

Economy Skills Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

9th February 2022

Subject:	2022 Mowing Season – Sandwell MBC
Director:	Alice Davey Director Borough Economy
Contact Officer:	Matthew Huggins, Interim Service Manager, Parks, Grounds, Events & Sandwell Valley

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon 2022 Mowing Season – Sandwell MBC that outlines:
- 1.1.1 The Mowing Season delivery dates for 22/23
- 1.1.2 The resources allocated to the effective delivery of the 22/23 Mowing Season.
- 1.1.3 The plan to monitor the delivery of the Mowing Season through the implementation and use of PSS Live software for 22/23.

2 Context and Key Issues

2.1 Mowing Season – Summary

- The mowing season is an in-house service provided by the Ground's team.
- The mowing season runs from 28th March to 28th October.
- Mowing is split into three groups, with the following outputs (Table 1):

Mowing Type	Description	Outputs	Plots	Sq. Metres
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Amenity Mowing (Cut and Drop)	Mow/Strim Grass Plots – no collection of clippings	Ave: every 4 weeks / min. 7 times per season	2,472	3,704,759
Prestige Mowing – Cut and Drop	Increased Frequency – Mow/Strim Grass Plots – no collection of clippings	Ave: every 2 weeks / min. 14 times per season	77	99,273
Prestige Mowing – Cut and Collected	Increased Frequency – Mow/Strim Grass Plots – clippings collected and disposed	Ave: every 2 weeks / min 14 times per season	121	282,759

2.2 Mowing Season – Resources

- Amenity Mowing’: 8 gangs comprising of 4 staff each.
- Prestige Mowing (no cuttings): 2 ‘gangs’ comprising of 2 staff each.
- Prestige Mowing (cuttings collected): 1 ‘gang’ comprising of 3 staff.
- Total Staff: 39 full time equivalents from 28th March – 28th October.
 - 22 full time staff
 - 17 fixed term seasonal workers

2.3 Mowing Season – Key Issues

- **Expectations:** the resources allocated to the delivery of the outputs in table 1 are fit for purpose for the frequencies / min times per season per plot. The service experiences some additional demand for requests to mow plots outside of these frequencies – i.e. when weather increases the growth time of grass.

Mitigation: the mowing season outputs and planned delivery dates will be made available to elected Members and the public on Sandwell.gov.uk.



- **Equipment breakdowns:** the mowing equipment is an ageing resource, and 2021 saw an increase in the number of breakdowns.

Mitigation: Grounds are working with Fleet to ensure parts are procured in advance to speed up repair turnaround time. A fleet replacement programme to update with new equipment where needed is also in progress.

- **Monitoring:** our current systems for monitoring are 'paper based' and updated on excel. This does not give clear oversight of time taken to complete each site, immediate updates on schedule delivery, or audit trails of quality (pictures).

Mitigation: we will be implementing PSS Live for the start of 2022 mowing season – a performance and tracking system for grounds and parks, which will give real time updates on delivery, performance monitoring on time and quality, and allow the service to use this data for more specific communications to the public on their scheduled mowing for open spaces in their area.

3 Appendices

No Appendices.

4 Background Papers

No background papers.

