

Purchase of 2 x Mechanical Sweeper Vehicles

Extraordinary Cabinet	29 February 2024
Report Author	Matt Elmer, Head of Cleansing Services
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Steve Albon, Cabinet Member for Cleansing and Coastal Services
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	Yes
Reasons for Key	An Executive Decision that involves incurring expenditure anticipated to be £250,000 or above
Ward:	All wards

Executive Summary:

To enhance our street cleansing provision, Cabinet will be asked to approve the purchase of two 7.5 tonne mechanical sweepers that have been built into the fleet replacement plan.

These vehicles are used predominantly for cleansing of roads as they are too heavy to be used on pavements and will be particularly beneficial in the autumn and winter.

These vehicles will double the current provision, and replace the current equivalent vehicle which is being hired rather than owned by the council.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to approve the following:

1. The purchase of two 7.5 tonne mechanical sweepers at a cost of approximately £175 K per vehicle.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

The vehicles have been modified to our specifications and are within the allocated budget and as a result we will be exploring purchase, via an appropriate framework. Purchase of these vehicles will also mean that the current hired variation which is being used at a cost of £700 per week (£36,400 per annum) can be returned, generating a reduction in spend associated with vehicle hire.

Each sweeper has an estimated useful life of 7 years, as such a purchase price of c.£175k per vehicle compares favourably with the £255k cost of hiring a vehicle over the same period of time. The maintenance of these vehicles will be undertaken by our in house workshop and so would not exceed standard budgeted maintenance costs.

Legal

S.111 Local Government Act 1972 and S.1 Localism Act 2011 permits a Council to do anything calculated to facilitate the delivery of its powers, functions and duties and this includes entering into contracts and service arrangements necessary to deliver those functions.

Procurement of these two vehicles will be subject to compliance with public procurement legislation and the Council's contract standing orders.

The purchase of these vehicles will support the Council to meet its duties under the Pollution Control Act 1974 and the Environment Act 1990 to clean its highways and to ensure that land is kept clear of litter and refuse.

Risk Management

The introduction of a second sweeping vehicle would greatly improve the standard of street cleansing, this would assist in ensuring we meet our cleansing service standards.

Purchasing these vehicles will also give us control over availability and maintenance of them rather than this being outsourced.

Corporate

As well as the operational benefits, this proposal is firmly aligned with the Corporate Plan objective to keep our district safe and clean. This will see us deliver against an agreed budget allocation.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposal has limited relevance to the duty in respect of the protected characteristics. It is the officer's assessment that the duty is not engaged by this proposal.

An equalities screening tool has been completed and there is no requirement for an EQiA as there are no equalities implications arising.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- To keep our district safe and clean
- To protect our environment
- To work efficiently for you

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The vehicles are scheduled to work seven days a week throughout Thanet, during the standard working shift (6am-2.15pm).
- 1.2 To maintain the vehicles working life and performance, key components such as the filter system must be thoroughly cleaned after each use, this has an impact on the daily productivity.
- 1.3 The proposed vehicles are both diesel powered. Electric versions have been trialled and were less operationally efficient and effective. The relatively small market for such vehicles and lack of observational data on service life raised concerns in terms of maintenance, part availability and whole life cost.

2.0 Current Situation and Proposed Works

- 2.1 The single hired vehicle is currently covering as best it can the scheduled work of two vehicles. This obviously means large parts of the working day is taken up with either cleaning or tipping of the vehicle, a problem exacerbated by the fact only one of the two expected vehicles is operating.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to consider the following options, with **Option 3** being recommended for approval.

Option 1 – Do not approve. This would mean continuing with the current service provision and the associated operational/reputational/financial risks of continuing to use the hired vehicle. **Not recommended.**

Option 2 – Approve one new vehicle. A potential compromise solution; could either replace the hired vehicle and continue to provide half the expected service, or operate two vehicles one owned and the other hired. A single vehicle will not be able to keep up with the road sweeping schedule. Continuing to hire a vehicle is not economically viable as there is a burden on revenue funds. **Not recommended.**

Option 3 – Approve the planned and budgeted purchase of two vehicles for an estimated £175k per vehicle, which exceeds the £250,000 threshold for a key decision, via an agreed framework. This decision will allow Cleansing Services to operate a full service with vehicles owned and maintained by the council. **Recommended.**

Contact Officer: Matt Elmer, Head of Cleansing
Reporting to: Mike Humber, Director of Environment

Annex List

None

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Matt Sanham, Head of Finance and Procurement

Legal: Ingrid Brown (Head of Legal and Democracy & Monitoring Officer)