

## INFORMATION BULLETIN

### Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

#### Insourcing Babergh Public Realm project



Public Realm is one of only two services that remains to be integrated under the “Working Together” arrangements. At present, Mid Suffolk District Council uses an in-house team to deliver the services, whilst Babergh District Council has an outsourced contract with IdVerde.

In May 2020, the Councils commissioned East of England LGA (EELGA) to prepare an Options Review which considered the following four models:

1. Continue to deliver the services ‘as is’.
2. Bring the services together in a single in-house operation.
3. Outsource both services.
4. Establish a trading company (wholly owned LATCo) to deliver both services.

Following a Scrutiny session by this Committee, a Cabinet decision in September 2020 resolved that the Public Realm services be brought together in a single in-house operation. It was also resolved that the LATCO be retained as an option for future consideration.

Following the Cabinet decision, a cross-functional team of officers was set up to manage development and delivery of this project. This bulletin summarises the work of this group to date, sets out the current position and the programme of activity for the remainder of 2021.

#### **Understanding the Risks:**

##### Staff:

Staff numbers coming across through the TUPE process will only be accurately known one month before the IdVerde contract ends (31<sup>st</sup> October 2021) as per TUPE rules. We have a rapid recruitment process in place to fill any staffing gaps, as well as utilising the Government’s Kickstart scheme to support any gaps. Permanent recruitment will take a minimum of 6-8 weeks to get new staff in post.

##### Data:

Digitising public realm data and transitioning to real time digital job management system similar to that used by the Waste team, is a large strand of the integration work. There is a significant volume of data that needs to be captured and digitised. To support this, we will bring in additional temporary staff to assist with collating data and presenting it in a format that can be easily accepted by the new software solution.

## Procurement:

Combined impacts of Brexit, Covid-19 and global semi-conductor supply mean Ford cannot supply the vans and 4x4's we require for November. We have therefore moved our fleet procurement to Vauxhall vehicles which are similar specification and cost to Ford. Vauxhall do not have the same supply chain issues and can supply the numbers of vehicles required within our timescale.

## Finance:

### Capital budget:

BDC allocated £715,000 for vehicle and plant procurement.

Current spend is £453,599 and includes new road sweeper, tractor and Vauxhall vans for grounds and streets teams.

Additional expenditure planned 1x 4x4 vehicle, mowers, brush cutters and hand tools.

### Transition budget:

£98,100 allocated from the Transformation Fund (BDC) and Growth & Efficiency Fund (MSDC) to cover costs of depot reconfiguration at Calais street, ICT, Initial PPE and uniform, H&S training. Costs provisionally shared equally between the two councils.

### Operational Budget:

2021/22 budget remains at same level as previous year. Currently there is a small projected underspend, however until staff costs are finalised, we cannot say what this might be.

## Public Realm organisational review:

The Public Realm Services business case prepared by Mark Emms in July 2020 as part of the options appraisal work identified the need for a review of the public realm service. In 2020, this review was already required and insourcing the services acts as a further catalyst for management reorganisation due to the fundamental change in service delivery model from being outsourced to insourced. The proposed review was scheduled for after the insourcing had taken place, but the timescale for this review has been brought forward. This has three major benefits:

- The structural changes to the public realm team can be implemented and staff settled into their roles before the Babergh team join.
- The BMSDC staff structure can be included in conversations with IdVerde staff and they will understand where they fit in the structure before joining.
- It removes the uncertainty amongst staff of further reviews on the horizon after the public realm teams are combined.

The proposed structure is detailed below, the main changes to the team are:

### Public realm officers:

Reshaping the public realm officer team to create a resilient structure where each officer can carry out day to day public realm activities, but within those roles adding a specialist area of focus and expertise. The number of FTE will remain the same.

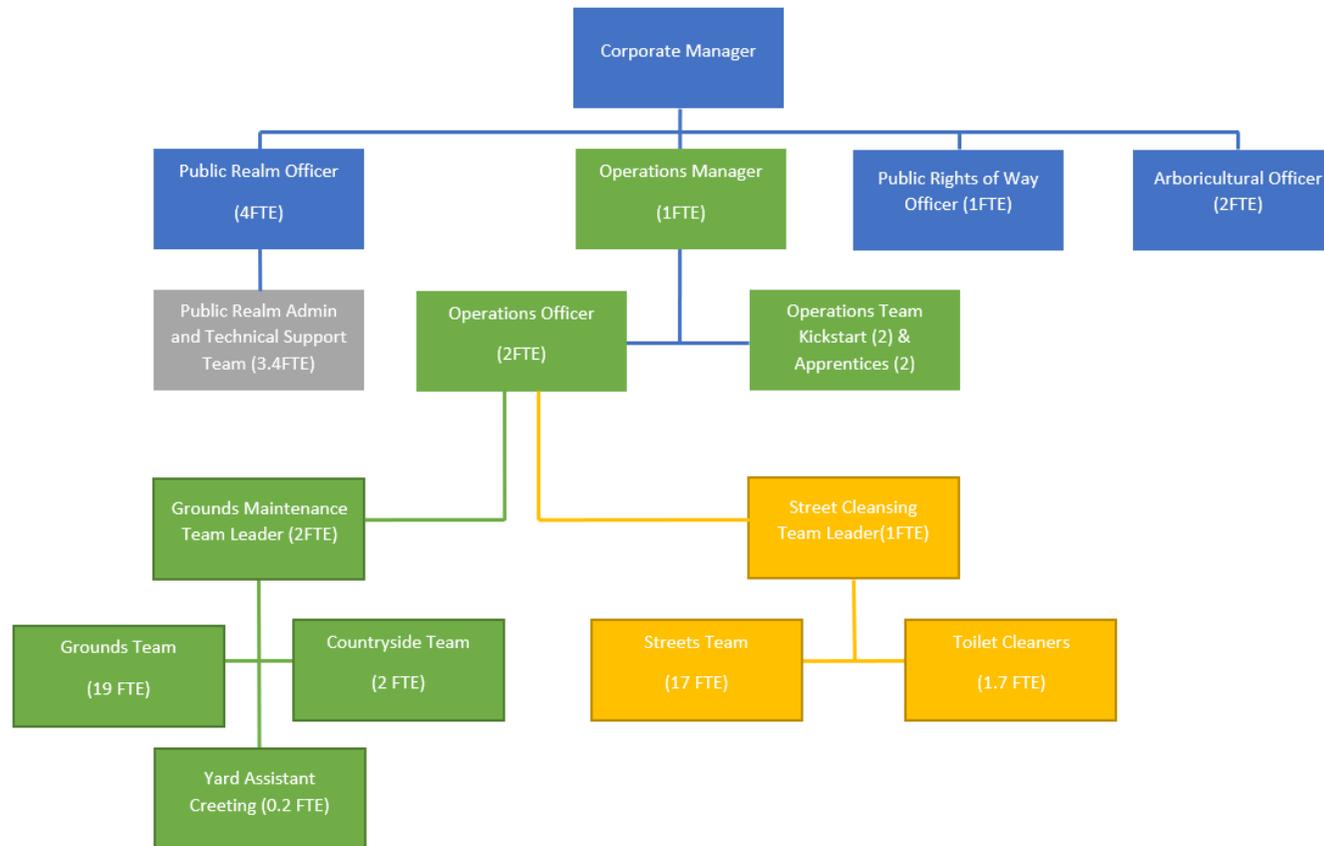
## Arboriculture officers:

Changing the Assistant Arboriculture Officer role to full Arboriculture Officer and standardising job description across both officers. This creates parity within the team, provides flexibility to support Planning Team with tree consultations when there are high volumes of requests, and operational resilience to cope with illness and annual leave.

## Operations Team:

Creation of an Operations Manager role to oversee grounds maintenance and street cleansing across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. This role is key to bringing both operational teams together culturally to work as one group across both districts and ensuring that the quality of service continues to improve. The postholder will manage two Operation Officers, one based at Creting Road Depot, Stowmarket and one at Calais Street in Hadleigh. They will also manage staff joining the team on temporary contracts through the Government Kickstart programme and the operations team apprentices.

## Proposed Public Realm team structure from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021:



**Readiness:**

The following table shows the various BMSDC teams involved in the insourcing project.

Resources and Expertise Required	In place (Yes / No)	Detail
<b>Project Team</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project team in place and meeting regularly.</li></ul>
<b>HR</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BMSDC and IdVerde HR teams working well together.</li><li>• TUPE process defined.</li><li>• BMSDC HR and Public Realm Corporate Manager meeting with all IdVerde staff July</li><li>• Planning for new starter welcome, introduction to BMSDC and programme of training and induction to begin July.</li></ul>
<b>Finance</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Budget agreed for 2021/22 - no change from 2020/21.</li><li>• Transitional funding of £98,100 agreed from Transformation Fund (BDC) and Growth &amp; Efficiency Fund (MSDC), provisionally shared equally between the two Councils.</li></ul>
<b>Procurement</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sweeper procurement completed, delivery July.</li><li>• Tractor and Mower procurement completed.</li><li>• Vehicle procurement underway, orders placed.</li><li>• Hand tools, small plant and equipment currently out to tender.</li></ul>
<b>IT</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IT team aware of project work and requirements.</li><li>• Phone order for new starters to be placed in September</li><li>• Data collection work package for Public Realm in-cab solution from Whitespace to be begin in July.</li></ul>
<b>Risk Management</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk register in place since start of project. Reviewed monthly and updated as new risks arise or risk analysis changes.</li></ul>
<b>Health and Safety</b>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• H&amp;S Team aware of the project and working with HR Team.</li><li>• Meetings scheduled for end May to plan PeopleSafe Devices, Health screening, BMSDC H&amp;S Training.</li><li>• Health and safety screening and training activities will be programmed into Phase 2 of the insourcing project as part of induction and integration for all new starters</li></ul>

## Schedule

Date	Item	Completed
<b>September 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Babergh Cabinet resolves to bring public realm service in house</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>October 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will Burchnall appointed Corporate Manager, Public Realm</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>November 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team set up to manage bringing public realm service in house</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>March 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle procurement – New sweeper</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>April 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle Procurement – Tractor, Light Vans and tippers, 4-wheel drive vehicles</li> </ul>	Yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipment procurement – Mowers, Battery operated hedge cutters and brush cutters, hand tools.</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>July 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal introductions at IdVerde team meeting – Will Burchnall and Caroline Perkins (Babergh Mid Suffolk HR Team)</li> </ul>	Yes
<b>August 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1:1 conversations with IdVerde team, Will and Caroline</li> <li>14-day Consultation with Mid Suffolk Public Realm Team on new structure</li> </ul>	
<b>September 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with IdVerde around transfer of staff into Babergh District Council.</li> </ul>	
<b>October 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirmation from IdVerde which staff will transfer into Babergh District Council.</li> <li>PPE, mobile phones, workwear ordered</li> </ul>	
<b>November 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1<sup>st</sup> November - Babergh Mid Suffolk joint public realm service starts.</li> <li>Welcome Team meetings, health and safety training</li> </ul>	
<b>December 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council induction for all new staff</li> </ul>	
<b>January to July 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 2 of insourcing project with focus on integration of staff across teams, further induction, occupational health and wellbeing activities, team working and team building exercises.</li> </ul>	

### Opportunities:

Recent Mid Suffolk grounds maintenance operative recruitment has been very successful with a good response to job adverts and high-quality candidates. We will also be employing two groups of two people as ground maintenance operatives through the Kickstart programme with the first group starting work in July. The training and learning these individuals will receive from our public realm maintenance teams may also yield some good candidates for future roles within the team.

### Will Burchnall, Corporate Manager – Public Realm