

Budget Development Process 2012/13 -2014/15

Savings/Income Generation Options

Savings Option	Reduction of summer bedding areas within the Grounds Maintenance service
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Directorate	DGFirst
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Service Area & ABB Link	Roads Maintenance, Neighbourhood & Contracted Service
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Narrative Description of Savings Option

The Neighbourhood Service grounds maintenance provision covers a number of tasks, perhaps the most intensive of which is the provision of summer bedding displays, hanging baskets, etc, as well as the less labour and plant intensive shrub and rose-beds.

Reduction in bedding areas by 30%, by reducing the size of beds rather than number. This will reduce the labour intensive elements of work, such as planting and weeding.

During previous public consultation process telephone respondents suggested that "grass cutting / gardening / parks / flowers" should be stopped – this was the 4th highest on the list of activities which should be stopped. The online survey also indicated a similar position (2nd highest on the list), and it also came highest on the list of activities respondents felt should be cut back or reduced; in the paper-based survey, this again ranked comparatively high.

The total annual investment in bedding (plants and planting) is £685,730, of which £390,940 is summer bedding.

Savings/Income Generation Option Amounts

2012/13:	£100,000
2013/14:	£100,000
2014/15:	£100,000

Details on the Calculation of Savings Option Amounts

The saving is based on the schedule of rates maintained for grounds maintenance within the Confirm system and is primarily based upon the removal of seasonal staff and a reduction in plant production.

	2012/13	2013/14	Comment
Seasonal Staff	£89,740	£89,740	10 @ £8,974
Plants & Materials	£10,477	£10,477	25% reduction
Total	£100,217	£100,217	

Details on Staffing Implications and how this will be managed

Removal of large elements of summer bedding work, and harmonisation of labour inputs would remove some of the more intensive tasks (planting, weeding and watering). Plants are also grown in-house, so there would be a reduction in the requirement for plant nursery provision. Removal of this element of the service combined with the other grounds maintenance savings schemes would mean the removal of all of seasonal posts. There would be some potential to reduce the service by a lesser amount.

Issues/Concerns Regarding Deliverability of Indicated Savings
None

Risk Effect Assessment	
	Potential Effect
Effect on Service User	2
Summer bedding and high quality grounds maintenance contribute to the tourism market by enhancing the appearance of communities within the region. Certain communities take great pride in their displays.	
Effect on Staff	1
Limited impact on permanent staff	
Effect on Other Council Services	1
Very limited, although see comments above re tourism	
Effect on Council's Agreed Priorities	2
Has an impact on the Council's priority of supporting and stimulating our local economy.	
Effect on ability to attract External Funding	1
If there were bids for town beautification, the Council would not be able to show any investment	
Total Potential Effect	7
The impact assessment screening is broadly neutral with one low negative impact which relates to the reduced recruitment of seasonal grounds staff and reduction in procurement from local suppliers of bedding plugs and seeds, compost etc.	
Measures to Reduce/Address Risks and Minimise Any Negative Impacts	
There may be a number of local community groups prepared to take on maintenance of areas of public open space. Longer term sustainability would be an issue.	