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Rutland County Council  
**Grounds Maintenance and  
Forestry procurement**

# Why Decision is required now

- Existing grounds maintenance and forestry contracts are ending having been extended to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2023.
- Procurement process timeline to adhere to ensuring we are ready for 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 mobilisation.
- Allow good time to engage with town and parish councils to shape the specification and approach
- Compliance with requirements of Environment Act (avoiding additional costs of making major service change mid contract and exploration of opportunities presented by Biodiversity Net Gain).
- To avoid mobilising at the same time as the waste management contract.
- Avoid paying higher rates to add additional services later (verge cutting) by correcting errors in existing specification.

# Current Grounds Maintenance Contract

- Council entered into existing contract with Harborough District Council in conjunction with FCC on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to provide all grounds maintenance services on behalf of RCC with the extended contract now expiring on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.
- Original re-procurement of services had to be suspended due to Covid .
- Whilst it is intended that the arrangements will deal with the current assets in scope, consideration will also be given as to whether it is beneficial to bring in additional areas that currently sit outside the existing arrangements.
- Devolution of maintenance of specified areas to Parishes will be considered as available options in the specification.

# Current Forestry Contract

- Councils existing forestry contract with George Walker will be expiring on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.
- Original re-procurement of services had to be suspended due to Covid .
- George Walkers provide both a scheduled and an ad-hoc specialist service.

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# Environment Act

- The Bill was introduced to the House of Commons in January 2020.
- Royal Assent was received in November 2021. Legislation is expected to be in statute from 2023.
- Further clarity is still to be provided by Government on Biodiversity Net Gain and the opportunities as well as additional responsibilities this may present to local authorities.

# Contract procurement considerations

- Current services are via separate grounds maintenance and forestry contracts.
- Consideration now being given to an appropriate lot strategy to combine both services in one contract.
- Alternatively, two separate contracts may be sought via the procurement process.
- The current grounds maintenance contract annual spend is £450k
- The current forestry contract annual spend is £115k
- Specification structured to encourage local suppliers to bid (potentially as a consortium)

# Procurement Process & Timeline

## Pre-procurement Stage:

- Began in October 2020.
- We are currently at stage 7 of the pre-procurement process
- Now at the important stage of seeking approval to procure and developing specifications following public consultations.
- Currently on schedule with the next milestones to take us to Procurement .

## Procurement Stage:

- We will then move to the Procurement stage requiring us to undertake the Tender Process and award of contract by June 2023.
- This will then be followed by a de-mobilisation of the old contract and mobilisation of the new between October and December 2023.
- We go live with the new Contract 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

# Procurement Process and Timeline





# Current Position Summary

- No Contract Extension beyond 31st December 2023.
- Procurement process requires going out to tender by December 2022.
- Recommendations align with public expectations (consultation) and the requirements of the Environment Act.

# Risks

## Waiting for further clarification on Environment Bill:

- Delays to Procurement process will impact on quality of process and incur additional costs.

## Doing Nothing:

- No option to extend current contract
- Opting for a shorter contract (1 or 2 year) to allow further time will come with a much higher cost and will also require additional cost of another procurement process.

# Consultation Key Questions subjects

We intend to go out to a public consultation to ascertain perception on the topics below:

- Safety
- Bio-diversity net gain
- Cost
- Devolution to parishes
- VS or comparison

How would you like us to frame the questions?



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Questions?