

Meeting	Full Council
Date	26 th September 2023
Report Title	Proposed hedge reduction Elstree Way in Conjunction with St Andrews Parish Council
Agenda Reference	12
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Recommendation: To proceed with the proposed hedge reduction on Elstree Way working in conjunction with St Andrew Parish Council. This approach will reduce health and safety issues for both teams and achieve a consistent look to the grounds maintenance in this area. Resourcing implications to be noted. Budget cost up to £500 to be allocated from 307/4309 Horticultural - funds available £4,504.

Background

Haydon Wick and St Andrews parishes share a parish boundary on the stretch of Elstree way between Thamesdown Drive and the first roundabout by the Abbey Meads Pub. This stretch of road is lined with hedging. The hedging is believed to be symphoricarpos (snowberry) bushes which are fast growing and not entirely suitable for the location due to their fast growth rate.

Issue

The stretch of road is an increasingly fast road as driving habits seem to change. St Andrews Parish Council's (SAPC) grounds team has reported that drivers pay scant regard to hedge cutting signage and do not slow down when they have been cutting the hedges. This has led to them raising a health and safety concern that it is hazardous to cut the hedges.

Proposed Solution

The solution St Andrews have proposed to implement is to cut the bushes back one (1) meter from the kerb line and replace it with grass. This solves the problem in the following respects.

- It provides a safe strip for team member to stand on when trimming the bushes going forward.
- It reduces the need for mid-season cutting as any outward growth would hang over the grass not the road hence not creating frequent trimming issues.
- The strip of grass approximately 1.2m is wide enough for a ride on mower to cut it.
- The strip of grass will create extra mowing but the practicality of less bush cutting, and greater safety will outweigh this.

In order that the changes to the hedges look symmetrical and to bring the safety benefits to the Haydon Wick Parish Council's (HWPC) Parks & Open Spaces team also, it is proposed a joint venture to make the changes both sides of the road.

Resourcing

It is estimated that the resources required will be:

- Two HWPC operatives for a day
- Two SAPC operatives for a day
- Two vehicles one for each team to waste to the tip
- SAPC to provide Tractor and Side Arm
- HWPC to provide Street Sweeper



Current view



Proposed reduction on both sides



Shrubs orange and the sections to be removed are in bright green.

Delivery

Proposed method of delivery:

- The work should be carried out instead of the winter cut for reasons of efficiency so timing to be planned when winter cut would have happened.
- Grounds/Parks & Open Spaces Managers agree the timing and design of the cut.



- St Andrews cut both sides of the road for the initial cut then ongoing both sides maintain their own side as usual. This brings the benefit of commonality of the design to both sides if the same driver and machine cut both.
- Both Councils then clear the roads into the trucks and deliver to the tip.
- When work is complete HWPC deploy their street sweeper to tidy both sides of the road.
- Grass seed is laid on both sides.

Cost

1. All work to be completed in one day but as the winter cut is being avoided it is likely to be half the effort.
2. Two operatives from HWPC but half day each of extra time so one resource day.
3. One vehicle diverted for use and petrol.
4. Street sweeper diverted for use for a day and fuel.
5. Grass seed/topsoil – approximately 70 tonnes of topsoil and a bag of grass seed are needed per side of the road. Approximate cost to Council - £500.
6. Ongoing 10 extra grass cuts of the strip assume 15 minutes.
7. Reduction of interim trims to bushes over the year.
8. Assumed fewer complaints so reduction in admin.

Overall Benefit of the Proposal

1. Reduction in Health and Safety Issue for our teams.
2. Consistent approach to grounds maintenance in this area.