

Report of the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods

Report to the Outer North West Area Committee

Date: 26th September 2011

Subject: Delegation of Environmental Services – Service Level Agreement

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes ALL	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) has been drawn up for the delivery of environmental services in Outer North West.
2. This report provides final details of the agreement and seeks approval of the document which will steer the work of the West North West Environmental Locality Team to the end of the current 2011/ 2012 municipal year. The Service Level Agreement is attached as well as a full set of appendices and maps on the enclosed CD. The SLA for 2012/13 municipal year will be presented to the Area Committee at its first meeting of that municipal year (June/July 2012).

Recommendations

The Area Committee is asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement for the delivery of delegated environmental services.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Area Committee, for approval, a final version of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) through which the work of the Environmental Locality team will be steered over for the remainder of the 2011/ 12 municipal year.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Work has been ongoing with Members and Area Committees since late 2010 on achieving the successful delegation of certain environmental services in 2011/12.

- 2.2 At its meeting of 30th March 2011, the Executive Board approved revisions to the Area Committee Function Schedules to include a new delegated responsibility for Street Cleansing & Environmental Enforcement Services.

- 2.3 The delegation makes clear the responsibility of Area Committees to negotiate, develop and approve a Service Level Agreement (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.

- 2.4 Services included in the delegation are:

- Street cleansing (mechanical and manual);
- Leaf clearing;
- Litter bin emptying;
- Dog warden services; (There are currently 4 dog wardens and a Senior Dog Warden working throughout the city. A Dog Warden has been allocated to WNW. Support will also be provided from the 'spare' warden and the senior warden.
- Littering & flytipping regulation;
- Domestic & commercial waste (storage & transportation issues);
- Highways enforcement (eg, abandoned & vehicles for sale on the highway, A-boards on pavements, mud on roads and placards on street furniture);
- Graffiti enforcement; and
- Overgrown vegetation controls (where the vegetation endangers or obstructs the free passage of pedestrians or vehicles).

- The delegation of the specified environmental services to Area Committee will mean that service resources, mainly staffing, which are currently managed centrally, will be devolved. These resources have been organised into three wedge based teams for East North East, South East and West North West, aligned to the new Locality Teams . The Service Level Agreement sets out the detail of the resources at a locality level and how they will be used to meet the Area Committee's responsibilities and local priorities.

2.5 Area Committee workshops have been held, in January, March and July, to involve Members in the development of Service Level Agreements (SLA), through which the delegated services will be delivered at a local level. The workshops also provided an opportunity for Members to consider current service schedules and activity, in terms of meeting the need of local areas.

2.6 In addition to the Area Committee workshops consultation has also been undertaken with Environmental Sub-group. Officers from the Locality Team have also met on a ward basis with members of the Outer North West.

3 Main issues

3.1 A great deal of work has been undertaken over the past six months to review the street cleansing service, implement a restructure to create the three new locality teams and build trust with Members.

3.2 The completed review of street cleansing services, in particular mechanical sweeping, has looked in depth at a range of issues affecting productivity and overall effectiveness of the service.

Annual Leave & Sickness Capacity

Work has been undertaken to ensure a sound understanding of the capacity needed within the service to accommodate annual leave and sickness, something not previously factored into the delivery schedule. This has resulted in additional capacity being created within a revised service schedule, meaning a significant reduction in the number of sweeping routes missed or not completed due to lack of available staff. To create the additional capacity, the cycle has moved from a 7 day cycle to an 8 day cycle. The sweeping blocks have been halved so that the size of the routes is now achievable.

Downtime

A primary concern highlighted by both officers and Members has been the extent to which 'downtime', i.e. the time machines are not actively sweeping, affects service delivery. A robust analysis has been carried out of travel time to/from depot to routes, the time involved in vehicles tipping their load during each route, the time spent at the start and finish of each day on vehicle preparation, i.e. washing down and refuelling, and identification of other issues affecting productive working time e.g. moving of bins off the carriageway so that the sweeping machines can gain access to the pavements/roads.

This work is still on going, but has already resulted in a number of additional tip sites being identified which will reduce unproductive work time. Additionally discussions

are underway to further minimise travel time by having more localised bases from which the vehicles will operate (currently all vehicles operate out of just two depots, Henshaw in the Outer North West and Cross Green in the Outer East).

It should be noted that the new schedule has been developed using the current tipping sites. Therefore when more localised sites are in use, this will free up further capacity.

Route Completion Rates

A further element of the service that has been investigated is the completion rates of the individual sweeping blocks. Although specific data is not currently available to give a completely accurate figure, anecdotal evidence from frontline staff, service supervisors and Members strongly indicates to a high rate of routes not being completed within a working day. In most instances the part of a route that did not get swept would be left until the next scheduled cleanse, potentially up to six weeks later.

The inability to complete a route has been assessed as being largely down to the size of the current routes, which were designed to be approximately 10 linear kilometres each. However, when taken into consideration that both pavement and road sweepers have to go up and down each side of a street this coverage is doubled. The most effective speed of a pavement sweeper is 2km an hour, thus to complete 20km would take 10 hours of productive cleaning.

As has been highlighted earlier there are a number of factors which mean that, out of a ten hour working day, the amount of productive cleaning time available falls short of this, meaning that historically the routes were not deliverable.

We have therefore sought to redesign the routes to make them deliverable within the current level of resources. Throughout the July workshops Elected Members have been consulted about a solution that effectively reduces the size of routes and makes them more achievable within the available productive time.

3.3 Comments and specific issues raised by Area Committee Members during the Environmental Services workshop held in July and during sub-group meetings include:

- Ginnels - the Locality Team will work to identify, map and establish ownership and maintenance of ginnels during the term of this SLA.
- Town and Parish Councils – the Locality Team will engage and consult with Town and Parish Councils regularly, in order to improve service delivery
- Leaf Fall – The Locality Team will allocate resources, flexibly and as required to meet leaf fall demands in Outer North West Leeds
- The Area Committee each has requested a 'share' of the budget so they can make decisions on the staff, vehicles and frequency of cleaning in their areas. – The Area Committees will have an ability to influence resources - the locality team will work with the Area Committee to ensure the wedge resources are deployed effectively in the area. At the current time budgetary control lies with

the Locality Manager who is required to engage with the Area Committee on resource and budgetary deployment.

- Can the job descriptions become more general so resources can be deployed to whatever tasks are necessary (within reason)? - The Locality Manager will seek to deploy resources as flexibly as possible. This includes maximising the use of staffing to meet work priorities across job descriptions. (within reason)
- A more joined up approach to flytipping is needed to gather evidence before cleaning takes place. Bags should have their locations where the flytipping occurred marked on them – the cleansing and enforcement sides of the Locality Team, have already begun to work together more closely on such issues.
- Need information from Officers when a complaint has been addressed including updates on progress and when completed. - the locality team has recently set up a priority e-mail for Member enquiries. These enquiries will be recorded and monitored - responses to all queries will be made.
- The area committee has expressed concerns about the inclusion of Graffiti Enforcement and Dog Warden services given the limited level of specialised city-wide resources these services are able to draw upon - whilst the services will remain in the delegation the committee will need to keep these services and their deployment under review.
- The Area Committee expressed concerns about it's inability to influence key areas of environmental services delivered by the Parks & Countryside Service and West North West Homes - they perceived a potential disconnect between the delegated services and these other 2 parts of the council delivering environmental services.

3.4 As a result of the workshops a number of key priorities have been identified by the Area Committee, these being:

- Routes to High Schools – litter clean up, educate and enforcement.
- Town centres – litter clean up and enforcement.
- Local shopping parades/areas – litter clean up and enforcement.
- Work with partners to broaden the range of people who can enforce.
- Address issues associated with dog fouling and dog control.
- Joint approaches to clearing open space/land in the public realm.
- Develop a maintenance programme for ginnels.

The locality team will develop an area work-programme through the committees environmental sub-group to identify the Area Committee's top enforcement issues so that resources can be deployed accordingly. Once the top issues have been identified, the Locality Team will seek to address these issues and seek to resolve the above priorities to the satisfaction of the sub-group.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Various consultation and engagement exercises have been undertaken with Members on an individual basis, as well as at ward and Area Committee level.
- 4.1.2 Most significantly three rounds of Area Committee workshops have been held in January, March and July 2011, designed specifically to shape the delivery of environmental services within the Outer North West wards.
- 4.1.3 A series of update reports have been provided to each Area Committee meeting since October/November 2010 (see background documents for full details).
- 4.1.4 Progress reports have been submitted to each Area Chairs' meeting since October, including seeking comments and confirmation of a template for the Service Level Agreement.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 There is no specific impact on equality and diversity or cohesion and integration as a result of this report. Although 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 proposed 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.
- 4.3.2 In order to formalise delegation of the listed environmental services, the Area Committee Function Schedule within the Council's Constitution has been amended, approved at Executive Board in March 2011 and ratified at the Annual Council meeting held on 26th May 2011.
- 4.3.3 Amendments have also been made to the Area Committee Procedure Rules to make allowance for the decision making powers being devolved to Committees, which will run concurrent to the same authority given to the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 There has been no change to the proportion of resources to be spent in each locality. The only difference is that for the first time budgets, and therefore spending, are split into localities and separated out from refuse / waste management costs. The resource allocated to the WNW Locality Team for 2011/12 is therefore the same as would have been spent in the area for those services under the previous structure.
- 4.4.2 The Service Level Agreements detail a revised mechanical street cleansing service, which will deliver increased efficiencies in terms of achieving a greater quality of street cleansing and therefore providing better value for money.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 Following revision to the Council's Constitution, as detailed at 4.3.2, the Area Committee has the legal powers to approve the attached Service Level Agreement and therefore formally undertake the delegation of services set out within it.
- 4.5.2 There are no further legal implications.
- 4.5.3 The report contains no information that is deemed exempt or confidential.
- 4.5.4 The Area Committee's decision to approve, or not, the attached Service Level Agreement is eligible for call-in, within the standard five working day period from the date the decision is published.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 The Area Committee is being asked to approve the attached Service Level Agreement, which will formalise the partnership arrangements between the West North West Environmental Locality Team and the Committee. Should the Service Level Agreement not be approved then the Locality Team will still be required to deliver environmental services within the area, however this will be without the significant input of the Area Committee (e.g. an ability to influence strategic development of services and resources deployment).
- 4.6.2 The locality team will need to develop strong and effective working relationships with the Parks & Countryside Service and West North West Homes in order to ensure that such services which are not covered by the delegation are delivered and developed in a way which supports the SLA.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 A significant amount of collaborative work has been undertaken and real progress made in making ready for the services to operate under the terms of the SLA with effect from September 2011. This first SLA will apply for a period of 6 months, during which time performance monitoring will be reported to the Area Committee and Environment Sub group.
- 5.2 The SLA will be reviewed annually to inform the production and approval of subsequent agreements for future years, in line with corporate budget cycle and

review process, with the first review beginning in October 2011. This update will be a verbal update and give members the opportunity to give feedback on how they feel the new service is working. A written report will be presented in December 2011.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Area Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the contents of the report, particularly concerns expressed by the area committee's sub-group relating to an inability to influence environmental services being delivered by other parts of the Council and the need for good partnership working between the area committee and such partners, and,
- b) Approve the attached Service Level Agreement.

7 Background documents

Leeds City Council Constitution

Area Committee report: Environmental Services Delegation – Update and Progress Report, 20th June 2011

Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees – progress report, 15th April 2011

Area Committee report: Delegation of Environmental Services, 14th March 2011

Executive Board report: Delegation of Executive Functions in Relation to Streetscene Management to Area Committees, 30th March 2011

Area Committee report: Delegation of Environmental Services, 31st January 2011

Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees – Development of Service Level Agreements, 14th January 2011

Area Chairs' Meeting report: Devolvement of Environmental Services to Area Committees, 3rd December 2011

Area Committee report: Briefing note on proposed delegation of elements of Streetscene services, Oct/Nov 2010