



Report of The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate

Meeting: Inner West Area Committee

Date: 12th February 2009

Subject: Relationship and reporting between Streetscene Services and Area Committees

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available for Call
In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

To outline the Streetscene Services function schedule and propose arrangements that will improve the working relationship between Area Committees, Area Management and Streetscene Services.

The report will briefly cover the current Streetscene Services arrangements, links with area management and elected members and current reporting mechanisms.

The report will also propose changes that will allow Area Committees to have more influence over the localised delivery of Streetscene Services.

1.0 Introduction & Purpose of report

- 1.1 The Area Management Review report presented to Executive Board in July 2008 proposed extending and enhancing the roles of Area Committees. The aim is to develop the roles of Area Committees in terms of the number of services that they will have increased influencing, developmental and consultative responsibilities for.

2.0 Background

2.1 Service Description

- 2.1.1 In terms of Streetscene Services the proposed additional enhanced roles for Area Committees for 2009/10 are, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance.
- 2.1.2 For the purpose of this report the new enhanced roles relate to those services currently provided by Streetscene that have a direct impact on environmental quality and the visual appearance of the built environment. This briefly includes mechanical sweeping (carriageway and footpaths), manual sweeping and litter picking, litter bin emptying, provision and maintenance, fly tipping removal, graffiti and fly-poster removal and leaf clearing. A more detailed description of the services is provided in section 3.

2.2 Intensive Neighbourhood Management

- 2.2.1 The Intensive Neighbourhood Initiative was launched in April 2006 aimed specifically at the most deprived areas within the inner city. Supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and the Safer, Stronger, Communities Fund (SSCF), the improvements have been significant. Cuts in the NRF and SSCF budgets in 2007/08 have made it difficult to maintain service standards in the INM areas in the future. Key to the success of INM has been the introduction of the Community Pride Teams and the co-ordination of services and outside agencies in dealing with specific issues.

2.3 Grounds Maintenance

- 2.3.1 In 2005 the citywide grounds maintenance contract was awarded to Glendale Services with the contract administration function being given to the City Services Department on behalf of the ALMOs and Highway Services. This function has now passed to Environmental Services. The initial contract term was three years with an option to extend by a further three years in one year extensions. The contract is currently in year 4 with approval to extend into years 5 and 6. In terms of service delivery this is clearly defined within the contract documents and service specification although facilities do exist to vary work in and out of the contract.

The current contractual arrangements provide little scope for Area Committees to significantly influence the way in which grounds maintenance services are delivered, certainly within the life of this contract. However, work has begun on the procurement of a new contract to commence March 2011 which will include contract packaging options and specifications.

- 2.3.2 In 2007 a decision was made to take out of the main contract the Britain in Bloom routes grass verges and rough cut and sight line grass and deliver this through a separate contract. The new work of motorway junction grass was also added to this contract. This contract was awarded to ATM Ltd on an initial one year contract starting March 2008 with the option to extend by two years. Environmental Services also have the contract administration responsibility for this contract on behalf of the ALMOs and Highways Services.

2.4 Current Streetscene Structure

- 2.4.1 Currently Streetscene Services works on an area wedge basis. There are 5 wedges in Leeds excluding the City Centre. Each Wedge has specific management and frontline staff to deal with arising issues as well as day to day service provision. Recently, the division of the city has been discussed and new working arrangements have been proposed, to match the three new Area Committee wedges.
- 2.4.2 The current Streetscene management structure reflects the old five Area Committee wedges.
- 2.4.3 Each wedge is allocated –
- 1 x Principal Area Manager
 - 1 x Senior Area Manager
 - 1 x Assistant Area Manager (2 staff in post working a 4x3 shift to provide 7 days cover)
- 2.4.4 All managers are multi-disciplined and responsible for the day to day operational delivery of all Streetscene services within their respective areas.
- 2.4.5 The following services are delivered city wide due to logistical or operational problems associated with delivery on an area basis
1. Car Park/Ginnels cleaning
 2. Removal of discarded hypodermic needles and syringes
 3. Public Convenience Cleaning

2.5 Description of Delegated Function/Enhanced role

- 2.5.1 For the purpose of this report the new enhanced roles relate to those services currently provided by Streetscene Services that have a direct impact on environmental quality and the visual appearance of the built environment. This briefly includes mechanical sweeping (carriageway and footpath), manual sweeping and litter picking, litter bin emptying, provision and maintenance, fly tip removal, graffiti removal, fly-poster removal and leaf clearing. A more detailed description is given in section 3.
- 2.5.2 In terms of the report that went to the Executive Board in November 2007 it highlighted the following enhanced roles for Area Committees,

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|---------------------|--|
| Street Cleansing | This covers teams of staff and specialist equipment to provide mechanical sweeping of adopted carriageways and footpaths, manual litter picking and litter bin emptying. Area Committees would be regularly presented with information about the services in their area and given opportunities to influence service planning and local priorities and hotspots. This would be primarily based on ward level discussions with Elected Members. |
| Grounds Maintenance | This covers various elements of maintenance work including grass cutting, shrub and rose bed maintenance and hedge maintenance. The current Ground Maintenance Contract runs to February 2011. Environmental Services currently has the contract administration function for this contract which it carries out on behalf of the three ALMO's and Highways Services. An annual Service Improvement Plan is produced and ways to engage local members in this will be considered over the course of 2008/09. A procurement timetable is in place for a new Grounds Maintenance Contract from March 2011. Work on this will include details on the contract package, contract administration and opportunities for the involvement of local Members in service planning, prioritisation and monitoring. There is currently, therefore, no detailed information prepared for this role at present. |

2.6 Role and Responsibilities of the Area Committee

- 2.6.1 Current Arrangements - As the roles of Area Committees have developed so have the arrangements that allow them to influence the way that Streetscene delivers its services at a local level. The following are not all consistently applied across all Area Committees.

- Environmental Partnership Groups – some Area Committees have established an Environmental Partnership group across an area committee to allow more detailed discussions about localised issues and develop deliverable actions. This process has been successful in the areas where it is used and allows a more open debate and understanding about the specific issues. It has improved the working relationship between the ACs and Streetscene Services but also with other environmental based services/agencies who attend. The partnership tends to be attended by the AC Member champion nominated for ‘environment’ which provides one of the ways of linking to the Area Committee.
- Site Visits and face to face meetings with Ward Members – these tend to be ad-hoc and usually in response to a specific issue. They tend to be very focused on dealing with specific issues but usually successful in terms of resolving problems in the short term.
- Area Delivery Plans – Streetscene Services officers and Ward Members contribute towards the development of Area Delivery Plans. However, the approach across each area appears to be inconsistent and from a service point of view tends to reflect service priorities rather than localised priorities
- Reports to Area Committees – the provision exist for this to happen but the frequency of reporting tends to fluctuate, reports being requested or provided in response to issues rather than reporting on overall performance.
- Tasking Groups – tasking groups are established in all of the area committee areas although their success and effectiveness varies in terms of Streetscene Services.

2.6.2 Current arrangements allow the area committees to influence and develop the following services,

- (i) Community Action Services Team (CAST). In the outer wedges Ward Members have direct access to the CAST teams. Referrals are made through area management officers and passed to Streetscene for action. Ward Members in the inner city have the same facility through the Community Pride Teams.
- (ii) INM – in particular those resources funded through SSCF is administered through area management and Ward Members. This process allows influence over where and how the resources are deployed.
- (iii) Public Conveniences – this is a responsibility delegated to Area Management and the provision of the PCs is determined by area committees, advised by Streetscene Services.

- (iv) Street Sweeping – in response to local needs , Streetscene managers do have some flexibility to vary the delivery of services. Area Committees have in the past supplemented street sweeping in some areas by funding additional resources.
- (v) Litter Bin Provision – the provision of litter bins is an issue for Streetscene Services as budget provision falls short of meeting demand. In the past most area committees have funded additional litter bins in priority areas
- (vi) Customer Satisfaction Surveys – area management have organised and funded customer satisfaction surveys that have included issues relating to environmental quality.

2.7 Proposed Improvements.

2.7.1 In view of the changing priorities in the individual area an option would be for the Principal Streetscene Manager for a wedge to meet with Ward Members on an agreed frequency. These discussions could include the changing area priorities and any immediate response that could be made by Streetscene, successes in the ward, new initiatives and any specific issues that need attention.

- Increased Use of District Local Environment Quality Survey (DLEQs) – DLEQs is a nationally recognised environmental quality survey methodology that assesses an area in terms of litter and detritus, graffiti, fly-posting, fly-tipping, staining, weed growth, litter bin condition (degree of fill, cleanliness etc) and the condition of landscaped areas. The information provided by these surveys can be used to identify area specific problems and how to utilise resources efficiently. The surveys are time consuming and resource intensive and currently have only been applied in selected areas by streetscene. To provide frequent data would require more surveying capacity.
- Develop the principle of Area Committee Service Champions – the principle would be to have a Ward Member from the AC to take the lead responsibility for Streetscene Services and work closely with the service. This would allow a more thorough understanding of the service and how it is delivered which in turn should help in terms of influencing how Streetscene services are delivered.
- Environmental Partnership Groups – an Environmental Partnership group across all area committees could improve the working relationship between the ACs and Streetscene Services but also with other environmental based services/agencies. Such a partnership allows a more detailed discussion and understanding of issues and inter-service/agency co-ordination to resolve localised issues often not achieved at a full Area Committee. Could be attended by the AC Member champion nominated for 'environment' as above.

- Adopt the 'probability and impact' framework to help prioritise service delivery. This approach has been adopted by some service areas and allows a risk based approach to prioritising issues. The benefit of using this principle is that it could also be used in the Area Delivery planning process and Streetscene Service Planning. The approach would take time to introduce but would allow a more structured approach to prioritisation and influencing service delivery. The probability is a measure of the volume of the work experienced and the potential for escalation if the response does not meet customer expectation. The impact considers the impact on the community, how it influences the strategic outcomes and the effect on statutory responsibility.

2.8 Contributing to Delivery of the Leeds Strategic Plan Targets and Outcomes

- 2.8.1 The strategic priorities that are outlined in this section are the main drivers that shape and influence the delivery of Streetscene Services.

2.9 Strategic Outcome for the Service

- 2.9.1 'To create a cleaner, greener and more attractive city through effective environmental management and changed behaviours. Within the strategic outcome are two very clear improvement priorities that influence the prioritisation of work within Streetscene services,

- 2.9.2 Address neighbourhood problem sites; improve cleanliness and access to and quality of green spaces.

- 2.9.3 Reduce the amount of waste going to landfill

2.10 Integrated Waste Strategy

- 2.10.1 Environmental Services has developed and produced an Integrated Waste Strategy for the Council that outlines how it will effectively deal with the municipal waste produced in the city over the next 25 years. Within the strategy are clear targets some statutory and others interim and set locally to meet the longer term targets. The two main targets that have a major impact on streetscene service delivery are landfill diversion and recycling targets. Clearly the main emphasis is on dealing with the domestic waste streams however the implications extend to all municipal waste including that picked up by the street cleaning services. For example, in terms of waste definition street arisings are classed as household waste and therefore can be included in the domestic recycling figures. Consequently we have arrangements in place to divert most of the street arisings away from landfill.

2.11 Closing the Gap

- 2.11.1 A key objective of the Vision for Leeds is to close the gap between the most disadvantaged areas of the city and the most prosperous. In terms of achieving this objective streetscene has a major role to play in ensuring that all neighbourhoods are safe, clean green and well maintained.

This will be achieved by tackling environmental problems and getting people and businesses involved in their own environment. Reference Britain in Bloom.

2.12 Legal Responsibilities

- 2.12.1 Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) the Council has a duty placed upon it to ensure that all of the land that it controls is kept clear of litter and refuse as far as is practicable. Accompanying the EPA is a Code of Practice that provides practical guidance on the discharge of duties under the EPA and identifies acceptable standards of cleanliness. Streetscene Services is responsible for delivering the Council's obligations on all adopted highways. The need to deliver the Council's responsibilities under the EPA clearly is a major driver in terms of how street cleaning services are organised and delivered.

3.0 The Service at Area Committee Level

3.1 Area Profile of the Service

- 3.1.1 Streetscene Services are currently delivered city wide and do not reflect ward or Area Committee boundaries. Consequently resource allocation is not done on an area committee basis. Streetscene aims to provide the same outcome across all areas in terms of service standards. To achieve this resource allocation within local areas will vary depending on need.
- 3.1.2 Below is a list of the services that are included in the enhanced role for Area Committees

3.2 Streetscene Services

- 3.2.1 *Litter bins (on programmed frequency)* - To collect and dispose of waste from litterbins and the mainten of litter bins and liners, where appropriate. Currently there are over 4500 litter bins across the city.
- 3.2.2 *Street Sweeping* - the street cleansing service is completed by a mechanical and manual sweep of both carriageways and footways. The service operates around a schedule covering all areas of the city. Sweeping removes litter, detritus and dead weeds The schedule is used as a guideline with the emphasis now on output rather than input.
- 3.2.3 *Manual Litter Picking* is used across the city in appropriate situations to supplement the mechanical street sweeping function.(for example, where a mechanical sweeper is insufficient or too cumbersome to operate efficiently).
- 3.2.4 *Fly tipping removal* – Fly tipping on the public highway is reported by the public or discovered by crews and removed accordingly or passed on to relevant agencies. Enforcement action is taken where evidence is available.

- 3.2.5 *Gully Cleaning* - To carry out routine servicing of gullies in order to make sure that the surface water drainage system is maintained in a working condition. Current provision allows gullies to be emptied and cleansed every 8 months to remove the build up of leaf and blossom fall, silt and detritus. Wetspot gullies, ie those in areas that are prone to flooding or ponding, are done every three months. Damaged gullies are reported to Highways Services for further inspection and remedial action.
- 3.2.6 *Grounds Maintenance* – Streetscene Services has the contract administration responsibility for the grounds maintenance contract on behalf of the three ALMOs and Highways services. There are currently two contractors responsible for delivering the service, ATM Ltd and Glendale Services. The current contracts cover,
- Maintenance of highway grass verges
 - Maintenance of ALMO grassed areas
 - Shrub and rose bed maintenance
 - Hedge maintenance
- 3.2.7 *Graffiti Removal* – six teams are deployed across the city to remove graffiti primarily from Council property but also provide a service to private property especially in response to the removal of racist and offensive graffiti (this is removed within 24 hours and other within 10 days.)
- 3.2.8 *Needle Picking* – Streetscene Services has one dedicated team responsible for the removal and disposal of discarded hypodermic needles and syringes. The work closely with Community Safety and West Yorkshire Police.
- 3.2.9 *Public Convenience Cleaning* – Streetscene Services clean and maintain the Council’s street located public conveniences across the city. This involves providing a scheduled cleaning service and opening and closing those pc that have that facility. The strategic responsibility for public conveniences has been delegated to the Area Committees.
- 3.2.10 *Leaf Clearing* – additional resources are employed to remove leaf fall from the highway as quickly as possible. The leaf clearing programme usually spans a twelve week period between September and December the start and finish dates being determined by weather conditions. All leaf fall collected is sent for composting.
- 3.2.11 *CAST* – cast teams operate in the outer area committee areas and deal with referrals from elected members. Where there are not sufficient referrals the streetscene area manager allocates work clearing known hotspot sites or problem areas. Referrals in the inner wedges are dealt with through the INM teams.

INTENSIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT (INM)

3.2.12 The INM programme helps focus on the improvement of existing public services in the most deprived communities in the city. It also helps provide new services that will address needs that have been identified in these areas.

3.2.13 Between April and June 2006, Environmental Pride Teams were recruited, trained and deployed in each of the five wedges within the city. These teams have received a detailed seven week training programme to equip them with relevant skills and techniques to deliver high quality visible improvements in the communities in which they work. The teams undertake tasks such as graffiti removal, minor construction works, horticultural works and intensive cleaning; leaving each street at a grade 'A' level of cleanliness

3.1.3 Area based Service Priorities and contributions to the Area Committee's Area Delivery Plan for 2009/10

3.1.4 Within the Inner West Area Committee Area below are a sample of some of the key issues to be addressed or contributed to by Streetscene Services. Clearly the full range of issues is much greater and could be the subject of a more detailed report.

- Work with the ALMO to agree a deliverable solution to keeping all ALMO land clean and litter free. This will include working towards a one Council approach to improve the service delivery to residents in the South Inner wedge. Tackling estates such as the Raynville's, Wythers, Broadlea Estate and Fairfield Estate.
- Continue to support operation Champion using the INM team to identify hotspots and remove rubbish. A major area of attention has been the Fairfield Estate..
- Develop a workable solution with Area Management to tackle the problem of rubbish in bin yards which is a particular issue in the Cedars and Stanleys in Armley.
- Identify and remove fly-tipping.
- Identify and encourage community groups to become part of the 'In Bloom' process. Reducing the impact of the annual tenancy changeover and freshers week. This is a particular problem in the Headingley but spreading to other areas of the wedge.

3.1.5 These are the key actions/priorities which would assist Streetscene Services to address the major issues identified in 3.2.1

- Undertake a review in the way services are currently delivered to achieve the localised delivery of Streetscene Services to meet the localisation of services agenda

- Continue to deliver the INM programme in each of the inner wedges
- Support and encourage community groups to adopt the 'In Bloom' principles
- Ensure that NI 195 targets are achieved both locally and city wide
- Increase the stock of litter bins across the city and ensure adequate resources are in place to service them
- Ensure that all ALMO and Highways grassed areas, shrub beds and hedges are maintained to an acceptable standard
- Work with the ALMOs to agree how all land can be maintained to meet the EPA Code of Practice standards

3.1.6 Delivering the LSP Service Priorities is a major driver for Streetscene Services and at a local level this will be achieved through its Service Plan and the Local Area Delivery Plans. To date Streetscene Services has achieved success in some areas by working closely with colleagues in the development and delivery of the plans. However this approach is inconsistent and more robust processes are required if it is to be consistently applied across the city.

3.1.7 To date, success has been achieved through the following,

- Tasking Groups
- Area Committee Sub Groups
- Direct contact with Ward Members
- Attendance at community forums, Tenants and Residents Groups, Community Group meetings
- Working with groups through the Streetscene Services Community and City Pride Scheme
- Working in partnership with VFS organisations such as Groundwork e.g recycling festival in South Leeds
- Working in partnership with other external bodies such as Fire and Rescue teams
- Providing the Contract administration function for the grounds maintenance contract on behalf of the three ALMOs and Highways Services

3.3 Customer and community engagement

3.3.1 Customer engagement and consultation are important for any service but difficult to achieve considering the wide range of services delivered by Streetscene Services.

There is a customer satisfaction Best Value Performance Indicator that is carried out every three years and measures through surveys, levels of satisfaction with cleanliness standards i.e. keeping land clear of litter and refuse.

3.3.2 The last survey results done in 2006/07 showed that 63% of the residents of Leeds were satisfied with the standard of cleanliness. This compares to a metropolitan authority average of 60.9%.

3.3.3 Clearly these are authority wide statistics and sometimes hide local issues. In addition to this survey Streetscene Service gathers information from several other sources to help to influence service delivery. For example,

- Attending area committee meetings where customers have the opportunity to raise their concerns and issues/ Area committee sub-groups, both of which allow the area committee to influence service delivery through feedback from community engagement..
- Attending tenants and resident group meetings.
- Attending community forum group meetings.
- Localised surveys either carried out by the service or area management
- Contact with local Ward Members
- Responding to service complaints and identifying trends and problem areas.
- Working closely with voluntary groups such as groundwork who work with local communities.
- Close working with a number of 'In Bloom' groups across the city who provide valuable feedback

3.3.4 In terms of grounds maintenance the ALMOs have detailed communications plans through which tenant views are obtained about service delivery and improvements. In 07/08 a customer consultation exercise was carried out with a particular emphasis on grounds maintenance. The results of this survey will be used to shape the package and specification of future contracts.

3.3.5 In terms of the future, Streetscene Services see area management as having a major role in terms of carrying out local area customer satisfaction surveys. This would be an ideal opportunity to utilise fully the Area Committee Community Engagement Plan.

4.0 Performance Management and Reporting

4.1 Baseline Position and key targets for the Service

- 4.1.1 Streetscene Services is proposing that the DLEQS methodology is introduced across all areas to measure performance and identify environmental quality issues at a district level. This information would allow target setting and performance could then be monitored against them. The DLEQS methodology produces a wide range of information relating to environmental quality including the current NI195 score that is reported on an annual basis to central government but on a city wide basis. In terms of the enhanced services the only performance measure currently reported against is NI195. As this performance indicator has recently been changed from BV199 2008/09 is currently being used to establish the city wide baseline performance from which improving targets can be derived. Unfortunately the NI195 is only done on an authority wide basis but with additional surveying resources it could be done at a local level.
- 4.1.2 SERVICE PLANNING – Streetscene Services has a service planning timetable that will ensure that the agreed service plan is in place by the first quarter of the year. The Service Plan will in future be linked more closely to the ADPs and input into the ADPs will be offered by Streetscene Services when they are updated. This process is not established and to date input across the areas has been inconsistent but we now have an opportunity to develop this . Practically there may be some resource issues trying to influence 10 ADP

4.2 Other Outcomes for the Area Committee area

- 4.2.1 Working with Area Committees across the city will vary from area to area as each will have their own specific issues and challenges. However in terms of Streetscene Services there are other outcomes that it wishes to achieve,
- Improving the general level of environmental quality across each area which ultimately will make Leeds one of the cleanest cities in the UK.
 - Implement Localised Streetscene Services that meet the governments localisation agenda.
 - Improve service delivery and in the process assist the pay and gradings issues
 - Continue to deliver Intensive Neighbourhood Management through the Community Pride Teams and use the experiences to improve service delivery city wide.
 - Support and encourage the existing 'In Bloom' groups across all areas and where possible help to introduce new groups into the process.
 - Continue to provide high standards of grounds maintenance service across the authority.
 - A key outcome for Streetscene Service that would benefit the local area is to encourage communities to judge the outcomes achieved by the service rather than concentrate on inputs into the area

4.3 Reporting Arrangements

4.3.1 It is proposed that Streetscene Services reports to the Area Committee on a six monthly frequency in September and March. However, the timing may need to be discussed to ensure that it satisfies Area Committee requirements. The proposal is that the reports are presented by the Principal Streetscene manager and if agreed the service champion. The contents of the report and format will need to be agreed. Clearly there needs to be performance data to demonstrate how the service is performing but also needs to report on service delivery against agreed priority areas. Streetscene does not currently have performance statistics that can be reported on a six monthly frequency, however work is being carried out to develop a suite of indicators for the Vitality Index that could also be used for Area Committee reports.

4.3.2 Suggested performance data.

- NI 195
- DLEQs
- Number of complaints/compliments
- Perception surveys

5.0 Programme of Activities 2009/10

5.1 The programmed activities will be finalised when the Streetscene Service Plan has been agreed.

5.2 In terms of Grounds Maintenance the work will begin in 2009/10 to start the procurement process to package and specify a new service and have a new contract in place to start March 2011.

6.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

6.1 The governance arrangements for Streetscene Services will remain within Environmental Services and the Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate.

6.2 In terms of policy development this will continue to be done in a city wide context to ensure that consistency of service is delivered across every area and that the Council's obligations are delivered in terms of the EPA. However, by developing closer links with local areas specific issues can be reflected in the policies to ensure that service delivery meets local area needs.

6.3 In terms of moving forward, the enhanced roles will provide an opportunity for area committees to influence policy development to reflect area needs.

7.0 Legal and Resource Implications

- 7.1 Streetscene Services has a responsibility for delivering services on behalf of the Council and is outlined in section 2.12.1. Although Streetscene Services is committed to delivering localised services there is a risk that resources are diverted to deal with localised issues at the expense of achieving city wide outcomes. With a limited resource working at optimum efficiency service prioritisation will have to be a key issue and a shared responsibility between Streetscene Services and Area Committees.
- 7.2 Streetscene Services resources are limited and with no prospect of increasing these it provides an opportunity for improved joined up working on imaginative and innovative ways to deliver services.
- 7.3 The delivery of some aspects of Streetscene Services, such as INM, graffiti removal, do depend solely on NRF and SSCF funding. Withdrawal of these funding streams will have significant implications in terms of service delivery and maintenance and improvement of service standards. Unfortunately, in all cases the funding is used to support salaries of front line staff in the most deprived areas of the city. Working with area committees may allow longer term planning and opportunities to maintain staff over longer periods of time.

8.0 Equality Considerations

- 8.1 Streetscene Services is currently undertaking Equality impact assessments of all aspects of the service to ensure that they deliver equality in terms of service delivery and accessibility. However, we recognise that Leeds is an extremely diverse city with each area having its own unique requirements. Streetscene views the enhanced relationship with area committees as an opportunity to use their experience and the detailed knowledge of area management officer to identify ways in which equality issues can be tackled.

9.0 Any Other Considerations

- 9.1 Streetscene Service is facing a number of issues that will have an impact on its ability to deliver the outlined enhanced services. They include,

9.2 NRF/SSCF Withdrawal

- 9.2.1 In 2008/09 the NRF funding for the INM programme was reduced by £829K resulting in some of the INM services being reduced or removed altogether. Similar reductions in funding are planned for 2009/10 and Streetscene Services is currently developing an exit strategy to try and minimise the impact on service delivery. Clearly a funding reduction in this area will undoubtedly have an impact on environmental quality in the INM areas.

9.3 Budget Pressures

- 9.3.1 In terms of the base budget, as with most services across the Council. Streetscene Services will be under pressure to deliver improved services with the same resources or in some areas less. In recent years the impact on core services has been minimised due to short term funding arrangements such as the INM programme. Increased customer expectation and the need for continuous improvements will put the core service under pressure. Streetscene is constantly looking at ways to improve service delivery and maximise the use of its resources.

9.4 Street Cleaning – Inputs vs Outcomes

- 9.4.1 The current Streetscene resources and method of working are based on a very rigid input approach to service delivery i.e. rigid streets sweeping schedules. However in terms of the Council's responsibilities under the EPA and associated Code of Practice environmental quality is measured by outcomes (how clean a street is) rather than how much resource has been allocated to the task. The current approach taken by Streetscene Services is to use the schedules as a guideline but use its resources to best effect. The principle is that if a street does not require sweeping on its scheduled day the resource is deployed to an area where the service is required.
- 9.4.2 NI 195 is the national measure of environmental cleaning at a point in time with no regard for the resource input. The challenge for Streetscene is to meet customer expectations and environmental quality standards.

9.5 Areas of Responsibility

- 9.5.1 This issue relates mainly to the confusion about the demarcation between the adopted highways, for which Streetscene has responsibility, and other areas of land. This is a particular problem in ALMO estates where many of the inter-connecting footpaths and hard surfaced areas (garage fore courts etc) are maintained by the ALMOs. Most people who complain expect a one Council approach to resolving the issue and are not really interested in which service has the responsibility. Streetscene Services spend a lot of officer time dealing with complaints that are not related to cleaning the adopted highways.

10.0 Conclusions

- 10.1 2009/10 and the enhanced roles for Area Committees provides an opportunity for a new relationship to be developed with Streetscene Services that will ultimately lead to service improvements and better a cleaner environment for the residents of Leeds. Within the report are a number of proposals in terms of the way forward and the expectation from Streetscene is that this relationship will be a developing one.

11.0 Recommendations

- 11.1 Members are asked to consider and note the contents of this report and consider the following issues,
- (i) Consider the area committee reporting process in terms of timetable, format and contents of the reports (see particularly 4.3).
 - (ii) Consider the use of DLEQs surveying and measuring methodology at a local level (see 4.1.1). This will have surveying resource implications that need to be identified and agreed.
 - (iii) How area committees and area management can assist Streetscene Services with customer/community engagement. (See particularly 3.3.)
 - (iv) Consider whether individual Ward Member meetings with Streetscene officers will be desirable and what the arrangements would be. (see 2.7.1).
 - (v) Consider the use of the 'probability/impact' approach to service prioritisation. (See 2..2 – (v)).

Background papers

Executive Board Report 16 July 2008 – Area Committee Roles 2008/09