

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE

### Report

**Subject:** Grass Cutting in the Memorial Gardens

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Author:** Bev Cornish, Clerk

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### 1. Report Summary

This report provides information and recommendations on grass cutting in the Memorial Gardens. It asks councillors to consider a request from the Primary School to review the existing arrangements it has for grass cutting with the Parish Council and sets out the potential implications for the Council on the retirement of the Primary School's grass cutting contractor.

### 2. History

For the last 16+ years the grass cutting in the Memorial Gardens has been shared with the Primary School. The agreement was for the Council's contractor to cut the play equipment area up to the flood defence bund and the School's contractor to cut the area beyond which in the football season is used for junior football pitches.

### 3. Retirement of School's Contractor

The Council was contacted in February 2021 by the Headteacher advising the Clerk that she had been informed of the possible retirement of their contractor but had not been advised of the date. She confirmed that she would let the Clerk know as soon as she was made aware so that the matter could be discussed by the Council with a view to the Council's contractor taking on the cutting for the remainder of their contract term and for discussions to be held with the Primary School to determine who would meet the costs.

The Headteacher also asked that the historical agreement for the Primary School to pay for the grass cutting be reviewed because it uses the Memorial Gardens on far fewer occasions than in years gone by when school football matches were played and the students used the gardens in the summer as well as for the sports day. Now that it has access to its own playground extension, this is used for both sport and play. The Memorial Gardens is used only on the occasion of the School's sports day once a year.

On Wednesday 9th June, the Clerk was advised by the School Secretary that the School's contractor had retired in March with a request that the field in the Memorial Gardens be cut ready for the sports day on 24th June. The Council's contractor agreed to cut the field on 10th June following a request from the Clerk

and also to provide costings to cut the field for the remainder of their contract which ends in March 2022 (last cutting is done in November 2021).

#### **4. Cost Implications**

As at noon on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June, the additional costs are still not know and the Council's contractor has advised that these will be provided either later that day or early on Monday morning, 21<sup>st</sup> June.

#### **5. Recommendations**

- i. The Committee considers the costs of adding the cutting of the field in the Memorial Gardens to its contractor's contract and how these will be paid for.
- ii. The Committee considers whether to review the current arrangement with the School, taking into account the School's reduced use of the Memorial Gardens and the fact that it is more frequently used by the youth teams of Downton Football Club for both football matches and training for which permission has been given.
- iii. To make recommendations from i and ii above to the Parish Council.

**Bev Cornish**  
**Parish Clerk**