

Joint Area North Committee – 28th January 2009

12. Streetscene Service – Monitoring Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jo Roundell Greene, Environment & Property
Head of Service: Chris Cooper, Head of Service - Streetscene
Lead Officer: Chris Cooper, Head of Service - Streetscene
Contact Details: chris.cooper@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462840

Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Joint Area North Committee on the performance of the SSDC Streetscene Service in Area North for the period April 2008 – December 2009, including the progress of the delivery of the Area North service enhancement programme for 2008/09.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the contents of the report and note the programme of Service Enhancements agreed to date between the Head of Streetscene and Parishes outlined in Appendix A.

Report

The major achievements of the service so far for this period as affect Area North, are listed below.

- Improved NI 195* average result for the first two of the required three inspections, of 10.5% compared to a BV199a result of 12.6% for 2007/8
- Completed the review of litter and dog waste bins across the district
- Carried out extensive bulb planting
- Started the Area North service enhancement program
- Completed customer satisfaction surveys across the district
- Responded to recent flooding incidents across the district

* NI 195. NI stands for National Indicator which means all local authorities collect the same data in the same way, allowing comparison and performance monitoring at a national level. NI 195 relates to the levels of street cleanliness including litter, graffiti and fly-posting.

Operational Works

As well as the normal routine **grounds maintenance and cleansing** works around the Area, the team completed the **maintenance of watercourses** and delivered the Councils **out of hours service**.

The contract for the maintenance of the **Cartgate picnic area** was extended and the on site team have worked hard to keep the site in a condition that the thousands of visitors find acceptable.

The Enforcement officers have, as usual been kept busy dealing with a wide range of both **dog-related problems and abandoned vehicles**.

A report on **Fly tipping** in Area North was taken to the Area North Safety Panel and subsequent Parish Workshop, however, the real work of dealing with fly tipping is carried out by both the operational teams who remove the waste and the enforcement officers who have the dubious pleasure of sifting through the waste to find evidence to follow up.

More **bulb plantings** of both Narcissi and Crocus were undertaken this winter, with 24,000 spring flowering bulbs being planted across Area North. Sites included in the planting program included Chilthorne Domer, Somerton, Compton Dundon, Martock, Langport, High Ham, Fivehead, the Seavingtons, Curry Mallet, Ilton and Barrington.

More recently the team was involved in the response to the widespread flooding that hit the area, delivering **sandbags** to households affected by the flooding, and **clearing the streets and roads** when the waters had receded.

Following the **service review** that was started early in the year, we have reorganised some of the operations in order to make time efficiencies and use this time to provide a safer, more structured, thorough service. As a result, the Streetcleaners now focus on specific tasks, with responsive works being attended to by a specialist team who visit the Areas on set days.

In addition to this, the Areas have now been visited by the services **Pavement Sweepers**, and we believe that this has greatly contributed to the improvements in the NI 195 scores.

Service Enhancement Program

Earlier in the year, as a result of local consultation, the Area Committee allocated £10,000 to the Head of Streetscene towards a programme of enhanced services. All parishes were invited to consider any local priorities, and many meetings with local clerks and councillors have taken place. A start has been made on the Area Enhancement program, including a series of deep cleans in targeted areas and some contribution towards replacing bins that are in a poor condition has been made, in response to feedback from towns and parishes. These works will be completed by the end of March 2009. Please see Appendix A. A review will be made of the success of this work later in the year. It is hoped that the additional consultation and involvement with parish representatives will additional benefits to future working relationships.

In view of the popularity of the programme, it was considered that until all parishes had had an opportunity to be involved, the parishes already benefiting from the Lengthsman scheme (see below), would be put 'on hold'.

Parish Lengthsman

The Parish Lengthsman scheme covering South Petherton, Hinton St George, Merriott, Shepton Beauchamp and the Seavingtons continues to deliver an enhanced level of service to these parishes through this county / district / parish based initiative. This is part funded by the SSDC Streetscene service budget, largely in addition to the services provided to all areas.

National Indicators (NI's) – Service Performance

National Indicator 195 replaces the old Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 199 for street cleaning, widening the scope of the inspections to reflect performance on cleanliness and graffiti and fly posting.

So far this year, our national indicator NI 195 average result for the first two, of the required three inspections, is 10.5% compared to a BV199a result of 12.6% for 2007/08. (The lower the percentage the better the performance).

The other national indicator NI 196 relates to our performance on dealing with fly tipping, and these results are produced annually.

We have retained the measurements of BVPI 218 relating to dealing with abandoned vehicles, and again this information is reported annually.

Local Area Quality Inspections

Once again we have carried out monitoring of the overall standards of streetcleaning and grounds maintenance via the process of site inspections carried out in conjunction with the local Ward Members. The results from these inspections are reported in the table below.

April – November 2008

Month	Location	Results %		
		Good	Fair	Fail
April	Norton Sub Hamdon	32	68	0
May	Ash & Tintinhull	25	50	25
June	Shepton Beauchamp, Ilton, Fivehead, Barrington	70	24	6
July	South Petherton	78	22	0
August	Martock	75	25	0
September	Langport & Drayton	50	50	0
October	Montacute	71	29	0
November	Hambridge, Shepton Beauchamp & Kingsbury Episcopi	62	32	6
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level			
Overall Performance	95% Pass, 57% at Good Level with 5% fail			

Customer Feedback

The service as usual, has dealt with a number of calls from customers and a general breakdown of the calls is detailed in the table below:

	Horticulture	Streetcleaning	Enforcement	Total
Request	66	371	81	518
Complaints	3	3	0	6
Compliments	4	5	0	9

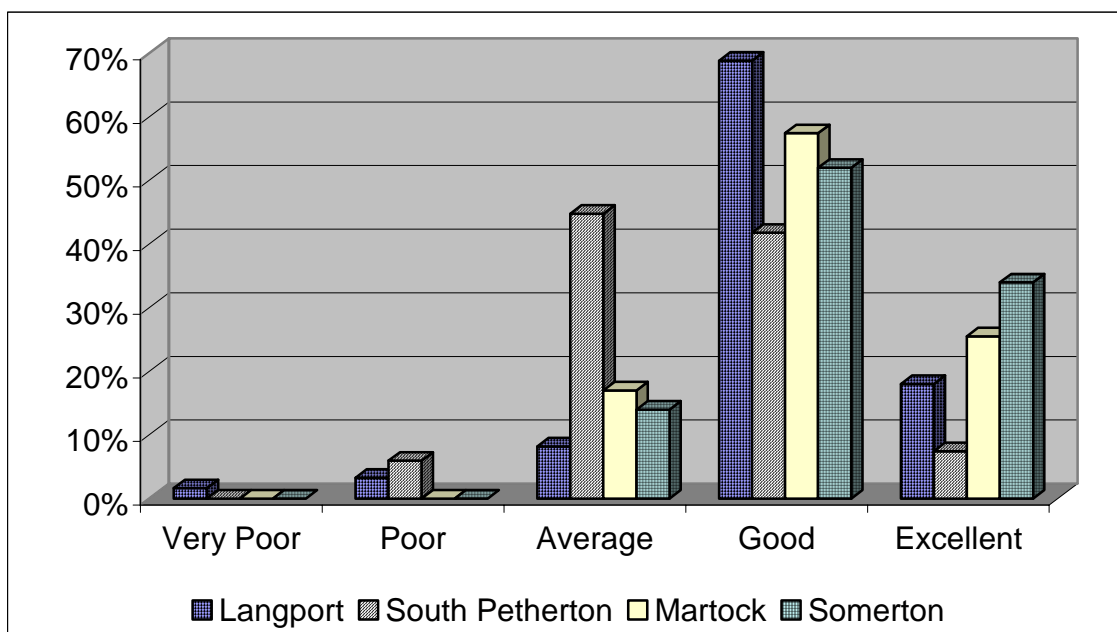
We are once again, pleased to note the lack of formal complaints that we have received regarding the service, the majority of calls once again are for information or requests for work.

In addition to this, the service carried out its annual customer satisfaction survey.

This year we asked members of the public what they thought of the services provided by Streetscene and Property / Engineering in the following towns: services included, grass cutting, planted areas, hedges & trees, litter picking, road sweeping, litter bins, car parks and public conveniences.

- Langport - 61 people surveyed
- Martock - 47 people surveyed
- South Petherton - 67 people surveyed
- Somerton - 67 people surveyed

Overall impression of work done by the Streetscene services



A number of comments were also collated from customers and have been assessed in order to help us ensure that the service is meeting the needs of the public.

As you can see from the results, the vast majority of people are pleased with the service being provided, and we are very pleased with the feedback that we have received.

Actions following the last report

- A comprehensive review of street cleansing operations is being carried out aimed at maximising performance, efficiency and accountability.
 - Only completion of the sweeping rounds remains outstanding
- Continued development of enforcement actions against environmental crime
 - This is an ongoing issue
- Work with the SWP to tackle waste related issues
 - Again, this is an ongoing issue

- Continued work on the Greenspace Strategy and Open space needs assessment
 - *The initial audit of sites has been completed*
- Keeping South Somerset clean, green and well maintained!
 - *Ongoing!*

What's coming next?

- The service is currently carrying out the winter maintenance of the planted areas across the district, and a program of re-landscaping of 'tired' shrub planted areas will be followed
- Summer maintenance will soon follow
- Compilation of annual Performance figures
- Completion of the service review

Financial Implications

All issues highlighted in the report will be achieved within service budgets, including the allocated £10,000 from the Area North Service Enhancement Budget. There are no additional financial implications arising from the service enhancement programme.

Implications to Corporate Priorities

- 2. Maintain above 75% the people satisfied with the way the council runs the district
- 4. Be a top 25% performer in the National Indicators appropriate to South Somerset
- 16. Maintain above 80% the people satisfied with their neighbourhoods as a place to live

Area Priorities

- 8 – Promote education and voluntary action to protect and enhance the environment and / or promote access to the countryside
- 9 - Promote and influence increased local environmental quality through better co-ordination of services or enhancements
- 10 – promote and increase levels of community safety and cohesion, reducing crime and the fear of crime through targeted action on local priorities

Background Papers: *Progress reports to Area Committees on the Performance of the Streetscene Service*