

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	5 April 2022
Subject:	Depot Services Working Group Report
Report of:	Head of Community Services
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Clean and Green Environment
Number of Appendices:	1

Executive Summary:

In July 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish the Depot Services Work Group in order to facilitate a better understanding of the operational, financial and governance aspects of Ubico and its partnership relationship with the Council. The Terms of Reference for the Working Group required that it meet until contract renewal. In April 2021, Members were informed that the Council had agreed a new contract with Ubico for five years from 2022 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the Depot Services Working Group should continue to meet for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

The Working Group has met on four occasions throughout 2021/22 and considered a wide range of subjects as set out at paragraph 2 of the report.

The Working Group considers that it has a continued role, due to the amount of ongoing work and number of long-term projects, and recommends that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve the revised Terms of Reference, as set out at Appendix 1, which will enable the Working Group to continue to meet until the end of the current Ubico contract in 2027, subject to biannual reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Working Group has expressed a strong desire for the Council to be able to seek contributions from developers towards waste services and, in particular, to support funding for the new depot. Following consultation with the Head of Development Services, it is proposed that Officers explore the mechanism for requesting additional capital funding for an additional waste vehicle, and develop a business case for adding the provision of a new waste collection depot to the Infrastructure List to enable Community Infrastructure Levy funding to be used, and report back to the Executive Committee.

Recommendation:

- 1. To CONSIDER the progress made by the Depot Services Working Group during 2021/22.**
- 2. To AGREE that the Depot Services Working Group continue to meet until Ubico contract renewal in 2027 with the revised Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix 1.**
- 3. To AGREE that Officers explore the mechanism for requesting additional capital funding for an additional waste vehicle, and develop a business case for adding the provision of a new waste collection depot to the Infrastructure List to enable Community Infrastructure Levy funding to be used, and report back to the Executive Committee.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

To allow Members the opportunity to continue to scrutinise Ubico operations and management and oversee ongoing waste management projects.

Resource Implications:

None arising directly as a result of this report.

Legal Implications:

None arising directly as a result of this report.

Risk Management Implications:

None arising directly as a result of this report.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The Working Group will operate within the guidelines set out in the Terms of Reference attached at Appendix 1. The Working Group will report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a biannual basis.

Environmental Implications:

None arising directly as a result of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** At its meeting on 23 July 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish the Depot Services Working Group to ensure that Members fully understood the relationship between Ubico and the Council. The primary aim of the Working Group, as set out in the approved Terms of Reference, was to receive reports and information pertinent to the operation and strategic direction of waste and recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance services. The Working Group was to continue until contract renewal at which point it would be reviewed.
- 1.2** At its meeting on 6 April 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on the work undertaken by the Depot Services Working Group since its inception and Members were informed that the Council had taken the decision to extend its contract with Ubico for a further five years from 2022; however, as there were a number of ongoing projects, it was felt there was still a role for the Working Group and it was agreed that it continue under the same Terms of Reference for the current Municipal Year 2021/22.

2.0 WORK UNDERTAKEN DURING 2021/22

- 2.1** In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the Working Group has met on four occasions during the year and, at its meeting in October 2021, agreed a comprehensive work programme in order to focus the meetings and ensure that all projects were being monitored and progressed.

2.2 There are a number of standard items on the Agenda for each meeting as follows:

- Ubico Quarterly Finance Report
- Ubico Quarterly Performance Report
- Grounds Maintenance Update

2.3 In addition, the Working Group receives updates on a number of projects at appropriate intervals, progress on which is summarised below:

2.4 Trade Waste Project

A Principal Trade Waste Officer was recruited in July 2021 to lead on the trade waste project. Workflows have been mapped out to understand the current actions of Tewkesbury Borough Council and Ubico and where improvements can be made. Work is taking place with Customer Services and the Business Transformation team to bring elements of the service in-house. A pricing review is taking place to ensure that the current financial deficit is removed. A trial will begin in Q1 2022/23, in the Brockworth area, which will offer recycling and food waste services to trade waste customers ahead of a planned full roll-out.

2.5 Street Cleansing Review

The regular work of the street cleansing crews has been captured in terms of the litter bins emptied, roads routinely litter picked and fly-tips collected. This information is being uploaded to PSS live, a system which is already used within the Council for grounds maintenance work and tree inspections. This will allow routing of work and mapping functionality within the PSS system, increasing the efficiency of the crews.

Around 70 properties will be moving from weekly collections of refuse only, to the full waste and recycling services. Information on properties affected, new collection days and the required containers has been collated, with the changes planned for Q1 2022-23.

2.6 Depot Project

Several potential sites have been identified for a new waste depot. The new site will be a joint Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council project, with the possibility of a third partner joining which would increase cost efficiencies. Cheltenham Borough Council is leading on the project with the completed site aiming to be operational by 2027/28.

2.7 Connected Workforce/In-Cab Technology Project

A procurement exercise has taken place, led by Ubico and supported by four Gloucestershire authorities including Tewkesbury Borough. After a thorough process, Yotta has been awarded the contract. Cheltenham Borough Council will be first to mobilise, followed by Gloucester City Council, with Tewkesbury Borough Council and Stroud District Council mobilisation planned for Q1 2023/24.

2.8 Grounds Maintenance

In addition to these regular items and projects, the Working Group is also responsible for progressing a number of recommendations made by the previous Grounds Maintenance Working Group. Progress against these items is as follows:

2.8.1 Maintenance of Land on Behalf of Gloucestershire County Council

Officers explored options for a pilot to reduce the level of grass cutting in a number of areas of land which it maintains on behalf of the County Council and record the effect so that the Working Group can gauge the impact of this reduction. The areas were discussed by the Working Group and the pilot will progress during this grass cutting season with taken to the Working Group at the end of the season.

2.8.2 Grass Cutting Standards

A more robust set of measures has been implemented to track the quality of grass cutting. 10 checks are made a month throughout the grass cutting season as before, but greater attention is paid to the look of the full site, including issues such as strimming and cut grass being blown back off pathways. Due to the changes, inspection scores reduced in 2021/22, but improvements have been made ahead of 2022/23 to enhance the attention to detail by having all work on a site take place at the same time.

2.9 Pending Projects

Recommendations in relation to the production of a comprehensive schedule of rates, wildflower planting and the potential for a hire contract for equipment/sharing with Ubico partners remain in the pending items section of the Depot Services Work Programme as future projects for investigation, should Members determine there is a continuing role for the Working Group.

3.0 SECTION 106 CONTRIBUTIONS / COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY TOWARDS WASTE SERVICES

- 3.1** The Working Group has expressed a strong desire for Tewkesbury Borough Council to be able to seek contributions from developers towards waste services and, in particular, to support funding for the new depot.
- 3.2** The planning team currently request Section 106 monies for waste bins, street litter bins and dog waste bins but do not currently make funding requests for infrastructure or waste vehicles.
- 3.3** Where a development, or a number of developments, are of such a scale that they would necessitate an additional waste round, and this round can be attributed to that development(s), then it would be possible to request additional capital funding for an additional vehicle. Officers will explore the mechanism for doing this.
- 3.4** In addition to the use of Section 106 contributions, it may also be possible for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to be requested for a new waste depot. In order for a request for CIL monies to be used, however, the new waste depot will have to be included within the Infrastructure List which is part of the Infrastructure Funding Statement. The Infrastructure Funding Statement has to be published every year by 31 December. Officers will develop a business case for the provision of a new waste collection depot and explore whether a reasonable cost per dwelling could be established.

4.0 RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD

- 4.1** At its last meeting on 1 March, Members of the Working Group unanimously agreed there was a continued role for the Depot Services Working Group and it is subsequently proposed that the Group continue to meet until the Ubico contract renewal in 2027 with biannual reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress.

4.2 The Terms of Reference for the Group – previously amended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23 November 2021 to update the membership of the Group – have been updated accordingly and are attached at Appendix 1 (shown as track changes).

4.3 It is also recommended that the Committee agree that Officers explore the mechanism for requesting additional capital funding for an additional waste vehicle and develop a business case for adding the provision of a new waste collection depot to the Infrastructure List to enable Community Infrastructure Levy funding to be used, and report back to the Executive Committee.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 For the Working Group not to continue – the Working Group did not feel this was appropriate given the amount of ongoing work and long-term projects and the high-profile nature of the services being overseen.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None

7.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

7.1 None

8.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

8.1 None

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

9.1 None

10.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

10.1 None

11.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

11.1 None

12.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

12.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 July 2019

Executive Committee – 4 March 2020

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 6 April 2021

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 November 2021

Background Papers: Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report – 23 July 2019

Grounds Maintenance Working Group Report to Executive Committee
– 4 March 2020

Depot Services Working Group Report to Overview and Scrutiny
Committee – 6 April 2021

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Depot Services Working Group Terms of Reference