

	FULL COUNCIL
Date	10 December 2025
Agenda Item	13

To consider taking on assets currently owned and managed by BDC

The Clerk recently attended an SLCC webinar on Assets transfer, as this is of particular interest with the forthcoming Devolution plans and the likelihood that BDC will seek to pass the management of some of the open spaces in Halstead to HTC. If this does not happen, they are likely to be managed at some distance by the new Unitary authority.

Th sites being considered in Halstead are the Public Gardens, King George V Playing Fields, Ramsey Road skate park and recreation ground, and Mill Chase playing field. These are currently maintained by a team from BDC, who bring their own equipment, and manage other open spaces in the Braintree District. The Deputy Chief Executive at BDC has suggested that HTC should make an offer to take on these 4 areas. The advice from SLCC is to 'go in hard and fast' asking for the funds for at least 2 years of maintenance. It is very likely that the District Council will expect to TUPE over any staff they have involved with the management of these areas, but HTC may be able to do a deal on this, as the BDC team manage other areas outside our authority, and we would probably not need more than 2 members of staff. It is possible also that some of those working in Halstead may be ready to take retirement. If staff are moved across under TUPE, they must be paid at their current rate and received the same benefits such as pensions.

Some research has been done into the possibility of outsourcing the work, if we did not have to take on BDC's staff. Two quotes have been received so far, suggesting 22 visits per year, one of which quotes £69k + vat, and the other £13k + vat.

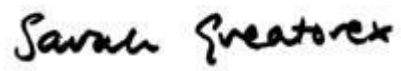
We need to establish when making the offer whether BDC expects us to take on their staff, and what they are currently paid. If we are to do that, it would also be worth enquiring what equipment might be available, at possibly an advantageous price. We would also have to find a storage area for the equipment, but some of it could be stored in the shed in the Public Gardens.

Recommendation :

- 1.that HTC makes an offer to BDC to take over the 4 public open spaces, but also requests funding to support the first 2 years
2. that HTC establishes with BDC whether TUPE will be necessary, and if so what current rates of pay are

3. that if staff are to be moved over under TUPE, HTC explores the possibility of taking on and storing some equipment

4.that if staff are not coming over under TUPE, HTC explores the cheaper of the 2 quotes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Greateorex". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Sarah" and the last name "Greateorex" clearly legible.

Sarah Greateorex Town Clerk