

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Street Cleansing – Update Report.

**Meeting/Date:** Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities & Environment)  
– 1st November 2016  
Cabinet – 17th November 2016

**Executive Portfolio:** Councillor Robin Carter – Executive Councillor for the Environment, Street Scene and Operations

**Report by:** Matt Chudley – Operations Manager (Environmental Services)

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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**Executive Summary:**

1. The report provides an update on the street cleansing activities delivered by the integrated Street Scene Service and outlines proposals to realign the service delivery arrangements following 9 months of operating to the Service Specification for Street Cleansing approved by the Cabinet in January 2016.
2. The scope of the street cleansing works provided by the integrated Street Scene Service area as follows:

| <b>Street Cleansing Functions</b>  |
|--|
| • Cleansing of Highway and adjacent verge, amenity planted areas and open grass areas. |
| • Litter bin emptying.   |
| • Cleansing of gullies.  |
| • Cleansing of Industrial Estates.   |
| • Removal of fly tipped materials from Council owned land and the Highway.             |
| • Removal of graffiti and flyposting that is offensive or on a Public Building.        |

3. This is the first year such a formal performance management regime has been applied to street cleansing activities and it evidences that real progress is being made towards delivering the specified service standards in the Street Cleansing Service Specifications.
4. The Street Scene Service management team based on the performance outturn have reviewed the current service delivery arrangements for street cleansing and are proposing the following realignments to service delivery arrangements:

- a) Creation of a three operative reactive team to deal with ad hoc works. This team will also have responsibilities for programmed works of weed ripping to build on the improved weed treatment programme, leaf clearance and litter picking of A1/A14 slip roads and roundabouts only. This will be achieved through the reorientation of the work regimes of the Highways Team.
  - b) Following a review of the 'beat sheets' cleansing of additional key footpaths and cycle routes will be added to be delivered within the existing resource basis as productivity gains.
  - c) Creation of an annual programme for a deep clean of all adopted residential areas District wide to be delivered within the existing resource base as productivity gains.
  - d) Absorbing the litter bins currently emptied by the Waste Service into street cleansing rounds. This will create a clearer reporting stream on litter bin issues and a clearer line of accountability to residents.
  - e) Realignment of channel sweeping to bimonthly for rural areas; monthly for towns; and weekly for high profile areas, (town centre sweeping remains unchanged). This is proposed following a review of the actual sweepings being collected on the current sweeping frequencies and this evidences that moving from sweeping every four weeks to every eight weeks in the villages will still deliver the specified service standards. This will allow the redeployment of resources to activities such as weed pulling and deep cleansing of residential areas.
  - f) Revised weekend working arrangements in the winter months with Saturday only full weekend working; with a Team Leader on call for emergencies on Sunday mornings. This will give us additional capacity in the working week for the proposed enhancements detailed above, a) to e).
  - g) Cessation of loan working in rural areas by doubling up work teams and merging beats. This will allow more efficient working and more litter picking to be done whilst emptying litterbins.
  - h) Standardisation of replacement litterbins across the District to get better value for money.
5. The proposed realignment of service delivery will be clear enhancement to the current service delivery arrangements and will be delivered within the existing resources base.

**Recommendations:**

1. The review of the performance of the Street Scene Service in the delivery of street cleansing activities detailed in this report gives the Panel the opportunity to appraise the impact of previous scrutiny work and to influence the future development of service delivery arrangements for street cleansing activities.
2. The Cabinet is recommended to endorse the proposed re-alignments of street cleansing service delivery arrangements outlined in the report.

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the street cleansing functions delivered by the integrated Street Scene Service and outlines proposals to realign the service delivery arrangements following 9 months of operating to the Service Specification for Street Cleansing approved by the Cabinet in January 2016.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current service delivery arrangements were endorsed by the Cabinet in January 2016 and they have been developed to deliver the service delivery requirements and standards set out in the Service Specifications for Street Cleaning. The current service delivery arrangements were a fundamentally remodelling of previous service delivery arrangements for street cleansing and involved the introduction of working on an area basis. The purpose being to introduce a more holistic and customer focused approach. This included the following:

- Area based management arrangements for the service;
- Area staff deployment arrangements for street cleansing, specifically the areas to be maintained by each team;
- New mechanical sweeping regimes to optimise the use of capital equipment;
- More comprehensive arrangements for weed treatment.

- 2.2 The scope of the street cleansing works provided by the integrated Street Scene Service area as follows:

| Street Cleansing Functions   |
|--|
| • Cleansing of Highway and adjacent verge, amenity planted areas and open grass areas. |
| • Litter bin emptying.   |
| • Cleansing of gullies.  |
| • Cleansing of Industrial Estates.   |
| • Removal of fly tipped materials from Council owned land and the Highway.             |
| • Removal of graffiti and flyposting that is offensive or on a Public Building.        |

- 2.3 The **Area Based Staff Deployment Arrangements:** Detailed overleaf in Table 1 are the current area based staff deployment arrangements for street cleansing:

**Table 1: Area Based Staff Deployment Arrangements for Street Cleansing Activities**

| <b>Street Cleansing</b>  | <b>Team Leader</b> | <b>Driver/ Operatives</b> | <b>Operatives</b> | <b>Total Staffing</b> |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>South Zone:</b>   |                    |                           |                   |                       |
| Team Leaders/Road Sweeper Drivers                              | 2                  | 0                         | 0                 | 2                     |
| Street Orderly – Huntingdon                                    | 0                  | 0                         | 1                 | 1                     |
| Street Orderly - St Neots                                      |                    |                           | 1                 | 1                     |
| Precinct Sweeper - Huntingdon (with extended cleansing routes) | 0                  | 1                         | 0                 | 1                     |
| Precinct Sweeper - St Neots (with extended cleansing routes)   | 0                  | 1                         | 0                 | 1                     |
| Response Team – Huntingdon                                     | 0                  | 1                         | 1                 | 2                     |
| Response Team - St Neots                                       | 0                  | 1                         | 1                 | 2                     |
| Response Team - Rural Areas                                    | 0                  | 1                         | 1                 | 2                     |
| Support Resource - Rural Areas                                 | 0                  | 1                         | 0                 | 1                     |
| <b>Sub-total (South Zone)</b>                                  | <b>2</b>           | <b>6</b>                  | <b>5</b>          | <b>13</b>             |
| <b>North Zone:</b>   |                    |                           |                   |                       |
| Team Leaders/Road Sweeper Drivers                              | 2                  | 0                         | 0                 | 3                     |
| Street Orderly - St Ives                                       |                    |                           | 1                 | 1                     |
| Precinct Sweeper - St Ives (with extended cleansing routes)    | 0                  | 1                         | 0                 | 1                     |
| Response Team - St Ives  | 0                  | 1                         | 1                 | 2                     |
| Response Team - Ramsey & Villages                              | 0                  | 1                         | 1                 | 2                     |
| Support Resource - Rural Areas                                 | 0                  | 1                         | 0                 | 1                     |
| <b>Sub-total (North Zone)</b>                                  | <b>2</b>           | <b>4</b>                  | <b>3</b>          | <b>9</b>              |
|  |                    |                           |                   |                       |
| <b>Highways Team (laybys, arterial routes &amp; A1/A14)</b>    | <b>0</b>           | <b>2</b>                  | <b>3</b>          | <b>5</b>              |
| <b>Parks &amp; Play Areas Team</b>                             | <b>1</b>           | <b>1</b>                  | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>              |
| <b>Total Staffing</b>  | <b>5</b>           | <b>13</b>                 | <b>12</b>         | <b>30</b>             |

2.4 **Mechanical Sweeping Regimes:** To better deliver Environmental Protection Act standards and to optimise the use of the existing capital equipment to ensure improved value for money in the service delivery arrangements new mechanical sweeping regimes were introduced. These were based on four weekly sweeping

cycles achieved through better and extended use of precinct sweepers in the market towns.

- 2.5 **Arrangements for Weed Treatment:** A specialist sub-contractor has been retained to undertake a cyclic programme of weed treatment across the District based on all towns and villages having three treatments annually. This was funded from the realignment of existing resources within the Operations Service.
- 2.6 **The Highways Team (laybys, arterial routes & A1/A14) Team:** The scope of work undertaken by the team has had to be reduced after two significant health and safety near misses for the team when working on the A1. Consequently the work of the team has been reduced down to cleansing of slip roads on a six week frequency, cleansing of laybys and arterial routes. Options for retaining a specialist highways contractor to carry out an annual cleanse of the A1 and A14 involving a rolling road closure is being explored.
- 2.7 Detailed in Table 2 below are the performance targets set for the next five years in the 2016/17 Service Plan for the Operations Service for street cleansing activities.

**Table 2: Adopted Performance Targets for the Street Scene Cleansing**

| <b>Key Performance Indicator – Corporate Plan</b>                   | <b>2016/17</b> | <b>2017/18</b> | <b>2018/19</b> | <b>2019/20</b> | <b>2020/21</b> |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Street cleansing works to standard (new).                           | 80%            | 82%            | 86%            | 88%            | 90%            |
| NI195 results for street cleansing, (graded A-B) (new).             | 80%            | 85%            | 90%            | 92%            | 94%            |
| Street cleansing service requests resolved in 5 working days (new). | 80%            | 82%            | 86%            | 88%            | 90%            |
| Residents satisfied with street cleansing services (new).           | 60%            | 64%            | 68%            | 72%            | 75%            |

- 2.8 The performance of street cleansing activities is measured through the following performance indicators:
- The number of service requests for work received from residents through the Call Centre.
  - The resolution of these service requests within the target time of 5 working days.
  - The number of formal complaints received from residents through the Call Centre.
  - The results of independent site inspections of work completed on site against the set service standards set in the Street Cleansing Service Specification. The inspections are based on NI195 Audits that tie back to the standards set (A to D) in the Environmental Protection Act. The performance target set for 2016/17 is that 80% of sites when inspected must be at Standard A or B. Going forward it is proposed to enter into reciprocal auditing arrangements with neighbouring councils to further test the quality of service being delivered.
- 2.9 The outcome of performance to the end of August 2016 against these performance indicators is set out in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Performance Outturn for Street Cleansing Activities to August 2016**

| Performance Indicator  | Annual Target                                    | Actual Performance   |
|--|--|--|
| Service requests for street activities.  | 80% to be received within 5 working days.        | 341 service requests of which 79.2% have been resolved within 5 working days.                        |
| The number of formal complaints received from residents regarding street cleansing.  | Less than 3 per month.                           | From April 2016 to August 2016 there have been no complaints received regarding street cleansing.    |
| Independent inspection results of street cleansing works to standard when completed. | 80% of works on site to standard when inspected. | 3,139 audits have been completed from April 2016 to August 2016 of which 90.7% work was to standard. |

2.10 This is the first year such a formal performance management regime has been applied to Street Scene activities and it evidences that real progress is being made towards delivering the specified service standards in the Street Cleansing Service Specifications.

### 3 PROPOSED SERVICE DLEIVERY REALIGNMENTS

3.1 The Street Scene Service management team based on the performance outturn proposing the following realignment to service delivery arrangements:

- a) Creation of a three operative reactive team to deal with ad hoc works. This team will also have responsibilities for programmed works of weed ripping to build on the improved weed treatment programme, leaf clearance and litter picking of A1/A14 slip roads and roundabouts only. This will be achieved through the reorientation of the work regimes of the Highways Team.
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- f) Revised weekend working arrangements in the winter months with Saturday only full weekend working; with a Team Leader on call for emergencies on Sunday mornings. This will give additional capacity in the working week for the proposed enhancements detailed above, a) to e).

- g) Cessation of loan working in rural areas by doubling up work teams and merging beats. This will allow more efficient working and more litter picking to be done whilst emptying litterbins.
- h) Standardisation of replacement litterbins across the District to get better value for money.

3.2 The proposed realignment of service delivery will be a clear enhancement to the current service delivery arrangements and will be delivered within the existing resources base.

#### **4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**

4.1 Comments of the Panel will be included in the future reports to the Cabinet regarding the delivery of street cleansing activities.

#### **5. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS AND HOW THESE WILL BE ADDRESSED**

5.1 The service specifications, service standards and street cleansing regimes have been developed to reduce the risk of the Council failing to properly protect, develop and maintain the public realm environment of the District.

#### **6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

6.1 Independent monitoring of service standards has been put in place along with standardised performance reporting to be able to evidence the standards of service being delivered.

#### **7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

7.1 The measures contained in this report will contribute to the Corporate Plan as follows:

- a) Further enhancing the built and green environment of the District.
- b) The Operations Service continues becoming more business-like and efficient in the way it delivers services.
- c) The proposed realigned service delivery arrangements will ensure the Operations Service better aligns with the principles and requirements of the Council's Customer Services Strategy.

#### **8. CONSULTATION**

8.1 The service improvement plan adopted by the Operations Service includes a structure of on-going consultation with residents and service users; these will be used to test the performance in respect to the delivery of street cleansing activities detailed in this report from the users' perspective. The performance monitoring results will also be published to evidence to residents that specified service standards are being delivered.

#### **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The proposals for realigning the street cleansing service delivery arrangements will better enable the Council to meet the requirements and environmental maintenance standards of the Environmental Protection Act.

## **10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The proposed realigned street cleansing service delivery arrangements in this report will be delivered within existing resources and are sustainable within the existing resources profile of the Operations Service set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## **11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The outlined service delivery arrangements seek to ensure the delivery of an appropriate and equitable balance in the provision of the detailed environmental activities across the District.

## **12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 12.1 The review of the service delivery arrangements detailed in this report gives the Panel the opportunity to appraise the impact of previous scrutiny work and to influence the future development of service delivery arrangements for key street cleansing activities.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Street Cleansing Service Specification – approved by Cabinet on 12th January 2016.  
Street Scene Scoping Report – approved by Cabinet on 21st April 2016.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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