

Report of Locality Manager (South and Outer East Leeds)

Report to South (Outer) Area Committee

Date: Monday 31st March 2014

Subject: New Environmental Locality Services and Development of the 2014/15 Service Level Agreement

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Ardsley & Robin Hood Morley North Morley South Rothwell.		
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 main issues

This report provides an update on proposed changes to the operating model and structure of Environmental Action Service Locality Teams to deliver zonally based services. It outlines the reasons for these proposals and the process for agreeing them. It also describes the process for developing the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with Area Committees for 2014/15.

Recommendations

That South Leeds (Outer) Area Committee:

- (a) Note and comment on the proposals for a new working model for Locality Team services
- (b) Agree the approach to consulting on proposals for changes to the Locality Team operating model, the priorities within the SLA for 2014/15 and proposals for future waste management arrangement

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1. This report provides an update on proposed changes to the operating model and structure of Environmental Action Service Locality Teams to deliver zonally based services. It outlines the reasons for these changes and the process for agreeing them. It also describes the process for developing the Service Level Agreements with Area Committees for 2014/15

2. Background information

- 2.1. Executive Board approved revisions to the Area Committee Function Schedules to include a new delegated responsibility for Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services in March 2011. The delegation makes clear the responsibility of Area Committees to negotiate, develop and approve a 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.
- 2.2. The delegation of environmental services to Area Committee means that service resources, mainly staffing, are now devolved. Resources are organised into three wedge based teams for East North-East, South South-East and West North-West, aligned to new Locality Teams. The SLA sets out the detail of the resources which will be allocated to the Area Committees. The annual SLA for the Outer South Area Committee was agreed on 15th July 2013.

3. Main issues

3.1 Background to the changes to the Locality Operating Model

- 3.1.1. Since October 2013 Housing Arms-length Management Organisations (ALMOs) no longer exist. The services delivered are now within Leeds City Council, within the Environment and Housing Directorate. This provides us with an opportunity to move to one service that covers all of the environmental issues that were previously split between the Locality Team and ALMOs. The integration of these services will provide one point of contact for these issues, leading to faster resolution and easier access for residents and the public. In the current economic climate the council's priority is to protect front-line services. A reduction in the duplication of management, and therefore a smaller number of managers in the service will help to deliver this.
- 3.1.2. In addition to former ALMO services there are a number of other environmental services currently managed through Locality Teams which are still delivered on a citywide basis. Bulky waste collection services and needles and public convenience removal services are currently managed by South and Outer East Locality Team for the whole city; Graffiti removal is managed by West North West Locality Team and the ginnel team is managed by East North East Locality. This

leads to inefficiencies in terms of travel and resources, but also means that these services are less able to be influenced and prioritised at a local level.

- 3.1.3. Whilst the service has made good progress over the last two years to initially stabilise and subsequently improve our delivery, there are areas which could be more efficient and effective. The current reliance on lone working all year around means leads to inefficiencies and a lack of flexibility within the service. Staff who work on their own have also fed back that they feel isolated and do not see their supervisor or colleagues often enough.
- 3.1.4. Staff have historically had rigid roles which only enabled them to do one task, e.g. litter picking or driving a particular vehicle. This again means we are not as flexible as we could be, and staff also have little opportunity to develop their skills and progress up through the service. Locality Team staff are often confused about their roles and about what tasks they are (and are not) required to do. Again this leads to a lack of flexibility and can cause conflict between managers and frontline staff.
- 3.1.5. Vehicle usage within the service is considerable, largely due to the size of the Locality Team area and the small number of mobile teams. There is a need to reduce travel time, and therefore fuel usage and wear and tear on vehicles to reduce costs and the impact on the environment.
- 3.1.6. The Locality Teams spend a significant amount on overtime to cover sickness and holidays. The reliance on lone workers and specific job roles compounds this problem as the service cannot easily move resources to cover functions and therefore has to use overtime payments. The imperative to protect frontline jobs also means that we should be using any additional budgets to create or protect permanent jobs, rather than to pay for additional hours.
- 3.1.7. Even though the service has made great strides in bringing together enforcement and cleansing functions so that they complement each other and deliver better outcomes, this relationship could be improved further. Collocating services with partners such as the Police and Housing Leeds, is also a key aim to deliver a more integrated, holistic service.
- 3.1.8. Whilst the gully cleansing service has again been stabilised and improved, the delivery of this on a locality basis has been problematic, especially given the level of resources at our disposal (one vehicle per Locality Team) and the close links to Highways Services. It is therefore proposed to move the gully service back to a citywide service and to further look at whether this service would be better delivered through Highways Services in future.
- 3.1.9. Environmental Action Services is therefore reviewing the delivery of our services and structures in order to deal with the challenges above, whilst protecting jobs and pay.

3.2. Proposed Changes to the Operating Model

- 3.2.1. Environmental Action Services propose to move to a zonally based service delivering all the services described above through a multi-skilled team of people.
- 3.2.2. The service will be directly responsible for all current aspects of Locality Team street cleansing services (excluding gully cleansing – see 4.1.7 above) as set out in the SLA:

- Manual litter picking
- Litter bin emptying
- Mechanical path & road sweeping
- Flytipping removal
- Graffiti removal
- Needle removal
- Ginnel clearance
- Cleaning of arterial routes
- Cleaning around recycling (e.g. bottle banks) facilities
- Leaf clearing

3.2.3. In addition to these in future Locality teams will be also be responsible for:

- Scheduled bulky waste collections
- Void garden clearances (responsibility for clearing the interior of void houses will remain with Housing Leeds)
- Maintenance of Housing Leeds land and estates.

3.2.4. This proposal does not cover those services delivered by Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation (BITMO).

3.2.5. The service proposes that South and Outer East Leeds area is split into seven zones, with a Team Leader managing both the cleansing and enforcement functions in the area. Table 1 below describes the current proposed zones. Job roles will be broader and multi-skilled enabling the zonal team to flexibly deliver all the services described above within the zone.

Table 1 – Proposed operational zones

Area Committee	Zone	Ward(s)
Inner South	1	Beeston and Holbeck
	2	City and Hunslet
	3	Middleton Park
Outer East	4	Cross Gates & Whinmoor Temple Newsam
	5	Garforth & Swillington Kippax & Methley
Outer South	6	Morley North Morley South
	7	Rothwell Ardsley and Robin Hood

- 3.2.6. It is still proposed that there will still be a commitment to a scheduled level of service for some functions, such as mechanical cleaning, litter-picking and bulky waste collection. However these scheduled services would be part of the zonal teams and therefore more flexible and reactive to the needs of the local Elected Members and residents.
- 3.2.7. Lone-working will be minimised with staff instead working in small teams. This would deliver the same level of scheduled litter-picking service but more quickly and efficiently and, as an added benefit, white bags would be removed at the point of clearance, rather than waiting for a collection crew to arrive.
- 3.2.8. Overtime cover would reduce as the multi-skilled workforce would be required to cover each other, with managers moving resources around the zones and the locality to meet the services' needs. A significant proportion of the current overtime budget would instead be used to fund additional permanent frontline posts. A small overtime budget would be retained to cover some specialist services, e.g. mechanical cleaning.
- 3.2.9. The service is also working with partners, such as the Police and Housing Leeds, to develop proposals for collocation where possible. The sharing of depot facilities in local areas would deliver significant efficiencies in terms of time and fuel usage.
- 3.2.10. Work is still required to fully develop detailed operational arrangements and to agree resource allocations within each zonal team. The Locality Team proposes to use the same process for the development of the Service Level Agreement for 2014/15 to undertake consultation with Elected Members on the detailed aspects of the proposals.

3.3. Developing the Service Level Agreement for 2013/14

- 3.3.1. Service Level Agreements with Area Committees have been in place since June 2011. As part of the process to develop the SLA in 2012/13 we undertook ward level workshops to develop priority areas for improvement. Since then, these areas have not been reviewed and several have now improved to the point where no further action is necessary.
- 3.3.2. We therefore propose to undertake ward-based workshop sessions in April to cover two main issues:
- Review SLA priority areas
 - Consult on proposals for resources in each zonal area based on an analysis of need
- 3.3.3. The results of this consultation will then be shared with the Outer South Environmental Sub-Board before sign-off by the Area Committee.

3.4. Streetscene Grounds Maintenance

3.4.1. Following a procurement exercise the streetscene grounds maintenance contract was awarded to Continental Landscapes Ltd (CLL) with effect from 1st January 2012. The management of the contract became the responsibility of Parks and Countryside with effect from the 1st September 2012 soon after the service transferred directorates. This enabled improvements to the management of the contract by integrating staff into an existing team which already had considerable knowledge and expertise of horticultural maintenance as well as the management and delivery of grounds maintenance contracts. From April 2013 the service took over budget management responsibility from the former ALMOs and highways along with undertaking monitoring activity and responding to customer enquiries and complaints.

3.4.2. The contract includes highway verges and incidental land around social housing. The specification requires the contractor to undertake litter removal from sites as part of horticultural management operations supporting the council's wider efforts to maintain clean streets. The table below shows the asset breakdown of contract items for the South Outer area committee:

Asset Type	Annual Visits	Unit	Total Quantity
Amenity grass	14	M ²	420,749
Premium grass	28	M ²	47,686
Arterial routes	6	M ²	101,106
Sight Line & Rough Linear	3	M	39,142
Rough grass area	3	M ²	27,992
Shrub and rose beds	4	M ²	7,454
Hedges	3	M	3,923

3.4.3. Following an assessment of performance during the first year of operation, the frequency was increased during 2013 from 2 to 4 visits on shrub and rose beds. These changes aim to address concerns with the levels of weed growth and litter evident between visits. The following tables provide a summary of contract performance from March to the end of October 2013 to reflect the grass cutting season:

3.4.4 Percentage of scheduled operations completed for each type of asset March to October 2013:

Asset Type	%
Amenity grass	99.6%
Premium grass	96.2%
Arterial routes	98.7%
Sight Line & Rough Linear	100%
Rough grass area	100%
Shrub and rose beds	99.5%
Hedges	100%

3.4.5 Customer Enquiries and Complaints March to October:

Type of enquiry or complaint	Number 2012	Number 2013	% Change
Quality issues relating to operation undertaken	115	89	-22.6%
Streetscene land not maintained by the contract	55	50	-9.1%
Advice on related horticultural issues	39	29	-25.6%
Health and safety incidents and accidents	9	6	-33.3%

Scrutiny

- 3.4.6 An update report was considered by the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board during October 2013 that identified progress against recommendations made including the increased frequency of operations, established consultation with members on shrub bed removal, additional works being delivered by the contractor improving skill retention, and improved arrangements for contract management. It was agreed that a further update would be considered in autumn 2014.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1. Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1. Consultation on the above has been undertaken with the Outer South Environmental Sub-group of the Area Committee.

4.2. Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1. A key principle of locality working and the Service Level Agreement is a focus on delivering the best outcome for residents across the area, so that the streets and neighbourhoods in which they live are of an acceptably clean standard. This principle underpins equality and community cohesion, seeking to bring neighbourhoods with poor environmental quality, up to an acceptable standard, whilst improving all areas of Leeds.

4.3. Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1. The delegation of environmental services to Area Committees, via an approved Service Level Agreement, will significantly contribute towards the Stronger Leeds section of the new Safer & Stronger Communities Plan 2011-15. By delivering services at an Area Committee level, the priority to *'ensure that local neighbourhoods are clean'* will be much more achievable.

4.4. Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1. There are no resource implications.

4.5. Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1. There are no legal implications.
- 4.5.2. The report contains no information that is deemed exempt or confidential.

4.6. Risk Management

- 4.6.1. There are no risk management implications within this report.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1. Whilst good progress has been made to improve delegated services over the last two years, for a number of reasons as outlined, we now propose to change the operating model for Locality Teams. This change will deliver a more flexible, local driven service and build upon the good work so far.
- 5.2. We need to make sure that any changes are developed in consultation with local Elected Members and therefore recommend that a ward-based workshop approach is taken to do this effectively.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That South Leeds (Outer) Area Committee:
- (a) Note and comment on the proposals for a new working model for Locality Team services
 - (b) Agree the approach to consulting on proposals for changes to the Locality Team operating model, the priorities within the SLA for 2014/15 and proposals for future waste management arrangements

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 There are no background documents associated with this report.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.