

Joint Area Committee North – 28 October 2009

9. Report for Area North Committee on the Performance of the Streetscene Service (Executive Decision) (Excepted Business)

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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 January 2009 – September 2009.

Recommendation

1. Members are invited to comment on the report
2. Members are invited to consider a service enhancement of £10,000, from the 2009-10 programme; delegated to the Streetscene Manager, to provide additional services within Area North, the actual allocations to be agreed in consultation with ward members and town & parish councils.

Report

Since the last report, the service has focussed on finishing the previous financial years work programs and delivering the new seasons workload. We believe that we have achieved some satisfying results; the main points regarding work in Area North, are listed below: -

- Improved our performance in NI 195 result of 8.6% (street cleaning)
- Improved our NI 196 performance result (fly tipping) to Level 1 which is classed as very effective
- Achieved BVPI 218 a & b (Abandoned Vehicles) performance results of 100%
- The service also dealt with 3 major flooding incidents in 2008/9, delivering approx 5,000 sandbags across the district
- We have renewed the contracts for the maintenance of Critical Ordinary Watercourses with the Environment Agency & the maintenance contract for the Cartgate Picnic Area with InterRoute
- Achieved 2* ratings from internal audits of our Horticultural Services, Lufton Stores, Open Space Management and Fleet Management & the Operators Licence.
- Achieved the savings targets required from the service

Operational Works

From a horticultural perspective -It's been a hard season!

The ongoing rain through the summer has meant that mowing operations have been relentless with grass growing at levels which we normally only see in spring, carried on throughout the season. This has also had the knock on effect of making herbicide applications difficult to schedule, as we can't spray in the rain! However, with all these

things taken into account, the team has responded brilliantly and the Area has looked well tended throughout.

In the office, we are working on our costings and efficiencies of operations, investigating technologies, which will help us to work 'smarter'.

Earlier in the year we attended the Area North forum, which we found to be a pleasant & useful meeting and prompted some interesting discussions.

Our responsive team has been kept busy on a range of matters throughout the year including clearing up after a traveller incursion in Montacute.

The service has continued with staff training, and we are proud that 10 of our street cleaners are starting an NVQ2 in Waste Management.

As well as this, horticultures Vicky Hamilton, Mark Rendell & Chris Meil recently passed their NVQ level 2 in Amenity Horticulture.

Vicky also achieved the BTEC National Award in Horticulture obtaining distinction level pass, and Sarah Pinder (Nursery Apprentice) completed the RHS advanced in Amenity Horticulture.

Jon Brown has recently completed a Tree risk assessment course in order that the team has that capability to continue with the tree risk management program, and Jon will be studying more on this topic over the coming months.

In addition to this, the service also has a dozen staff involved in the Skills for life program coordinated by HR.

Streetscene also actively works with agencies to encourage the long term unemployed to gain work experience, and this year we have enabled approx 20 people to gain experience through the County Training program, and we wish them well in their search for employment

National Indicators

Following changes to the streetcleaning service, we are delighted to show that our street cleaning performance (NI195) has again improved from 12.6% in 2007/8 to 8.6% 2008/9. As always, we are aiming to deliver further improvements in this area of service in 2009/10.

In addition to this we have also improved our NI196 score (for managing fly tipping) from level 2 in 2007/8 (effective) to level 1 (very effective). This means that we have taken more enforcement actions against fly tips, and have received less instances of fly tipping compared to the previous year. This is especially pleasing for us, as it follows a reorganisation of the way in which we respond to responsive street cleaning works. My thanks go to the team who tackle this area of work.

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.

December 2008 > March 2009

Month	Location	Results
December	Ash, Tintinhull, Kingsdon & Chilthorne Domer	56% Good 33% Fair 11% Fail
January	Somerton, High Ham	63% Good 30% Fair 7% Fail
February	Long Load & Martock	67% Good 33% Fair 0% Fail
March	Drayton, Long Sutton, Langport & Huish Episcopl	69% Good 12% Fair 19% Fail
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance	92% Pass, 58% at Good Level with 8% fail	
<i>Note – the first part of this years results were reported in the last Streetscene update report</i>		
April 2009 > July 2009		
April	Norton & Stoke sub Hamdon, East Chinnock & Montacute	59% Good 37% Fair 4% Fail
May	Tintinhull & Chilthorne Domer	46% Good 45% Fair 9% Fail
June	Ilton, Fivehead, West Lambrook & Barrington	100% Good 0% Fair 0% Fail
July	South Petherton, Ash, Curry Rivel & Shepton Beauchamp	57% Good 32% Fair 11% Fail
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance	94% Pass, 65.5% at Good Level with 6% fail	

Enforcement

Our officers are currently working on the development and introduction of Dog Control Orders that will alter the control of dogs & dog fouling, anywhere on publicly accessible land in the district.

A workshop was held with Parish Clerks & Members in September to discuss & consult on this issue.

The Orders would also enable us to:

- Ban dogs from certain areas - e.g. play areas & sports pitches during playing seasons.
- Impose restrictions on any publicly accessible land which is either free to use, or paid to access. At the moment we can only control dog fouling in built up areas, however the DCO's would enable us to expand this power.
- Enable authorised officers to instruct someone to put their dog on a lead
- Enable us to can designate areas where dogs must be kept on a lead
- Allow us to restrict on how many dogs can be walked at any one time by one person.

Officers have continued with regular patrolling across the area, teaming up with PCSO`s to carry out joint patrolling covering a range of issues, in particular in the Ham Hill area where officers teamed up with staff from the PDSA to jointly tackle dog fouling while offering free health checks for peoples dogs, patrolling has also been carried out at a wide range of locations across the Area. In addition to this, litter picks have also been coordinated at South Petherton, Kingsbury Episcopi, Curry Mallet, Somerton, Long Sutton & Norton sub Hamdon.

As usual one of our most common areas of calls is regarding abandoned vehicles and our performance on the speed with which we respond to these is measured via BVPI 218a & b, I am delighted to inform members that the team has achieved 100%performance on this work, with every reported vehicle dealt with within the set timescales.

Parish Lengthsman

The Parish Lengthsman scheme has once more been funded and is performing well. To quote the scheme administrator.....

“What did we do before we had 'David' in the village? He carries out all those jobs that really need to be done to improve the village but are the small jobs that never quite reach the top of anyone else's list. He is a cheerful, co-operative worker, always keen to come up with suggestions of his own as to the best way to achieve an objective. He can be trusted to work unsupervised and, indeed, without specific tasking. He has a refreshing attitude to his role as Lengthsman and seems to achieve a lot in the time he has available in each village. Our villages are now cleaner, more attractive village since the start of the scheme.”

I think this says more than I ever can about the scheme.

Cartgate Picnic Area

The maintenance of the area has progressed following changes to the contract, and more of the cleansing works have been brought into the teams work in order to improve the quality of the service being provided.

In addition to this, we are currently working to achieve National accreditation required for the renewal of this contract with the highways agency.

Actions following the last report

The service was 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. Winter maintenance was completed and a number of beds were re-landscaped.

Summer maintenance will soon follow.

The summer maintenance programs were introduced in March and have been the focus of the summer.

Compilation of annual Performance figures.

As discussed, we're very pleased with the results so far this year.

Completion of the service review.

Parts of the service have been reviewed and changes have been made where appropriate, this process is continuous!

What's coming next?

Fencing works at Hills Lane in Martock.

Extensive bulb planting works with 34,000 bulbs being planted at Towns & Parishes across the area, including sites at Ilchester, Compton Dundon, Somerton, Huish & Kingsbury Episcopi, Barton St David, Keinton Mandeville, Langport, Pitney, North Vale, Fivehead, Montacute, South Petherton, the Seavingtons & Barrington.

Tree planting at sites across the Area.

Winter maintenance works, starting with the maintenance of watercourses and including winter grass cutting.

Landscaping works at Abbey fields in Curry Rivel.

Hedging work at Piece Lane in Shepton Beauchamp.

Focussing on rural road litter clearance.

Financial Implications

The Area North Service Enhancement budget for 2009-10 is £40,000. Allocating £10,000 to streetscene services will leave £30,000 for the current financial year.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

Increasing resident satisfaction with the built environment from 44% (2006) to 60% by 2012.

Background Papers: Progress report to Area Committees on Performance of Streetscene
