

**The Highland Council**  
**City of Inverness Area Committee**  
**10 September 2015**

Agenda Item	12
Report No	CIA/42/15

**Grounds Maintenance Performance Monitoring Report – Mid Season Update**

**Report by Director of Community Services**

**Summary**

This report details performance management information of the Grounds Maintenance Services from April to June 2015.

Members are invited to note the management actions taken to deliver contracted and SLA grounds maintenance operations.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Council's Scheme of Delegation to City/Area Committees gives the City of Inverness Area Committee the power:

“to approve local levels of service for grounds maintenance within the strategy and budget allocated by Community Services Committee.”

1.2 Community Services is responsible for a wide range of horticultural related activities, including the maintenance of grass, flower and shrub beds, pruning vegetation and trees, weedkilling in public open spaces, sports areas, burial grounds and play areas.

1.3 This report details the recorded performance from April to June 2015 and provides feedback of actions taken to manage the service during the period.

**2. Maintenance Arrangements**

2.1 Inverness City and rural Inverness-shire grass cutting operations are predominantly delivered by ISS. There are though a few notable exceptions; High use/high profile locations such as Castle Banks, sports facilities and operational city burial grounds, village officer work, sites adjacent to DLO depots and community challenge bids such as Fort Augustus.

2.2 The ISS contract was awarded in April 2011. Fort Augustus Community Challenge, took over grass cutting and other SLA works within Fort Augustus October 2013. For the 2015 summer season ISS took over maintenance of bowling greens in Drumnadrochit and Inverness.

2.3 The DLO is responsible for all non-contracted grass cutting and maintenance of open space assets listed in 1.2 above.

### 3. Contract Supervision & Performance

- 3.1. The basis for all SLA or contract inspections is to determine if the site management, including contracted services, is sufficient to maintain the service standard of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and contracted works.
- 3.2. The first point of contact for all operational issues, customer or member enquiries/complaints and service requests is the respective Community Works Officer, and then escalated to the Assistant Area Manager, where no satisfactory outcome or response is proved. The DLO undertakes initial assessment of works delivered by in-house or contracted service delivery teams.
- 3.3. The role of monitoring and validation of all works has been assigned to Community Services contracts team consisting of a Performance Coordinator and two Contract Supervisors. They undertake planned, focused and reactionary inspections; covering all grounds maintenance disciplines. Re-inspections are undertaken following the issue of a Breached Standard notice.
- 3.4. Where performance or inspection failure is recorded, a breached standards, (informal, remedial or default), notice is issued to the service provider, whether internal (DLO) or external contractor.
- 3.5. Failure to return the site to the required standard within the notice period results in an escalation of the original notice issued.
- 3.6. A follow up inspection will be made on or after the notified completion date and if there has been insufficient improvement then a Default Notice will be issued to the DLO manager or the contractor respectively.
- 3.7. For the grass cutting activities and other grounds maintenance work the number of inspections and resulting breached standard notices issued to the contractor and in-house DLO during April to June 2015 are shown below:

<b>Grounds Maintenance Performance Report Inverness-shire All tasks - All service providers</b>					<b>Wards 13 to 18 + 20</b>
<b>Table 30</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring</b>		<b>Breached Standard Notices</b>		
<b>April 2015 - Mar 2016</b>	<b>Validation Inspections</b>	<b>Pass Rate</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>No. complete d within Notice Period</b>	<b>% complete d within Notice Period</b>
April	57	74%	15	11	73%
May	131	43%	74	48	65%
June	146	62%	54	37	69%
<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67%</b>

3.8 Overall 67% of all breached standards were rectified within the notice period. Compared with the maintained area of 2.987 million square metres and the 42,203 annual tasks undertaken, the number of breached standards is low.

#### **4. Management Summary and Actions**

4.1 The monitoring and arrangements for recording performance is migrating to the area teams who will work closely with the Community Service Contracts team over the remainder of the growing season to ensure consistency.

4.2 Members will note limited formal contract monitoring data for retained DLO works. Unfortunately conflicting service priorities has resulted in a greater reliance on customer reports through the CRM Lagan system to alert the service to any quality concerns. This has been a relatively successful approach; however, discussions are underway on how the existing arrangements can be enhanced to provide a more comprehensive recording mechanism.

#### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to:-

- (i) scrutinise the performance management and remedial action information provided on the grounds maintenance service set out in this report.
  
- (ii) note the management action taken to address the performance issues identified and agree to review required service standards at future Ward Business meetings.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 25th August 2015

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## Appendix A - Grass Cutting Maintained Areas and Annual Tasks

<b>INVERNESS</b>						
<b>Area Maintained</b>		<b>Square Metres</b>	<b>Contracted</b>		<b>In House</b>	
	Grass	2,976,364	2,376,487	80%	599,877	20%
	Planted	4,025	0	0%	4,025	100%
	Hard landscape	7,339	0	0%	7,339	100%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,987,728</b>	<b>2,376,487</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>611,241</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Forecast Tasks Annually</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Contracted</b>		<b>In House</b>	
Grass	Growing Season	20266	16396	81%	3870	19%
	Dormant Season	3050	0	0%	3050	100%
Planted	Growing Season	2882	0	0%	2882	100%
	Dormant Season	2284	0	0%	2284	100%
Hard landscape	Growing Season	8247	122	1.5%	8369	98.5%
	Dormant Season	5474	0	0%	5474	100%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42203</b>	<b>16518</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>25929</b>	<b>61%</b>

## Appendix B - Grass Cutting Amenity Standards

<b>Grass Type</b>	<b>Minimum Height of Grass cutting)</b> (after	<b>Maximum Height of Grass</b> (prior to cutting)	<b>Evident Clippings</b> <b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Action if Excessive Clippings</b>
<b>Lawn</b>	<b>15mm</b>	<b>25mm</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>N/A - Collected at Each Cut</b>
<b>High Amenity</b>	<b>25mm</b>	<b>60mm</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Remove</b>
<b>General Amenity</b>	<b>35mm</b>	<b>100mm</b>	<b>Some, Evenly</b> <b>Dispersed</b>	<b>Spread thinly or Remove</b>
<b>Low Amenity</b>	<b>75mm</b>	<b>150mm</b>	<b>Moderate, Dispersed</b>	<b>Spread</b>
<b>Rough or Verge</b>	<b>100mm</b>	<b>250mm</b>	<b>Significant, Scattered</b>	<b>N/A – Not an Amenity Grade</b>