



Environment Scrutiny Committee

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East Herts Grounds Maintenance Contract – Contract Review 2012

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Purpose of the Presentation

- Background to the Review
- What the Grounds Maintenance Contract covers
- Evidence
- Future objectives and standards
- Procurement decision

Background to the Contract

- Let in April 2007 for 6 years, 9 months with possible extension for up to a further 7 years
- Awarded to John O'Connor (GM) Ltd
- Review required after year 5
- Opportunity to review performance and decide whether to extend or re-tender

What the contract includes

- Parks and Open Spaces
- Highways
- Riversmead Housing Association
- Some town and parish land

What the contract includes

- EHC - Parks
- Grass cutting
 - - Fine grass (cut and collect)
 - - Urban – 80mm
 - - Rural - 150mm
 - - Conservation or rough cut – once or twice a year.
- Shrubs - High Care (Ornamental) or Standard Care (Standard) beds
- Hedges
- Woodland maintenance and tree canopy lifting
- Sports pitch maintenance
- Play area inspection and maintenance
- General infrastructure (gates, fences, 'furniture' etc.)
- Litter and dog bin emptying
- Car park sweeping
- Allotments
- Sponsored roundabouts

What the contract includes

- Highways Verges under contract to HCC
- Grass cutting
 - - Urban – performance 80mm
 - - Rural - performance 150mm
 - - Swathe cut – twice per year
- Visibility Cut (Sight lines) – 150mm
- Hedges on highway
- Maintain access along some some adopted footpaths
- Shrub bed weeding / pruning
- All roads except A roads and the B1000

What the contract includes

- Riversmead Housing Association
- Grass, shrub and hedge maintenance of specified housing estates
- Fortnightly “high care” visits to sheltered housing
- Spraying of some hard surface areas
- Ditches and watercourses
- Provisional rate to de-ice footpaths

What the Contract doesn't include

- Tree health and safety inspections and maintenance
- Repairs and replacement infrastructure (e.g. fences, steps, paths)
- Sports pitch bookings
- Closed churchyards
- Enclosed gardens around EHC leased buildings
- Highway pavement weed spraying
- Control of Japanese Knotweed

EHC Contract Standards- Grass

TYPE	CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	PERIOD	STANDARD
C	Park Grassland	Usually large open spaces. Usually cut with gang mowers in the main. Includes football pitches.	1 st Apr - 31 st Oct 1 st Nov – 31 st Mar	Minimum height - 25mm Maximum height - 75mm Minimum height - 50mm Maximum height - 75mm
E	General Amenity Grass	Generally amenity land and open spaces, and small parks, mainly in urban areas. Usually cut with ride on rotary or cylinder mowers.	All Year	Minimum height - 25mm Maximum height - 80mm
B	Box Mowing High Amenity Grass	High Amenity Parks at Hertford Castle and Bishop's Stortford Castle Grounds. Usually cut with a rotary or cylinder mower with collection box	1 st Apr - 31 st Oct 1 st Nov – 31 st Mar	Minimum height 12mm Maximum height - 25mm Minimum height - 20mm Maximum height - 35mm
I	Conservation Cut (Meadow Grass)	Cut and collect and dispose of arisings on certain park areas with aim of keeping nutrient levels low and help disperse seeds to encourage wild flowers	Twice per year March and August or July and September as instructed	Height after cutting - 75mm
J	Rough Grass	Cut only on certain park areas to maintain a 'naturalised' appearance	Twice per year March and August	Height after cutting – 75mm
F	Rural Grass Cut	Grass cutting of land owned by East Hertfordshire District Council – mainly roadside verges in rural areas. Mainly cut with ride-on cylinder or rotary mowers but may require tractor and side arm or strimming in some locations.	All Year	Min – 50mm Max – 150mm

EHC Shrubs

- Shrub beds - High Care / Standard Care
- All shrub beds are pruned once per year.
- Litter is collected during all visits.
- Site Manuals – pruning at the correct time
- Dead shrubs are reported and removed.
- Replacement shrubs must be guaranteed for 18 months
- Beds must be 95%

EHC Hedges

- Hedges cut twice a year.
- Avoid programming works through the nesting season.
- Timed to prevent encroachment across footpaths.
- All litter and arisings is removed from the hedge base on the same day as pruning.
- Chemicals are used to control weeds in hedge bases and rogue species such as Elder, Bramble and Ash should be removed completely.

HHC Contract Standards- Grass

CLASSIFICATION	DESCRIPTION	PERIOD	STANDARD
Urban Highway Verge Mowing	Grass cutting of land owned by Hertfordshire Highways – mainly roadside verges in urban areas, but includes some plots in rural areas.	All Year	At all times: Minimum height 25mm Maximum height 80mm
Rural Highway Verge Mowing	Grass cutting of land owned by Hertfordshire Highways – mainly roadside verges in rural areas. Mainly cut with ride-on cylinder or rotary mowers but requires tractor and side arm or strimming in some locations.	All Year	At all times: Minimum height 50mm Maximum height 150mm
Rural Visibility Cut	Grass cutting at highway junctions and other locations to ensure highway safety. Generally in rural areas	All Year	At all times: Minimum height 50mm Maximum height 150mm
Swathe Cut	'Rough' cut of all other rural highway verges to ensure highway safety	2 cuts per annum	Height after cutting Minimum – 50mm Maximum – 100mm

HCC standards summary

- Shrub maintenance carried at visits every three months
- An annual remedial prune of all shrubs is included but where 'sight lines' may be affected minimum prune heights apply
- HCC grass cutting priority is road safety
- EHC (and residents) priority is visual amenity
- 'Topped up' to EHC standard for consistency and amenity

Riversmead standards summary

- The Council's housing stock was previously transferred to two housing associations
- Riversmead HA continued to buy in to EHC contract (economies of scale)
- Specification same as EHC, but with some 'high care' sites
- Housing Officers monitor standards









Evidence for the Task and Finish Group to consider

- Performance of the Contractor to date?
- How do our main partners view the service they receive?
- Is the contract still giving value for money?
- What is the current state of the market?
- Have our objectives for the contract changed since it was let?

Next Steps

Questions and Comments

- What additional information do you need?
- Are there any further issues you would like the Task and Finish Group to consider?