

## **Performance of the Streetscene Service**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To update and inform the Area North Committee on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the Area for the period May 2016 - May 2017.

### **Recommendation**

Members are invited to comment on the report.

**The major focuses for the service so far for this period that affect Area North, are listed below.**

- Routine cleansing and grounds maintenance
- Christmas tree shredding
- Staff training
- Annual work schedule
- Health and Safety
- Annual budget

### **Operational Works**

Since the last report, the service has delivered the annual work schedules and once again we are pleased to inform members that this was delivered to plan. We are now managing the 'spring rush' of work which is now the main focus of the teams.

The service is also pleased to report that it ended the last financial year within budget, reduced our staff sickness levels to 9.4 days per FTE from the previous year's level of 14 days per FTE. We aim to reduce this further to a target of 8 days per FTE.

In addition to these improvements, we have recently analysed the complaints that we handled and found that across all of the service that make up 'Streetscene', 52 complaints were reported and handled, but only 27 of these, were genuine service related complaints, whilst the others were passed to the relevant authority such as the Waste Partnership or County Highways. Appendix A shows a breakdown of the details.

In the last financial year we delivered two applications of herbicide as programmed through the highway weed killing operation. The quality of the control was excellent and we aim to maintain this level of service in the coming year and spraying is currently underway.

Last year we worked with Glastonbury Town Council to investigate non-chemical options of weed control using a hot water system and we carried out trials using a number of different methods. Unfortunately the hot water system was very costly to employ and gave limited weed control as it is only effective on annual species of plants, unless high frequencies of application are employed, we simply do not have the required resources available to operate in this manner. However, the system would be very useful in specific situations and we could draw on this if required.

Managing the Health & Safety of the workforce is a critical part of our work and having reviewed and reworked our 'working around water' safe systems of work, we have since carried out a review of working alongside the highway, using a health and safety specialist to offer advice and guidance to the team. The outcome of this approach has resulted in the development of flow-chart type guidance volunteers to enable them to make informed, consistent decisions regarding the safety measures needed in any relevant situation. We are currently finalising a similar format to provide guidance staff and volunteers who may find themselves working around water in both maintenance or flooding situations. A draft chart for information regarding working alongside the highway is attached as Appendix B.

We continue to invest-in and develop our team, last year undertook extensive training on a wide range of customer focussed, health and safety and service related aspects of work. The service also contains a number of apprentice positions, and once again a 'home grown' apprentice has been recruited into a permanent position within the unit having shown great potential and we are now interviewing to recruit our next apprentice in the horticultural service, with our operational staff carrying out the interviews, thus further developing their ownership of the service.

The Parish Ranger Scheme continues to flourish, with a number of parishes using the scheme to add an enhanced level of service to their parishioners. Should any members wish to find out more about the scheme or any other of the services that we offer, we will be delighted to discuss their needs with them.

This year we once again offered our 'Christmas Tree Shredding Service' which proved to be a great success with approximately 3,500 trees being recycled from 43 towns and parishes across the district. As a result of this, the tree chippings were re-used and a notable lack of 'dumped' Christmas trees in lay byes and hedges was seen. We received very little in the way of unwelcome items being left with the trees, nor did we experience much fly tipping in the areas designated for recycling, which was very welcome.

In addition to shredding trees, we also planted over 30 cherry trees at Minchington Recreation Ground in Norton to create an avenue of blossom in the springtime, which alongside the new tarmac footpath, has both enhanced this area and made it more accessible to users.

As always, we continue to focus on managing the number of flytips found in the district, the chart overleaf shows the numbers of fly tips collected from Area North since the last report.

AREA North	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	TOTALS
Aller		2	1			1		3	1				8
Ash						1	2	3	2		1		9
Barrington													0
Beercrocombe													0
Bower Hinton													0
Chilthorne Domer		1	1				1				1		4
Compton Dundon							2						2
Curry Mallet				1	1		1	2		1			6
Curry Rivel		1			1	1	2	4	2	1	3	2	17
Drayton							1	1					2
Fivehead			1	1		3	1	2		1		3	12
Hambridge & Westport											1		1
High Ham				1	1	2				2	3	1	10
Huish Episcopi				1						1			2
Ilton								1		1			2
Isle Abbotts													0
Isle Brewers													0
Kingsbury Episcopi		2		1		1		1	3	1	3	1	13
Langport						1		1	2	1		1	6
Long Load	1			1						2	2		6
Long Sutton							1				1		2
Lopen	2	1						1	1	2			7
Martock		2	1	2		1	3	1	3		1	1	15
Montacute	2	2	1		2	2	2	3	1			7	22
Muchelney				1		1					1		3
Norton Sub Hamdon		2				1				2			5
Pitney						1	1						2
Puckington										1			1
Seavington				1				1		2		1	5
Shepton Beauchamp							1				1	1	3
Somerton	4					2	1	1	2	1	2	3	16
South Petherton	2		1		1	2	3	3	2	2	6	2	24
Stocklinch		1											1
Stoke Sub Hamdon							1					1	2
Tintinhull	1	2		1	1	2	3	1	1	3		2	17
<b>TOTAL AREA NORTH</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>225</b>

Unfortunately we are seeing a notable increase in the numbers of incidents across the district as a whole. For example during the period 15/16 we cleared 951 flytips which compares to the same period in 2016/17 when we cleared 1108 tips at a cost of £62,541.

Having analysed the figures, we believe that the changes involved with the introduction of the SWP 'vehicle and trailer permit scheme' controlling access for small vans and trailers at HWRC's has led to the rise in figures. This conclusion has been reached after analysing the fly tipping data which shows the increase in fly tipping numbers being in the size of load of a small van.

Following the Clean for the Queen initiative was taken up by a number of parishes and towns last year, with Curry Rivel, South Petherton and Somerton in Area North, my thanks to those who took part in this initiative.

This year the team has also started working with the charity Key4life who arrange work placements for young men who have come out of prison and in order to help them integrate into society again, we are working with them to enable these individuals to gain experience and skills to help them in their futures. We believe that indications are that this is a very successful charity with excellent results from their approach and we are delighted to be working with them.

### **What's coming next?**

- Summer delivery of the annual work programmes
- Continued development of the workshop as an MOT station

### **Financial Implications**

All of the matters highlighted in the report have been achieved within service budgets.

### **Implications for Corporate Priorities**

- Continue to deliver schemes with local communities that enhance the appearance of their local areas
- Continue to support communities to minimise floodwater risks.
- Maintain street cleaning high performance across the district.

### **Background Papers**

Progress report to Area Committees on the Performance of the Streetscene service.

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