

## **Buxted Parish Council**

Clerk: Miss R Macklen, PO Box 202, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 1BN, Phone/Fax: 01435 812798

Email: [clerk@buxted-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@buxted-pc.gov.uk) Website: [www.buxtedparish.org.uk](http://www.buxtedparish.org.uk)

### **Review of Grass Cutting Arrangements for Buxted Parish Council maintained land**

#### **Purpose**

To review grass cutting arrangements and costs to ensure best value for money and identify any changes to reduce current outgoings.

#### **Background**

The last grass cutting review took place in 2010, the results of which were implemented in 2011. Since the reduction in grass cutting by ESCC, the Parish Council is looking to increase its current grass cutting contracts by adding on further areas of grass. It would therefore seem an appropriate time to review contracts again.

At the Buxted Parish Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019 it was agreed that the clerk should carry out a review and request new costs prior to budget setting later on in the year.

Following the meeting, the Clerk wrote to the three current grass cutting contractors – Denzil Fears, Jon Avery and Barcombe Landscapes Ltd to request full details of the areas of land/grass maintained; how many times per year the area is maintained; and the charge per cut. In addition to the existing contractors, the clerk also asked Dan Saunders and Simon Woodyly for costs.

#### **Current Grass Cutting Arrangements**

##### Denzil Fears:

**High Hurstwood Recreation Ground** - cut 12 times per year during the Spring/Summer months (i.e. two cuts per month). The charge for 2018/19 was £80 per cut.

##### Barcombe Landscapes:

**The Dene, Uckfield** - cut six times per year at £60 per cut.

##### Jon Avery:

**Littlewood Lane Triangle** – cut up to 14 times per year (dependent on weather, if dry summer or wet start to the year would be fewer) at £68.80 per cut.

**The Reading Room** - cut up to 14 times per year at £42.75 per cut.

**High Hurstwood and Other Verges in Parish** – cut up to 10 times per year. The areas cut are:

- Inside of grass triangle at end of Limes Lane and weed spraying
- Two verges either side of Eight Bells Close (these are the verges from bushes to mowing strip that ESCC cut)
- Verge at Britts Farm Road on the right hand side as you exit Britts Farm
- Verge at Buxted Park
- Verge at 8 Bells Close (this was an extra that the clerk was unaware was cut)
- High Hurstwood Recreation ground – this is a tractor width from the five bar gate at the bottom corner of the playing field up and around the children's play area and up to the top side by a large oak tree. Also includes inside the play area and inside the goal areas.

The cost for all of these areas per cut is £133.

### **Proposed Costs**

To enable members to compare costs effectively, costs are listed per grass cutting area.

#### **The Dene, Uckfield**

Barcombe Landscapes (current cost £60 per cut) - £60 per cut

Dan Saunders - £47 per cut

#### **High Hurstwood Recreation Ground**

Denzil Fears (current cost £80 per cut) - £80 per cut

Dan Saunders - £120 per cut

#### **Grass Verge A272 between Harrock House and Yew Tree Cottage (heading east)**

Simon Woodley - £200 per cut

**All Other Areas** (Littlewood Lane, The Reading Room, Limes Lane Triangle, Eight Bells Close, Buxted Park Verge, High Hurstwood Rec Children's Play area and strip, Verge at end of Gordon Road, Toll Farm Triangle)

Jon Avery – £337.30 per cut

Simon Woodley - £665 per cut

### **Recommendation**

Having consideration to the existing arrangement; three recommendations are suggested for discussion:

1. Members consider that the existing arrangements provide good value for money. The Clerk is asked to advise the current contractors to continue without change;
2. Members consider that the existing arrangements can be reduced or amended to reduce overall grass cutting costs.
3. Members consider changing contractors in financial year 2020/21 to ensure best value for money.