



Report of Finance Officer

Hanging Baskets

Access Public

Background

1. Earlier this year, Councilors approved in principle the purchase of new hanging baskets that would incorporate water reservoirs to improve the effectiveness of the existing twice-weekly watering regime and improve the quality of the displays.
2. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on models and costs following research into suppliers.

Issues

3. Research into manufacturers of commercial self-watering baskets show that the main supplier, Amberol, has few competitors, with the only real alternative found being supplied by Garland Products Ltd. However, in this manufacturer's basket the reservoir is designed to be unscrewed for filling, which is considered impractical for baskets hanging from lamp posts compared to the Amberol product, where the reservoir is an integral part of the basket. In the case where there is just a single appropriate supplier, any purchase requires suspension of the relevant financial regulation.
4. The Amberol baskets come in two basic styles, conventional [47cm and 53cm diameter] and Cup and Saucer [41cm diameter]. In black, the respective costs are £37.49, £47.78 and £25.89.
5. Amberol also supply self-watering barrier baskets similar to those used along the barrier at the Victoria Fountain. These are 1.29m long and cost £127 each.



Amberol Conventional basket

Options – Hanging Baskets

6. Currently, the Council's hanging baskets are two sizes, 41cm [64] and 47cm [10], which correspond to the size of the Cup and Saucer basket and the smaller conventional basket respectively.
7. There are three obvious options relating to choice of model and size:
 - a. To replace all baskets with 47cm conventional baskets [cost £2775],
 - b. To replace all baskets with 41cm Cup and Saucer baskets [cost £1916], or
 - c. To replace the smaller current baskets with Cup and Saucer baskets and the larger ones with the conventional baskets [cost £2032].[Costs calculated for black baskets]
8. There are also options relating to colour, with the baskets being available in a range of different colours, including white, yellow, green and dark blue. Coloured baskets cost approximately £2 more per basket.
9. There is also the option to increase or decrease the number of baskets provided around the town.

Options – Barrier Baskets

10. Currently there are 9 barrier baskets, although one currently has a broken bracket. Ten Amberol barrier baskets would provide a similar display, with space between the baskets and only part of the barrier length covered [Cost £1270].
11. Alternatively, more baskets could be ordered to provide a continuous display over a greater part of the barrier [full length approximately 30m, requiring 20-25 baskets].
12. The barrier baskets also come in the same range of colours as the hanging baskets.

Recommendation

1. Councillors indicate which of the various options they wish to pursue relating style, colour and number of hanging and barrier baskets.

Author	RPL	Town Clerk sign off (if required)	GD
Checked by	SC	Finance Officer sign off (if required)	RPL