

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO AND DECISION OF OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE ON 23 MARCH 2021

### PART A : INFORMATION PAPER

<b>SUBJECT: Annual Review of the Greenspace Management Contract</b>
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<b>DATE:</b> 23 March 2021
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<b>EXTN:</b> 37955
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<b>PORTFOLIO AREA:</b> Neighbourhood Services
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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report provides members of the Overview Select Committee with an annual performance review for the Council's Greenspace Management Contract and will include a presentation from Tivoli Group Ltd, the Council's current contract provider.

This report includes an overview of the scope of operations delivered by Tivoli, how the contract is managed and outlines how Arun District Council and Tivoli have worked in partnership to continue to deliver services during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

##### **Members of the Overview Select Committee are asked to;**

1. Note the information contained within the annual update report for the Council's Greenspace Management Contract.
2. Recognise the significant challenges our parks and greenspaces have experienced in the last 12 months and the extraordinary efforts of front-line Tivoli staff and Tivoli management involved on the Arun contract, who have continued to deliver the best possible service for our residents since the start of the Covid pandemic.
3. Note the ever more critical role that parks & greenspaces have in supporting the health and wellbeing of our communities.

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Following a competitive tender process, Arun District Council awarded its ten-year Greenspace Management Contract (GMC) to ISS Facility Services Landscaping (ISS FSL). The contract commenced on the 1 January 2017.
- 1.2 The contract was novated to a new provider - Tivoli Group Ltd (TGL) whose holding company Amistha Holdings Limited purchased the trade and assets of ISS Facility Services Landscaping in the summer 2018.
- 1.3 The contract is a ten-year contract, with an optional extension of up to 5 years. The annual value of the contract is approximately £1.25 million. The retender delivered a saving to the Council of approximately £250k per annum on the previous contract, therefore contributing to the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

## **2.0 Contract scope**

- 2.1 The GMC covers approximately 250 hectares (*the equivalent of 500 football pitches*) of diverse public open space, spread across approximately 500 sites which range from small garage compounds to large Nature Reserves.
- 2.2 Grounds maintenance operations include but are not limited to; grass mowing, litter picking, bin emptying, hedge trimming, shrub maintenance, bedding plant supply and maintenance, wildflower meadow maintenance, cemeteries maintenance and grave digging.
- 2.3 The contract includes the grounds maintenance, management & marketing of the Council's Outdoor Recreation Service, which includes bookings for and use of sport facilities e.g. football pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts, par 3 golf, adventure golf etc. These services are accessed by approximately 80,000<sup>1</sup> customers annually. These services are currently delivered under the Tivoli 'Lifestyle' brand.
- 2.4 Play area repairs & maintenance plus fortnightly inspections of 80 play areas.

## **3.0 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our parks and greenspaces and the GMC**

- 3.1 National lockdowns followed by the closure of hospitality, gyms and leisure centres put parks in the national spotlight for the first time in decades. Parks became destinations for millions to pursue exercise and socialising. Parks in the Arun District were (like other coastal towns) witnessing significantly higher numbers of visitors than at any other previously known time. The public conscience began to recognise the value parks has on their health and wellbeing
- 3.2 At Arun we quickly predicted that our parks and greenspaces would become even more valuable to our communities and that the maintenance of them should continue as it always had. Staff were not initially furloughed or redeployed elsewhere.
- 3.3 The impact of the pandemic on the GMC at first involved ensuring Covid safe working environments for all staff. Mobile teams were adjusted, more site-based working was undertaken (and continues). Supervisory and management staff worked on rotation at the Ford depot. Whilst Arun and Tivoli agreed that no member of staff should be

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<sup>1</sup> In a normal year

furloughed at the instruction of either party, approximately 10% of the Tivoli were furloughed for shielding or self-isolating purposes.

3.4 As our communities continued to use their parks and greenspaces, more than they ever had before, followed by a boom in 'staycationers', came increased challenges in delivering the GMC;

3.4.1 In 2020 there was a 20% (*with peaks as high as 50% during school holidays*) increase in litter collected overall compared with 2019. 52 35yard skips in total were used to handle the litter collected; enough to fill 13,000 park bins. Using additional bins in priority areas became key in keeping up with demand. However, we were continuing to see lots of discarded litter (including PPE) left on the ground.

3.4.2 We needed to prioritise grass mowing at locations which had the highest impact to ensure enough resource was reserved for litter collection

3.4.3 Contingency planning was regularly adapted as supply chain issues developed which meant on occasion PPE supplies for staff were difficult to obtain early in the pandemic

3.4.4 Keeping up with regularly changing Government guidance was, at times, difficult to implement, for example; play area/skate park/outdoor gym closures, funeral service arrangements, enforcing social distancing messaging, coping with takeaway only hospitality, Outdoor Recreation services, events management etc.

3.4.5 Through the summer months vandalism became an increasing issue and one which often diverted the GMC from delivering core work to resolve

3.4.6 By Autumn wear and tear in some of our parks became more apparent than in previous years

3.4.7 Encouraging compliance of the Covid Regulations in our parks and greenspaces has become increasingly difficult to manage. A significant minority have continued to breach the regulations which has often led to the diversion of resources available to replace signage, locks, fencing etc.

3.5 The Tivoli Lifestyle service (Outdoor Recreation) faced significant challenge at times during 2020 having to either close the service completely or operate in a Covid-safe manner.

3.6 Although there have been plenty of challenges much of our decision making has been the result of networking with other GMCs and other Councils. Engaging with others led to local improvements in service delivery, learning from the experience of others.

3.7 Summarising the efforts of the past 12 months has been a valuable exercise and something which Tivoli have also recognised with the publication of their 'white paper' which they will run through as part of their presentation.

#### **4. Contract management**

4.1. The Council has continued to proactively manage and monitor the performance of the GMC, as follows;

4.2. Regular auditing and site monitoring of performance against contract standards.

4.3. Regular site visits with contract supervisors and site based operational staff to plan and review works.

- 4.4. Operational compliance was regularly reviewed including but not limited to the following; risk assessment, PPE, vehicle and equipment checks, environmental awareness/impact etc.
- 4.5. Weekly operational meetings between the Environmental Services & Strategy Manager/Parks & Cemeteries Manager and Tivoli Contract Manager/Tivoli Regional Manager. These meetings cover staffing updates, GM & Lifestyle operational updates, health & safety updates, machinery updates and contract administration.
  - 4.5.1. Over the past year operating in a 'Covid safe' environment and overcoming the logistical challenges of these restrictions has been the consistent focus at all levels of the client/contractor relationship
- 4.6. Monthly meetings between senior Arun & contractor management.
- 4.7. An annual Health & Safety compliance review of all contract operations and subsequent report, shared with Arun's Corporate Health & Safety Officer.
- 4.8. Many key staff, from both the client and contractor, have been involved with this contract for a considerable period of time. Therefore, experience of the district, the open spaces themselves and an understanding of each organisations respective aims have developed. Almost all Tivoli operatives on the Arun contract plus all of the local Tivoli management team reside in the district, which promotes pride of place in contract delivery.

## **5. Performance Monitoring**

- 5.1. For the purposes of consistency, the impact of the pandemic on the delivery of contractual standards was not taken into consideration when monitoring performance. This is therefore reflected in the scoring which can be seen below.
- 5.2. On occasions throughout 2020 performance monitoring needed to adapt to the Covid-19 national restrictions in place at the time. Arun officers and Tivoli operational staff were not, at any time, put at unnecessary risk in undertaking performance monitoring.
- 5.3. The targets set within the Greenspace Service's Service Delivery Plan (SDP) require that the GMC delivers a prescribed level of performance in delivering operational tasks.
  - 5.3.1. GM Operational tasks include, but are not limited to; grass mowing, litter & leaf collection, hedge, shrub and tree whip maintenance etc. Each task is scored out of 40 using a scoring matrix. An overall percentage score for the inspected site is returned once all applicable operational task scores have been inserted. An average score across all sites returns an overall percentage score for the performance of the contract.
  - 5.3.2. Lifestyle operational tasks include; customer care, signage, health & safety and cleanliness.
- 5.4. Performance monitoring is undertaken by all Greenspace officers and is ongoing throughout the year.
- 5.5. At quarterly intervals the performance monitoring figures for the previous 3 months are officially recorded and then discussed at a quarterly contract meeting.
- 5.6. Once a year (at both this meeting and the Annual Contract Review meeting) the results of the previous 12 months are officially recorded and discussed.

5.7. The minimum contractual performance target is 66%

5.8. Performance to date for 2020/21 is as follows;

<b>Contract package/site typology</b>	<b>Score (April 20 – March 21)</b>
Premier Parks	67.4%
Recreation & Leisure Grounds	66.6%
Amenity Parks and Greenspace	66.7%
Housing Parks and Greenspace	71.2%
Cemeteries and Church Yards	71.5%
<b>OVERALL SCORE FOR GMC</b>	<b>68.7%</b>
<b>OVERALL SCROE FOR LIFESTYLE SERVICE</b>	<b>73.1%</b>

5.9. Performance in 2019/20 (for comparison)

<b>Contract package/site typology</b>	<b>Score (April 19 – Mar 20)</b>
Premier Parks	84.6%
Recreation & Leisure Grounds	71.9%
Amenity Parks and Greenspace	74.3%
Housing Parks and Greenspace	68.9%
Cemeteries and Church Yards	76.5%
<b>OVERALL SCORE FOR GMC</b>	<b>75.2%</b>
<b>OVERALL SCROE FOR LIFESTYLE SERVICE</b>	<b>70.5%</b>

5.10. Whilst the scores in the above table exceed the minimum contractual performance requirements, they are less than the scores achieved in 2019/20. As previously mentioned, the pandemic has not impacted on how sites have been scored. Also, as previously mentioned, litter had been a significant challenge throughout 2020 and this is reflected in the reduced scores shown above.

5.11. Throughout the past 12 months both Tivoli and Arun District Council have developed and strengthened their long-term partnership. Day to day issues which occasionally do arise are often swiftly resolved. We are pleased to confirm that no contractual defaults were issued. Standards were generally maintained to high levels which met expectations and excellent progress has been made over the winter period in terms of pruning and enhancement work.

5.12. The GMC includes undertaking of inspections, repairs and maintenance of the Councils play areas. The element of the contract continues to run efficiently, with two dedicated operatives undertaking various work identified at weekly review meetings with Arun officers. All staff involved in this area of the contract have been fully trained in play area inspection and maintenance and are DBS checked.

## **6. Achievements & Tivoli presentation**

6.1. In 2020 the Council was awarded its 6<sup>th</sup> Green Flag Award for Brookfield Park in Littlehampton. This park joins Hotham Park, Mewsbrook Park, Marine Park Gardens, Old Rectory Gardens and Norfolk Gardens sports site in achieving this coveted award, which recognises best practice in green space management.

6.2. Tivoli will present further successes and an overview of the business as part of a five minute presentation.		
2. <b>PROPOSAL(S):</b> Members to note the contents of the report		
3. <b>OPTIONS:</b> N/A		
4. <b>CONSULTATION:</b> N/A		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5. <b>ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial		✓
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6. <b>IMPLICATIONS:</b> N/A		

7. <b>REASON FOR THE DECISION:</b> N/A
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8. <b>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b> None
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