

# **Report for Area West Committee on the Performance of the Environmental Services Team**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

To update and inform the Area West Committee on the performance of the Environmental Services team in the Area for the period May 2017 – April 2018.

## **Recommendation**

Members are invited to comment on the report.

## **Report**

**The major focus of the service so far for this period, are listed below.**

- Routine annual work schedule for cleansing and grounds maintenance
- Service transformation
- Christmas tree shredding
- Annual budget

## **Operational Works**

As always the main focus of the service has been to deliver the annual work schedules, as if these are delivered according to the plan, a successful service outcome is inevitable, resulting in low levels of complaints and good numbers of compliments, and once again we are pleased to inform members that this was delivered to plan.

We are now focussing on the 'spring rush' of work which is now the main focus of the teams. This has proven to be difficult this year due to weather conditions where a wet start followed by high temperatures resulted in the teams having to delay some operations – such as mowing and weed spraying – to focus on completing key aspects of the service such as rural road litter picking and the cleaning of the A303, however we have a plan and are working hard to deliver it in a condensed timescale.

We have completed the litter picking on our main roads and in Area West we have cleaned the following roads and collected the following amounts of litter (this does not include areas where we will require traffic control to access waste left on hazardous parts of these highways, however we will be returning to address these areas)

Date	Road	Location	Amount of bags collected
14 <sup>th</sup> February	A358	Southfields to Donyatt	7
19 <sup>th</sup> February	A30	Cricket St Thomas to Grove Pitts	30
20 <sup>th</sup> February	A30	Grove Pitts to Chard	15
13 <sup>th</sup> March	Kingstone Hill	Dinnington to Ilminster	26
5 <sup>th</sup> April	B3169	Crewkerne to Clapton	26
16 <sup>th</sup> April	A30	Chard to Devon	31
16 <sup>th</sup> April	A30	Yeovil to East Chinnock	3
		<b>TOTAL</b>	112

We have also just finished cleaning the verges of the A303. On analysis of the material collected we find that we are on average collecting 10 black bin bags of litter each mile of verge, with 40% of the waste being plastics; 30% paper; 10% cans; 15% miscellaneous debris and car parts 5% (based on volume of waste).

Recently we have been investigating how to safely clean the central reservation areas of this road and have been looking into the cost implications of the traffic management system needed to fulfil this work. Our enquiries have resulted in two very different approaches being suggested by specialist companies, along with considerable variances in the associated costs. This caused some concern among the team and subsequently we have met with the Highways Agency regarding the cleansing of this section of the road. We are working with them to identify a work method that we can follow with confidence and could become 'standard practice' for other authorities carrying out similar duties. We expect to hear from the agency with their suggestions very soon.

As part of our processes to continually improve the services we have reviewed what service demands the team has focussed on over the last few years, and our focus has been on the following:

- Providing additional waste bins by increasing our capacity to accommodate these requests
- Improving road sweeping on our major roads across the district by introducing a night shift sweeping round
- Highway weed control following changes to the County Highways maintenance schedules.

We believe that we have been successful in improving these areas of service and the performance in these aspects of our work is sustainable. The next area of focus that we are looking to improve is the litter cleaning of all of the small rural roads across the district and we are hoping to coordinate our efforts with voluntary groups to clear litter from the public rights of way.

The works will be managed through a series of 'zones' and members will be updated on progress in their areas.

In the last report we informed members that the service had reduced its staff sickness levels from 14 days per employee to 9.4 days and we were aiming to reduce this further to a target of 8 days per person. I am delighted to update you on this as we have recorded figures of 6 days per employee, most of which have been due to long term sickness absences.

In addition to these improvements, the analysis of compliments, complaints and enquiries across all of the service that made Streetscene showed that we received 1517 enquiries / requests for work, 70 complaints and 76 compliments, we are pleased with these figures as we believe that they show that the performance and behaviour of the teams is very good.

This year we once again offered our 'Christmas Tree Shredding Service' which proved to be a great success with trees being recycled from 47 towns and parishes across the district. In Area West we recycled trees at Broadway, Buckland St Mary, Chaffcombe, Chard, Combe St Nicholas, Crewkerne, Donyatt, East Chinnock, Ilminster, Merriott, Misterton and Winsham.

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.

We have also carried out remedial works to the entrance track and car park area of Snowdon Park ensuring it is more accessible for all users.

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

AREA WEST	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	TOTALS
Ashill				2	1	2	2	3				1	11
Broadway			1			1				1			3
B'land St Mary							1	2					3
Chaffcombe				2	1		2	1	2			1	9
Chard	2	1	2	3	2	3	3		1	3	1	5	26
Chillington			1					2					3
Chiselborough		1	2		1		1						5
Combe St Nic			1					1	1	1	3		7
Crewkerne	3	2	3	3	4	4	2		4	1	3	1	30
Cricket St T'mas			1		2	1	1		3	1			9
Cudworth													0
Dinnington			2		1		2		1		1		7
Donyatt				1		1				1	1		4
Dowlish Wake			1		1	1		1			1		5
East Chinnock	2			1	1							1	5
Haselbury P'nett													0
Hinton St George	1		1	1			2		3	2	3		13
Horton				1				1					2
Ilminster	1	1	3		2	1	3	4	1	1	5		22
Kingstone		1						2			1		4
Knowle St Giles			1										1
Merriott	2		1			1	1		1	1			7
Misterton			1					1					2
North Perrott				1				1	1				3
Over Stratton													0
Tatworth/Forton	2				3	1	1			1			8
Wambrook	3		1	1	1		2			1			9
Wayford											2		2
West Chinnock	2					1							3
West Crewkerne	1	2											3
Whitelackington		1											1
Whitestaunton													0
Winsham							1						1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>208</b>

As always, we continue to focus on managing the number of flytips found in the district, the chart below shows the numbers of fly tips collected from Area West over the last year. The figures indicate a considerable reduction in occurrences when compared to the same period last year when we cleared 264 flytips across the area.

Across the district as a whole we have found a similar pattern with 940 flytips reported this financial year compared to 1108 during the previous year.

We are continuing to monitor this situation and follow our approach of clearing away the items promptly so we do not allow the fly tips that have been made, to attract more items.

As part of the Council's Transformation programme, Streetscene has been rebranded as Environmental Services and now contains the Waste & Recycling Service and management of the Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery, should members wish for updates on these aspects of the service in the future, I will be best placed to provide this information.

In line with these changes, we are working with Somerset Waste Partnership to review the types of material and volumes of potentially recyclable waste that is being deposited in town centre bins. The results of this study will inform us of the potential for further recycling options.

Our findings to date show that approximately half of the waste collected is potentially recyclable, with the main items being plastic, drinks cups, tin cans, cardboard and glass. With this initial data collected, we are now in a position to investigate the various collection options and associated cost implications. We are also leading on a management approach to minimise the use of single use plastics across the district council and updates on progress in this area of the service will be made if requested.

As noted in previous reports, the service is developing an MOT station at the depot and progress continues to be made towards this as the essential electrical and concreting works are now finished, the technical equipment will be fitted during May (once the concrete has hardened sufficiently) In addition to this, staff have been trained and we are on schedule to be functional by the summer.

The service is also reviewing its existing IT systems and work flows to enable better use of digitalisation and a reduction in our current paperwork processes whilst seeking to improve our existing IT systems to more modern programs which will enable us to work more effectively and efficiently.

Finally, the team has recently carried out the recruitment of our agency staff provider and we are happy that we have secured a reliable, ethical and cost effective solution to our seasonal staffing needs.

### **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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