

## FULL COUNCIL

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**Date:** Monday, 13 February 2023

**Title:** Council's Vehicle Fleet

**Contact Officer:** Town Clerk - Sharon Groth

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### Background

The purpose of this report is to update Members on and seek agreement to additions to the Council's fleet of vehicles, the Officers now having had time to review the current and future need.

### Current Situation

The schedule titled TABLE 1 lists the current fleet, its usage and limitations, condition and renewals value provided for the replacement in the earmarked reserve.

Council had in the past agreed to the purchase of an electric UTV which would be 4-wheel drive, however due to the long lead time this is yet to materialise. This, along with the demands on the fleet following the TUPE transfer last year is having an impact on productivity and efficiency.

Particularly, the Park Ranger has encountered limited availability of a suitable vehicle when required to undertake works at the lake and country park, to transport materials and tools. Whilst the procurement of the UTV would alleviate some of the issues – it would not however be his designated vehicle and would need to be shared with the expanding works team.

### Fleet Requirements

Based on the above the Park Ranger has requested that the Council consider purchasing a second-hand 4-wheel drive vehicle (not electric – because of supply and demand). He has carried out some research and thinks that a suitable vehicle would cost in the region of £12,000.

The Operations Manager has provided a further TABLE 2 which gives a couple of options for future procurement based on if the Council agree to the Park Ranger's request.

TABLE 3 details the final fleet envisaged by the Operations Manager.

## **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Officers will consider environmental issues when procuring goods to ensure where possible the Council's climate emergency declaration aspiration is taken into account. However this will need to be balanced with availability and suitability of what is on the market in order to meet the Council's needs for efficiency and productivity.

## **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

As mentioned above the Council needs to be realistic in what is available on the market to meet the Council's needs for efficiency and productivity particularly given the economic climate and the rising costs of most things.

## **In-house Grounds Maintenance, the Open Spaces Strategy & other Council Objectives**

Following the resolution to bring the Council's grounds maintenance contract back in house, on doing so it was also accepted that the Council would have to procure additional vehicles, plant, and machinery.

The following objectives set in the Open Spaces Strategy document relating to this report are as follows:

- ✓ OSS PO1 – Draw up revised grounds maintenance specifications in order to raise standards within the Parks and Open Spaces
- ✓ OSS EE1 – Appoint a Park Ranger as already agreed with a clearly defined Job Description and Job Purpose
- ✓ OSS EE5 – Undertake an options review of the most efficient and effective manner to deliver grounds maintenance services
- ✓ OSS EE8 – Seek to move to a grounds maintenance fleet of electric vehicles, machinery and kit

## **Financial implications**

The financial implications are as follows:

Earmarked Reserves – Renewal Fund – as detailed in Table 1;

The Park Ranger has estimated that a second-hand 4-wheel drive vehicle would cost in the region of £12,000. This would need to be met from the Council's Rolling Capital Fund or a supplementary estimate from the General Reserve.

The Precept for 2023/24 has been set with a zero increase to the Band D Council Tax levy.

Financial regulations (FR 11.1 [i]) state that three quotations shall be obtained for purchases of between £5,000 and £64,999. However, as the Council use the procurement partnership to ensure value-for-money, the Council may wish to waive this requirement in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (d), *the Council as the governing body exercising the power which would otherwise rest with the Policy, Finance and Governance Committee.*

### **Recommendations**

Members are invited to note the report, and:

1. Consider the request of the Park Ranger to procure a second-hand 4-wheel drive vehicle, and if agreeable to fund it from the Council's Rolling Capital Fund.
2. That if the Council agrees to recommendation 1 – that the order for the electric UTV is cancelled and that the Operations Manager can procure the vehicles he suggests in Table 2/3.
3. That the requirement for three quotations be waived, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (d), on the grounds the procurement will take place through the procurement partnership to ensure that the Council obtains value-for-money.

**TABLE 1**

The table below shows the Council's current vehicle pool; a column on usage/limitation to best understand how each vehicle can be used has been provided.

You can quite easily see from this the need for something with **4-wheel drive**, the main reason the decision was made to replace the Nissan Primera with an electric UTV. This was made knowing the Council would be employing a Ranger at the time which would have a higher requirement for access across the country park in winter months.

Current Fleet:

Vehicle	Type of vehicle	Usage/Limitations	Condition	Replacement	Renewals fund
Ford Transit	Flatbed tipper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Towing</li> <li>● Carrying material</li> <li>● 3 seats</li> <li>● No 4-wheel drive large/wide</li> <li>● Poor fuel efficiency</li> </ul>	Very good		£22,878.00
Nissan Cabstar	Flatbed tipper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Towing</li> <li>● Carrying material</li> <li>● 3 seats</li> <li>● Narrow</li> <li>● No 4-wheel drive</li> <li>● Poor fuel efficiency</li> </ul>	Good but old	Asked council to replace with a diesel equivalent or electric utility vehicles which can tow	£17,669.00
Peugeot Partner	Small van	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Small</li> <li>● Fuel efficient</li> <li>● Good for light tasks</li> <li>● Small tow bar</li> <li>● 2 seats</li> <li>● No 4-wheel drive</li> </ul>	Good		£9,593.00

Nissan Primera	Medium van	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 – seats</li> <li>• Can carry a lot of tools for maintenance.</li> <li>• Long wheelbase for long ladders and material</li> <li>• Can fit pedestrian mowers.</li> <li>• No 4-wheel drive</li> </ul>	Poor – will be sold when the replacement arrives	<p>Replaced with an electric UTV (4-wheel drive) currently on order</p> <p><b>£28,870.00 not including VAT around £20,000.00 was being used from the EV fund</b></p>	£9,649.00
Peugeot	Medium van	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 – seats</li> <li>• Can carry a lot of tools for maintenance.</li> <li>• Long wheelbase for long ladders and material</li> <li>• Can fit pedestrian mowers.</li> <li>• No 4-wheel drive</li> </ul>	Good / 90,000+ miles on the clock	Purchased used	Bought used in 2022
Nissan NV200	Small – medium van	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halls van</li> <li>• Low usage means the battery often fails.</li> <li>• No 4-wheel drive</li> </ul>	Poor/ required regular maintenance	Needs a replacement	£10,856.00

**TABLE 2:**

The below table contains information on the vehicles the Operations Manager is currently in the process of trying to procure through the procurement partnership. These are the additional vehicles required for the grounds contract, however, as part of this process, he cannot see a reason the Council cannot consolidate its fleet over the next 2 years with more efficient working practices. Three elements that will affect that process are the start/end times of TUPE'd staff, taking vehicles home and how the ranger wishes to work.

Vehicle	Type of vehicle	Usage/Limitations	Cost	Long term plan
Mitsubishi FUSO	Flatbed tipper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Towing</li><li>• Carrying material</li><li>• 3 seats</li><li>• Narrow</li><li>• No 4-wheel drive</li></ul>	£34,000.00	An additional vehicle for ground maintenance would be the perfect replacement for the Nissan Cabstar
IZUZU D-Max	Pickup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Crewcab so can carry 4-5 operatives</li><li>• Large area to carry material</li><li>• Towing below 1000kg</li><li>• 4-wheel drive</li><li>• Poor fuel efficiency</li></ul>	Around £32,000.00	Additional 4-wheel drive option on top of a UTV.

If the Council agrees to the Park Ranger having his own exclusive vehicle, the Operations Manager cannot see a reason to bring in any 4-wheel drive vehicles into the fleet. He would then recommend cancelling the order of the Electric UTV and instead of procuring an IZUZ D-max as an additional vehicle opting to get 2 Mitsubishi FUSOs.

**TABLE 3:**

The final table is how the Operations Manager could envision the fleet looking going forward and plan for each vehicle. Orange is a pool of 6 vehicles shared across the works team and halls, green is the UTV for the Park Ranger. If in agreement this set up it would give £20,505 in renewals funds to help purchase the two FUSO's and a further £29,100.00 from the EV fund to help purchase the Nissan NV200E.

Vehicle	Type of vehicle	Old/New	Future plan	Vehicle replacement
Ford Transit	Flatbed tipper	Old	Renewal	Similar vehicle
Nissan Cabstar	Flatbed tipper	Old	Renewal	Replace with electric utility vehicle
Mitsubishi FUSO	Flatbed tipper	New	Renewal	Similar vehicle
Mitsubishi FUSO	Flatbed tipper	New	Renewal	Similar vehicle
Peugeot Partner	Small van	Old	Renewal	Comparable electric model
Nissan NV200E	Electric Medium van	New/ replacement for Nissan Primera	Renewal	Similar vehicle
All-terrain vehicle	UTV	Ranger	Would need a renewal fund for a future replacement, especially if purchasing used.	