

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 24TH NOVEMBER 2011

SUBJECT:	PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES MODERNISATION PROJECT - INTEGRATION OF HIGHWAY SERVICES AND OUTLINE DELIVERY PLAN
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR CHRIS MEADEN, LEISURE & CULTURAL SERVICES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Following on from the decision ratified by Cabinet on 3rd November 2011 to not award an external contract for the delivery of parks and countryside services and continue the direct delivery of these services in-house, this report provides Cabinet with an update on progress in integrating Highways Grounds Maintenance Services into the Council, seeks approval for the extension of the existing Highways Arboricultural Maintenance contract with Amenity Tree Care Limited and seeks endorsement for the proposed project management arrangements and Outline Delivery Plan to modernise the service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (1) Note the progress made in integrating Highways Grounds Maintenance Services formerly delivered by Continental Landscapes Limited into the Council;
- (2) Approve the extension of the existing Highways Arboricultural Maintenance Contract with Amenity Tree Care Limited on the same terms and conditions until 31st December 2012 for the reasons stated in section 5.3;
- (3) Note and endorse the proposed project management arrangements and Outline Delivery Plan to modernise the Parks & Countryside Service for spring 2013.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the extension of the existing Highways Arboricultural Maintenance Contract with Amenity Tree Care Limited for the reasons stated in section 5.3 of this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At Cabinet on 22nd September 2011 a resolution was passed to not award a contract for the future delivery of the Council's Parks & Countryside Services but to retain these services in-house to be delivered directly by the Council (Minute 117 refers).
- 4.2 This decision was subsequently subject to 'Call In' for further scrutiny by the Council's Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 20th October 2011 (Minute 41 refers).
- 4.3 On 3rd November 2011 Cabinet resolved to keep to their original decision of 22nd September 2011 and not award a contract and retain these services in-house (Minute 173 refers).

5.0 INTEGRATION OF EXISTING HIGHWAYS CONTRACTS

5.1 Background to Highways Grounds Maintenance and Highways Arboricultural Maintenance Services

- 5.1.1 The highway grounds maintenance and highway tree works are currently delivered via two separate specialist contracts with external contractors.
- 5.1.2 Continental Landscapes Limited undertake the highways grounds maintenance (grass cutting) services (value £1.17 million/annum) and this contract has been running since 2003 and has been previously extended to terminate at the end of January 2012. Advice from Legal Services and Corporate Procurement confirm this contract should not be extended.
- 5.1.3 Amenity Tree Care Limited undertake highway tree surveys and follow up maintenance works (value £0.22 million/annum) and this contract commenced more recently in April 2008 and has an option to extend from the end of January 2012 until the end of December 2012.
- 5.1.4 These services will now be integrated into the Council's Parks & Countryside Service in accordance with the decision by Cabinet on 3rd November 2011 and will be part of a new 'modernised' service to be launched in spring 2013.

5.2 Highways Grounds Maintenance (Continental Landscapes Ltd) – Progress Update

- 5.2.1 Initial discussions have taken place with Continental Landscapes Limited and they have advised that there are 22 FTE permanent and 14 FTE seasonal

employees to which in their view TUPE Regulations apply and should transfer into Council employment on 1st February 2012. Corporate HR are now progressing the transfer of these employees on this basis.

- 5.2.2 In addition to the HR issues, it will be necessary to organise the necessary plant and equipment and depot arrangements for the Council to deliver the Grounds Maintenance Service and a special 'Task and Finish' Group has been established to ensure this work is successfully delivered to meet the 1st February 2012 deadline for service commencement.

5.3 Highways Arboricultural Maintenance (Amenity Tree Care Limited) – Proposed Extension of Existing Contract

- 5.3.1 Initial discussions have also taken place with Amenity Tree Care Limited and they have advised that in their view there are only 2 FTE permanent employees to which TUPE Regulations apply and would transfer to the Council when the service is brought in-house.
- 5.3.2 The work undertaken by Amenity Tree Care Limited is specialist by its nature (eg. specialist arboricultural risk assessments, cyclic surveys) and there is currently a lack of in-house resources to undertake larger tree maintenance schemes. There is also the need to set up appropriate management/ administration systems to enable the Council to successfully deliver the service.
- 5.3.3 Based on these factors, *it is proposed that Cabinet approve the extension of the current contract on the existing terms and conditions from 31st January 2012 until 31st December 2012* to enable the Council to develop its expertise, resource availability and management/ administration systems to ensure this service can be successfully delivered. An extension until 31st December 2012 would tie-in with the proposed launch of the overall 'modernised' service in spring 2013.

6.0 PROPOSED PROJECT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND OUTLINE DELIVERY PLAN TO MODERNISE THE SERVICE BY SPRING 2013

6.1 Proposed Project Management Arrangements

- 6.1.1 The 'Parks & Countryside Service Modernisation' Project is a complex multi-disciplinary project with the purpose of establishing a modern, cost effective and efficient service comparable to that offered by the private sector via the recent procurement exercise by spring 2013.
- 6.1.2 Based on an analysis of the key tasks to achieve the new modernised in-house service, a medium/ long-term project management structure consisting of four 'workstreams' reporting into a corporate Project Board is suggested.
- 6.1.3 In addition, there is an urgent piece of work to integrate the Highways Grounds Maintenance Service into the Council by 31st January 2012 as described in

section 5.2 and a short-term 'task and finish' group is suggested for this time-critical piece of work.

6.1.4 Accordingly, the **proposed project management structure is as shown overleaf.**

6.1.5 Due to the importance of this high-profile project it is suggested that it should be included in the Council's Strategic Change Programme to ensure a robust approach to management/ governance and monitoring progress of delivery.

6.1.6 The Project Board will be chaired by the Deputy Director of Technical Services and will consist of senior representation from all the key corporate disciplines as follows:

- Leisure & Cultural Services
- Human Resources
- Asset Management
- Communications & Engagement
- Legal Services
- Finance
- Procurement

6.1.7 *Cabinet are invited to comment on and are requested to endorse these arrangements.*

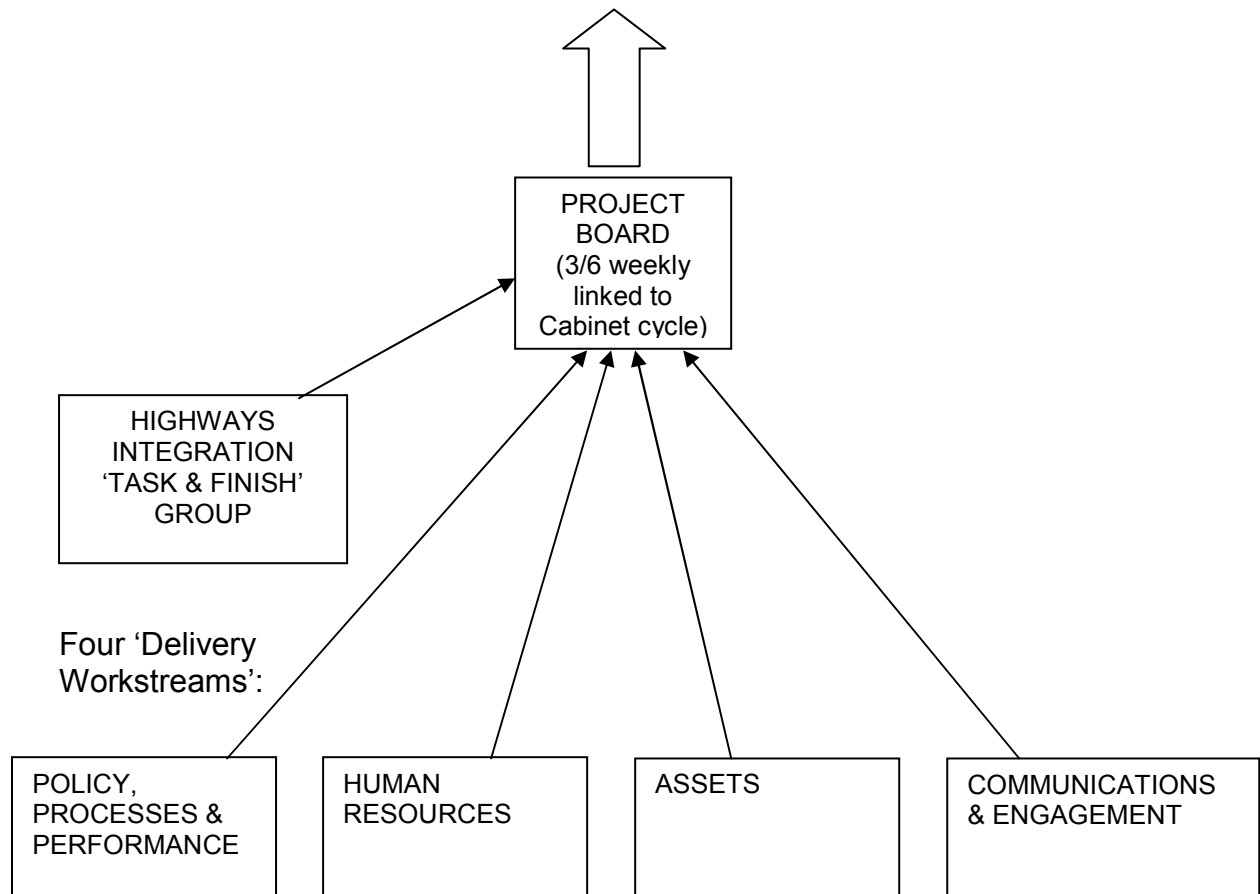
6.2 Proposed Outline Deliver Plan

6.2.1 A draft Outline Delivery Plan to modernise the Parks & Countryside Service by spring 2013 based on the four suggested Delivery Workstreams is set out in the **Appendix** to this report.

6.2.1 *Cabinet are invited to comment on and are requested to endorse this draft Outline Delivery Plan.*

Proposed Project Management Structure

CABINET/ STRATEGIC CHANGE PROGRAMME BOARD



7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Risk management will be an important function of the proposed Project Board and overall project management arrangements as described in section 6.0 of this report.

8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 The alternative option to extending the existing Highways Arboricultural Maintenance Contract with Amenity Tree Care Limited would be to bring this service back into the Council for 1st February 2012 however this has been rejected based on the factors and associated risks highlighted in section 5.3 of this report.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 Consultation and Engagement is one of four key workstreams for the Modernisation Project as set out in section 6.0 of this report.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

10.1 An important objective of the Modernised Service will be to facilitate the development of relationships with the community and voluntary sector.

11.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Financial Implications

11.1.1 It is proposed that the Policy, Processes and Performance Workstream will carry out a review of Parks & Countryside Service budgets and realign them to the new service/ performance monitoring areas under the new Modernised Service.

11.2 Human Resource Implications

11.2.1 As part of the integration of highways into the Council, the workforce responsible for delivering the work covered by the existing Highway Grounds Maintenance and Highway Arboricultural Maintenance Contracts have the right to transfer into Council employment under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment) Regulations.

11.2.2 Continental Landscapes Limited have advised that there are 22 FTE permanent and 14 FTE seasonal employees to which in their view TUPE Regulations apply and should transfer to the Council on 1st February 2012.

11.2.3 Amenity Tree Care Limited have advised that in their view there are 2 FTE permanent employees to which in their view TUPE Regulations apply and will transfer to the Council on 1st January 2013 if the existing contract is extended.

11.2.4 Under the project management arrangements for the Parks & Countryside Service Modernisation Project it is proposed that there will be a dedicated Human Resources Workstream to deal with all human resource-related aspects of the project, in particular discussions with Trade Unions and the workforce.

11.3 Asset Management Implications

11.3.1 Under the project management arrangements for the Parks & Countryside Service Modernisation Project it is proposed that there will be a dedicated Assets Workstream to deal with all issues relating to plant and equipment, vehicles and depot arrangements for the new 'modernised' service.

12.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Legal Services are a key discipline in the proposed project management arrangements for the new project as described in section 6.0 of this report.

12.2 Legal considerations have been taken into account in determining options for integrating highway services back into the Council as described in section 5.0 of this report.

13.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

13.1 A detailed Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the project to modernise the Parks & Countryside Service.

14.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Environmental Sustainability is an important objective for the Modernised Service.

15.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Community safety in parks is an important objective for the Modernised Service.

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APPENDICES

Parks & Countryside Services Modernisation Project – Draft Outline Delivery Plan

REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – PACSPE Contract Award	22nd September 2011
Sustainable Communities O&S Committee – PACSPE Contract Award Call In	20th October 2011
Cabinet – PACSPE Contract Award (following Call In)	3rd November 2011

PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES MODERNISATION PROJECT – OUTLINE DELIVERY PLAN (DECEMBER 2011 TO MARCH 2013)

A. POLICY, PROCESSES AND PERFORMANCE WORKSTREAM

Key Outcome	Task	Duration
Create Excellent Business Processes	• Establish existing 'as is' business processes	Dec 11 – April 12
	• Review and redesign business processes	Jan 12 – June 12
	• Procure necessary ICT	Jun 12 – Dec 12
	• Provide necessary training and development	Nov 12 – Feb 13
	• Implement 'to be' business processes	Nov 12 – Feb 13
Establish Ten Year Strategic Plan and Policy Framework	• Review existing policies	Dec 11 – Mar 12
	• Develop new Ten Year Strategic Plan and Policy Framework including Annual Business Plan	Jan 12 – June 12
	• Implement Annual Business Plan	Feb 13 onwards
Establish New Performance Standards and Monitoring Regime	• Baseline existing performance standards	Dec 11 – June 12
	• Establish Partnership Performance Advisory Board (PPAB)	Jun 12 – July 12
	• Agree and implement new performance standards (KPIs, CPIs)	July 12 – Nov 12
	• Review and realign budgets to service/ performance areas	Apr 12 – Nov 12

B. HUMAN RESOURCES WORKSTREAM

Key Outcome	Task	Duration
Establish New Management Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and redesign management structure 	Dec 11 – Feb 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and implement revised management structure 	Jan 12 – Jun 12
Establish New Operational Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing operational structure including Terms and Conditions 	Dec 11 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and implement revised operational structure 	Jun 12 – Nov 12
Develop and Implement Training & Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Skills Gap Analysis 	Dec 11 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Training and Development Plan including Competency Framework 	Apr 12 – Oct 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Training and Development Plan 	Nov 12 – Feb 13

C. ASSETS WORKSTREAM

Key Outcome	Task	Duration
Develop and Implement Plant & Equipment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing Plant and Equipment 	Dec 11 – Feb 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Plant and Equipment requirements 	Dec 11 – May 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and agree funding and procurement strategy 	May 12 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Plant and Equipment Plan 	June 12 – Dec 12
Develop and Implement Buildings and Depots Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing Buildings and Depots 	Dec 11 – Feb 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Building and Depot requirements 	Dec 12 – May 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and agree investment strategy 	May 12 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Buildings and Depots Plan 	Jun 12 – Dec 12
Develop and Implement Tree Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and develop tree management procedures 	Jan 12 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and implement new Tree Management Plan 	Jun 12 – Feb 13

D. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Key Outcome	Task	Duration
Develop and Implement Communications & Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement Communications and Engagement Plan 	Dec 11 – Feb 13
Develop and Implement Regular Public Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and agree new survey format 	Dec 11 – Jan 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new Public Surveys 	Jan 12 – Jun 12
Develop and Implement Branding and Marketing Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and agree Branding Guidelines 	Jan 12 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and agree Marketing Strategy 	Jan 12 – Jun 12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Branding and Marketing Plan 	Nov 12 – Feb 13