

Area West Committee – 17th September 2008

11. Report for Area West Committee on the Performance of the Streetscene Service

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Purpose of the Report

To update and inform the Area West Committee on the performance of the Streetscene Service in the Area for the period October 2007 – September 2008.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the report.

Report

Overall, the service had a successful year in 2007/8 and has achieved a great deal.

We are currently reviewing and implementing a number of changes to the street cleaning service in order to improve the efficiency and performance of our street cleaning teams.

The major achievements of the service so far for this period as they affect Area West, are listed below:-

- Improved BVPI 199a result of 12.6% for the year compared to a BVPI199a result of 25.6% for 2006/7
- BVPI 199 b & c results of 0%, both of which improved from 1% last year
- BVPI199d – fly tipping performance has improved to a good level (an improvement of two places)
- 100% performance on BVPI 218a & b – last year we scored 94% for 218a
- Completed the review of litter & dog waste bins across the district
- The team played a central role in cleaning up Crewkerne following the recent flooding
- Completed the first application of herbicide in line with the street weeds control partnership with Highways
- The service completed the year on budget
- First NI195 inspection result of 15% - *this was previously reported as BVPI 199 a, b & c*
- Introduced dedicated teams in Area West to target specific operations as part of the service review
- We are currently mid way through the first of the pavement sweeping operations that will encompass the whole of the Areas paved areas.

Horticultural & Street Cleaning Operations

During the winter, as well as the normal routine horticultural maintenance & street cleaning works around the Area, the team completed the maintenance of the Councils own, and the Environment Agencies watercourses.

In addition to this, the team carried out further development at Snowdon Park, with the installation of bins and benches, tree and bulb planting on site. Time has also been spent

working with voluntary groups looking at issues such as Minnows Pond in Chard, shrub beds in Ilminster and street furniture in Crewkerne.

The team has also delivered the Councils out of hours service, carrying out a range of tasks from collecting homeless dogs through to working to address flooding problems in various locations.

This winter, the team carried out a complete grass cut of all areas and we believe that this made a great difference to the look of the Area over both the winter & early spring periods.

Some bulb planting was carried out in Snowdon Park and this winter we plan to carry out further plantings at a number of sites including Broadway, Ilminster, Buckland St Mary, Hinton St George, Ashill as well as further plantings in Chard. These plans follow the great interest that resulted from an invite that was sent to towns & parishes, asking for invitations to naturalise bulbs in their local neighbourhoods.

Following the work that was done to collate service information regarding litter & dog waste bins, we are in the process of changing the way that we deliver the front line street cleaning service, moving from a 'do all in a geographical area' approach, to a much more structured, task specific service delivery, with specific teams delivering individual functions.

The aims of this approach are to reduce non-productive time, improve customer satisfaction levels through improving communication to the customer after they have requested works, improve the routing of works, better record keeping and projections of when works will take place and improve our ability to assess teams daily workloads which will in turn enable us to make informed decisions on what can be achieved.

This is a considerable piece of work, however, we have already implemented specific teams to service bins, carry out pavement sweeping and routine litter picking. We are close to deploying a specific team to tackle responsive works and we are currently working on reviewing our road sweeping processes.

The use of 'hit squads' who have previously targeted deep cleans of towns and villages will recommence during the winter periods, as during the summer months these staff help cover a range of work, such as weed spraying and assisting with holiday cover for staff that work across the district.

We aim to target some of our planned staff training to maximise performance on specific operational issues (such as weed control & working with traffic management on specific highway areas) and we are also working to gain capital backing which would be used to further improve service performance in a number of areas.

Performance Indicators

Following a programme of constant small changes to the street cleaning service, we are pleased to show that our performance in this area has improved considerably from 25.6% in 2006/7 to 12.6% in 2007/8.

We are confident that we can continue to improve our performance in 2008/9 as a result of ongoing improvements that we are making to the service.

This year the performance indicator that reflects this subject changed from BVPI199a, b & c to NI 195 meaning that we are now measured on all of the street cleansing indicators

at the same time and should any of these fail, then our 'score' for the area will reflect this.

NI 196 relates to Fly Tipping and is measured on the number of fly tips reported compared to the previous year, and the number of actions taken against fly tipping, again, this is compared to the previous year. The most desirable situation is a reduction in incidents and an increase in the number of actions taken.

The teams' performance regarding abandoned vehicles (reported as BVPI 218a & b) was exceptional in 2007/8 with improvements made from what was already a very high level of performance. Although the increase in the price of scrap metal has reduced the number of abandoned vehicles, the team still has a lot of work following up on reports of 'neglected vehicles' that are left in various neighbourhoods.

Local Area Quality Inspections

Once again we have carried out monitoring of the overall standards of street cleaning and grounds maintenance via the process of site inspections, which where possible, are carried out in conjunction with the local ward members. The results from these inspections are reported in the table below.

October 2007 – March 2008

Month	Location	Results
October	Ashill - 100% Good Pass Ilminster - 75% Fair Pass, 25% Fail	50% Good 38 % Fair 12% Fail
November	Combe St Nicholas - 100% Fair Buckland St Mary - 60% Good, 40% Fair	30% Good 70% Fair 0% Fail
December	Chiselborough - 20% Good, 80% Fair East Chinnock/West Chinnock - 20% Good, 80% Fair	20% Good 80% Fair 0% Fail
January	Tatworth - 75% Fair, 25% Fail Winsham - 60% Good, 40% Fair	30% Good 57% Fair 13% Fail
February	Dowlish Wake - 50% Good, 50% Fair Broadway - 44% Good, 66% Fair Horton - 20% Good, 80% Fair Kingstone - 100% Fair	48% Good 52% Fair 0% Fail
March	Misterton - 29% Good, 71% Fair Merriott - 23% Good, 77% Fair Haselbury Plucknett - 20% Good, 80% Fair	24% Good 76% Fair 0% Fail
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance	96% Pass, 34% at Good Level with 4% fail	

April to August 2008

Month	Location	Results
April	Chiselborough - 17% Good, 83% Fair East Chinnock - 44% Good, 66% Fair West Chinnock - 20% Good, 80% Fair AVERAGE: 32% Good, 68% Fair	32% Good 68% Fair 0% Fail
May	Ashill - 100% Good Ilminster - 25% Good, 50% Fair, 25% Fail	62% Good 25% Fair 13% Fail
June	Chard - 22% Good, 78% Fair	22% Good 78% Fair 0% Fail
July	Winsham - 75% Good, 25% Fair Tatworth - 25% Good, 50% Fair, 25% Fail Wayford - 100% Good	67% Good 25% Fair 8% Fail
August	August Results - Not Completed Yet.	% Good % Fair % Fail
Target Set	90% Pass, 50% at Good Level	
Overall Performance to date	95% Pass, 46% at Good Level with 5% fail	

Enforcement

The enforcement team has once again been focussing on the issues of stray dogs and abandoned vehicles.

The team has recently acquired holding kennels at the depot, which will further improve the team's service to the public while at the same time controlling costs. We believe that this is achievable as dogs, which were previously collected and taken straight to the kennels, can now be held at the depot and potentially returned to their owners directly without incurring kennelling costs – a minimum of £60 per dog. A reduced level of charge for dogs returned directly to their owners is being considered.

In addition to this, a considerable amount of time has been allocated to tackling littering over the Area, speaking with and making agreements with shopkeepers & businesses regarding litter control adjacent to their premises. This work will continue over the coming months with a focus on tackling cigarette litter being dropped outside of various premises across the area.

I am pleased to report that the work that was previously done in conjunction with planning enforcement to tackle fly posting has been a great success, and my thanks to those who were involved in this process.

Transport

Following the move of the Councils waste service to the Somerset Waste Partnership, the transport section has moved to become part of the Streetscene team.

As a result we have become very involved in work aimed at transport related carbon reduction, and a number of proposals are being produced which will contribute to improving the efficiency and carbon footprint of the service.

Actions following the last report

- A review of bin provision and development of a policy covering the installation, maintenance and level of provision of bins across the District.
This collation of information is now completed and is being used to identify areas of need
- Ditch maintenance works – *completed*
- Installation of pavement sweeper work schedules – *completed & implemented*
- A review of the street cleaning service has been started.
- Progress on the Greenspace Strategy and Open space needs assessment will be made – *The work on the strategy has started and is being led by Steve Fox*
- Clarifying refuse related enforcement with the SWP – *This work is underway and will be ongoing until secure arrangements are embedded on a range of service related issues*
- Continuation of the work being done by the Responsive Works team – *they have completed a number of projects and are now starting the second herbicide application on highway related weeds in specific areas of the Area as agreed with partners.*

What's coming next?

- Complete the review of street cleansing operations
- Continued development of enforcement actions against environmental crime
- Work with the SWP to tackle waste related issues
- Completion of the Greenspace Strategy and Open space needs assessment
- Winter bulb planting programmes
- Risk assessments of the Council's tree stock in Area West
- Continuing to keep South Somerset clean, green and well maintained!

Financial Implications

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

Implications for Corporate Priorities

- Deliver well managed cost effective services valued by our customers
- Ensure safe sustainable communities
- Promote a balanced natural & built environment

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