

Report to: **Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

Date: **6 September 2018**

Title: **Pay & Display Machines**

Portfolio Area: **Environment Services**

Wards Affected: **All**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: *(e.g. referral on of recommendation or implementation of substantive decision)*

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**Recommendations:**

**That Members are updated on the Pay & Display machine maintenance contract and have the opportunity to comment on the same.**

**1. Executive summary**

1.1 Following the Overview & Scrutiny Panel meeting on 28 June 2018, this report updates Members of steps taken by officers to improve the effectiveness of car parking equipment.

**2. Background**

2.1 Following concerns raised by Members, a verbal update in respect of the effectiveness of car parking equipment was given at the Overview & Scrutiny meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018. At that time, Members requested that a full report be presented to the Panel in September.

2.2 Members will know that the issues considered at the June meeting were as follows:

- The need for Mobile Locality Officers to be in receipt of basic training in repairing parking machines akin to that received by Civic Enforcement Officers.

- There being a current deficiency in ensuring that the contractor was complying with its requirements to both respond to a call-out within 12 hours and service the machines twice yearly.
  - The contractor realising that they have had an insufficient number of employed engineers in the South West region. As a result, the Panel noted that the contractor was in the process of recruiting an additional engineer; and
  - There seemingly being no financial penalties within the contractual arrangements.
- 2.3 All Pay & Display (P&D) machines in South Hams are provided by Metric Group Ltd, and are maintained by the same company. It should be noted that all P&D machines, whichever supplier is used, are maintained by the providing company and that there are no independent maintenance contractors in or near our district.
- 2.4 It should also be noted that the problems with P&D machine maintenance, together with the associated loss of income, are not a long term issue and records indicate that the failures in our service from Metric began early in this financial year. This concurs with the issues Metric have experienced with losing a reliable and experienced engineer in our area.

### **3. Outcomes/outputs**

- 3.1 On 16 August, officers met with two representatives from Metric – Robert Kinch, Head of Customer Service and Support, and Steve Eeles, Head of Field Service – in order to consider to fall in the standard of service South Ham District Council has received from Metric.
- 3.2 Mr Kinch explained that he had been recruited by Metric 18 months ago in order to improve overall customer service and that he had made good progress in this respect although there had been some challenge from those who did not agree with the changes being implemented.
- 3.3 Officers detailed the incidents that had caused concern with the performance of the contract and presented evidence of the poor service received from Metric. See Appendix A for details.
- 3.4 The outcome of the discussion may be summarised as follows:
- Metric have introduced a system to allow them to monitor the performance of their engineers, and they will share this information with us on a monthly basis.
  - Metric are reviewing the frequency of the delivery of parts to their engineers to make them more efficient.
  - Updated contact details to be provided by Metric, to make it easier for officers to escalate issues in the future, although if all else fails, officers will contact Mr Kinch direct.

- Service desk employees are now a brand new team at Metric, hand-picked by Mr Kinch for their service experience within the industry.
- New engineer now in post and fully trained.
- Maintenance engineers now focus on Business as Usual, with a separate team of engineers dealing with P&D machine installations, which are time consuming.
- Metric have undertaken a remodelling of engineer areas to ensure a quicker response and more flexibility.
- Repeat breakdowns will be monitored by Metric in the future, in partnership with officers.

3.5 In respect of the contract between Metric and South Hams District Council, it was acknowledged that this is now dated and should include performance measures and financial penalties for service failure. Working with an updated standard contract, officers will negotiate acceptable turnaround times, and consider inclusion of a list of priority machines, where the turnaround time could be reduced to ensure that machines are back in working order as quickly as possible at key locations in the District. Officers will consider the impact of these improvements on the cost of contract versus lost income when machines are out of action.

3.6 In respect of the lost income, although Metric are unable to make a financial contribution to this, they have agreed to compensate as follows:

- Enhanced machine maintenance training to be given to all CEOs by an engineer trainer.
- Metric will undertake a complete overhaul of all machines (in addition to the twice-yearly service) to include the replacement of all escrows, a deep clean and a software upgrade.
- Metric will consider what other compensation they are able to offer and Members will receive a verbal update on this at the Overview & Scrutiny meeting.

3.7 Officers will monitor the performance of Metric and will meet with the same Metric representatives in November 2018 in order to provide feedback and to conclude maintenance contract negotiations.

#### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

4.1 Should Metric fail to meet their obligations, as promised, officers, who have already begun to look at alternative P&D machine providers, will recommend that the Council moves to an alternative provider. However, it should be noted that it will take up to 10 years to make the switch for all machines from Metric to the alternative, as it would be a gradual process.

#### **5. Implications**

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		The Council has power to provide off-street parking under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended).  The Council has the power to deal with the provision, management and control of car parks.
Financial		Metric to make contribution towards income loss of £17,500, as shown in Appendix A.
Risk		Further loss of income if Metric don't adhere to their commitments. The introduction of a new maintenance contract will go towards mitigating this.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		A comprehensive impact assessment has been completed in respect of this matter which shows that there are no groups of customers which are adversely affected more than others.
Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No potential positive or negative impact on crime and disorder reduction.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No implications.
Other implications		None.

### **Supporting Information**

Appendix A – Metric Machine Fault Analysis 2018/19