

Report of: Jason Singh, Locality Manager, Environmental Action Service

Report to: Inner West Community Committee

Report author: Jason Singh, Locality Manager, Environmental Action Service
(jason.singh@leeds.gov.uk)

Date: Wednesday 9th December 2015

For Approval

Environmental Services - Update and Service Agreement for 2015/16

Purpose of report

1. This report presents for approval a new Service Agreement between the Committee and the Environmental Action Service to help maintain clean and tidy neighbourhoods across the Inner West area.
2. The proposed framework has been 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 ward member meetings 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. However, for 2015/16 further significant functions are being delivered through the Locality Team and the service has redesigned its delivery model to learn from the first few years of delegation and make better use of resources available to further improve effectiveness and efficiency.

6. A report was presented to the sub-groups 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 two dedicated zonal teams being established - **Kirkstall and Bramley/ Stanningley & Armley**.
7. 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 West operational teams. The Inner West operational structures are provided at appendix B.
8. 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 is being prepared for the next tenant), cleaning of non-highway paths (incl. ginnels) and open spaces on estates, assistance with gritting around vulnerable tenant properties, helping keep access roads and paths behind council owned shops and multi-occupancy properties clean and supporting tenant action days. The service is also assisting vulnerable tenants to maintain gardens where this is deemed an urgent priority. The council is currently agreeing a policy and qualifying criteria for a city-wide vulnerable tenant garden scheme, in the interim requests are being considered on a case by case basis. 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 (CEL).
9. 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 West 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 West 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. The locality team is currently looking to commission the Keep Britain Tidy group in Armley and Bramley to use community development methodology and principles to build a social contract with businesses and residents to developing networks and active campaigns to create greater ownership of environmental issues and solutions.
10. 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.
11. The remainder of the Service Agreement sets out initial headline priorities in the form of a “plan on a page” for both zones in Inner West. These provide a focus for the service to prioritise actions in each zone according to local need/priorities – which ward members and officers, should now further develop and check progress against and change 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 updates on progress to the Community Committee.

Conclusion

12. 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 to be accountable for the use of that resource through a Service Agreement with each Area (now Community) Committee has been a key element of that.
13. The Directorate has taken the opportunity to bring more functions into the Locality Team to be delivered as part of a delegated service. The new zonal teams are still being embedded and further reviews of service delivery approaches with a view to improving the service offer and quality of cleansing will be undertaken throughout the year. The service is committed to community development approaches and developing a strong, positive and enabling relationship with local residents and community groups so that more work can be done to support the locality teams by these key partners in their own neighbourhoods.
14. 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 West.
15. The Service Agreement was discussed at the Inner West Environmental Sub Group meeting of July 2015, where it was agreed to endorse the recommendations set out below:

Recommendations

16. 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 development and delivery of the Agreement and the associated “plans on a page” to the Environmental Sub Group, with input through ward member and sub-group meetings.