

Update on Grounds Contract in Wickhambrook 2020 - 21

The Estates Committee reviewed the grounds contract for 2021-22 at its March meeting and resolved to appoint R.H.Landscapes & Maintenance Services Ltd for the current financial year (Min. 21.03.09.2 refers).

The quotes considered were, as far as possible, like for like, based on the understanding of the frequencies of cutting undertaken during the previous contract.

The first cut took place in April, and it has been acknowledged that there were some issues to be resolved, relating to:

- Access to gated areas
- Collection of grass cuttings in some areas
- Level of cuts

all of which have been discussed with the contractor following a site visit with the Clerk in late April. A number of adjustments to the contract were agreed as a result, including

- The inclusion of strimming of the small meeting green at no extra cost
- The exact delineation of the nunnery green cut
- That leavings at the Bury Road pocket park would be collected, and the area outside the fence strimmed; and
- That cutting of the old cemetery would be delayed by two to four weeks to allow for the spring flowering bulbs to set their seed

Due to an unusually wet and warm May, the grass has grown at speed, and it is becoming apparent that the smaller greens, which were contracted for eight cuts a year, may need more frequent cutting in the spring months. Accordingly, the clerk has asked the contractor to increase the frequency of cuts to bi-monthly for the next six weeks, when the situation will be reviewed.

The clerk has also requested a further on site meeting with the contractor at the next cut, scheduled for early June.

A more detailed review of the contract can then be considered towards the end of July in time to report back to the August meeting, and feed into preparation for a specification for the grounds contract for 2022-23 in the autumn, in advance of budget preparation.