

Performance of the Streetscene Service

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Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Area East Committee on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the Area for the period April 2014 – March 2015

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report

Report

The major focus of the service so far for this period that affect Area East, are listed below.

- Routine cleansing and grounds maintenance
- Highway weed control
- Rights of Way maintenance
- Main Road litter picking

Operational Works

As usual the main focus of the service has been the delivery of routine street cleansing and grounds maintenance across the Area. Our teams have settled following some changes to personnel and the staff have performed consistently well through the year.

Unfortunately we have recently experienced some staff sickness which has brought with it some operational challenges, however we are working with these members of staff to get them back into action as soon as possible.

One area of work that has received on-going focus has been the highway weed killing operation. The service now has two bespoke weed spraying quad bikes operating, and these now provide the capacity for two full applications of herbicide a year across the district. This will make a notable difference to the towns and villages as this operation becomes more and more embedded in the service. We aim to recommence spraying throughout the district as soon as the litter picking of main roads is completed and as weather conditions allow.

This year we also worked with the community payback groups and we have worked to develop good working arrangements with them. Although this relationship has been some time in developing, we are very close to having established processes that will enable us to deploy working parties around the district carrying out work in all wards and parishes. As part of this working arrangement, the payback team will store their vehicles and equipment at our depot; this provides the team with secure storage whilst developing better communication and working practice between both parties.

We have started working with the Wincanton Town Team; offering support where possible on the initiatives around the High Street and we are looking forwards to seeing the outcomes of this work. We believe that these cooperative working practices will show notable

improvements in service delivery and we will look to continue to explore other opportunities for joint working that will improve the look of the district.

In addition to delivering routine maintenance operations, the team worked in preparation for potential winter weather issues. Fortunately this year we have not experienced any serious problems and as a result, we hold a large number of prepared sandbags which are ready for use, in addition to these we also have numbers of 'flood sacks' in stock should they be required.

As well as preparing for flood related issues, we also planned, if we were faced with snowfall; to deploy teams to clear snow and spread grit in market towns, focussing on gritting pavements and crossings in town centres and high streets. The use of 4x4 vehicles and grit spreaders makes this a viable option for us. Should members have areas of particular concern that would benefit from gritting, please contact us to discuss these ideas.

We also 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 East over the year.

AREA EAST	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	TOTAL
Abbas & T/combe	1	2		1			1	1				6
Alford												0
Babcary												0
Barton St David												0
Bratton Seymour				2	1	2	1	1				7
Brewham		1										1
Bruton				1			2	1				4
Castle Cary & Ansford	1			4	1	1		3	2	2		14
Charlton Horethorne				1							1	2
Charlton Mackrell				1	5	2	1			1		10
Charlton Musgrove	1								1			2
Chilton Cantelo		1	1					1	2			5
Compton Pauncefoot	2	2		1		2	3	1		1	2	14
Corton Denham										1		1
Cucklington	1				1		1	1	1			5
Henstridge	2		4	2	1				1			10
Holton		1			1						1	3
Horsington							1			1		2
Ilchester	1		2		1	1	1	2	3		3	14
Keinton Mandeville												0
Kingsdon	1				1	2				1		5
Kingweston	1	1			1							3

Limington				2						1		3
Lovington												0
Maperton				5	1			3	2			11
Marston Magna				1			1					2
Milborne Port	1		2	2	1		1	1		1		9
Mudford	1	4	1	4	1	1	8		4	1		25
North Barrow				1								1
North Cadbury				1								1
North Cheriton												0
Penselwood				1						1		2
Pitcombe				2	1						1	4
Queen Camel				2			1	1				4
Rimpton												0
Shepton Montague												0
South Barrow							1					1
South Cadbury										1		1
Sparkford					1						1	2
Stoke Trister		1	1		4	1	1	3				11
West Camel			1				1					2
Wincanton		1	7	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	22
Yarlington	1			1								2
Yeovilton	2									1		3
TOTAL AREA EAST	16	14	19	36	24	15	27	21	18	14	10	214

In Area East we find that the levels of tipping are the same as during the previous 12 months, with 217 flytips cleared for the same period the previous year. The vast majority of these tips are the size of a small van load or less and we are carefully monitoring the types of waste deposited to help us control this problem.

The Parish Ranger Scheme has continued to develop and the service now employs three Rangers across the district. In Area East we have schemes working in Compton Pauncefoot /Blackford, Wincanton and Milborne Port. We aim to continue to develop the programme with more parishes over the coming year.

Our horticultural teams have completed 16 grass cuts through the year and they have recently completed the winter work programme of winter mowing; ditch maintenance; shrub bed pruning, weeding and mulching. As is normal for us, we are now undertaking spring maintenance operations in line with our work schedules.

In 2014 the service was successful in tendering for the maintenance of Public Rights of Way in South Somerset, and we delivered the service as specified by the Rights of Way Officers in line with the County Councils work programme. The service is now working on the tender documents for this coming season.

In addition to these operations, the landscaping team has been working with James Duvall, the Town Council and Cllr. Anna Groskop on landscaping initiatives in Bruton. This has consisted of two landscaping programmes the first programme focusses along the river walk from the pump house through to the Plox; while the other scheme targeted the Milldam to improve the pathway, handrail and bridge. These works have greatly improved access and will encourage ongoing use of this lovely route.

This year the service renewed the bulb planting initiative, working with towns and parishes to introduce plantings of a mixture of bulbs including Muscari, Leucojum, Galanthus, Fritillaria, Hyacinthus and Ornithogalum. This year we provided bulbs to the following parishes; Blackford, Sparkford, Corton Denham, Abbas & Templecombe, all of these bulbs were planted by local groups of volunteers and we are looking forwards to seeing the results of these plantings.

As well as delivering our normal work programme, the major focus for the horticultural service will be to improve signage and accessibility on and around our open spaces. These developments will enable greater use to be made of our green spaces for everyone, while making the visiting experience more enjoyable.

What's coming next?

- Spring and summer work programmes shrub bed maintenance, hedge cutting, spraying and mowing
- Ongoing developments to the cleaning systems along the main roads and A303 in particular
- Delivering the years highway weed control programme
- Development of signage and accessibility in open spaces

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