

Report of Locality Manager (East North East)

Report to Area Committee (Inner North East)

Date: 9th December 2013

Subject: Environmental Services – Half Year Performance Update on the 2013/14 Service Level Agreement

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Chapel Allerton Moortown Roundhay		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

Summary of the main issues:

This report provides a high level half-year update on performance against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Inner North East Area Committee and the East and North-East (ENE) Environmental Locality Team. It covers the period from May to October 2013. The detail will be provided and discussed at the Inner NE Environmental Sub Group, and at ward member meetings where required.

Recommendations:

That the Inner NE Area Committee note the report, comment where progress in delivering the SLA is good/not so good and identify any service developments/priorities it would like to see included in service planning for 2014/15.

Purpose of this report

- 1 This report provides an high level update on performance against the Service Level Agreement between Inner North East Area Committee and the ENE Environmental Locality Team.
- 2 This report covers the six month period from May to October 2013 (i.e. a half-year report).
- 3 The report sets out to give the Area Committee information of the range of functions being delivered across the area during this period against the priorities and commitments set out in the SLA. The report seeks to explain how they are helping make a difference on the ground/at the front line. This includes the continued focus on the agreed approach to target efforts at Environmental Improvement Zones (EIZs).
- 4 The intention of the report is to provide a high level update and for the detail to be discussed at the Environmental Sub Group and overseen by the Area Lead Member for the Environment. The Area Committee is asked to provide a steer to the Sub Group on a particular service/outcome issue that it would like to see a focus on over the next six months.
- 5 The report also provides an opportunity for the Area Committee to influence the service and budget planning process for 2014/15. Views on service developments and continued top priorities for Inner NorthEast are sought, particularly in light of the expected further financial pressures and anticipated merging of services into a new locality team.

Background information

- 6 At its meeting of 30th March 2011, the Executive Board approved revisions to the Area Committee Function Schedules to include a new delegated responsibility for Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services.
- 7 The delegation makes clear the responsibility of Area Committees to negotiate, develop and approve a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the service that achieves as a minimum, the service standards set by Executive Board. The SLA should determine the principles of deployment of the available resources by:
 - the identification of priorities for service delivery annually (both geographical and in terms of types of services delivered)
 - the agreement of the most appropriate approaches to be taken to achieve local environmental cleanliness and quality.
- 8 Services included in the delegation are:
 - Street cleansing (mechanical and manual)
 - Leaf clearing
 - Litter bin emptying
 - Gully cleaning
 - Dog warden services (excluding responsibilities for dangerous dogs);
 - Littering & flytipping regulation;

- Domestic & commercial waste (storage & transportation issues);
- Highways enforcement (abandoned & nuisance vehicles, A-boards on pavements, mud on roads and placards on street furniture);
- Graffiti enforcement
- Overgrown vegetation controls
- Graffiti removal *
- Needle removal *
- Ginnel clearance *
- Public convenience cleaning *

(* note: these services are still organised as a citywide team, but each managed by an agreed manager in a locality)

- 9 To enable this to happen, a restructuring of the previous Streetscene service was undertaken and completed by September 2011. Importantly this separated out the local street cleansing functions from the city's refuse and recycling functions and created for the first time local supervisory/support roles for a key front line service. At the same time, Environmental Action Teams that had previously just focused on enforcement and regulatory practices were brought together with the street cleansing function to create new Locality Teams.
- 10 It is important to note that this splitting of street cleansing staff from refuse services did not include any changes to job descriptions or working hours (inc. shift patterns) etc.
- 11 In early 2013, the "enforcement" element of the Locality Team underwent a restructure to rationalise the various grades/posts and modernise/strengthen the job descriptions to better reflect the needs of Area Committees as identified through the locality based/focused work so far.
- 12 The delegation of the specified environmental services to Area Committee means the majority of service resources, mainly staffing, are devolved to a locality level to a Locality Manager. These resources are organised into three wedge based teams for East North-East, South South-East and West North-West, aligned to Locality Teams. The Service Level Agreement sets out the how those resources will be used to meet the requirements of each Area Committees in order to achieve the outcome of clean streets.

Main issues – performance against the SLA commitments

- 13 The SLA sets out how the service will be developed, organised and delivered in five key sections. Progress over the first six months of the current SLA against each section is summarised below and in the appendices referred to:
 - a) **Service Principles and Priorities**
- 14 The SLA sets out our service principles (inc values and culture change) and priorities. This summarises what we will do to change the way the service delivers, to increase efficiency and become more responsive to local needs.
- 15 Work has continued during the reporting period to work with staff to understand what will help improve their productivity, efficiency and wellbeing at work. This has included:

- Quality appraisals over May/June with all staff across the Locality Team, with an emphasis on the values of the council.
- An increased emphasis on the importance of 1-2-1s with staff
- Team away half-days bringing together our streets operational staff with enforcement staff – with briefings and discussion on the need for a service redesign in 2014 to bring together other environmental services under one new service.
- A number of meetings of an ENE staff working group (mainly streets staff) to look at new ways of working that can take on new responsibilities and deliver a more effective local service.

(b) Delivering the Service Activities

- 15 An analysis of the service requests, legal notices and fixed penalty notices dealt with by the enforcement and regulatory staff in the three Inner North East wards during this reporting period will be provided and discussed through the Environmental Sub Group. Any issues arising will be fed into the next Area Committee meeting.
- 16 A key performance measurement is how many mechanical sweeping blocks we have been scheduled to clean have we actually managed to do in the reporting period, and how that compares to previous reporting periods (i.e. is there an change in service efficiency/reliability?). This is a summary for Inner North East:

Summary of Completion Rates for Mechanical Sweeping Blocks				
Ward/Area	April-Oct 2012		May-Oct 2013	
	No of blocks scheduled	No of blocks completed (%)	No of blocks scheduled	No of blocks completed (%)
Inner NE Area	362	(88%)	312	231 (74%)
	No of service requests for sweeping from residents (May-Oct)		No of service requests for sweeping from residents (May-Oct)	
Inner NE Area	Roads: 33 Paths: 20 Total: 53		Roads: 41 Paths: 20 Total: 61	

- 17 The table clearly shows a reduction in the percentage of programmed blocks completed over the last six months as compared to the same period last year.
- 18 However, it also shows the number of service requests and complaints received from customer/residents has stayed the same for sweeping of paths and increased by only 8 requests for the sweeping of roads (the increase is entirely related to the Chapel Allerton ward, from 16 to 25).

- 19 The main reason for the reduction in programmed blocks covered, is the service has carried two vacancies plus two significant long term sicknesses during this reporting period (out of a total daily mechanical sweeping fleet of 7). The service has historically overspent it's overtime budget to ensure automatic cover for all such absences. This is not sustainable, particularly in the current financial climate. It is not necessary either in terms of ensuring the outcomes promised in the service agreement are delivered. The Locality Team has therefore **reduced the inherited spending on overtime as a means of cover by 50%**, from an inherited level of around £180k per year, to a forecast of about £90k this year. This has been achieved by supervisors/managers making decisions on whether to cover/recover missed blocks based on whether there is actually a need to do so, and by using the improved and closer relationship with ward members to check where capacity days are best used in their ward.
- 20 We believe that taking the two sets of data together shows a future service delivery model would be more effective and efficient based on a team approach in a defined geographical area using local knowledge, common sense and responding to the issues presenting themselves - rather than being built around a programmed, block based approach where performance is judged on the number of blocks swept irrespective of whether they needed sweeping or not.
- 21 However, we do need Member feedback if we are to move forward based on this belief. We would like the Area Committee's view on the performance over the last six months in terms of the cleaner streets outcome. Has the reduction in the amount of cover for missed blocks had a corresponding negative affect on the cleanliness of those streets – or have we managed to make sure that the right blocks that needed covering/recovering have been swept and therefore the cleanliness levels not dropped unacceptably?
- 22 The following are examples of significant work undertaken in each ward during the reporting period which meet localised need:

Chapel Allerton Ward: Leeds West Indian Carnival (August 2013)

This year's Carnival was a huge success, helped no doubt by the hot and sunny weather. Consequently, the amount of litter/debris left over to clear up was probably the most ever. Staff were brought in from across the locality, with support from some staff from other localities, to spend the next day ensuring the area was cleaned up. The photo shown speaks for itself in terms of the efforts and outcome.



Moortown

A number of referrals have been made to the team from local Councillors and residents over the last six months for obstructions to paths caused by overgrown hedges and trees. Staff will try and resolve such issues through common sense and by talking to the "offending" owner, but where necessary legal notices will be served which usually results in the obstruction being cut back/removed. If this approach doesn't work then we will get the work done ourselves and recharge the owner. The

photo shows a case in Moortown that we had referred to us from a local resident who was concerned that pedestrians couldn't safely use the path. Following a conversation with the owner of the hedge which failed to gain cooperation, it was felt necessary to issue a "Section 154 of The Highways Act 1980" notice requiring the work to be done and which gave the owner 28 days to do it. In this case that did the trick as the "after" part of the photo shows.



Roundhay: De-leafing (started October 2013)

This year's operations across ENE started mid-October. The amount and the effect of leaf-fall varies considerably across the nine wards. Priority has to be given to those paths and roads where there would be a genuine danger to pedestrian and vehicles if we did not do what we can to clear leaf fall. The SLAs in ENE make clear that resources will be prioritised to this issue as required.

Inevitably those wards with a higher number of trees lining the streets will receive a greater amount of attention during the times of heavy leaf-fall. Roundhay ward has the most tree lined streets, with a high amount of large, old trees. The work is a mixture of programmed and reactive. The photo shows the additional crew and dedicated vehicle brought in to undertake this seasonal work in action in Roundhay in October.



c) Outcomes

- 23 Revised versions of surveys measuring levels of litter and detritus have been taking place across the city since late 2011. These were initially planned as quarterly but have been revised to half-yearly as they were considered too resource intensive/costly for the value of the data collected. Members have previously questioned the validity of this measure at a more local level.
- 24 The results gathered are still considered statistically sound to be looked at as a general citywide measure, but not robust enough to be analysed at locality or Area Committee level. It therefore only provides the Area Committee (and Executive Board) with sufficient information to aid judgement on whether the delegation of the service has had an effect on the cleanliness of the city as a whole. The figures are provided below but may be of limited interest to the Area Committee in terms of making their own judgements on the delivery of their SLA.

Percentage of clean streets as measured through sample surveys (city wide measure)	
Year	Percentage of Acceptable Streets
2010-11 full year	86.7*
2011-12 full year	85.9*
2012-13 full year	91.5

*note: this is a figure re-calculated using data from a previous methodology of doing the surveys, based on the now obsolete national indicator, NI195.

- 25 Overall, the Locality Manager continues to use the judgement of the ward members/Area Committee and feedback from forums such as the Neighbourhood Improvement Boards to assess whether satisfaction levels are acceptable and where outcomes need improvement.

d) Accountability and Member Influence

- 26 The Locality Team continues to ensure senior manager representation at each of the 3 ward member meetings as required. The meetings provide opportunity for members to be action on priorities/issues that they raise for their wards to be tracked and have discussions on how sweeping routes could be altered and where new litter bins could be best placed.
- 27 The Inner NE Environmental Sub-Group meets quarterly and considers/ raises services issues with the Locality Manager. It also receives updates and questions other services that have an influence on the environmental condition of the area, such as Housing Leeds (ENE) and Continental Landscapes. The group ensures there is appropriate coordination between the Locality Team and these services.
- 28 Individual ward members are referring issues direct to the Locality Team where they are deemed a significant issue that needs a quick response. Feedback from Members continues to be positive and that most issues are being responded to and resolved quickly.
- 29 In terms of accountability for the financial management of resources, an updated financial statement for 2013/14 will be provided to the Environmental Sub Group and the end of year position reported to Area Committee.

- 30 The Locality Team continues to update its own Facebook page to provide another way for interested members, professionals and residents to learn more about what is being done by the service across the locality and improve it's public accountability.

Members are asked to help publicise the Facebook page – it can most easily be found by Googling “*ENE Locality Team Facebook*”



e) Environmental Improvement Zones (EIZs)

- 31 In addition to the overall SLA progress update provided, the following section provides Members with a performance overview on work done in the approved EIZs in Inner East during this reporting period.

- 32 The following table provides Members with the total number of actions taken in each EIZ during the reporting period. The detail behind each action will be provided at the Environmental Sub Group and discussed at ward member meetings as appropriate.

Ward/Zone	EIZs - Locality Team Case Management (May to Oct 2013)							
	No. of homes in the EIZ	Cases Identified	Cases Resolved at Informal Stage	Notices Issued	Resolved After Notice	FPN's Issued	FPN's Paid	Prosecutions Awaiting Court
	<i>Analysis not available at time of print. Will be reported at the Area Committee meeting/Env Sub Group.</i>							

- 33 The detail behind the caseloads is provided to relevant ward members through updates at ward member meetings. Examples of how enforcement action has impacted in the zones will be discussed at the Environmental Sub Group and provided as part of the end of year report to Area Committee.
- 34 The latest perception surveys for each EIZ are currently being undertaken and analysed. These results will be provided and discussed at the Environmental Sub Group.

Recommendations

- 35 That Inner North East Area Committee note and comment on:
- a) what aspects of the service they feel are working well and delivering against the commitments made in the SLA;
 - b) what aspects of the service do they feel are not working as well as they should against the commitments made in the SLA and would like to see improvements made;
 - c) what elements of the service provision and/or desired outcomes would the Area Committee want its Environmental Sub Group to focus on over the coming six months?
 - d) what the Area Committee's views are what the key service developments and continued top priorities for Inner East should be in planning for 2014/15, particularly in light of the expected further financial pressures and anticipated merging of services into a new locality team.