



Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 13th October 2008

Subject: Recommendation Tracking

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Members introduced a formal recommendation tracking system in December 2006. Each Scrutiny Board receives a quarterly report, coinciding with the quarterly presentation of performance information, on the progress made in implementing the Board's recommendations.
- 1.2 This tracking system allows the Board to monitor progress and identify completed recommendations; those progressing to plan; and those where there is either an obstacle or progress is not adequate. The Board will then be able to take further action as appropriate.
- 1.3 A standard set of criteria has been produced to enable the Board to assess progress. These are presented in the form of a flow chart at Appendix 1. The questions in the flow chart should help to decide whether a recommendation has been completed, and if not whether further action is required.
- 1.4 To assist Members with this task, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser has given a draft status for each recommendation. The Board is asked to confirm whether these assessments are appropriate, and to change them where they are not.
- 1.5 Last month the Board requested an update on the Streetscene Grounds Maintenance Contract and therefore this recommendation tracking report focuses on the recommendations arising from the 2005/06 Scrutiny Inquiry into the Streetscene Grounds Maintenance Contract.
- 1.6 Senior officers from Environment and Neighbourhoods will be attending today's meeting to present this update and answer any further questions from Members.

1.7 The next quarter report in January 2009 will be updating Members on progress against a number of previous inquiries dating back to 2004.

2.0 Recommendations

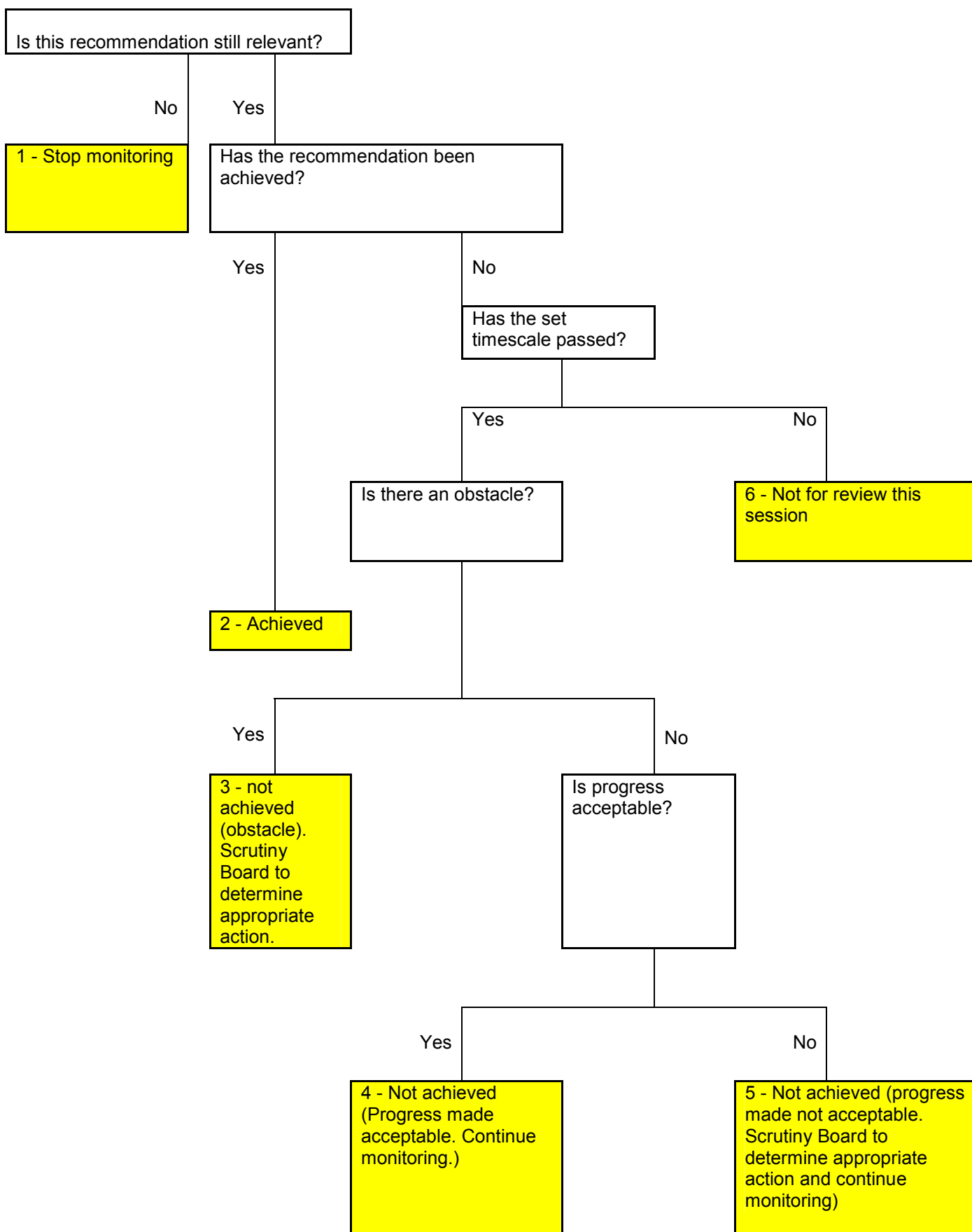
2.1 Members are asked to:

- Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
- Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

Background Papers

None.

Recommendation tracking flowchart and classifications:
Questions to be Considered by Scrutiny Boards



Recommendation Tracking – Progress Report (October 2008)

Inquiry into Streetscene Grounds Maintenance Contract

Recommendation for monitoring	Evidence of progress and contextual information	Status (categories 1 – 6)	Complete
<p>1. That the senior project officer, the project manager and project boards do not disband until the project board is satisfied that the contract or new service arrangements are established and running satisfactorily, in order to provide a co-ordinating body dealing with issues, risks and contingencies up to, and beyond, the start of the contract or the establishment of new service delivery arrangements.</p>	<p>The current contract Review Project Board is considering the governance arrangements that need to be put in place to ensure that future contract re-rendering programme is managed through to contract award and commencement.</p>	<p>4 Not achieved. (Progress made acceptable. Scrutiny Board to continue monitoring)</p>	
<p>2. That CMT discuss the monitoring arrangements for this contract to ensure that there is agreement on where this function should lie.</p>	<p>Monitoring arrangements have been agreed and are now established. The ALMO's monitor their own areas and Environmental Services monitor highway areas on behalf of Highways Services. Monitoring arrangements will be reviewed for the next contract.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>3. That projects involved in procuring services ensure that specifications and any proposed variations are costed simultaneously to prevent the need for the re-submission of tenders.</p>	<p>Environmental Services will ensure through the Project Board that this recommendation is adhered to as it will speed up the procurement process. Development of the specification and variation options will be carried out with the ALMO's and Highways. Any additional or enhanced service requirements will be specified and priced separately. The procurement process will include preparing a shadow bid on the basis of core service and additional requirements.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>

4.	That any future Streetscene Grounds Maintenance contracts are awarded well ahead of the growing season, so as to ensure the Contractor has sufficient time to mobilise.	Environmental Services supports this recommendation and will ensure that a generous mobilisation period is incorporated into future procurement timetables.	2 Achieved	✓
5.	That risk assessments for seasonal contracts should identify a cut off point by which time the contract should be awarded for the effective delivery of the service. Where this is unachievable, the award should be deferred.	Environmental Services will ensure that a rigid risk management approach is applied to future contract procurement and that a risk register is created that identifies this issue.	2 Achieved	✓
6.	That a mechanism is established to identify high and low risk projects and to formalise the necessary reporting of issues to CMT.	Environmental Services will ensure a rigid risk management approach is applied to future contract procurement and that colleagues in CPU and the Risk Management Unit are fully engaged in the process. CLT will be advised at the earliest opportunity of progress with the procurement and notified of any significant risks.	2 Achieved	✓
7.	We recommend that training takes place or information is disseminated to ensure that the term 'letter of intent' and other specialist procurement terminology is used correctly	Environmental Services will ensure that all of its officers involved in the procurement process are familiar with procurement terminology to avoid any confusion. Colleagues in CPU have assisted in this: 1. The procedure to be followed and the issues and risks associated with the issue of Letters of Intent were included into the Contracts Procedure Rules (CPR's) Code of Practice. This was effective from 1 st April 2006.	2 Achieved	✓

		<p>2. The issue of Letters of Intent was incorporated into the CPU's CPR training sessions from April 2006.</p> <p>3. The publication of issues relating to Letters of Intent are included (as and when necessary) in the CPU's procurement newsletter.</p>		
8.	<p>That the Corporate Procurement Unit develop and establish the improvement measures identified as part of the review of the Streetscene Grounds Maintenance project, particularly regarding the roles and responsibilities and project management tools in place, the reporting process, the remit of the project board, costing the specification and the time allocated to the stages of procurement. We also recommend procedures are introduced to ensure all meetings throughout the process are minuted.</p>	<p>The Chief Procurement Officer is a member of the Grounds Maintenance Review Board which will ensure that the recommendation is delivered. The CPU have incorporated the Council's corporate project management methodology into its project strategy.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>
9.	<p>Those as part of the project management process for high profile or high risk contracts or new service delivery arrangements adequate contingency plans are put in place.</p>	<p>The DSC programme for project management will be applied to the re-tendering of the grounds maintenance contract which will ensure that contingency arrangements are identified and put in place.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>

10.	<p>That where a high profile project is experiencing any difficulties or risks that might influence the awarding of a contract or the delivery of new service arrangements, the relevant Executive Board Member is briefed by the chair of the project board at the earliest possible stage. To complement this we recommend that guidelines are drawn up outlining the appropriate stages at which Members should be briefed.</p>	<p>Environmental Services will ensure that all high risks associated with the grounds maintenance re-tender are identified as part of the risk management process. All high risks will be reported to the Executive Member for Environmental Services.</p> <p>The Chief Officer for Environmental Services has regular scheduled meetings with the Executive Member and progress with the re-tendering of the grounds maintenance contract will be reported including all high risk issues.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>
11.	<p>That the current risk assessment methodology is reviewed to ensure that issues identified in this inquiry are incorporated and to ensure that a rolling risk register is always adopted for projects.</p>	<p>Risk Management methodology is applied to all key stages of the grounds maintenance contract and risk registers are created to help manage the risks. The risk register will be active and maintained for the life of the re-tendering project.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>
12.	<p>That the risk assessment process ensures that the option of a phased approach to a contract is considered.</p>	<p>Environmental Services will ensure that the approach is considered in future contract strategies.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>

13.	<p>That work continues on the database held by Parks and Countryside to ensure that data is up to date and correctly attributed. We also recommend that where a similar contract is let in the future issues around data are resolved and checked before the specification is agreed and is given to the Contractor / service deliverer in a usable form.</p>	<p>Environmental Services has now created its own mapping database which is well managed and updated as the contract has developed.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>
14.	<p>We recommend that City Services and Parks and Countryside work alongside Ward Members in identifying privately owned land erroneously on the cutting schedule and that the owners are contacted to take over maintenance. We also recommend that this exercise also identifies land which should be on the schedule and is currently not being cut.</p>	<p>The identification and mapping of Council land, where appropriate, on the grounds maintenance database is now well developed and up to date. However, a number of pieces of 'orphan' land have been identified where the owner cannot be traced. The location and quantity of these areas of land are being logged and a corporate decision will have to be taken about how they will be dealt with in the future. Currently there is no budget provision to carry out maintenance of these pieces of land.</p>	<p>3 Not achieved. (Obstacle. Scrutiny Board to determine appropriate action)</p>	
15.	<p>We recommend that City Services establishes what is required for the 'In Bloom' routes and ensures that appropriate arrangements are made for next year.</p>	<p>The 'In Bloom' routes have been removed from the main grounds maintenance contract and are currently cut by a second contractor. Close liaison is maintained between the 'In Bloom' groups and Streetscene monitoring staff.</p>	<p>2 Achieved</p>	<p>✓</p>

16.	That City Services, as the monitoring department, continues to closely monitor the performance of the Contractor particularly with regard to shrub maintenance and verge maintenance and any contingencies being developed by both the Council and the Contractor for the start of the next cutting season.	Environmental Services continue to monitor highways land and the individual ALMO's monitor their respective areas. Shrub bed maintenance continue to be an issue as not all 'non-maintainable' beds have been restored to a maintainable condition by the ALMO's as agreed. Monitoring of shrub beds continues and the standard of work is improving.	4 Not achieved. (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)	
17.	That City Services (in consultation with the Executive Board Member) consider the possibility of a winter cut this year and an earlier Spring cut next year and that where appropriate this is included within the budget discussions, whilst ensuring that the specification has been fully met.	In years two and three of the contract additional cuts have been achieved. Negotiations with Highways Services and the three ALMO's have resulted in an additional cut (Cut 14) to be carried out in November of this year, 2008. The frequency of cut of rough cut grass has been increased to three times per year and is now the same as sight line grass.	2 Achieved	✓
18.	That induction arrangements are regarded as a priority when handing over a service to a new delivering body, internally or externally to the Council.	This will be included as part of the procurement process and letting of the new contract.	2 Achieved	✓
19.	That City Services review the arrangements around weed control to ensure that any issues are resolved for next year.	The decision was taken that Parks and Countryside should continue to manage the citywide weed spraying contract on behalf of Highways Services and the three ALMO's. The contract expiry date was 31 March 2007, but due to a procurement delay was extended until July 2007. There is now a new contract in place specifically for weed spraying.	2 Achieved	✓

20.	That City Services develop and arrangement with the Contractor to allow direct access for Ward Members to the service provider, whilst continuing the appropriate performance monitoring.	Discussions will take place on whether there could be some form of escalation arrangement introduced for use by Ward Members in the next Contract.	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not achieved. (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring).</p>	
-----	--	--	---	--

Categories

- 1 - Stop monitoring
- 2 - Achieved
- 3 - Not achieved (Obstacle)
- 4 - Not achieved (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 5 - Not achieved (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 6 - Not for review this session