

FOR PUBLICATION

AGENDA ITEM

Street Scene Performance

MEETING: **Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

DATE: 16th January 2014

REPORT BY Environmental Services Manager

WARD ALL

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY: ALL

FOR PUBLICATION

BACKGROUNDS PAPERS FOR PUBLIC REPORTS

None

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform members of the progress in delivering the route optimisation project for street cleansing and to discuss the Council's performance in maintaining a high quality street scene.

2.0 Background

2.1 In March 2011 Cabinet approved a detailed improvement plan for Street Scene. During 2012-13 the delivery of the plan was a project on the corporate plan. Members received a closing report on that on 27th June 2013. It was agreed then this committee would continue to receive a bi-annual report and, in particular, monitor the corporate plan measures and projects relating to street scene performance.

2.2 Cabinet approved invest to save funding to procure route optimisation software to enable a review of cleansing rounds and ensure the most efficient integration between mechanical and manual cleaning across the borough.

2.3 Attached as **appendix A** is the cleansing review report which includes the details of the route optimisation.

3.0 Progress

3.1 Work on route optimisation is progressing well as shown within **appendix A**. This demonstrates that all targets are being met on all the major cleansing routes. All mechanical and manual routes have been imported on to the system and the rounds are currently being tested and refined.

3.2 Cashable savings of £95,700 were achieved together with efficiency gains of £7,500.

3.3 National Indicator 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, weed growth and dog fouling) has been adapted for the current corporate plan. The latter two were introduced in August 2011.

3.4 We assess quarterly in line with our own performance management system. Table 1 outlines the targets and results for all of our performance indicators.

3.5 Overall, performance has exceeded the original targets thus more stringent and demanding targets have been set this year, wherever possible. Whilst the issuing of fixed penalty notices should not be subject to a “target” for ethical reasons, for budget purposes we must establish a baseline.

3.6 A summary of key performance indicators is shown below

Table 1 2013-14 Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target (pro-rata)	Actual	Period	Comments
Litter	97%	97%	9 Month	Target met
Detritus	94%	89%	9 Month	Target not met
Weed growth	None	82%	9 Month	No target set.
Dog Fouling	None	94%	9 Month	No target set.
Litter Fixed Penalty Notice	150	106	9 Month	Target not met
Fouling Fixed Penalty Notice	30	21	9 Month	Target not met
Grass cutting	<49	41	Full Season	Target met

complaints			March-Sept	
Location full of litter	<36	12	9 Month	Target met
Area needs sweeping	<18	6	9 Month	Target met
Dog bin overflowing	<36	12	9 Month	Target met

- 3.7 The LEQS indicators on detritus are listed as below target. However, these results are drawn from surveys that have been undertaken for the first time by a newly trained member of staff so there may be some discrepancy between the perceptions of the current and previous officers. Additionally, there were no surveys undertaken in quarter two (July-September) due to the transfer of responsibilities under the restructure and arguably detritus is less evident during the summer months. Looking forward, the new sweeping routes applied following the recent route optimisation process allow for increased sweeping frequencies to be achieved in residential areas which will have a significant effect on the levels of detritus build up.
- 3.8 The number of fixed penalty notices issued has fallen over the last 12 months. Over the last four years cigarette litter formed a significant percentage of all littering that the Enforcement Officers observed. Recent Department of Health studies suggest that up to 18% of smokers now smoke electronic cigarettes, obviously these do not create the same litter as traditional cigarettes. This is reflected in the LEQ surveys which record that many locations are free of cigarette litter.
- 3.9 The Enforcement Officers are becoming more of a deterrent as we see much more compliance during our patrols; there is less cigarette litter, and dog fouling seems to be less common. During 2013 there was a 10% reduction in complaints about dog fouling (397 to 359). However this means that the EO's need to focus on more structured patrols, fitting around their numerous other functions. These officers have taken on some of the work of the Abandoned Vehicles/Clean Streets Officer who was made redundant as part of the service restructure. There has been an increase of 30% of reported vehicles so far this year, with a 200% increase in the number of notices served. We plan to have more enforcement action days when we bring the area officers together to target problem locations for an extended period of time.
- 3.10 We have achieved four Green Flag Awards. Of particular note is the success with Poolsbrook Country Park and Brimington Crematorium recently adding to those already achieved at Queen's Park and Holmebrook Valley Park. We will be applying for Green Flag status at Eastwood Park by the end of January 2014 following this park's recent refurbishment.

- 3.11 The restructure of the Environment Service was approved by Cabinet in March 2013 and the new Environmental Services Team, incorporating waste, building cleansing, bereavement services and green space management has been established. The Manager started in late November 2013.
- 3.12 The Neighbourhood Environment Action Team (NEAT) have been working on part of Barrow Hill housing area.
- 3.13 The HRA share of the NEAT team funding is still set at 80% as agreed with Housing. This position will be reviewed again at year end but at the moment it seems to accurately reflect the proportion of work completed.
- 3.14 During September 2013 the “Are You Being Served” postal questionnaire was sent to a random sample of 300 residents. 758 residents responded and the relevant results are shown in Table 2. Where possible, comparator data from the 2008 Place Survey is provided. Traditionally this “perception” survey was undertaken every three years. The Council has not yet determined if and when to repeat it. Where we have used the LGA questions, comparisons will be made with other participating authorities when the data becomes available in April.

Table 2 Satisfaction Survey Performance

Indicator	2008	2013	Comments
Borough free from litter and refuse	49.5%	60.5%	A marked improvement since the Citizen’s Panel assessment of 2008.
Parks and open spaces	65.5%	73.5%	Marked improvement
Working to make the area cleaner and greener (excluding don’t knows)		75.7%	

4.0 Matters arising from previous meetings

- 4.1 On 18th April 2013 this committee was consulted on proposals to deal with juvenile offenders of environmental crimes. Proposals to revise our

enforcement policy and develop a policy of restorative justice for damage to Council property are being prepared for Cabinet.

4.2 At Eastwood Park the signage and dog control order is now in place.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 In the updated corporate plan for 2012-2015 it is proposed that we have set a target for the satisfaction with cleanliness which will replace the "NI 195" style observational surveys.

5.2 The corporate plan also sets a target of having four Green Flag awards; as per the comments at 3.9 this has been achieved. The prestigious award has been maintained at Queen's Park and Holmebrook Valley Park and gained for Poolsbrook Country Park and the Crematorium. Following the investment in Eastwood Park, it is anticipated that this will be the next park for which Green Flag status will be sought.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Committee receives and monitors the progress with ongoing actions and improvements in service delivery.

6.2 Committee considers future performance monitoring of local environmental quality

DARRAN WEST
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT

For further information on this report, please contact Mel Henley on ext 5120 or Russell Sinclair on ext 5397.