

### Deputy Clerks Report to HR& Training Committee – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 Development of the Grounds and Maintenance team

#### Objectives

- Resource the team to be able to deliver the level of service at our Open spaces that meets the expectation of all stakeholders (Residents, Councillors, Officers)
- To provide a seasonal resource to deliver the Churchyard Maintenance project as well as manage other seasonal activities at our open spaces
- To provide the line managements needs for day to day management of delivery of tasks
- To provide a resource to cover weekend play area checks and remedial work as required, litter picking and 'caretaker' duties to our hireable resources
- To facilitate a small 'maintenance' service for all council properties
- To have distinct 'teams' with the team to cover basic and specialist tasks within the responsibilities of the Grounds Team
- To provide the team with the opportunity to attend training courses and learn new skills which will offer then personal and transferable skills
- To develop an engaged team, proactively delivering with pride and where their work is recognised and praised by stakeholders.

#### Background

Following my arrival in my role as Deputy Clerk responsible for Open Spaces and Highways and the delineation of responsibility with the setting up of the Open Spaces and Highways and Facilities & Events it was recognised that 2020 had been a challenging year with the added complication of the exiting of the Grounds Team Manager in August 2020. Since then, the team have maintained a reasonable level of service but it is recognised that opportunities exist to vastly improve the service provided and to be more proactive and schedule led operation. They are very reactionary and deliver the basics. Implementing this new structure will allow the team to be managed effectively on a day-to-day basis by a line manager with the necessary skills to drive deliver and allow me to focus on the strategic focus of the Open Spaces and Highways in order to effective manage and monitor defect resolution, improvements and refurbishments and to drive forward change.

Having line managed the team for three months, I am now in a position, working with the Clerk, to propose a new structure with new roles to meet the objectives identified above.

The Team currently consist of three team members:

- Deputy Head Grounds Team Operative
- Grounds Maintenance Operative x2

All of these employees have 5 years service or more with the Ivers Parish Council.

The purpose of this structure is to provide the resource for the day to day management of the team to deliver the day to day activities that maintain the open spaces of the parish to a level that meets and potentially exceeds the expectation of our residents and users of the open spaces in the Parish enabling the Council to promote our open paces and facilities as destination places for parishioners and beyond to local surrounding areas.

Close liaison between the Supervisor and the Officers, in particular the Deputy Clerk will ensure the team are motivated, delivered, engaged and take pride in their work.

## Proposed Structure

### The Ivers Parish Council Grounds and Maintenance Team



#### **New Roles:**

- Grounds and Maintenance Supervisor
- 2 x Community Assistants (Full Time Equivalent)
- Temporary Seasonal Grounds Assistant

#### **Overview of New Roles:**

#### **Grounds and Maintenance Supervisor – Reports to Deputy Clerk (with significant liaison with Assistant Clerk & Business Administrator)**

##### Role to include:

- Day to day supervision of the Grounds and Maintenance Team
- Allocating and prioritising tasks
- Ensure effective cover / absence managements
- Identify training / development needs with Deputy Clerk
- Carrying out initial risk assessments in conjunction with Officers
- Carry out inspections and report to Deputy Clerk
- Ensure quality management is achieved on all tasks
- Identifying defects and assessing immediate 'make safe' requirements
- Manage the plant / vehicle schedule with the Deputy Clerk
- Identify equipment needs and recommend replacements
- Manager specific Grounds projects in-conjunction with the Deputy Clerk
- Assist the Deputy Clerk with Performance Management of the team
- Work with the Parish Assistants to cover hiring opportunities (eg. Cover on a Wednesday)

## Parish Assistants – reports to Supervisor with significant liaison with Assistant Clerk & Business Administrator

Role to include:

- Overseeing and assisting with opening and closing of premises including shutters
- Basic cleaning
- Showing prospective hirers around
- Ensuring 'furniture' etc required is available
- Checking facilities post booking
- Weekend play area checks and immediate remedial work
- Litter picking round the Parish
- Identifying and escalating defects to Officers
- Weekly meter readings

This resource could be divided to two 'patterns (Sun, Mon, Tue and then Thurs, Fri Sat) with the Wednesday being covered by existing team or where needed provide an opportunity for additional hours. Basic operating hours could be based on any regular bookings that might include evening work. The role holders will need a degree of flexibility and a can-do attitude and will work well if the two role holders can work together to cover all requirements.

## Seasonal Grounds Assistant (6 months May to November – Temporary Contract FTE)

Role to include:

- Churchyard Maintenance – Strimming and general maintenance to the plan
- Strimming at Swan Meadow and Hardings Row
- Allotment maintenance (Iver Heath & Iver)
- Litter picking
- General hedge maintenance
- General basic tasks as required by the G&M Supervisor

### Delineation of Grounds and Maintenance Operatives:

The aim is to create two distinct 'teams' that divide the tasks out to **Essential** and **Specialist** activities to ensure delivery of key activities.

Below is a summary (which is not exhaustive) of the delineation of activities and will further develop as the structure beds in:

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Specialist</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tractor work</li> <li>• Strimming</li> <li>• Hedge trimming</li> <li>• Small tree work</li> <li>• Japanese Knotweed maintenance</li> <li>• Pitch Maintenance</li> <li>• Flailing</li> <li>• Brush cutting</li> <li>• Water / Pond maintenance</li> <li>• Chainsaw work</li> <li>• General clearance maintenance (Allotments etc)</li> <li>• Graffiti clearance</li> <li>• Play area / equipment daily checks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAT testing</li> <li>• Churchyard Topple testing (push Pull)</li> <li>• Basic stone repairing</li> <li>• Building maintenance</li> <li>• Basic electrical work</li> <li>• Basic plumbing work</li> <li>• Street furniture -Bench, signs &amp; boundary gates maintenance</li> <li>• TSID</li> <li>• Grave measuring</li> <li>• Play area / equipment maintenance</li> <li>• Pitch Maintenance</li> </ul>

## **Summary**

Implementing this structure will fully resource the team to deliver the day to day activities to keep the Parish open spaces and facilities maintained as well as providing an opportunity to upskill our resource and save the council expenditure by giving rise to tasks being completed in house and potentially quicker than employing contractors where waiting from quotes can delay matters. It will allow the Deputy Clerk to work with the Open Spaces and Highways committee to develop and deliver strategy to provide refurbishments and improvements as well as giving a focus on health and safety of our team, residents and visiting members of the public.

## **Recommended Next Steps**

- Recruit Seasonal Grounds Assistant - six month contract (urgent) via Indeed
- Develop job descriptions and Person Specifications for roles to present to next HR & Training Committee meeting

**Jem Day**  
**Deputy Clerk**  
**20<sup>th</sup> April 2021**