

Date: 1st March 2018

Dear Community Council

As you may be aware the Council decided to in source the grass cutting operations in November 2016 and since 1st April 2017 grass cutting within the Highlands has been delivered primarily in house.

During the first season of the in sourced grass cutting service a number of issues arose due to the tight timescales we gave ourselves for implementation. As such the whole operation was delayed in starting and was not fully functioning in the manner intended until around June 2017.

For this coming season, starting 3rd April 2018 it is intended that the operations will function in a more streamlined manner. Attendance by local managers at each Ward's Business Meeting has ensured that all local Councillors are aware of what is expected for this coming season.

We have also decided write to all Community Councils to inform them how the service will be delivered this year.

As a general rule of thumb, high amenity grass (i.e. sports pitches) is cut once a week, general amenity (i.e. open spaces) is cut once a fortnight and low amenity (i.e. path verges) is cut once a month. There are also a number of sites which are cut on an annual basis (i.e. wildflower meadows). The largest machines visit sites first with a follow up team using smaller machinery and weedkilling edges and kerb lines.

A number of efficiency savings have been discussed at the Ward Business Meetings, such as

- changing amenity levels of grass, which affects number of cuts per season
- changing sites to be cut
- identifying possible sites where frequency of grass cutting could be reduced or stopped allow the introduction of wildflower areas or more naturalised grass areas

As we introduce our new maintenance programmes you may see a difference in your local area. If you have any comments or suggestions, could you please get in touch with the service centre on 01349 886606.

Yours faithfully



Andy Summers
Head of Environmental and Amenity Services