

<b>Key Decision Required</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>In the Forward Plan</b>	<b>No</b>
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**CABINET**

**8 NOVEMBER 2019**

**REFERENCE REPORT FROM RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
OF 29 JULY 2019**

**A.1 GROUND MAINTENANCE (INCLUDING WEED SPRAYING) IN TENDRING**  
(Report prepared by Ian Ford, Richard Barrett, Ian Taylor & Damian Williams)

**BACKGROUND**

At the meeting of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 July 2019 (Minute 16 refers) the Committee had before it a report of the Head of Public Realm – A.3 – Ground Maintenance (Including Weed Spraying) in Tendring, which presented to the Committee the Council’s procedure on Ground Maintenance (Including Weed Spraying).

The Council’s Head of Public Realm and the Open Space and Transport Manager attended that meeting to present the report to the Committee and to answer any questions Members raised.

The advantages generally for the District, its residents and visitors of key gateway sites and routes being well maintained was a focus for discussion at the Committee. Those sites included the vicinity of Railway Stations.

The RSOS Committee was advised that many areas of land adjacent to the highway were the responsibility of the Highways Agency, others were directly the responsibility of the Essex County Council and others were the responsibility of the Council under its agreement with the County Council. In broad terms, of the £100,000 received from Essex County Council and referenced in the report, £20,000 related to highway weed spraying, £40,000 for highway verge maintenance and £40,000 to highway tree maintenance.

The Committee also considered the role of a range of Parish and Town Councils in the area who undertook measures to maintain open spaces.

The Committee commended the Officers for their report.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

Having considered and discussed the report it was:-

**RESOLVED** that the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee **RECOMMENDS TO CABINET** that:

- £50,000 should be available for works to be carried out in the Tendring District's area to improve the look of the area for visitors and improve the quality of life for residents; and
- Discussions be held with Town and Parish Councils in the District about opportunities to best achieve the stated aims.

Cabinet is now asked to consider the recommendations of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

##### **Comments**

The Environment and Public Space Portfolio Holder thanks the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its recommendations and comments as follows:-

*"I thank the Committee for the points that they raise, which are timely, given similar work is already underway within the Council.*

*In terms of improving the look of the area that the Committee refers to, additional funding has already been identified for 4 additional posts – 2 within Public Realm and 2 within Building and Engineering services. The activities of these roles will include grass verge and tree maintenance, additional planting and landscaping opportunities and weed control as well as the ability to join up to create a hit team able to respond quickly to issues relating to public realm in sensitive areas. Further to this, the additional posts will provide a welcome extra resource to the public realm team and its overall work. The additional posts within the Engineering Service will create team that will be responsible for improving and maintaining the cleanliness of a number of Town Centres supporting the recently purchased steam cleaning machine. This team will also be responsible for minor repairs to pavements and street furniture and will look to respond quickly to remedy repair issues as they arise.*

*As part of developing these enhanced services, it would seem sensible to talk to Town and Parish Councils to achieve the required aims.*

*The Committee's comments also overlap to some extent with the additional £50k match funding contribution proposed within Appendix H of the Financial Performance Update report elsewhere on today's agenda. This should lever in an additional*

*contribution of £100k from ECC to support highways improvement works which should also make a positive contribution to the overall look of the area.*

*Given that the 4 additional posts have only recently been agreed, improvements will not be visible until the associated officer restructures have been fully implemented. However once the officers are in place we should see some really positive changes which hopefully addresses the point raised by the Committee.”*

**Recommendation to Cabinet**

That Cabinet notes the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s recommendations and endorses the response of the Environment and Public Space Portfolio Holder thereto.