



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 22 March 2016	Matter for Information
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Title: Operations and Facilities Services Update

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1. Introduction

This report covers progress and developments within the Operations and Facilities Services setting out achievements and work in progress since January 2016 when activity was last reported.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.** That Members note the information provided within the report.
- 2.2.** That Members decide if additional verge cutting in 2016/17 is required as set out at paragraph 6 of this report.
- 2.3.** That Members approve the Draft Tree Strategy to go out to public consultation.

3. Capital Projects 2015/16

- Ervins Lock footbridge – A site meeting was held on 18th February with William Saunders and Danaher and Walsh who are currently working with Leicester City Council on installation of a footbridge across the canal in the city. William Saunders has agreed to put forward a proposal to Oadby and Wigston on the Ervins Lock footbridge based on their experience. This report is awaited but will include the process for taking the project forward, the likely budget requirements and advice on how we might deal with the on-going liabilities for maintenance and repairs.
- Memorial Safety - on-going. Cemetery staffs continue to carry out remedial work to memorials on an as required basis with stonemasons carrying out work on larger more complex memorials if required.
- Wigston Cemetery Boundary Wall repairs – work to be carried out in March depending on weather.

4. Forum Projects:

- Ellis Park Drinking Fountain – as agreed with Chair of Oadby Forum this work will be carried out in July 2016.
- Bus shelters – three shelters (for Paddock Street, Horsewell Lane and Oadby Road) have been delivered and are awaiting installation. Bus shelter licences have been applied for and the outcome is awaited from Leicestershire County Council. LCC also require applications for temporary excavations in the highway which have also been submitted. Installation cannot take place until these approvals have been received.
- Chicken Alley – quote accepted and work to be carried out during late spring

school holiday (start date 31st May). The alley will need to be closed during the works and advance notice will be distributed to local residents.

5. Other Facilities Work

- Sheila Mitchell Pavilion – quotes are awaited for installation of CCTV, re-lining the multi use games area, and repairs to the water fountain. Repairs to the canopy roof have been approved as a capital bid for 2016-17 and work should start on this in early April.
- Freer Centre – a protective covering has been installed on the low level walls to the main hall and meeting room to prevent damage by users and to save on repairs. The walls have been re-painted to door height and a high level deep clean has been completed.
- New notice boards have been installed at Wigston Road and Aylestone Lane allotments.
- Slabs have been levelled around Ellis Park bowls green

5. Borough Gateway Signage:

- A report was submitted to Greening the Borough Working Group relating to the 'Welcome' signs at the entry points into the Borough. The existing 'Welcome' signs are in need of refurbishment and it has been suggested that this forms part of a sponsorship scheme. Sponsorship could also extend to include planting and encouraging 'local distinctiveness' by incorporating sculpture or artwork at specific locations (for example golf clubs by the entry sign on the A6 outside of Glen Gorse Golf Club). The Working Group requested an action plan and further report for their next meeting which should look at refreshing the oldest signs first and how sponsorship could be secured. It was generally agreed that, if possible, excessive planting should be avoided as this is susceptible to vandalism and can detract from the sign itself.

6. Grounds Maintenance

Grass Verges

For 2016/17, Leicestershire County Council have now agreed to fund 6 cuts contracted to Blaby District Council. As in last year, Blaby will carry out a further verge cut in 1206/17 at 50% of the cost (i.e. £2,350.). Budgetary provision will need to be made Members agree to this.

Works that have taken place over the past months are summarised below:-

Peace Memorial Park, Wigston

- Planting of 3 new Cherry Trees (2 either side of tennis court and 1 next to the memorial seat;
- Revamp of the Sensory Garden, with new planting;
- Hawthorn whips planted as fence line; and
- Application submitted for Green Flag status.

St Peters Path, Oadby

- Longstanding overgrown area alongside Marriott House now cleared; and
- Whips planted for hedge line.

Portland Walk, Oadby

- Pride of the Borough volunteers took on a piece of land to develop for planting from LCC, the team assisted with the new planting area by carrying out the initial rotivation and weed spraying.

Bull Head Street, Wigston

- Slabs removed at area of open space as continually broken up by cars driving over, trip hazard. Slabs removed, replaced with topsoil for planting/turfing. The area has been flagged up to the Pride of the Borough as a potential area for Food Trail Project.

Pride of the Borough/Take Pride Campaign

- Team supply Pride of the Borough Volunteers with litter pickers and bags and direct to hotspot areas . Litter picks by volunteers carried out 2-3 times per annum

7. Draft Tree Strategy

To meet the aims of the Council's Greening of the Borough Strategy, in particular Aims 6 and 11 as set out below, a Tree Strategy has been drafted.

Aim 6 – to increase the number of trees on public property, and to seek to reverse the trend of removing trees from gardens which has had a detrimental effect on the appearance and ecology of many streets.

Aim 11 – To educate the residents, employees, organisations and businesses of the borough on environmental issues to encourage changes in behaviour.

It is not intended to provide a specific planning led policy document. Almost all aspects of planning control over the protection or loss of trees are the subject of legislation or Central Government policy and, in terms of process or procedure it would be hard to improve upon these. The emerging document is therefore aspirational and focussed upon enhancing the care and regard for otherwise protected trees and woodlands more generally. However, if the aspirations of the document are to carry any "weight" as material planning considerations in future then its text must be the subject of a local public consultation.

A draft of this strategy was presented to the Greening of the Borough Working Group, some minor suggestions were made and amendments are being made by the external consultant, the updated draft will be circulated prior to 22 March. Members are requested to approve the draft strategy to go out for public consultation

The Council now has a dedicated Tree Officer in post.

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Implications	
Financial (CR)	No significant implications.
Legal (AC)	No significant implications.
Risk (AC)	No significant implications.
Equalities (AC)	No significant implications.