



POLICY RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Meeting Date: 11 November 2025

Agenda Item: 11

Subject:	Ride on Mower
Prepared by:	Sam Dickins, Deputy Town Clerk
Purpose of Report:	To consider the purchase of a ride on mower.
Background:	The Council agreed to include an earmarked reserve of £30,000 for the purchase of a ride on mower within its budget for the 2025/26 financial year. Officers have consulted potential suppliers, colleagues within the Local Government grounds maintenance sector and the Town Councils grounds operatives to identify suitable ride on mowers for the Council's purposes.
Key Points:	The acquisition of an in-house ride on mower is expected to end the Council's reliance on external cutting provision, leading to financial savings over the long-term. In-house provision also allows the Council more flexibility in its ground maintenance, ensuring cuts are aligned to when the Council needs them, rather than contractor availability. Procuring a mower will also prepare the Council for maintenance of additional grounds and spaces. Key considerations and required characteristics of potentials mowers were: - Roadworthiness: To enable the mower to be taken from one site to another via road without being moved by trailer. - Adjustable cutting height: To ensure cuts at various sites could be tailored to various purposes. - Collection: To the ability to collect cuttings to avoid undesirable heaping which makes playing fields less usable. - Suitable cut width: To ensure ground operatives can work at a suitable speed. - Avoidance of zero-turn machinery: To avoid damage to grass areas by zero-turn machine wheels and operator familiarity. - Budget conformity: Adherence to the £30,000 budget. With this expenditure likely to exceed £10,000 the Committee would be required to make a recommendation of the purchase to Full Council for authorisation in line with Council's Financial Regulations (1.7). Officers have investigated numerous machines from nine mower manufacturers, to identify machines most closely complying with Council's requirements. Suitable machines identified are presented in the following table on page 3:

Implications:	Selection of a machine which does not meet Council's needs will constitute a significant single expenditure with diminished value for money for the local taxpayer. Failure to identify a machine for purchase may delay or totally prevent Council conducting its own grass cutting, reducing future contract savings and operational flexibility. The purchase of a mower is a significant single-item asset. Council should consider ensuring its safety from theft or damage, securing and insuring it appropriately. Use of a ride on mower requires staff training and Council should ensure it has a suitable process in place to ensure compliance.
Recommendation:	To recommend the purchase of a <i>FD 13.09 Stage5 4WD (Grillo) with 61" rotary cutting deck</i> from <i>Hunt Forest</i> at a cost of £27,750 (excluding VAT) to Full Council for authorisation, subject to satisfactory demonstration, with the expenditure to be drawn from the "Ride on Mower" earmarked reserve. To consider budgeting a portion of the under-budget savings for the future purchase of a flail cutting deck for a <i>FD 13.09 Stage5 4WD (Grillo)</i>.