

To: INFRASTRUCTURE, LAND AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY BOARD

On: 24 MARCH 2021

Report by: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Heading: Grass Cutting Service 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks to update the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board on the grass cutting service for 2021 and the changed approach to service delivery across Renfrewshire which will commence on Monday 5th April 2021.
- 1.2 The Council's green space has a key role to play in supporting the quality of Renfrewshire as a place for communities, residents and businesses and of increasing weight, its role in supporting the Council's ambitions to tackle climate change
- 1.3 The Council's grass cutting service had been suspended as the country entered lockdown in March 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic and was only able to restart under the Government's "Routemap" on the 1st June. The re- introduction of grass cutting on a phased basis, was delivered on a community by community basis around Renfrewshire. This largely geographical approach during COVID 19 grass recovery provided an insight and the direction for a review in how grass cutting was delivered across Renfrewshire and shaped the move to a fully geographical approach.
- 1.4 During this time we also listened to the various views across communities in relation to both grass cutting frequencies, areas maintained and the wider biodiversity agenda.
- 1.5 Moving into the 2021 grass cutting season, it is proposed that the delivery of grass cutting services changes to a single 14-day cyclic schedule across Renfrewshire on a community by community basis.

- 1.6 This 14-day schedule will allow us to cut grass within each community on a given day and by providing the information on the councils website, communities will be able to view when the grass in their area is expected to be cut.
- 1.7 The increased frequency of grass cutting will coincide with a significant investment in modern grass cutting machinery to complement the service change.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board:

- 2.1 Approve changes to 2021 grass cutting service as set out in the paper, moving to a geographical based model where grass will be maintained through a single programme of cyclic maintenance.
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3 Background

- 3.1 Currently the grass cutting services are delivered through both local area and activity-based teams delivering different programmes of grass cutting activities. This approach results in various teams visiting the same area at multiple periods of time to perform maintenance activity.
- 3.2 This current approach to delivering this service can cause confusion with residents and communities with grass being cut within communities at differing times and frequencies.

4. New Approach to Service Delivery

- 4.1 The proposed approach will:
- Bring together all grass cutting services,
 - Rationalise the differing frequencies to a single 14-day model
 - Fully deliver grass cutting on a geographical basis.
 - Sports turf will continue to be maintained at a different frequency, commensurate with the sporting activities and the time of year.
- 4.2 The new season will commence on 5 April 2021, Appendix 1 of this report provides an area by area allocation of days that communities will have their grass cut, with Appendix 2 detailing a map.
- 4.3 Additional inspection and monitoring will be undertaken to ensure that all the areas are being maintained to a standard and that the grass cutting schedule is adhered to as closely as possible. Weather conditions will always be a factor that will influence the speed at which grass can be cut and communications will seek to support this on occasions when grass cutting may temporarily fall behind due to adverse weather.

The service has contingency plans to ensure that operations do not fall behind, to maintain the 14-day cyclic schedule.

- 4.5 This new approach to service delivery will be supported by a communication campaign that will advise communities and elected members of when grass within their community is scheduled to be maintained. This will be done predominately through the Council's digital channels and community groups.
- 4.6 A customer application which enables residents to enter their post code to identify their location that will show the area they fall into and when next scheduled to be maintained has been developed, details will be circulated with communications.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The investment in new equipment will be met from the Council's Fleet Asset capital funding. The changes to service will be met from existing resources and from additional income from the housing revenue account.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – Staff and trade unions have been engaged with the plan for the service changes commencing in April with additional seasonal staff employed to support the new service programme.
3. **Community Planning** – None
4. **Legal** - None.
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** – None
11. **Privacy Impact** – None

12. Cosla Policy Position – None

13. Climate Risk – The Council's green space has a key role to play in supporting the delivery of biodiversity improvements and the Council's ambitious actions to tackle climate change. The revised approach to grass cutting will reduce duplication in visits and contribute to this agenda.

List of Background Papers - None

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Appendix 1

StreetScene – 2021 Grass Cutting - Operating Model

WEEK 1	
Monday	Renfrew – Arkleston, Moorpark, Newmains, Dean Park, Town Centre
Tuesday	Renfrew North – Blythswood, Kirklandneuk; Inchinnan; Bishopton
Wednesday	Erskine; Langbank; Houston; Crosslee; Craigends
Thursday	Bridge of Weir; Kilbarchan; Brookfield; Howwood; Lochwinnoch
Friday	Johnstone West – Corseford, Spateston, Milliken Park, Cartside, Quarellton, Cochrane Castle
Saturday	Johnstone – Johnstone Castle, Town Centre, Johnstone East; Elderslie
Sunday	Linwood; Ferguslie Park
WEEK 2	
Monday	Paisley South – Foxbar
Tuesday	Paisley Town Centre; Paisley South – Brediland, Meikleriggs, Lounsdale
Wednesday	Paisley South – Glenburn
Thursday	Paisley South East – Castlehead, Hunterhill, Todholm, Lochfield, Charleston
Friday	Paisley East – Dykebar, Hawkhead, Seedhill, Williamsburgh, Whitehaugh, Ralston
Saturday	Paisley North – Gallowhill, Shortroods
Sunday	Paisley – West End

Appendix 2

