

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Personnel Committee - 16 August 2004

REPORT ON: Children's Playgrounds and Open Spaces - Transfer of Leisure Management Staff

REPORT BY: Director of Dundee Contract Services, Head of Waste Management and Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

REPORT NO.: 222-2004

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the transfer of cleaning duties of children's playgrounds and open spaces from Dundee Contract Services to the Waste Management Department.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the transfer of the budget involved in the cleansing of children's playgrounds and landscape areas in housing areas and open spaces throughout the city, from Dundee Contract Services to the Waste Management Department.
- 2.2 The transfer to be implemented from 1st October 2004.
- 2.3 That one operative be retained within Dundee Contract Services to deal with the existing inspection of play equipment.
- 2.4 That the remaining employees be transferred to the Leisure and Arts Department on their existing terms and conditions of employment.
- 2.5 That the Waste Management Department recruits sufficient additional employees within the transferred budget.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Revenue Budget for this activity will be transferred to the Waste Management Department. There are no additional costs as a result of this transfer.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6. MAIN TEXT

- 6.1 The daily cleaning and safety inspections of children's playgrounds in housing areas and open spaces is currently undertaken by Leisure Management staff employed by Dundee Contract Services under the leisure management contract. These staff also carry out cleansing duties in key open spaces e.g. The Law, Hilltown Park, Seabraes, Ardler Ponds etc etc.
- 6.2 The service includes the removal of litter, broken glass and rubbish accumulations from the play areas and open spaces within the leisure management specification. The Waste Management Department is responsible for cleaning the adjacent footpaths, grass areas and road surfaces.
- 6.3 The work specification also includes inspections of all play equipment and surfaces. Any equipment considered unsafe is immediately immobilised and the Playground Maintenance Section informed.
- 6.4 The ending of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) and the introduction of Best Value require the appraisal of Council Services for sound governance and continuous improvement. A Best Value Review of the Waste Management Department Street Cleansing Service was completed and approved by the Best Value Review Sub Committee in September 2000.
- 6.5 The conclusion of this exercise was to initiate a review to develop a corporate approach to litter removal by all departments. Part of this review led to an appraisal of the duties within the Children's Playground Service. The conclusion reached was that service delivery would be improved if the cleaning duties of the Children's Playground Service and open spaces were transferred to the Waste Management Department.
- 6.6 The Waste Management Department currently has staff working throughout the city undertaking cleansing duties. The rationale for this transfer is that both departments currently undertake litter and rubbish removal from the areas of work where playground and open spaces are located, and it is not uncommon for both departments to be seen working together.
- 6.7 Lines of demarcation still exist from the respective departments' CCT contracts and consequently staff from each department will not remove litter or rubbish from adjacent areas outwith their allocated route.
- 6.8 This is often perceived by the general public as an overlap of duties and not the best use of resources and restricts the standards of quality expected by our stakeholders.
- 6.9 The general public often perceive that the Waste Management Department is responsible for all aspects of litter and rubbish removal throughout the city irrespective of where it is lying. Complaints are investigated and redirected to the appropriate department to action, and this can cause unnecessary delays in responding to the complaint and lead to confusion.
- 6.10 The Scottish Executive is in the process of developing a Performance Indicator based on the Environmental Protection Act Litter Code of Practice. Waste Management staff have undergone training on the level of cleanliness expected under the proposed performance monitoring system.

- 6.11 In the interest of flexibility, uniformity and Best Value, the transfer of the respective duties to the Waste Management Department is the most logical conclusion.
- 6.12 It is proposed that the inspection of all play equipment and play surfaces remains with the Playground Maintenance Section of Dundee Contract Services by the retention of one operative from the existing Leisure Management Section.
- 6.13 Discussions have taken place with the relevant Trade Unions on the proposed transfer. Staff will be transferred on existing pay, grades and conditions of service.
- 6.14 A proportion of the budget costs for this service will be transferred to Waste Management from October 2004.
- 6.15 The staff employed by Dundee Contract Services were previously employees of the former Leisure and Parks Department and it is proposed that they be transferred to the Leisure and Arts Department to fill vacancies in similar positions.
- 6.16 The Waste Management Department will then adjust current cleansing routes and where necessary employ additional staff to complete the current work.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and relevant trade unions have been consulted on the proposed works have been consulted on this report. The Trade Unions are also being consulted.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

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6 August 2004

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6 August 2004

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6 August 2004