	PRIMARY AREAS LITTER BINS/CLEAR LITTER	219.00	M2	152

GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PP02B	PRIMARY AREAS PATHS SWEEP INC. LEAVES	219.00	M2	152
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/PP03B	PRIMARY AREAS WASH LITTER BINS/SEATING	219.00	M2	13
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/RB05B	AUTUMN PRUNE ROSES, REMOVE ARISINGS	36.00	M2	1
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/SP01B	SECONDARY AREA LITTERBIN/BIN CLEAR	658.00	M2	39
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/SP02B	SECONDARY AREA PATHS SWEEP INC. LEAVES	658.00	M2	13
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/SP03B	SECONDARY AREA WASH LITTERBINS/SEATS	658.00	M2	13
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/VC02B	APPLY HERBICIDE TO PATHS, DRIVES AND HARD SURFACES	439.00	M2	3
GLE01285	KINGSHILL PARK	GR/VC03B	SPRAY FENCE LINES, HEDGES ETC	831.00	M2	3