

Report of: Helen Freeman, Chief Officer, Environmental Action Service

Report to: Inner North East Community Committee

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For Approval

Environmental Services – Service Agreement for 2015/16

Purpose of report

1. This report presents for approval a new Service Agreement (SLA) between the Committee and the Environmental Action Service to help maintain clean and tidy neighbourhoods across the Inner North East area.
2. The proposed framework has been developed and discussed at the Committee's Environmental Sub Group, with a recommendation made to approve the Service Agreement and further develop the "plans on a page" for each ward through each ward member meeting for the sub group to then oversee on behalf of the Committee.

Main issues

3. The Community (Area) Committee first approved a Service Agreement covering delegated environmental functions in late 2011. The formal delegated function as set out in the Council's Community Committee Executive Delegation Scheme is provided on the front page of the Service Agreement (appendix A).
4. The Service Agreement was "refreshed" each subsequent year; but didn't change significantly, with the majority of local priorities remaining the same and only minor changes to the functions/services covered in the delegation.
5. A particular feature of the SLA for Inner North East was the development of a geographically targeted way of prioritising the limited resources through the establishment of "Environmental Improvement Zones". This was complemented in 2015

by the use of Housing Revenue Account monies to establish an additional, dedicated crew to work in the Beckhills and Chapeltown areas.

6. In 2015/16 further significant functions are being delivered through the Locality Team. The service has redesigned its delivery model to learn from the first years of delegation and make better use of resources to further improve effectiveness and efficiency.
7. A report was presented to the Community Committee in October 2014 which set out the new functions to be delivered in 2015/16 and consulted on the proposed new delivery model – based on a zonal team approach. For this Community Committee that meant a dedicated operational team being established for the Inner North East area.
8. Since that time, further conversations and updates have taken place with Members. The Environmental Sub Group has been updated and consulted on progress and work to create the dedicated Inner East operational team. The operational structure of the team can be found at appendix B.
9. The full list of functions delivered by the Locality Team is provided on page 2 of the Service Agreement. The new responsibilities/functions being added to the Locality Team to deliver from 2015/16 are:
 - a. **Graffiti removal, needle picking, public toilet cleaning, ginnel clearance, LCC bin-yard clearance**
 - b. **Household bulky item collection service**
 - c. **Work largely previously done by “Estate Caretakers” in council housing areas**
 - elements to be delivered by Locality Teams include: clearance of void gardens (when a house becomes empty and being prepared for the next tenant), cleaning of non-highway paths (inc. ginnels) and open spaces on estates, assistance with gritting around vulnerable tenant properties, helping keep access roads/paths behind council owned shops and multi-occupancy properties clean, support to tenant action days and assisting vulnerable tenants to maintain gardens. For clarity, the Locality Team will not be doing work inside void properties or cleaning up in and around multi-occupancy flats/high-rise; that work will be done by Civic Enterprise Leeds.
10. The Service Agreement also sets out (on page 2) other services and community led work that has a significant impact on the environmental cleanliness and appearance of the Inner North East area. Although these are not part of the formal delegation, the Community Committee has the delegated responsibility to “*work with residents, other services and community based groups/organisations across the Inner North East area to achieve clean and tidy neighbourhoods*“. It will be the role of the Locality Team to work with the Environmental Sub Group to work with/exert influence on complementary services and provide support to community led action/work.
11. The roles of the Committee and the Locality Manager in ensuring the delivery of the agreement and achievement of the delegated responsibility are set out on page 3 of the Service Agreement.

12. The remainder of the Service Agreement sets out a proposed “plan on a page” format for each of the three wards in Inner North East: Chapel Allerton, Moortown and Roundhay. Please note that the first draft plans will be provided at the meeting and will require amendment/agreement at the next respective ward member meetings.
13. These will provide a focus for the service to prioritise action in each ward according to local need/priorities – which ward members can check progress and ask for changes as the year develops. The Sub Group will oversee the plans on behalf of the Community Committee for the year, with each ward being represented on that group. The Sub Group will provide a half year update on progress to Community Committee.
14. The “plans on a page” do not represent all actions/resources applied in the Inner NE area and need to be considered alongside required response to customer/resident requests for service. Statistics of service requests will be provided to the sub group.

Conclusion

15. The introduction of a new, locality focused service for street cleaning and enforcement across Leeds has been widely regarded as a success. The delegation of resources to a Locality Manager to manage and be accountable for use of that resource through a Service Agreement with each Area (Community) Committee has been a key element.
16. The Directorate has taken the opportunity to bring more functions into the Locality Team to be delivered as part of a delegated service.
17. The SLA for 2015/16 will provide the Community Committee with increased responsibilities and greater influence over more resources. This will be achieved through a redesigned service with improved and modernised working practices, with greater local accountability and more direct access to the operational resource through a dedicated Team Leader for Inner North East.
18. The Service Agreement was discussed at the Inner North East Environmental Sub Group meeting of 12th May, where it was agreed to endorse the recommendations set out below (subject to the development of ward “plans on a page” with each set of ward members).

Recommendations

19. The Community Committee is asked to:
 - a. approve the attached Service Agreement for the 2015/16 municipal year;
 - b. delegate the responsibility to oversee the delivery of the Agreement and the associated “plans on a page” to the Environmental Sub Group, with input through ward member meetings.

Background information

- Environmental Services SLA 2013/14 (document)
- Environmental Services – Consultation on the 2014/15 SLA (report to Area Committee March 2014)
- Environmental Action Service – Locality Team Update (October 2014)