

Area North Committee – 14 December 2011

10. 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 – November 2011.

Public Interest

The report is to inform interested parties what the Streetscene team has been doing in Area North since May this year, and to indicate what the service will be focussing on over the coming months.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report.

Report

The major activities and achievements of the services so far for this period, that affect Area North are listed below.

Service Restructure

As a result of the 4% savings that services had to make this year, the Streetscene Team had to lose a Co-ordinator post and in order to effectively manage the service; a restructure has been carried out.

The result of this restructure is the 'splitting' of the joint supervision of horticulture and street cleaning. Instead, Environmental Enforcement and Street Cleansing are being led by Phil Jones and Mike Gottlieb, with Chris Holley taking over the running of the Cartgate Picnic site. In addition to this, Chris and Mike's roles have changed so they are also part operational rather than simply managerial.

On the horticultural side, Rich Davy continues to lead on the 'contract' side of our service and oversee the grassland maintenance in Area South, with Jon Brown taking the lead role in the management and maintenance of the services tree stock, flood alleviation work and grassland maintenance in areas North, East and West. Ian Lock leads our landscape Yeovil in Bloom teams which have been merged, while also managing the shrub bed / hedge cutting teams across the district.

Both Jon & Ian share their time between traditional supervisory roles and operational roles with their respective teams. Initial indications are that this restructure is proving to be successful, although at times it is also quite challenging for those involved to effectively balance their time.

As a result of these changes, the service has unfortunately had to stop carrying out the NI195 inspections (National Indicator), Local Area Quality inspections and Customer Satisfaction Surveys that have previously been carried out and reported on. We will however, continue to inspect standards of service for management purposes; while meetings with the supervisory team can still be arranged directly, should you wish to discuss or inspect matters in your towns or parishes.

Lean Review

Following the recent changes to the service detailed above, the enforcement and cleansing parts of Streetscene have recently started a 'Lean Review' which will form the focus for the team over the coming few months, and an update of the process and its findings will be reported to the committee in due course.

Operational Works

Horticultural

We have as usual, focussed on summer maintenance since May, with grass cutting and vegetation control forming the main focus for the teams. Having restructured the mowing to account for the reduction in funding for the maintenance of highway verges we have been pleased to have kept the Area looking acceptable despite this reduction in service.

The service has recently taken delivery of five replacement mowers, which form the front line of our mowing operation. We have acquired a mixture of mower types this time and have a mixture of both rotary and cylinder type mowers chosen to provide the best possible outcome for the service in terms of cost and quality of cut.

We have started the winter maintenance program on both SSDC controlled and Environment Agency watercourses and continued with the fortnightly inspections of the trash screens in the Area.

In addition to the routine works listed above, the service is currently working with parish and town councils to carry out spring bulb planting across the district. In Area North the parishes of Compton Dundon, Montacute, Stoke sub Hamdon, Martock, Ilton, South Petherton, Seavingtons, Drayton, Huish Episcopi, Langport, Somerton, Curry Rivel, Curry Mallet & Fivehead have received bulbs which will enhance the area over the coming years. Ash and Long Load received bulbs that they have planted themselves.

Other works that will be carried out this winter includes:

- Tree planting and the installation of an improved pathway at St Marys Close in Huish Episcopi. This will enable easier access for all to the area.
- Installing new fencing at Barrymore Close in Huish Episcopi to replace the existing old fencing and thus improve the health and safety of the site.

Street cleaning

As usual, the main thrust of the cleansing service has been the routine litter picking, bin emptying and road sweeping across the Area, with the removal of fly tips keeping our responsive team gainfully occupied. A change to the service this year has been the reduction in highway weed control with only one full application of herbicide treatment being carried out, rather than the previous program of two treatments. We have noted that unfortunately this has resulted in a rise in highway weeds, which do detract from the look of the street scene. However at this time we do not have resources to redress this matter.

In the previous report it was brought to members' attention that our street cleaners are now working in pairs and I am pleased to report that this change has largely proven to be a success in many ways and will be continued in the foreseeable future.

The recent months once again saw a traveller incursion at the Cartgate picnic area. This site is controlled by Balfour Beatty who dealt with the 'accommodation' and subsequent removal of the travellers from the site, while our teams worked to keep the site operational and the toilets open for visitors during this time. The contract to maintain the site is due for renewal in June 2012, and we will be reapplying for the maintenance contract once again. Later this year, Steve Antell, one of our team based at the Cartgate picnic area, retires after a long service, and we are currently going through the process of recruiting to this post.

Break Down of Service Requests

The chart below is a break down of the nature of requests received by the service between March and September 2011. During this period you will note that we have a fairly even mix of both routine and responsive type of requests. This is both typical in its nature for the season covered by these figures and reflects the external pressures that the service has faced during this time.

Once again I am pleased to report the relatively low number of complaints received by the service during this period – please note that the figures show the level of complaints district wide, not simply in Area North.

Area North Requests April – September 2011

Job / Month	Apr 11	May 11	Jun 11	Jul 11	Aug 11	Sept 11
Trees (H)	0	0	1	1	3	3
Grass (H)	2	4	5	4	1	1
Hedges (H)	0	3	3	2	2	0
Other (H)	0	1	2	1	0	1
Flytips (SC)	23	29	16	14	18	27
Litter/glass (SC)	3	1	3	3	3	2
Litter Bins (SC)	3	3	5	6	1	0
Household Rubbish (SC)	1	0	3	1	10	0
Needles (SC)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sandbags (SC)	0	0	0	0	1	0
Dead Animals (SC)	7	6	5	6	4	9
Graffiti (SC)	0	1	1	1	1	0
Sweeping (SC)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dog Fouling (SC)	0	0	2	0	1	0
Strays (E)	1	9	3	5	5	0

Job / Month	Apr 11	May 11	Jun 11	Jul 11	Aug 11	Sept 11
Vehicles (E)	2	1	2	3	1	1
Other (E)	2	1	2	4	2	2
Flyposting (E)	0	1	0	0	0	0
Dog Fouling (E)	5	0	2	2	3	2
TOTAL						321

(H) Horticulture Requests = 40

(SC) Street Cleaning Requests = 220

(E) Enforcement Requests = 61

Service Complaints Statistics

Service / Month	Apr 11	May 11	Jun 11	Jul 11	Aug 11	Sept 11
Street Cleaning	0	0	2	3	0	0
Horticulture	3	3	1	3	2	0
Enforcement	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL						17

(Unfortunately these complaints cannot be broken down into Area)

Financial Implications

All issues highlighted in the report will be achieved within service budgets.

Corporate Priority Implications

- 2.8 Improve Street and environmental cleanliness by reducing levels of graffiti, litter, detritus, fly-tipping and fly-posting
- 2.9 Increase resident satisfaction on country parks, open spaces, street cleaning, car parks and public toilets

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

To be added

Equality and Diversity Implications

To be added

Background Papers: *Previous progress reports to Area Committees on Performance of Streetscene*