

Report of Locality Manager (East North East)

Report to Area Committee (Outer North East)

Date: 3rd February 2014

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

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Alwoodley, Harewood, Wetherby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of the main issues:

This report provides a high level half-year update on performance against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Outer 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 Committee's Environmental Sub Group, and at each ward member meeting where required.

Recommendations:

That the Outer North East 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 Outer 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 East 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

16 A ward analysis of the service requests dealt with by the Locality Team staff in the Outer NE area during this reporting period is attached as appendix A. It is suggested that any detail behind the figures is best discussed/investigated at the Environmental Sub Group or at ward member meetings. The totals are summarised below:

Analysis of Locality Team Service Requests for May to October 2013				
Service Request Job Type	Alwoodley Ward	Harewood Ward	Wetherby Ward	Outer NE Total
Total Enforcement Jobs	116	157	113	386
Total Street Cleansing Jobs	130	233	142	505
Total Locality Team Jobs	246	390	255	891
	28%	43%	29%	

17 Another performance measurement is how many of the programmed mechanical sweeping blocks 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 Outer NE:

Summary of Completion Rates for Mechanical Sweeping Blocks				
Ward/Area	May-Oct 2012		May-Oct 2013	
	No of blocks scheduled	No of blocks completed (%)	No of blocks scheduled	No of blocks completed (%)
Outer NE Area	240	225 (94%)	220	179 (81%)

18 The table clearly shows a reduction in the percentage of blocks completed over the last six months as compared to the same period last year.

19 The main reason for this 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).

20 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. The service believes it is not necessary either in terms of ensuring the outcomes promised in the service agreement are delivered.

- 21 Over the last two financial years the Locality Team has reduced its spending on overtime 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.
- 22 We believe that this shows that 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 just a programmed, block based approach where performance is judged on the number of blocks swept irrespective of whether they needed sweeping or not
- 23 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 make not dropped?
- 24 The following are a small selection of actions taken during the reporting period to tackle priorities and concerns raised by ward members, parish/town councils and members of the public. These also demonstrate that the action does not always need to be a legal notice or enforcement of the notice; often the right outcome can be achieved through sensible conversations or at least the threat of action.

Alwoodley Ward

Complaints were made to our service regarding illegal advertising on Shadwell Lane. The advertising boards had become an issue due to several companies competing against each other to sell properties from the same development. We investigated, contacted the companies and all the boards were removed.



Complaints were made to us of the nuisance and obstructions caused by cars for sale on King Lane. Notices were attached to the vehicles and we also called the vehicle owners advising them of the notices and the requirement to remove the vehicles forthwith. The vehicles were removed, however monitoring of this site is continues due to a history of this issue.



Harewood Ward

A complaint was received from East Keswick Parish Council of a caravan being permanently parked on the highway thus

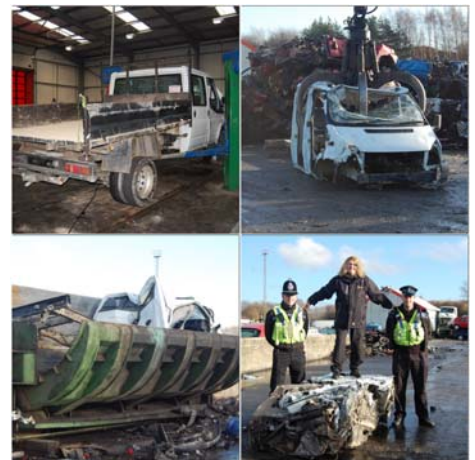


obstructing the highway to motorists and pedestrians. A legal notice was served (Section 149 Highways Act 1980) on the owner of the caravan. The caravan has been removed and monitoring of the road will ensure continued compliance.

Wetherby Ward

During this reporting period discussions took place with ward members and the Town Council regarding complaints about the practice of leaving white LCC bags full of collected litter at the road side on the Town's main streets for collection. There was agreement that an alternative practice should be found if at all possible to minimise the amount of bags left in public view in the main shopping/pedestrian areas. It was agreed to trial a new practice involving alternative drop off points for the white bags, either away from public view or into commercial waste bins. We also bought a street barrow for the Attendants to help carry more bags/waste, as well as basic equipment. The Street Attendants for Wetherby have been dropping all white bags at two drop off points, one being the 'truckers' car park and the other being the Wetherby One Stop Centre (OSC). The side loaders have continued to pick up from the car park and the OSC have arranged a separate bin to be collected each week. The Police also kindly offered to take white bags - but after a brief trial of this, it became obvious that the distance from the main street meant it was not time efficient. The Wetherby Whaler has also indicated that they would like to help. Longer term we will look at how the new service will ensure that the practice of white bags on the main street does not return.

On evening in late October 2013, the driver and passenger of the tipper truck shown in the photo opposite were disturbed by the police (who were patrolling the area) whilst in the act of tipping household waste on a bridleway, bordering Thorner Road. The two males saw the police and sped off in the truck leaving behind the waste and their truck's tailgate. The police found the truck shortly after, the occupants had fled the scene after they crashed into barriers at the junction of Paradise Way and Thorner Road. The Police recovered the vehicle and contacted our service to get the flytip removed and to help investigate further. We were involved in subsequent interviews of suspects.



However, after extensive enquiries by the Police and LCC, no owner of the vehicle or perpetrators were identified or attempted to claim the truck. The truck was dismantled and crushed in January 2014 (see photos), arranged by our officer. This attracted some good coverage in the press, we hope acting as a deterrent for other flytippers.

c) Outcomes

- 25 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.

- 26 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 score)	
Year	% 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.

- 27 Overall, the Locality Manager continues to use the judgement of the ward members/Area Committee and feedback from forums such as the Outer NE Town and Parish Council Forum to assess whether satisfaction levels are acceptable and where outcomes need improvement.

d) Accountability and Member Influence

- 28 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.
- 29 The Outer 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 in place between the Locality Team and these services.
- 30 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 the majority of Elected Members and at Ward Member meetings during the reporting period continued to be positive and that most issues were being responded to and resolved quickly.
- 31 However, Councillor Cohen raised concerns about a delay in responding to some of his emails making requests for service and about the Locality Manager's lack of attendance at a ward member meeting in this period. Alwoodley Ward Members were also concerned about the delay in implementing an extra temporary resource/post to be part paid for by Area Committee. Explanation and an apology for the poor communication relating to these issues has been provided to Councillor Cohen.
- 32 The Locality Manager attended and updated on actions/took questions at the June NE meeting of the Town and Parish Council Forum.

33 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 in June 2014.

34 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 its public accountability. The page is now “liked”/followed by 113 people. A recent post highlighting the crushing of a vehicle impounded after flytipping in the Wetherby ward was viewed by 350 people.



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

e) Local Sites of Concern

35 In consultation with Members, the Locality Team introduced a new local monitoring service during this reporting period. Each set of ward members drew up a list of a number of “sites of concern” where they felt a regular inspection would be beneficial.

36 These included sites such as bottle banks, laybys and open spaces – where issues such as flytipping and littering were most likely to happen.

37 We asked ward members, staff and took feedback from members of the public to decide on which locations would be most beneficial to focus this resource. The types of locations which were identified are:

- Bottle banks
- Lay-bys
- Ginnels
- Frequently blocked gullies
- Certain litter bins prone to getting full/overflowing
- Parades of shops
- Litter traps (i.e. small pieces of a land that seem to attract blown litter etc.)

38 We promised to deliver up to 10 sites of concern weekly inspections in each of the Outer North East’s three wards. This commitment was implemented and has now been in place since August 2013. The current list is provided in appendix B for information.

39 This location list is continually reviewed and monitored, allowing us to highlight locations requiring weekly visits depending on the level of environmental crimes i.e. those specific locations that regularly cause demand for clean-up. Also attached is the jobs highlighted in each of the wards.

- 40 The sites of concerns visits have been very positive and have helped us to work proactively rather than waiting for reports or complaints. Our enforcement officers are working with education, fixed penalty notices and prosecutions to prevent future environmental crimes at these locations. Our cleansing teams are also working effectively to complete any jobs identified from the sites of concern visits as a matter of urgency.
- 41 Ward members have taken time to visit the sites of concerns in their wards and feedback positive comments about the approach.
- 42 Please see below examples of environmental crimes identified and action taken through sites of concerns visits:

Wetherby – Moor Lane

A referral from the sites of concern visits was referred to our enforcement team where evidence relating to “Blu Hair & Beauty, Horsefair, Wetherby” had been found in boxes fly tipped near the recycling containers in the Hallfield Lane car park. Our Enforcement officer interviewed the owner of the establishment and issued a fixed penalty notice for the offence of littering due to being unable to establish who/which member of staff had fly tipped the waste. The business had all the required contracts for their waste in place at the time of the offence. The fine was paid immediately to prevent further prosecution action being taken.



A sites of concern visit was completed on 28th October 2013. Highlighted was a fly tip of a wooden fence. On this occasion there was no evidence found therefore this was referred directly to our streets cleansing team who removed the waste on 29th October 2013.

Alwoodley – Recycling facilities at Moortown Shopping Centre

This is one of our main sites of concerns in Alwoodley. Several clearances at this location have been highlighted via the sites of concerns inspections. Currently we request a clearance a week from this location due to the over spill of recyclable waste left on top and around the recycle bins. This is cleared by our fly tipping team within 48 hours of the sites of concerns visits. The type of waste that is being left at this location is mainly paper, bottles and plastics. Whilst we would want to encourage customers who use these facilities to take empty bags and excess waste home to put it in their own bins, we will trial a litter bin for customers to leave bags and other rubbish in the instead of leaving it on the ground. Where we need to, we will continue to use legal notices/enforcement as a way of finding solutions on these particular issues, for example serving S154 of the highways act requiring the local supermarket to clean



and cut back vegetation. Our enforcement officers are also working positively with the management of Sainsbury's and they are currently in process to arrange additional litter picks of the site.

Harewood – Tarn Lane

The sites of concerns visit was completed on 28th October 2013. Highlighted was a fly tip on Tarn Lane leading to Brandon Crescent of several dumped cushions. Unfortunately, laybys in the Harewood ward are a prime location for fly tipping. The sites of concern visits are allowing us to identify work such as this before a complaint or request to clear the waste is made to the Locality team. As a result of this work it is allowing our Enforcement officers who



cover this ward more time to concentrate on environmental crimes which can be enforced on. Again on this occasion there was no evidence found therefore it was referred directly to our streets cleansing staff who removed the waste on 29th October 2013.

f) Trial Peripatetic Service

- 43 Proposals were brought forward by the Locality Manager at the beginning of 2013/14 to trial a peripatetic service in the Outer NE area.
- 44 This was partly in response to a request from Alwoodley Ward Members to look at increased resources for that ward to help deal with littering at various spots and the acknowledgment that there was no programmed de-littering from the service in that ward (although significant de-littering through the ground maintenance contract and local housing services). The proposals also sought to try out a different, more efficient approach to providing services to Wetherby Town Centre, the villages and key laybys that are unique to the area.
- 45 The Area Committee agreed to part fund the trial post, on the basis that if it was successful then the service would look to mainstream that way of working as part of the service review expected to be implemented in 2014/15.
- 46 Unfortunately, as reported to the December Committee meeting, it was not possible to progress the recruitment to this new, temporary post as had been hoped. It was made clear that the funding set aside by the Area Committee would not be required.
- 47 The focus of the team/service in terms of developing new and improved ways of working has been on ensuring that the new service that will be created from April 2014 incorporates the best bits from the services it is bringing together and takes the opportunity to redesign and learn lessons to better meet the local needs of areas such as Outer North East.
- 48 The scale of the change and opportunity for the new service delivery from April 2014 has only become clear more recently. Consultation has now formally begun with staff on the proposed new structure for the service. This includes modernised, flexible job descriptions and proposals to create a number of zonal, multi-tasking teams in each locality.

- 49 As discussed at each of the recent ward member meetings, the service does not therefore intend to trial the new peripatetic service but instead ensure that the gaps that need filling in the meantime are met by other means and that the conversation with Members is about creating a new, dedicated team for the Outer NE area and how that would best operate.
- 50 An update on the new structure/service and how and what that will cover will be provided to the next Area Committee cycle as part of the 2014/15 SLA priorities consultation. More detailed discussion will take place at the Environmental Sub Group.

Recommendations

- 51 That Outer NE 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 Outer NE 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.