

REPORT TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

TOWN RANGER HOURS



Report Reference P-22-12
Meeting Date 17th January 2023
Agenda Item 6
Prepared by Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Town Council delivers a floriculture service as part of the *In Bloom* efforts, which comprises a number of hanging baskets and barrier planters. During the summer season, these require regular watering, naturally the number of times watering is required is dependent on the weather and how warm summer is. Watering starts in April/May (weather dependent) and continues to September. The Environment Committee has reviewed how it delivers this service following contractor price increases and has resolved to move delivery in hours. This would enable annual operational costs to be reduced through an increase in the contracted hours for the Town Ranger with the upfront bowser cost being funded through the capital receipts reserve.

2.0 BACKGROUND

It is estimated it would take approximately 4.5 hours per instance to provide the watering service and that this would be undertaken by the Town Ranger. This provides sufficient time for collecting/returning the bowser, filling it from the designated hydrant and undertaking the watering. It is likely this will take place early in the morning when there is less pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

The number of watering occasions may vary in a year, there have been as few as 26 and as many as 42 with an average of 33 per year. This requires an additional 117-189 annual hours at a cost of between £2,135 and £3,450 (inclusive of employer costs). The draft 2023 budget included provision for this within the Environment Committee budget, which will be transferred to the Personnel Committee. It is therefore recommended that:

- a) The committee approves an annual increase in the Town Ranger hours of 148 hours (equivalent to 33 waterings)
- b) The committee approves a further draw down allowance of up to 41 hours for additional watering (equivalent to 12 additional waterings)

This provides sufficient hours for the average watering requirements as part of the core contracted hours of the Town Ranger. This would increase their average weekly hours from 28 to 30.8 and enable a consistent monthly wage to be paid and for their time to be more effectively planned. In years that additional waterings are required, the additional hours would be drawn down and paid as additional pay.

3.0 DECISION REQUIRED

The committee should consider approval of the changes to the Town Ranger's hours as outlined.