

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**HIGHWAYS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS
CABINET MEMBER**

EALAND DEPOT

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To request that the Cabinet Member consider options relating to the future working arrangements of the rural operations team that services the Isle of Axholme and surrounding area, including options for their work base.
- 1.2 The key points in the report are: -
- Relocating the team offers a number of potential operational benefits.
 - Relocation will achieve savings on depot costs. These savings could then potentially be reinvested towards improving front line service delivery for communities in the Isle of Axholme.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The council currently provides streetscene and landscape services to communities in the Isle of Axholme and the surrounding area from a depot located in Ealand near Crowle. The facility is leased to the council. The lease is overdue for renewal. Negotiations toward possibly renewing the lease have been ongoing for some time.
- 2.2 Ealand depot is one of the three rural depot facilities operated by the service. The others are located in Brigg and Barton upon Humber. The main depot operated by the service is located in Scunthorpe at Northhampton Road. This depot mainly serves the urban areas of Scunthorpe.
- 2.3 Prior to entering into a further long term lease agreement it is prudent to consider if continuing to provide services from the Ealand depot is the best option available from both an operational and financial perspective.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The following options are suggested for consideration by the Cabinet Member.

- 3.1.1 **Option 1** – to renew the current lease on the Ealand depot facility and retain the current arrangements.
- 3.1.2 **Option 2** – to relocate the team currently based at the Ealand Depot facility to operate from the main depot at Northampton Road, Scunthorpe.
- 3.1.3 **Option 3** – to relocate the team currently based at the Ealand Depot facility to operate from the main depot at Northampton Road, Scunthorpe and in conjunction make use of a facility already in the ownership of the council in the Isle of Axholme to act as a local operational support facility

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The following analysis is presented for consideration.

- Additional fuel costs of around £4,500 per year are likely to arise as a result of relocating the team to operate exclusively from the Northampton Road depot.
- This cost would be partly offset by savings on tractor costs that currently rely on cover from the Brigg Depot as they would be replaced by tractors based at the Scunthorpe Depot. Future renewals of vehicles and equipment based at one site will alleviate the need for purchasing for two separate sites and allow us to consider greener fleet options to reduce travel costs.
- Further savings associated with vehicle and equipment maintenance and supply chain arrangements are likely as most of the current arrangements are based in Scunthorpe. At present these result in significant travel and down time whilst transferring between Ealand and Scunthorpe.
- The team would benefit to more convenient access to a wider range of operational equipment if based in the main at the Northampton Road depot.
- A marginal impact on the potential time available to work in the Isle of Axholme might arise from locating the team exclusively at Northampton Road, Scunthorpe. The management of the service would seek to mitigate for this by making use of greater flexibility achievable across the wider workforce that provides streetscene and landscape related services. These include improvements to internet access, job ticketing and increased cover for supervisor absences. Rescheduling of current works with other area teams in some of the areas outside of the Isle of Axholme boundaries (but currently carried out by the Isle of Axholme team) should also help to ensure that more time is spent by the team servicing locations specifically within the Isle of Axholme area.
- Having a secondary support base located in the Isle of Axholme would also help in mitigating for any loss of time for work

activities in the area. The suggested best option towards achieving this is to make use of a facility already in the ownership of the council. The Household Waste Recycling facility located on Epworth Road, Belton offers a potentially suitable facility for this purpose. This option would save the £19,000 annual lease cost of the Ealand depot.

- The current annual cost of maintaining the Ealand Depot amounts to approximately £28,107 per year. When any adverse relocation costs for fuel are taken into account there would still be a substantial saving in operational depot related costs if any of options 2 or 3 were chosen. Some or all of any saving achieved could potentially be available to reinvest towards enhancing the service provided to customers in the Isle of Axholme area, consistent with our commitment of ***“Putting Our Customers First”***.

4.2 In light of the above, officers recommend that option 1 is rejected and either **option 2 or 3** is approved as the best option toward providing the most effective and efficient streetscene and landscape related service to customers in the Isle of Axholme area.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The proposal will secure net annual savings of up to £23,607 on current depot and related operating cost, depending upon the option approved. Some or all of this saving could potentially be available to reinvest towards enhancing the service provided to customers in the Isle of Axholme area, consistent with our commitment of ***“Putting Our Customers First”***.

5.2 Staffing

5.2.1 There are no changes to the current staffing establishment arising from the proposal. The council will provide the usual relocation support relating to any additional travelling costs incurred by staff in accessing their new base in line with current approved Human Resource policies.

5.3 Property

5.3.1 Depending upon the option chosen, the proposal will provide for the release of a ‘leased in’ property. We have advised the landlord of the Ealand depot of our intention to surrender our tenancy in anticipation of adoption of the proposal. In the event of the Cabinet Member deciding to retain the current arrangement, we would reopen negotiations with the landlord with a view to renewing the current lease arrangement.

5.4 There are no other resource implications to consider.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Statutory

6.1.1 A decision to relocate the team will have no detrimental impact on service delivery. Indeed, officers believe that it potentially offers the best opportunity toward providing the most effective and efficient streetscene and landscape related service to customers in the Isle of Axholme area.

6.2 Environmental

6.2.1 No significant environmental impacts are anticipated. As outlined above some minimal changes might result from revised transport movements.

6.3 Other

6.3.1 There are no other implications to consider.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 Staff currently based at Ealand depot and their trade union representative were consulted on the proposals. They subsequently raised a number of issues for consideration. Subsequent discussions with the affected employees have helped to alleviate any concerns raised with the majority of the workforce.

7.2 The trade unions assisted in the consultation with staff.

7.3 As there are no service impacts that result from the proposal, no consultation was necessary with wider stakeholders including relevant ward members or town and parish councils. Despite this, both Crowle and Ealand Town Council and Haxey Parish Council have submitted in writing their views that adopting option 2 might have a detrimental effect on the services that are provided within the area with particular regard to maintaining existing response times and service standards.

7.4 For the reasons set out above, service managers do not believe that these concerns are valid and will prioritise going forward at the very least maintaining current service levels and standards. However in light of the concerns arising from consultation, officers have developed option 3 as described above for consideration alongside the other options.

7.5 There are no known conflicts of interest to highlight.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Cabinet Member considers options presented in section 3 of this paper to relocate the rural operations team that services the Isle of Axholme and surrounding area from their existing base at Ealand Depot with a view to realising improvements in the service offered to customers as well as at the same time achieving cost saving benefits.
- 8.2 That the Cabinet Member approves option 3 to relocate the team currently based at the Ealand Depot facility to operate from the main depot at Northampton Road, Scunthorpe and in conjunction make use of a facility already in the ownership of the council in the Isle of Axholme to act as a local operational support facility as the preferred accommodation option toward improving the provision of streetscene and landscape services to communities in the Isle of Axholme and the surrounding area.
- 8.3 That the Household Waste Recycling facility located on Epworth Road, Belton is used as the local operational support facility for the service located in the Isle of Axholme.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None